

## **ASPECTS OF LOVE THE LOVE OF THE WORLD VERSE THE LOVE OF GOD**

Intro:

This week we celebrate Valentines Day. What valentines day means to most people is a time of sharing expressions of friendship and love.

But of course, most people in the world do not even know who Valentine was.

According to church tradition Valentine was a Believer and Pastor who lived in Rome in about the year 270 A.D. At that time the Roman Emperor Claudius II was imprisoning Christians for not worshipping the Roman gods. During this persecution Valentine was arrested. Some say he was arrested because he was performing Christian marriages, but others say it was for helping Christians escape prison. During the trial they asked Valentine what he thought of the Roman gods Jupiter and Mercury. Of course Valentine said they were false gods and that the God that Jesus called Father was the only true God. So the Romans threw him in prison for insulting the gods.

While in prison Valentine continued to minister. He witnessed to the guards. One of the guards was a good man who had adopted a blind girl. He asked Valentine if his God could help his daughter. Valentine prayed and the girl was given her sight. The guard and his whole family, 46 people, believed in Jesus and were baptized. Because these people had come to know Jesus, Valentine praised God right there in his prison cell. When the emperor heard about this he was furious that Valentine was still making converts even in prison, so he had Valentine beheaded.

The tradition states that before he was beheaded he wrote a letter to the little blind girl and signed it "your Valentine."

Valentine knew that he might get caught in his Christian activities. He knew that if he told the court the truth about the Roman gods that he would be thrown in prison. And he knew that if he continued to witness of Christ in the prison he would make his captors angry. But he continued, because he loved the Lord and his fellow humans. He was willing to risk his life to free the prisoners and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who needed to hear it.

Valentine was martyred for the truth.. He would not acknowledge the pagan gods of Rome as being on an equal plane with the Lord Jesus.

In contrast to the tradition of Valentine, we have the pagan tradition of the god Eros.

Eros, in Greek religion and mythology, was the god of love. He was the personification of love in all its manifestations, including physical passion at its strongest, tender, romantic love, and playful, sportive love. According to some legends he was one of the

oldest of the gods, born from Chaos and personifying creative power and harmony. In most legends he was the son of Aphrodite and Ares and was represented as a winged youth armed with bow and arrows. In Greek poetry Eros was often a willful and unsympathetic god, carelessly dispensing the frenzies and agonies of love. At Thespieae and at Athens he was worshiped as a god of fertility. In Hellenistic and Roman myth, he was represented as a naked, winged child, the son and companion of Venus. To the Romans he was Cupid, or Amor. Eros was sometimes attended by his brother, Anteros, who was said to be the avenger of unrequited love or the opposer of love. Cupid, according to Greek mythology, married Psyche the goddess of the soul . So this month we have these two conflicting traditions concerning Love.

In contrast to this pagan god tradition, you have the Christian tradition of Valentine who was imprisoned for his Christian faith, and just before he was martyred left a letter to the jailers daughter which ended with his signature "your Valentine.."

There certainly is no problem expressing our love to each other. But of course the world is more concerned for fleshly lust and passion than what the Bible says about love.

So this month we have these two conflicting traditions concerning love.

Nevertheless, I thought it a good time to review what the Bible says about Biblical love and to contrast it with what the world calls love since all week you will be reminded of the subject by the world. And I thought it good to let the world drive home my message all week into your heart and life.

Every time you see a silly valentines commercial on TV think of this message.

**THERE IS A LOVE THAT THE WORLD HAS AND IT IS WRAPPED AROUND THREE VICES.**

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

I John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

All that the world has, the love of the world is wrapped up in  
**THESE THREE VICES.**

The lust of the flesh.

The lost of the eyes.

The pride of life.

This Valentines Day, when the world speaks of love, that is what their love entails.

## **I. THE LUST OF THE FLESH.**

**LUST.** The word generally means a strong desire that usually is unlawful and inordinate. A forbidden desire or the flesh. Usually it involves a inordinate desire for some device to please the flesh apart from the provisions made in God's Word.

Lust, in the area of sex, drink, eating, etc. is to go beyond the boundaries given by God's word, to fulfil these desires we label lust.

Everything that we love in the flesh will perish. The passions of the flesh will fade away. The World Magnifies the Flesh.

