****C3 Questions

*C3 exists to glorify God and edify the body by knowing and delighting in the Father through the joy and love of the Spirit and unity in the Son.*

Red Text = Tips and guides to help use the questions

Blue Text = Sample Answers

Green Text = Additional questions to ask

Got Milk?

During our time of fasting, we have talked a lot about the secondary benefits and the Best benefits of fasting. Write down some of the secondary benefits you've experienced in your fast and write down some of the Best benefits you've experienced with God.

* Remember secondary benefits are God's good gifts. Things like healing, refreshment, breaking an addiction, restored relationships, guidance, and peace. While primary or Best benefits are experiences with God himself in His Word or in His world.
* How does James 1:17 help us keep God distinct from His gifts?
* How do we ensure that God gets the glory in every benefit to come out of your fasting?

Where’s the Beef?

Isaiah 58 talks about the fast that pleases God; in other words, the fast that brings God pleasure. If we love God, what should our attitude be towards what pleases God and brings Him pleasure? How should that attitude help motivate our behavior?

* It is important to understand that what pleases God are the things that bring God pleasure. The Bible often talks about the pleasure or delights of God (Jer 9:24/Isa 61:8/Mal 1:10). We do not add anything to God in doing things that bring Him pleasure because all of our actions that are pleasing to God simply reflect God's own character. God delights in the echos of His excellence in the lives of His people.
* If we love God and treasure Christ, our attitude towards what brings Him pleasure should be one of constant pursuit. We should continuously strive to do what pleases the Lord because we love Him! Think of a husband that loves his wife. He will do whatever he can, in all the creative ways he can think of, to bring her happiness and joy. However, he must know her well in order to know what pleases here. The same is true of God. Christ is our great husband and we should strive to bring pleasure to our Bridegroom. Jesus himself says in John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." In other words, if you delight in me you will strive to do what pleases me.
* This attitude of pursuing what pleases God should be one of our primary motivations. Paul says in 2 Cor 5:9 that his whole aim in life and in death was to be pleasing to God. So we should strive to know Jesus better and better to know what pleases him. That takes place as we study and memorize His word. Then we should measure all of our behaviors by His reveal standards. Those standards are simply the reflections of His character and so by obeying them, we become more Christ-like and Christ is pleased with the echos of His excellence in His people.
* Read Heb 11:6. What is at the core of pleasing God? Why?
* Read Heb 13:6, 2 Cor 5:9, Ps 19:14. How do these verse help us discern what pleases God?

Isaiah 58 says the test of fasting that pleases God is whether it overflows into loving acts and fruit-bearing. Read the following passages, observe how they support the test of Isaiah 58 and how they add to it.

John 15:5-8

* Jesus says that those who are His followers will bear much fruit. This fruit is loving works towards others. To be found in Christ and to not bear the fruit of God-glorifying works, was an impossibility to Jesus. It couldn't happen. Therefore, the test of those who feast on God is the fruit of their lives.

John 14:15

* Jesus here makes the test of those who love him and delight in him whether they obey his commandments. Loving Christ and keeping his commandments are not the same thing but they go hand in hand. Obedience is the *fruit* of loving Jesus and treasuring Him. If you are fasting for God and feasting on Him, the fruit will be obedience.

1 John 2:3-11

* Here John talks about the test of those who say they know God (have feasted on Him). The test is that they keep God's commandments. But what is the summary of the commandments? Love! Loving God radically and loving others. John goes on to say that if you don't love your brothers (hate them) then you do not know God.

John 7:37-39

* This passage describes the result of being satisfied in Christ (loving Him). Jesus says the Holy Spirit will overflow out of that persons heart. What that looks like to others is visible demonstrations of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). This is exactly what Isaiah describes in Isa 58:11.

Examine your own fast based on the tests above. Do you think it was pleasing to God? How can you do better in your future fasts?

Are You Satisfied?

Will you make fasting a regular discipline in your life? How exactly do you plan to do that?

* Try to encourage people to make fasting a regular part of their Christian walk. Talk about how you can set up disciplines to establish that like fasting every Wednesday from breakfast and lunch.