

# How Deep Is Your Love?

Sermon Notes for Dec 24, 2017 at Brentwood

Luke 1:46b-55 (934) & 2 Samuel 7:17 (278)



**I have not lived in a house  
since the day I brought up the people of Israel  
from Egypt to this day,  
but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.  
(2 Samuel 7:6)**

## Provocative Ponderings that Call Forth Our Potential in Christ

- Christmas in a migrant world – families that have scattered coming together, in someone's home, to celebrate their connection – in Christian gatherings, their connection in and to God – a relationship initiated by God to draw people back into the flow of God's purpose = God's PEACE on earth, as in heaven – the passage from 2 Samuel reminds us that this God is a God of migrants – a God of a people on the move in search of freedom to be God's companions in blessing the whole world – but where is love and security found in such a world?
- John Stuart's crayon drawing of the holy family points to the answer – it's found in the warm embrace of love, of God's love, of God's love mediated through human beings acting like a loving family – it's the love that was the driving force of this whole Christmas enterprise – God's love in the flesh invading a world torn apart by fear, anger, slaughter, and revenge – God's coming, God's life in the flesh, God's death, God's resurrection, and the triumph of God's PEACE all confound expectations, even those of the religious authorities of Jesus' day – this is a different way of being in, with, and for the world – a way of justice, of kindness, and of humble journeying with God into God's intention for this world and the next
- When I chose this question for the sermon's title this morning, I knew it was an 'ear-worm' from a song of my youth – but I couldn't remember which one – I was surprised when I discovered that it came from a #1 pop hit back in the early 1970s by the Bee Gees – and even more surprised when these words showed up as the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse:

*I believe in you  
You know the door to my very soul  
You're the light in my deepest, darkest hour  
You're my saviour when I fall  
And you may not think I care for you  
When you know down inside  
That I really do*

*Notes for a sermon preached by Brian Fraser,  
minister with Brentwood Presbyterian Church, Burnaby, BC*

I have no idea what was in the minds of the Gibb brothers when they wrote the song, but I think the 'you' referred to is Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us – and, as the lyrics say, that we really do know that God exists and cares for us, even if we don't always think that or live in gratitude for that – at a deeper level, at the level of loving connection, there is a *sensus divinitatis* (Calvin's 'sense of the divine') that God has planted in the soul of each and every one of us – and God keeps nourishing that seed to sprout, and that plant to grow, and that constantly maturing plant to yield food for the journey – to share in the tent on the way

### **So, what are we going to do with this ...**

This is Christmas Eve and we are together as the Trinity's family – old and young, from many places in this world, happy and sad, hopeful and fearful – I hope that, in the midst of the paradoxes and puzzles that make up human life as we know it, that you have been touched this morning by the deep love of God found in Jesus Christ and at work in you and among us by the influence of the Holy Spirit – I hope that God's coming this year has reached more deeply than ever into your soul and inspired a new vision of significance for you in this world – as we move around this world, our true sanctuary is our relationship with God – it never leaves us – it is always there in God's deep love nourishing our souls always and inviting our gratitude

### **Your Notes ...**

### **Today's Framework for our Prayers**

**Thanks** – for being with us, and for us in the midst of all our confusions and challenges, offering the comfort of dignity and worth ...

**Help** – to be channels of your PEACE in all our circles of influence, whatever the provocations and irritations that trigger our fears and frustrations ...

**Awe** – at the way you came to be your love in the world - as a little kid, born of unmarried teen-agers, in a back alley, in the dead of night in the dead of winter, in a terrorized and traumatized world where your love met the madness and overcame it ...