ALL THAT IS OF THE FLESH involves eating, drinking, immorality, sensuality.

INTERESTING TO NOTE.

The first sin involved eating what was forbidden, and so it is to this day when we feed the flesh we go into self destruct mode.

Why do we still seek to feed our flesh things that will kill us?

Drugs, alcohol, even gluttony, cigarettes. All these stimulants and drugs that give us sensual pleasure.

What is it about things that are forbidden in the flesh that our sinful natures are drawn towards?

When I was young and in high school, we have a designated area for smoking so students would not smoke in the bathrooms. Did this help? No it didn't. There was something more exciting about smoking where it was forbidden.

The power of lust is the power of the forbidden. This is the power behind the gay and transgender movements. However I have news for you, now that these lifestyles are accepted men will go on to the next forbidden sexual activity and mark my words that will probably be to make pedophilia acceptable. This is already happening in California. The age of sexual consent was dropped from age 18 to age 14 and now includes homosexual acts for children as young as 14.

THIS IS THE POWER OF LUST. OUR SINFUL NATURE. TO SEEK TO DO WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

So it is in the area of what we put in our bodies. Drink, drugs, food. So it is in the area of sexual appetites.

If a man has a wife why does he seek a relationship apart from wife?

If a woman has a husband why does she seek a man outside her husband?  
It is because of lust, which is derived from the power of the forbidden.

## **IT IS THAT THING CALLED THE LUST OF THE FLESH. THE FORBIDDEN.**

We had a roadie that traveled with us when I was in the rock and roll world. He would go into a McDonalds and look at the girl behind the counter and say, "I think I love you..." I wanted to puke on the spot. He didn't love her, he lusted for her. But if he said, I lust after you, do you think that would work?

For the world, Valentines Day is Cupid Day.  
Cupid was the heathen god of lust, really a demon.

## **THE LOVE OF THE WORLD INVOLVES THE LUST OF THE FLESH.**

Lust is not Biblical love, it is the opposite. Lust is seeking to gratify fleshly appetites with that which is forbidden.

## **II. ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD INVOLVES THE LUST OF THE EYES.**

Most of marketing today involves the appeal of the eyes.  
We lust often with the eye.

***Matthew 6:22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.***

***Matthew 6:23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!***

The greatest portal to our being is our eyes.

WE SEE BEFORE WE DESIRE. WE OFTEN MUST LOOK.

So some things often need to be right in front of us before we desire them.

Jesus said an interesting thing in Matt. 6. He said, the light of the body is the eye. If your eye is single, your body will be filled with light.

If your eye is evil it will be filled with darkness.

God's way is often referred to as a narrow way, which is a single way.

NARROW IS THE WAY TO LEADS TO LIFE.

Evil is often referred to as a crooked way.  
Broad is the way that leads to destruction.

A train is safe as long as it follows the narrow way of the tracks.  
When it gets off track it is on the way to destruction.

If your eye wanders from the straight path that God has set for you,  
then you will desire things that are evil.  
With a desire to do evil that will lead you into evil.

You are a slave to your desires and your desires are fed by what you allow yourself to look at.

Every now and then it is time to clean house. And the best way to start cleaning it is to throw out the garbage.

**GARBAGE IN AND YOUR LIFE WILL BE CLUTTERED WITH EVIL.**

Here is why our country is on the road to destruction.

The world takes all the good looking eye appealing things and uses them to promote their agenda which is usually wrapped up in sin.

Satan used the serpent:

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

The serpent was originally a beautiful and subtle creature. Sin turned it into what repels us today, a venomous odious creature that most people are repelled by.

So the media is destroying us.

Today, the media does more to determine who our next president will be, more than anything else.

A candidate must look the part. It doesn't matter what he stands for.  
He just has to look good. A majority of people do not hear what the candidate is saying. They are more concerned about how he says it. It's all about how someone looks and how they talk.

**III. THE THIRD ASPECT OF WHAT THE WORLD'S LOVE REVOLVES AROUND IS WHAT THE BIBLE CALLS THE PRIDE OF LIFE.**

Pride is really having an inflated opinion of self.

Pride is really the vice of thinking more highly of self than you should.

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man .....

Men today are proud to their own destruction.

