

Christmas Day  
December 25, 2016

E. Bevan Stanley

And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Last night we heard the old, old story of the birth of Jesus from Luke. This morning we hear a theological reflection on that event. This is the Feast of the Incarnation. That is we celebrate our belief that in Jesus of Nazareth, God was fully present. God in his great love for us bridged the chasm between divinity and humanity, between transcendence and material existence. In Christina Rossetti’s beautiful words, “Love came down at Christmas.”

As the Letter to the Hebrews puts it, “Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways through the prophets, but in these last days, he has spoken to us by a son.” God has always desired to be in intimate, loving relationship with each of us. Relationships entail speaking to one another. So God tries to speak to us. The word of God is God’s attempt to establish and build this relationship with us. For centuries God inspired prophets to communicate with us. Finally, the self-expression of God, the message of God’s love, takes a different form. Instead of using words, God becomes a human being. The Word of God becomes a human life. It is as if God said, “You are not getting what I am trying to say about love. Here, I going to show you what love is. Watch this.” And God proceeds to show us what God means by love by giving us Jesus.

This Word made Flesh is also our light and our life. This is the light that the darkness has not and can never extinguish. This is the light that is with us in the darkest of hours and in the darkest of places. This is the light that illumines that darkest parts of

our own hearts. And this is the life that overcomes death. This is the life that we all, in our heart of hearts, yearn for. This is the life that is so thick and strong and rich and free, that we call it eternal life. It is the Life God wants us to experience even now.

This is our Christmas gift from God. Love, Light, and Life. This is our gift. God wants us to receive this gift so that it will change us and make our lives full of joy and love. We receive this gift to be changed. “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth.”