

1 In Search of True Love

- Who was Saint Valentine?

2 Who was Saint Valentine?

- Valentine was a Christian pastor in Rome during the third century—a time of great persecutions.
- The Emperor Claudius II wanted to have a big army, so he outlawed all marriages.
- Valentine seeing this as unjust, ignored the Emperor's edict and performed secret marriages for Christians.
- However, Valentine was discovered, arrested, and thrown into prison.

3 Who was Saint Valentine?

- Many young people came to the jail to visit Valentine.
- One of these young people was the adopted blind daughter of the prison guard.
- Through the encouragement of the prison guard Valentine prayed for her and she was healed from her blindness.
- The whole jailer's family was converted (46).
- When the Emperor heard about all of this he was furious and condemned Valentine to death.

4 Who was Saint Valentine?

- On the day Valentine died, he left his friend a little note thanking her for her friendship and loyalty.
- He signed it, "Love from your Valentine."
- So then when we give each other Valentine Cards, we are commemorating a special bond between dear friends.

5 Feast of Lupercalia

- In ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honor Juno—the Queen of the Roman Gods and Goddesses.
- The Romans also knew her as the Goddess of women and marriage.
- The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia.

6 Feast of Lupercalia

- In Roman culture, unmarried women lived separated from men.
- However, on the eve of the festival of Lupercalia the names of Roman maidens were written on slips of paper and placed into jars.
- Single Roman men would reach into the jar for their date for the duration of the festival.
- During this festival two young boys would go around the city striking women with a februa—an instrument of purification for good luck, and fertility.

7 Valentine's Day

- Lupercalia, with its lover lottery, had no place in the new Christian order.
- In the year 496 AD, Pope Gelasius did away with the festival of Lupercalia, citing that it was pagan and immoral.

- He chose Valentine as the patron saint of lovers, who would be honored at the new festival on the 14th of every February.

8 **What about Cupid?**

- Cupid was the god of love in Roman mythology.
- The name Cupid means “desire or passion,” and was also known by the name Amor (love).
- According to the legend, someone to get shot by one of Cupid’s arrows would be filled with uncontrollable passion.
- Cupid’s counterpart in Greek mythology was “Eros.”

9 **What is Love?**

- The English language has more words in its vocabulary than any other language in the world.
- However, it only has one word for love.
- So then, we can often get confused to what love is because it can be used in several different ways.
- I love cookies and I love my wife, but I don’t love them in the same way.

10 **What is Love?**

- This weekend there is a movie that will be making its premiere.
- Its not about winters in Kentucky, but something quite different.
- It’s suppose to be a celebration of love and romance, but if the truth be known, it is a perversion of love, which is disgusting and in my opinion evil.
- So to help understand the meaning of true love, I would like for us to look at how the Bible defines love and what it looks like when it’s put in action.

11 **Three Types of Love**

- The New Testament was written in Greek and the Greeks had at least three different ways on how love was defined.
- Eros - (Ἔρως *érōs*) is passionate love, which is connected to physical attraction and includes desire and longing.
 - Eros was the word often used to express sensual love or the feelings of arousal that are shared between people who are physically attracted to one another.
 - By New Testament times, this word had become so debased by the culture that it is not used even once in the entire New Testament.

12 **Eros**

- This is not to denigrate eros as sinful or impure.
- Sensual love is not inherently unclean or evil.

- Rather, it is the gift of God to married couples to express their love for one another, strengthen the bond between them, and ensure the survival of the human race.
- The Bible devotes one whole book to the blessings of sensual, love—Song of Solomon.

13 Eros

- However, a long-term relationship based solely on eros is doomed to failure.
- The “thrill” of sensual love wears off quickly unless there are some philia love and agapé love to go along with it.

14 Philia

- The second Greek word for “love” is philia, which forms part of the words philosophy (“love of wisdom”) and philanthropy (“love of fellow man”).
- This word speaks of the warm affection shared between friends.
- Whereas eros is more closely associated with the libido, philia is associated with the heart.
- Philia is usually motivated by practical reasons; what is best for both parties.

15 Philia

- However, philia is not felt between people who are at enmity with one another.
- We can feel philia toward friends and family, but not toward people whom we dislike or hate.
- This is why Jesus said, “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even ‘sinners’ love those who love them.” (Luke 6:32 NIV)

16 Agapé

- Different from all of these is the third Greek word for “love,” agapé, typically defined as the “self-sacrificing love.”
- This is the love that moves people into action and looks out for the well-being of others, no matter the personal cost.
- Biblically speaking, agapé is the love God showed to His people in sending His Son, Jesus, to die for their sins.
- It is the love that focuses on the will, not the emotions, experience, or libido.

17 Agapé

- This is also the love that Jesus commands His disciples to show toward their enemies (Luke 6:35).
- But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:35–36 NIV)

18 Agapé

- In other words, agape love is charitable love and ultimately is concerned for the well-being of other.

- As the Apostle Paul said so brilliantly, Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, 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. (1 Cor 13:4–7 NIV)

19 Agapé

- But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom 5:8 NIV)
- The word here for love is agapé. Not eros or even philia.
- God’s love isn’t all sentimental, but was tangible in that He sent his Son to pay for our sins, so that we would no longer be under a curse.
- Through repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ, we are now new creatures —enabled and empowered to share agapé love in all our relationships.

20 Agapé

- “A new command I give you: Love (agape) one another. As I have loved (agaped) you, so you must love (agape) one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love (agape) one another.” (John 13:34–35 NIV)
- The sign of a disciple of Christ is not how they treat their friends, those they find are cool, but what they do with those who are unloveable or those in whom they are at odds with.
- There will be times when eros love will fail us. There will be times when philia love will fail us.
- But there will never be a time when true love fails us.
- As the Apostle Paul says, Love (agapé) never fails. (1 Cor 13:8 NIV)