THE WORLD EXALTS THE PROUD.

Malachi 3:15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

**1. WHAT HAPPENS TO THE PROUD IS THAT THEY EXERT THEMSELVES TO THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION.**

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

What is pride? Pride is self exaltation.

Pride is thinking more highly of yourself than you should.

Pride is exalting your thoughts above God's Word.

Pride is doing it your way and not God's way.

Pride is what leads to destruction.

Proverbs 16:18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 16:19 Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

When you think you are able to do more and think you are greater than you really are. In the end this pride will lead to your destruction and downfall.

I think that the greatest manifestation of pride in the world today is this idea of climate control. It is a grand fantasy beyond comprehension.

That mankind really thinks that they are in control of global warming is the grand display of pride against their creator. Do we really think we can control such a large global effect on our planet? If we set up an agency called gravity control what would people say?

The truth is that this planet is experiencing decay in many ways. One of the easiest to understand is the magnetic pull of the earth and even it's rotation.

The earth itself is slowing down and it's spin changes.

If the government were to forbid all jumping up and down to stop the earth from slowing down everyone would laugh. Yet we think we can control climate change by everyone buying electric cars.

The earth's magnetic field is in decay. No one talks a lot about this. This has more effect on the ozone than CO2 emissions. This factor cannot be controlled by men.

### Magnetic Evidence of a Young Earth.

The known decay in the earth's magnetic field and the inexorable depletion of its energy clearly point to an imminent and inevitable end of the earth's magnetic field. A Department of Commerce publication lists evaluations of the strength of the earth's dipole magnet (its main magnet) since Karl Gauss made the first evaluation in the 1830's. It states that the rate of decrease is about 5% per hundred years. It then states that if the decay continues the magnetic field will "vanish in A.D. 3391."

This decay has some harmful environmental effects. The earth's magnetic field extends into the space around the earth. This provides a protective shield against cosmic rays and solar wind. The half-life of this decaying magnetic field is 1400 years (meaning that every 1400 years its strength is cut in half). The field strength is now only about one third as strong as it was at the time of Christ. More harmful radiation is penetrating down to the surface of the earth. This is an irreversible degradation of our environment.

Horace Lamb predicted this decay in an 1883 theoretical paper on the source of the earth's magnetic field. Looking backward in time, in the light of his theory and the present known decay rate, and assuming the maximum plausible initial strength, puts an age limit on the earth's magnet of only a few thousand years.

Now should congress convene and set up an agency to prevent the magnetic decay of the planet? Saying if we do not do something mankind cannot survive another 1000 years? So here is what we need to do. Let us outlaw everything that will slow down the magnetic field. You would laugh at them. Who can control this but God himself?

Yet our leaders propose we can stop global warming and everybody like zombies bow to our scientific gurus.

So we set up agencies to our own destruction.

Right now Russia is flexing its muscles because they know we are weak. Why are we weak? It is because of our wacky climate change laws that have closed down oil and gas pipe lines. Our president, to keep gas prices down, has tapped into our military oil reserves and now we have strapped our military. There are shortages, all because of foolish efforts to deal with Covid in ways that make no sense at all.

The same liberal crowd that supposedly is for the poor are the same people that make these government agencies that are destroying the poor.

Now, in our pride we think we can govern ourselves apart from God and His law and Word. So we make laws that are going to destroy us. Environmental laws that hinder our economy. Moral laws that bring the judgment of God on a wicked nation.

ELECTRICITY IS GOING UP. WHY? BECAUSE ENVIRONMENTAL WAKOS ARE AFRAID OF BURNING COAL.

A farmer was telling me he can no longer kill a sick cow in the barn. He has to go through the expense of moving the cow outside the barn to shot it. Why? Animal rights.

I wanted to sub-divide my property give a piece of land to kids. DEP comes along and says can't do it so the government is paying people to hold back the economy.

Liberals now see to it that every woman has access to free birth control. Since when is it the government's job to provide free birth control? Reasoning is, it is cheaper to provide birth control than to abort unwanted babies. That is the problem. We look at babies as a curse.

Is a nation made strong by more babies being born or less babies being born?

Again this is the reasoning that we come up with when we try to govern ourselves apart from the law of God!

