TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor / Opening Prayer by: Daniel Balch
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Bobby Rader

#144 O Worship the King
#469 Faith Is the Victory

Scripture Reading by: Joseph Girard
Communion Devotional by: Craig Girard

#382 Why did My Savior Come to Earth
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#300 Praise Him! Praise Him!
Sermon "Living for Christ"
Philippians 1:18-26

#912 Burdens Are Lifted at Calvary
#589 Leaving on the Everlasting Arms
Closing Prayer by: Gus Tristan

Our Small Groups will meet tonight.
Bobby Rader's group will meet at the building at 5:00 p.m.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Feb. 11, 2024

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

How the Lord Sees

As I write this, we are planning to celebrate our Valentine's Banquet this weekend. (By the time you read this, assuming it is the print copy on Sunday morning, it will have already happened.) I am really looking forward to it, as it is yet another one of those things that has not been done since the pandemic that just sort of slipped away when we began to get back to normal; it's a good sign when we revive things like this.

But that reminds us that we celebrate Valentine's Day this week, which has become a fairly significant holiday in this country. In terms of its origins, the way the story is usually told, the is traced back to a Roman priest who was imprisoned during an outbreak of persecution under the Emperor Claudius II in the 3rd century. He ran afoul of the law for performing clandestine weddings for Christians in the army who were forbidden to marry and was consequently sentenced to death. While awaiting execution, he healed the daughter of his jailer. Just prior to his martyrdom—on February 14—he wrote her a letter, signing it as "Your Valentine" in farewell.

It is a lovely story, with just one tiny problem: none of it is true. There were several early Christian martyrs named Valentinus, and more than one came to be connected early on with February 14. In fact, in establishing the feast day in 496, Pope Gelasius I included Valentine among those, "whose names are justly reverenced among men, but whose acts are known only to God"—in other words, already nothing was known about his life. There is no record of such a marriage ban; in a sharp contrast, Claudius II actually encouraged his soldiers to take 2 or 3 wives after defeating the Goths. And there was no association of Valentine with love until Chaucer's day.

Nevertheless, we associate Valentine's Day with love, or what our culture shallowly calls love, at any rate, to the extent that it has become a very significant holiday in this country; there is a reason you started seeing all of those little heart shaped boxes on the shelves in Wal-Mart already a few days before Christmas. According to the estimates published by the National Retail Federation, spending on the holiday in America is expected to be $25.8 billion. That's slightly behind the all-time record of 2020 (again, the effects of the pandemic!), but it is roughly the same as last year and a big bounce back from 2021-22. Average per person spending is expected to be about $185, a number that generally rises year over year in a constant effort at "one-upsmanship" in relationships: making sure flowers go to work where everyone can see them, posing your unique gift just right for that Instagram or Facebook shot, getting a reservation at that exclusive—and expensive—restaurant. It's one more indication that the world around us has a very different view of love than Scripture. Our world is obsessed with the externals, with the outward appearance of love; we could obviously note that in other aspects of society too.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Ricky Lucas had surgery on Thursday.

Gayle Coleman will be having in the future.

Jennifer Stelly, Patti Davis' daughter in law is recovering from surgery..

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Kelly McCain, Wayne Noonkester

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meeting Monday night at 5:30 p.m..

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, Feb. 15th at 8:00 a.m.

Food Bank

We served 134 families on Tuesday, Feb. 6th at our food bank. That equals to 422 individuals. We had 15 volunteers.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

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In contrast, I think of what God says to his man Samuel. *Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart* **(1 Sam 16:7).** This is in the context of anointing a new king of Israel. Saul, the current king, had the right look: he was handsome, a head taller than anyone else, a king straight out of central casting. But the Lord rejected him, because he was unfaithful. Yet here, Samuel almost makes the same mistake with Jesse's oldest son, Eliab: *Surely the Lord's anointed is before me* **(1 Sam 16:6).** Why? Because he looked like a king! Yet God chose a ruddy youth, out watching the sheep in the field: David, a man after God's own heart.

God looks at our hearts. He doesn't care how good looking we are. He isn't impressed with where we went to school or what degrees hang on our walls. He isn't awed by our wealth or our success in our careers. Instead, he's searching to see whether or not we have a heart for him. What does that mean?

For one, our lives need to be built around God. David himself would write, *Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works! Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice! Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!* **(Psalm 105:2-4).** People with a heart for God want to be in God's presence. That means they want to worship him: to sing praises to him, to gather around his table, to tell of his mighty works.

Secondly, we need to build our lives around his Word. Again, let's see what David said: *The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.* **(Psalm 19:8-10)**

Finally, we need to build our lives around God's people. An expert in the Law once asked Jesus what the greatest commandment was. He responded 1) love the Lord your God with all your heart and 2) love your neighbor as yourself. If we are going to love God, we have to learn to love others. And that especially goes for his children, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

We could list other characteristics, but this is a good start. Do you want to be a person after God's heart? Commit yourself fully to the Lord, to his Word, and to his people. If you don't, it doesn't matter how frequent your attendance is in the church assembly or how many Bible verses you share on Facebook. God knows our hearts.

Bryant Perkins