

Candlemas 28.01.07

MP, Brassington and Middleton

Malachi 3:1-5
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

The endless search for something

Daughter
The world is longing for something
Proud of my children

- Lovely story
- Others there too
- Longing for redemption, salvation
- Simeon and Anna teach us that rather than search we should let it come to us.
- Be still. I am the least qualified person to be giving you this advice.
- And this was the message of Advent too.
- Simeon and Anna, recognised, accepted salvation
- That's all we have to do – accept salvation
- No need to work at it

Images

Bank manager - redeem
Judge – justify, atone
Sailors – save

Evangelicals often talk about being saved by the cross.
In truth, we are saved not by the cross, but by the one who died on the cross.

Here at the end of incarnation celebration

Without incarnation, no atonement

Salvation by the **incarnation** of logos is unsurpassable, Rahner says, for three reasons.

- what is communicated is God's own self;
- the mode of communication, human reality, is made divine;
- the recipient of the self-communication, Jesus himself, is one with God.
- Irenaeus, Rahner, incarnation divinizes humanity
- All This is *deification*, and salvation involves participation in the already deified humanity of Christ as the true goal of Christian life, accomplished through the Holy Spirit.
- We in him, and he in us

What is the key to salvation?

Childlikeness

The old man carried the child, but the child governed the old man.

The message of children, suffer, be like, cast off attachments.

Old ways enfolded not superseded
Courage to fight
fearlessness

The result of this salvation

- God became man and suffered all men's woes. We didn't ask him to. That is love.
- Through the incarnation, life and crucifixion of Jesus, God enters into all human experience: *God enters man*.
- Through the resurrection man is reborn – a constant cycle of death followed by resurrection: eternal regeneration, eternal Eucharist, eternal spiritual re-incarnation. *Man enters God*.
- We fall short, repent and accept forgiven – crucifixion immediately followed by resurrection. Perhaps this is salvation, when we give something back to God-incarnated-in-us.

Forgiveness, childlikeness, everyone

- Christ's forgiveness is salvation.
- Why is it so difficult to accept forgiveness and divine love? Are we afraid that by letting someone into our lives we are in some way diminished? 'Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return.'
- Difficult for people like me brought up in Protestantism
- Christianity teaches that when I accept the forgiveness offered in Christ, it does not affect me alone – it affects all those with whom I come in contact because it changes the way I relate to everyone and everything.
- We have to forgive to help save others.

All this transforms us – if we let it

Simeon was transformed and so can we be. And if we are transformed, so is everyone who comes into contact with us.

We are all saved – we just have to accept it.

Jesus is God, God is love,

One of the most moving stories of the salvific effect of love, with an incarnational effect on the recipient, is in

- Andersen's *The Snow Queen* where Gerda melts Kay's heart of ice with tears of joy and love.
- O my saviour lifted --- melt this heart of ice.
- And what more beautiful image of salvation through incarnational Eucharist than George Herbert's: *Love bade me welcome.*