Let me suggest to you that mankind thinks more highly of himself than he should. PRIDE is inflated opinion of our knowledge and ideas.

Look, God never made this planet to last forever. It is a temporary home and someday God is going to destroy it.

II Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

II Peter 3:11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

II Peter 3:12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

II Peter 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

**2. THIS WORLD IS AN EXAMPLE OF TRYING GOVERN OURSELVES APART FROM GOD. THIS IS THE ULTIMATE IN PRIDE AND ARROGANCE.**

Ezekiel 28:15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

Ezekiel 28:16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezekiel 28:17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

Isaiah 14:13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

Isaiah 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Isaiah 14:15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

PRIDE OF LIFE IS THINKING YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU DO.

THE DEVIL THOUGHT HE COULD GOVERN THINGS BETTER THAN GOD.

Mankind joined his rebellion and now we have a world for the greater part that is being run without God and we wonder why it is a mess.

Sin come into this world because mankind thought they could decide for themselves what is good and evil, right or wrong.

Problem is, no man is wise enough to see the repercussions of their decisions when they decide for themselves these things.

Death is a by-product of sin.

Every heartache and thing that brings destruction to us came because men thought they could get along fine without God.

The restraints that God gives us are for our own good.

ONLY GOD CAN SEE THE BIG PICTURE AND IS WISE ENOUGH TO GOVERN OUR LIVES.

The great depression came because our nation, during the roaring twenties, was unrestrained. Tilled every inch of the great plains. And then through a series of droughts there was not enough untilled ground to restrain the country from the massive dust storms that plagued our nation. This led to a domino effect of financial collapses that destroyed our economy.

THE ECONOMIC WOES WE FACE TODAY CAME ABOUT BECAUSE OF UNRESTRAINED BANK LOANS GIVEN TO PEOPLE THAT COULD NOT AFFORD THEM!! AGAIN IT WAS ALL ABOUT GREED, PRIDE, ARROGANCE, AND A NATION THAT WILL NOT BE RESTRAINED BY MORAL STANDARDS AND GOD.

Pride comes before a fall.

Nazi Germany voted in Hitler because they were proud and he provided a vehicle to transport their pride to a higher level.

ALL THE LOVE OF THE WORD. ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD.

LUST OF THE FLESH.  
LUST OF THE EYES.  
PRIDE OF LIFE.

This is in contrast to the Biblical love that the story of Valentine offered this ungodly world.

#### ***IV. IN CONTRAST TO THIS IS THE LOVE THE CHRIST OFFERS US.***

I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

I John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

I John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Apart from God and His love we do not know how to love.

God is love. God is omniscient, we cannot be omniscient like God but we can love like God.

God is omnipresent. We cannot be omnipresent like God but we can love like God loved.

God is omnipotent. We cannot be omnipotent like God but we can love as God loved.

This is why Jesus said, the greatest command for us is to love.

Paul the Apostle wrote the greatest characteristic of Christ is His love.

Unless you know Christ you cannot exhibit a true godly love.

Unless you are born again you cannot love.

He provided an example of how to love.

He provided what we needed apart from our worldly prejudices.

He defeated the power of sin and death on the cross. Gave victory.  
He gives us new life, a new spirit.

Now we can love as He loved.  
He breaks the bounds of sin and death in our lives.  
He changes our desires and our heart.  
He gives us a new spirit and a new mind.  
He breaks the shackles of sin in our hearts and minds.

The only way this happens is by coming to Him in salvation.  
We love Him because He first loved us and gave Himself for us.

### **CONSIDER THE LOVE THAT CHRIST HAS FOR US.**

There is no greater love that a person can show than to sacrifice their lives for another.  
And this is the love that Jesus showed us.

There are some who would do so for those they love.  
Years ago I met a man who was selling a truck. His name was Mark Keene. I didn't buy the truck from him but I remember him.

Then a few years back it was this month February 2009, I read in the newspapers, that he died rescuing a young girl from drowning.

His stepson went into an icy pond in their front yard because his girlfriend's child fell into the pond. He jumped in and held up the young girl while Mr. Keene ran to get a ladder to straddle the ice and rescued them both.

He succeeded in rescuing the child and the mother but his stepson drowned and then he had a heart attack and drowned.

