

*And now abide* **FAITH, HOPE, LOVE,**  
*these three; but the greatest of these is*

**LOVE**

-1 Corinthians 13:13



# Who is St. Valentine?

Today we exchange cards expressing love or appreciation for one another.

According to tradition and Legend, on this day, February 14, 269 AD, a young man named Valentine was executed in Rome for his faith.

The history of Valentine's Day is shrouded in mystery. That means that this is not a Biblical account but a historical story sent down from past generations. But who was this Valentine?

These are the 3 most popular versions concerning the person of Valentine. Valentine was a Christian living near Rome in about the year 270 A.D. At that time the Roman Emperor Claudius was imprisoning Christians for not worshipping the Roman gods, while others write that he was arrested because he was performing forbidden Christian marriages, and for helping Christians escape Roman torture or imprisonment.

While in prison Valentine continued to minister. He shared his Christian faith with 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, came to faith in Christianity as a result. When the emperor heard about this he was furious that Valentine was still making converts even in prison, so he had Valentine beheaded. On the day of his execution he left her a note signed "Your Valentine" an expression that is still in use today.

Valentine greetings were popular as far back as the Middle Ages, in England and France though written Valentine's didn't begin to appear until after 1400.



Americans probably began exchanging hand-made valentines in the early 1700's. In the 1840's, Esther A. Howland began selling the first mass-produced valentines in America. Howland, known as the "Mother of the

Valentine," made elaborate creations with real lace, ribbons and colorful pictures known as "scrap." (We get the word scrapbook from this)



The rise of Internet popularity at the turn of the millennium is creating new traditions. Millions of people use, every year, digital means of creating and sending Valentine's Day greeting messages such as e-cards, love coupons or printable greeting cards.

There are rules for using the word Love. If we don't know them it can get confusing. Obviously I Love my Enchiladas, I love my Mom, I love my friends and I Love my God all have different meanings. Why? Because there are 4 different meanings to the word Love. Here's the Greek definition as an Example:

♥ **Phileo** - Like or Brotherly Love

♥ **Storge** - Family Love

♥ **Eros** - Romantic Love

♥ **Agape** - Self-sacrificing Love

Imagine yourself taking your wife to a romantic spot in Collins Garden Park (not in the HEB parking lot) telling your wife this Valentine's Day that you Love her in the same way you Love your truck. **Now imagine yourself in an ambulance.** While we would never do that there are times that we come very close to blurring the lines between all the Loves described. The greatest decision we can ever make in our lives pertains to the Love we have toward God. The Love for God cannot be on the same level that we love Elvis, enchiladas, our pet, our family, not even ourself. This Love for God must transcend any other love. This love belongs to God and God alone. Without His Love we would not exist today in this world or the world to come. We owe everything to Him. He is our sole provider. We Love God because He first Loved us (1 John 4:19) and The Father proved it. John 3:16 says For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. The Son Jesus willingly gave His life for us to show us His love for you and me. It seems that the healthiest thing we can do is find out what our most important and most valued possession or person is in this world and then define how much separation there is compared to the Love we have for God. Let's send God a "Valentine"!

*Dear Father I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior and ask that you help me have a stronger more intimate relationship with you. You will always be greater than the sum of all my possessions and loved ones here on this earth. I now thank you Lord Jesus for saving me from an eternal separation from God. Thank you for your great love and mercy through your death, burial, and resurrection. Love you Lord.*



## 3 things you can do to encourage/love your neighbor.



### LEAVE A THANK YOU NOTE FOR YOUR MAIL CARRIER

Nobody pays more service visits to your home than your mail carrier. Taking time to thank someone for a job that's all too often thankless is a great way to connect with someone vital to our neighborhood.



### LEAVE AN UPLIFTING NOTE ON YOUR NEIGHBOR'S CAR

When you see a note on a windshield, it's easy to think bad news is looming. But not this time! Give someone a word of encouragement because everyone is going through something challenging in their lives.



### TAKE A NEIGHBOR YOU WANT TO KNOW BETTER TO LUNCH

We're surrounded by opportunities to connect with people. And with every connection we make, we make our communities stronger.



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