



Christmas Unwrapped!

An Advent Worship and Preaching Series

December 20, 2009

Week 4: Luke 1: 26-33, 46-48a, 50-53

Unwrapping God's Love

The television detective Kojak often asked, “Who loves ya, baby?” We want answers, too. We want assurance from those around us, some sign that his/her/their love is genuine. But we experience or read about divorce, violence, exploitation of the elderly, road rage, angry letter-writers, angry politicians, wars & rumors of war. Where is the love? Listen for a surprising answer in the Christmas carol of a powerless, penniless, illiterate Jewish peasant girl.

Observations from St. Luke 1

The sign of genuine love was inked in the angelic announcement to shepherds in Lk. 2: “Unto you is born...a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord. This shall be a sign unto you. You will find the Babe...lying in a manger.” The song of Mary alerts us to Divine reversals that characterized the Christ's earthly ministry: He has brought down the ruler, *but lifted up the humble! He has filled the hungry with good things*, but has sent the rich away empty/ He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts, *but been mindful of the humble state of His servant*. Another surprise is that God continues to love both those who are in and those who are out, those who are up and those who are down, those who are winners and those who are losers.

Questions for Reflection and Growth

In the Sermon on the Mountain, Jesus preached, “Blessed are the poor, blessed are the hungry, blessed are the meek.” “Where did He get His material?” asks Pr. John Ortberg. “Could it have been from His mom?...Did she teach her Son that it angers God when people are selfish or violent, when rich people watch poor people go hungry and do nothing, when the powerful push around the weak because they can get away with it?”