We are amazed at such stories of heroism.  
And often we will see people doing such feats for those they love.

YET THINK OF THIS.

JESUS DIED FOR US WHEN WE WERE HIS ENEMIES.  
AS SINNERS WE WERE RUNNING FROM GOD.  
AS SINNERS WE WERE AT ENMITY WITH GOD.

Romans 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.  
Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

There is no greater love than this.

## ***EVENING MESSAGE***

Two conflicting traditions of why we have a Valentines Day.

There was the pagan feast that was held about the same time of the year, which was around the 15th of February. Then there is the Christian tradition.

So there is a pagan worldly love. And there is an Agape love. Let me give you an account of both traditions:

### ***The Pagan Tradition:***

Around the time of February the Romans celebrated their Paganistic traditions and customs that are intermingled with our traditions.

Cupid was the chubby little son of one of the jealous gods who was jealous over the beauty of a mortal by the name of Psyche.

February was the last month of the Roman Calendar and was the month that the Festival of Lupercalia was celebrated.

This was the feast of marriage and through pagan tradition couples were paired off for the year. This was done with the superstition that spring was the time of the mating of birds: and so too in the pagan tradition of humans mating.

This celebration was tied in with the Pagan gods of Pan, the Marriage of the goddess Heras and Zeus.

Part of the Pagan Roman festival of Lupercalia was the putting of girl's names in a box and letting the boys draw them out. These couples were supposedly paired off for the whole year. A similar practice was began in the fourteenth century. A sweetheart was chosen for a day by lot. This was done to correspond with the belief that the springtime mating of birds took place in the month of Feb.

So the pagan tradition was simply a tradition of romance and sexual attraction, based on the heathen god Cupid.

### **According to church tradition**

About the year 270 A.D. the Roman Emperor was imprisoning Christians for not worshipping the Roman gods. During this persecution Valentine was arrested. Some say he was arrested because he was performing Christian marriages, but others say it was for helping Christians escape prison.

During the trial they asked Valentine what he thought of the Roman gods Jupiter and Mercury. Of course Valentine said they were false gods and that the God that Jesus

called Father was the only true God. So the Romans threw him in prison for insulting the gods.

While in prison Valentine continued to minister. He witnessed to the guards. One of the guards was a good man who had adopted a blind girl. He asked Valentine if his God could help his daughter. Valentine prayed and the girl was given her sight. The guard and his whole family, 46 people, believed in Jesus and were baptized. Because these people had come to know Jesus, Valentine praised God right there in his prison cell. When the Emperor Claudius II heard about this he was furious that Valentine was still making converts even in prison, so he had Valentine beheaded.

Just before Valentine was beheaded his only comfort and friend was the little blind girl who would bring him food.

On the eve of his execution Valentine wrote a farewell message to the little blind girl and signed it "From your Valentine." His execution was carried out Feb. 14th 269 A.D. in Rome. According to legend a pink almond tree, a symbol of friendship and affection, shared each anniversary of his death, which marked what became known as Valentines Day.

Valentine knew that he might get caught in his Christian activities. He knew that if he told the court the truth about the Roman gods that he would be thrown in prison. And he knew that if he continued to witness of Christ in the prison he would make his captors angry. But he continued, because he loved the Lord and his fellow humans. He was willing to risk his life to free the prisoners and spread the good news of Jesus Christ to those who needed to hear it.

The pattern of two traditions, pagan and Christian, surround almost every holiday you can think of. This is true of Christmas, Easter, and so many more. But consider the application to this day that we call Valentines Day.

### ***NOW CONSIDER THE APPLICATION OF THESE TWO TRADITIONS:***

#### ***I. THE PAGAN LOVE IS SELF GRATIFYING AND SENSUAL LOVE.***

Cupid love.

It is a love built around lust and self gratification outside of the marriage contract and the Lord. Such love will not last and cannot last.

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

I John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Years ago I was listening to a talk show. The host was a counselor, psychologist giving her listeners advice. A woman called in about her husband who was suffering from Alzheimer disease. She was in her late 40's and he was about 60 years of age. The host said to her, "You're young, you may want to seek legal counsel to go on with your life.. " In other words, what her advice was, was to let him die and move on with her life, seek a divorce and find someone else. This is the advice of the world. It is self centered. There is no call to sacrifice for others.

