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Christian Perspectives ? love came down at Christmas

By Reverend Barbara Moulton

One hundred and thirty years ago, the words of this lovely poem by Christina Rossetti, were first published.

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine,
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and Angels gave the sign.
Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine,
Worship we our Jesus,
But wherewith for sacred sign?
Love shall be our token,
Love shall be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

If you search for this poem online, you often will only find the first four lines. Lovely of course, as they speak of the coming of Jesus Christ. Christ is not just a gift OF love. He is love itself.

But the whole poem reminds us all of a challenge that Christmas brings to us. If we truly worship the one who is Love Incarnate, that love should also be born in us.

I have been saddened this Advent Season as once again I read and heard words of anger. Anger at cashiers who follow instructions to wish someone ?Happy Holidays. Demands to boycott business who try to recognize that not everyone is celebrating Christmas. Insults directed at government leaders when they acknowledge that we live in a diverse society.

I must admit that I find it to be a strange irony that we can be so unloving in how we respond to others.

As a Christian in Canada, I am free to celebrate exactly how I want to celebrate. I can sing carols. I can send cards of faith. I can even choose to use Christmas Stamps which depict the Nativity. (Provided I can buy them early enough. This year they sold out from my local post office outlet very quickly.) I can pray and worship freely in my church and in my home.

I can freely celebrate the love of Christ, the Prince of Peace. Why should I look for battles?

When you think about it, the word ?holiday? originates in ?holy day?. So if someone wishes me Happy Holidays, I thank them. I take their words in a loving spirit. I will have a blessed holy day. On Christmas Day and every day.

A few Sundays ago my pastor and husband said these words during his sermon, ?When people ask you why you love Christmas so much. Tell them it is because you need Easter so badly.? (Pastor Carl Moulton)

I enjoy Christmas. I love the celebration that comes around this season each year. But God did not send His Son so that we would have the right to the word ?Christmas'. As my pastor implied in his sermon. God sent His Son to show us how much He loved us. This love is not only seen in the manger of Bethlehem. It is in the Cross of Calvary and the Empty Tomb.

So I will not speak of my ?right? to be wished a Merry Christmas. Instead I will focus on the one who surrendered His rights. Who became Emmanuel:God With Us. And in His name, I will speak love.

Love shall be our token,
Love shall be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign

May God's love reign in our hearts.