

Ash Wednesday Virtual Communion

Prayer of Surrender: Spirit of Truth, CARRY ME where you will; BRING TO ME what You will; TAKE FROM ME what You will; AWAKEN IN ME what You will. The Christ MAN is around me. The Christ MIND is in me. The Christ POWER flows through me. And, the Christ MYSTERY exists as me. I believe it. I perceive it. And, now I receive it! I am surrendered. Amen. And, so it is!

A Holy Fast

Today is Ash Wednesday, a holy day where all of Christendom begins a season of fasting leading up to Easter. For those who join us regularly for our Wednesday night teaching and discussion, please read this text from Isaiah and come prepared to discuss the beauty of these verses:

Isaiah 58:3-12 Why have we fasted,' *they say*, 'and You have not seen? *Why* have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?' "In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And [b]exploit all your laborers. ⁴ Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as *you do* this day, To make your voice heard on high. ⁵ Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? *Is it* to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the Lord? ⁶ "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the [c]heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? ⁷ *Is it* not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are [d]cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? ⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. ⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I *am*.' "If you take away the yoke from your midst, The [e]pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, ¹⁰ *If* you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your [f]darkness shall *be* as the noonday. ¹¹ The Lord will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. ¹² Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of [g]Streets to Dwell In.

Affirmation: "This Lenten Season, I will begin or continue a Holy Fast. My light will break forth like morning, my healing will come speedily, my soul will be satisfied in drought, my bones will be strengthened, and when I call on the Lord there will be an answer - as I love my neighbor and become the hands of God's love extended to the world. Amen."