When to use `less +F error.log`

When you are monitoring a **single file**, consider using `less +F` over `tail -f`. At first they do the same thing, but `less +F` allows you to switch from **watch** mode into a **navigation** mode with `ctrl-c` (and back to watching with `F`).

In navigation mode you can use the usual `less` commands, such as:

· Search "foo" with `/foo`
· Jump to the next occurence with `n` or the previous with `N`
· Go up with `j` or down with `k`
· Create marks with `m`

If you use rotating logs, check out the `--follow-name` option.

Monitoring logs with

less +F

instead of `tail -f`

When to stick to `tail -f *.log`

When you are monitoring **multiple files**, you'll probably prefer `tail -f` because it will show you changes in all monitored files whereas `less +F` will only show you the first file (unless you use `ctrl-c`, `:n`, `F` to switch between buffers).

Also stick with `tail -f` if you want to insert empty lines as a visual separation.