Most young people are attracted to each other on the basis of this type of worldly love. So when the attraction is gone so is the love gone.

Days of sensualism and lust. This is what happened in the days of Noah that brought the destruction of the flood.

Genesis 6:1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

Genesis 6:2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

## ***II. GREATEST VIRTUE OF LOVE IS THE WILLINGNESS TO SACRIFICE FOR THE ONE LOVED.***

The tradition of the martyr Valentine was a symbol of this sacrificial love. He was a man who gave his life for others and gave his life in witness for our Lord. This is a worthy thing to celebrate.

Yet during all seasons, it is up to you which you will follow.

For the most part people still follow the Pagan tradition. Cupid seems to prevail.

But in the end the spirit of Valentine will endure.

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

I John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

I John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

**III. THE NATURAL MAN WITHOUT THE SPIRIT OF GOD CANNOT LOVE LIKE CHRIST LOVED. So those who are without Christ continue in the Pagan traditions of Rome.**

When the Martyr Valentine signed his last letter YOUR VALENTINE, his expression of love was the same as Christ's.

He was saying even to death I will love the Lord and love the brethren.

The only way we can have this kind of love is by having Christ in our hearts and being born again.

I John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

I John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

I John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

As we gather this Wednesday the 16th at our Valentines Banquet let us honour the true source of love, Jesus Christ. There is nothing wrong with Romantic love as long as it is within the confines of the marriage covenant. But for the most part the Bible talks about a sacrificial love that God's people should have for each other.

**WE LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US.**

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

I John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

What better way to celebrate Valentines day than to go to Church and worship our Lord who gave His life for us. That is what we are going to do this Wednesday. It was because of that love that men such as Valentine gave their lives.

Let us love our Lord because He first loved us.

Characteristics of biblical love are found in A Cor. 13, good to review them.

I Corinthians 13:4  
Charity suffereth long,

and is kind;

charity envieth not;

charity vaunteth not itself,

is not puffed up,

I Corinthians 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly,

seeketh not her own,

is not easily provoked,

thinketh no evil;

I Corinthians 13:6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity,

but rejoiceth in the truth;

I Corinthians 13:7 Beareth all things,

believeth all things,

hopeth all things,

endureth all things.

I Corinthians 13:8 Charity never faileth:

but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

I Corinthians 13:9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

I Corinthians 13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

I Corinthians 13:13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

We love Him because He first loved us. Consider the kind of love He had for us.

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for

the ungodly.

Romans 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

The story of Mark Keene and his stepson.

**Two heroes honored posthumously  
with prestigious award.**

A Dalton man and his stepson who died while helping to save a girl from drowning in a frozen North Abington Twp. pond last year have been awarded the Carnegie Medal, a prestigious award for heroism.

Mark Keene, 55, and Willard "Billy" VanFleet Jr., 36, were among 23 people in the United States and Canada to receive the medals Thursday from the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, which honors people who risk their lives "to an extraordinary degree" while saving the lives of others. The men were two of three honorees named Thursday who died during their heroic acts.

Mr. VanFleet and Mr. Keene died Feb. 21, 2009, while they were rescuing Mr. VanFleet's girlfriend and her daughter from a pond on Mr. Keene's property, where the 5-year-old girl had fallen through the ice.

Mr. VanFleet jumped into the water and held the girl up as her mother, who tried to reach her, also broke through the ice. Mr. Keene ran to call 911, then grabbed a ladder to lay across the ice when he collapsed with a fatal heart attack.

Both the mother and daughter were rescued by emergency responders. Mr. VanFleet drowned.

Bill White, a 30-year friend of both men who eulogized them at their memorial service, said he is thrilled they were given the award, however bittersweet.

"So often people just aren't recognized for the heroism that they exhibit in very dire circumstances," he said. "They came through when it was needed."

Mr. VanFleet and Mr. Keene are among 9,372 people who have been honored with the Carnegie Medal since the Pittsburgh-based fund was established in 1904 by Andrew Carnegie for those he called the "heroes of civilization."

Each of the heroes or their next of kin will also receive a financial grant.

Mr. White said the men made helping people a part of their everyday lives, not just their last day.

"This was just a part of the way they lived," he said.

