

The Gables – Valentine’s Day

Opening Story:

History of Valentine’s Day: Provided by Dennis Deluzio, Music Director for WIHS Radio, Middletown, Connecticut.

- The word "love" appears 310 times in the King James Bible, 348 times in the New American Standard Bible, 551 times in the New International Version and 538 times in the New Revised Standard Version.
- There is no single correct way to translate the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek Bible manuscripts into English. The grammar, structure, and style of those languages are very different from English, and a literal word-for-word translation is not possible. Therefore, the number of times a particular word appears is usually different for each version of the Bible.
- Let's take a quick look at 3 Greek words for love found in the Bible.
 1. Phileo - This love speaks of affection, fondness, or liking. But it can collapse under stress. Often defined as “brotherly love.”
 2. Agape - This love keeps on loving even when the loved one is unresponsive, unkind, unlovable, and unworthy. It is unconditional love. It is God's love.
 3. Eros - Refers to sexual, erotic love or desire.
- On February 14 around the year 270A.D., Valentine, a holy priest in Rome in the days of Emperor Claudius II, was executed. Under the rule of Claudius the Cruel, Rome was involved in many unpopular and bloody campaigns. The emperor had to maintain a strong army, but was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. Claudius believed that Roman men were unwilling to join the army because of their strong attachment to their wives and families.
- To get rid of the problem, Claudius banned all marriages and engagements in Rome. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine’s actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death. Valentine was arrested and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. The sentence was carried out on February 14, on or about the year 270. Legend also has it that while in jail, St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer’s daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it “From Your Valentine.”

Here are some fast facts about the Valentine's Day holiday as of 2/14/2017:

(<http://abcnews.go.com/Lifestyle/valentines-day-numbers-money-spent-flowers-candy-cards/story?id=45480956>):

- Total spending for the holiday [on flowers, candy and cards] is expected to top \$18.2 billion, according to the National Retail Federation. That's an average of \$136.57 per person.

The Gables – Valentine’s Day

Dialog between Rick & Donna (Jokes are taken from *101 Valentine Jokes*, by Pat Brigandi):

Rick: Hey Donna, isn’t that something: \$18 billion spent during the Valentine’s Day holiday.

Donna: Well, you can never do enough for your wife, right dear? ... Did you know you’re never supposed to eat chocolate on an empty stomach?

Rick: No, I didn’t know that.

Donna: Yeah. You’re supposed to eat it on a plate.

Rick: [Shakes his head] Donna, this is a Bible study! You’re not supposed to joking around like that.

Donna: Oh, that’s okay Rick. Lighten up... Hey, I just noticed. You look very handsome tonight. You have a face like a saint.

Rick: I do? That’s so nice of you to say. Did you mean to say I have a face like St. Valentine?

Donna: No. Like a St. Bernard.

Rick: [Jaw drops] Ouch!

Well, Valentine’s Day is about more than chocolates, cards and flowers, isn’t it?

Donna: It is? I like getting chocolates, cards and flowers.

Rick: It’s really about love.

Donna: Love? Oh yeah, that’s right. I forgot about that. I was more focused on all the stuff I was going to get.

Rick: What is one of the most recognized chapters in the Bible about love?

Donna: [Pausing]

Rick: OK, I’ll give you a hint. It was read at our wedding, remember?

Donna: Oh, yes: 1 Corinthians 13.

Rick: That’s correct. Let me read it now:

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all

The Gables – Valentine’s Day

knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Rick: What is love, Donna?

Donna: Hmm. That’s an interesting question, Rick. I’ll have to think about it for a minute ... I think love is caring more about another person than you care about yourself.

Rick: [Nodding] Wow! That’s a great definition, Donna. Did you know God is love?

Donna: He is?

Rick: Yes. It says so in 1 John 4:8.

Donna: Cool! Sometimes you do things for others that you don’t really want to do, but you do it anyway because you love them. Like when you go shopping with me. I know you don’t like shopping, but you do it anyway – once in a while – because you love me.

Rick: Right. It’s also like Jesus dying on the cross for our sins. He didn’t want to be flogged so badly he couldn’t be recognized. He didn’t want to die an agonizing death on the cross for our sins, but he did it anyway because he loved us, and because he wanted to be obedient to His Father.

Donna: Yes. That’s an amazing love.

Rick: John 3:16 says: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Donna: Yes, that’s true.

The Gables – Valentine’s Day

Rick: Think about what it must have been like for God the Father and God the Holy Spirit to watch God the Son (Jesus) suffer and die on the cross. It must have been terrible.

Donna: Yes; and for all the angels who had to watch too. God must love us very much to have done that for us.

Rick: Yes, He does. Since God loves us so much, you know he’ll take care of us. We don’t have to worry when things may go wrong in life. God is in control. We can have confidence that God will take care of us.

- Proverbs 3:25 says, “Have no fear of sudden disaster, or the fear that overtakes the wicked.”
- Nahum 1:7 says, “The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him...”
- Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on our own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”
- 1 Peter 5:7 says, “Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”
- In Matthew 10:29-31 Jesus says, “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”

Donna: Rick?

Rick: Yes, Donna.

Donna: You don’t have to get me a Valentine’s Day Card this year, okay?

Rick: I don’t think so! Remember the time I didn’t get a present for you? It was either your birthday or Valentine’s Day; I don’t remember which. I remember you told me you didn’t want me to get anything for you and I foolishly listened to you ... Your mother called me the next day and scolded me for not getting you a present.

Donna: Well, don’t spend a lot of money, okay.

Rick: Okay. So, what is the real meaning Valentine’s Day? Is it just about getting chocolates and cards and flowers? Or, is it something more?

Donna: It’s about much more. It’s about love.

Rick:

That’s right, Donna.

The Gables – Valentine’s Day

[Turning to the audience] We hope you all have a Happy Valentine’s Day, and as that day approaches, you think not only about those you love, and those who love you, but also about how much God loves you.