



News and Current Events :: History of Valentines day

History of Valentines day - posted by bible4life (), on: 2019/2/15 18:55

<http://makingsense.proboards.com/thread/304/valentine-friend-lovers>

This is a writing from my friend Rob Case

Editor's Note: It has been a tradition since the establishment of the Making Sense website to restore (in gritty detail) the original meanings of the Holidays we celebrate, as well as articulate the eternal hope that each of them offers for all time. In that spirit, I offer you an expanded version of my Valentines Day piece entitled, "Valentine: Friend of Lovers." Enjoy!

Valentines Day is commonly known as a day when a person focuses on his or her honey. Valentines Day is also widely attributed as being a "Hallmark Holiday," as well as a day in which men "scramble" around to buy their mate last minute flowers or chocolate"s.

In essence, Valentines Day is celebrated as a day set aside in which a person makes a sacrifice of time and money as an expression of their appreciation for their spouse or lover. Valentines Day also has an interesting background behind it, as does all widely celebrated Holidays dating back to the Roman Empire.

Of course with any and every holiday, the story behind it is one of spiritual warfare, persecution, and pressure regarding the allegiance one has to God or to Government. The story of Valentines Day is about taking a stand in the midst of an oppressive government, and placing people's interests first, the way God had intended, while facing intense challenges to encourage and bring about true love, virtue, and sacrifice. Valentines Day is culturally known today as a day of love, yet once you leave this article, you will never again see it in the same way. So let's take a journey, and travel back to the origins of what we know today as Valentines Day.

The Historical Environment of Pagan Rome:

Roman Emperors loved power. They lived for power. Power would bring about untold wealth, leisure, and pride. The Roman Emperors enjoyed widespread authority over its people, and would, on the backs of them, through taxes, erect practically monuments to themselves to "make their marks" in history for all time. An emperor's pride was invested in the monuments they erected for the purpose of establishing and maintaining their legacies. Many Roman Emperors were so prideful that they were convinced that they were gods (falling under the mindset articulated well in Genesis 3:5). Rome was an empire that did not take matters lightly that would empower the individual (i.e. the peasantry) much less treat them as equals. The Roman Empire took seriously to the extreme, any threat of an uprising or revolt. In other words, the empire would diminish any and every threat (whether genuine or perceived) to a possible rebellion, thus securing its own rule. The Roman Empire saw Christianity, which became a growing movement after the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a movement that undermined the strength that the Roman government had over its people. As such, tyrannical Emperors viewed Christianity as a significant threat, as it empowered those empowered by the Holy Spirit to keep their sights set on things above (Colossians 3:2), and focus on the promise of a better country (Hebrews 11:16).

In the late 260's A.D. the Roman Empire was pressured from its outside neighbors regarding borders. The Roman Empire expanded, and felt it needed more soldiers to keep up with both protecting its borders, while keeping an eye on the peasantry (to prevent uprisings) from within. When Roman Emperor Claudius-II took charge, he thought that the Roman Guards were in his eyes getting weak because they were constantly apart from their wives and children, thus causing low morale, and reducing their effectiveness towards their work. Emperor Claudius wanted men to be fully devoted soldiers to the interests of his empire, completely dedicated to protecting it. So, in order to assure the highest job performance from his soldiers, Claudius issued a decree banning marriage.

In defiance of the Emperor's orders, a young minister by the name of Valentine, a man who viewed Claudius' act as unfair, noticed the distress of lovers wanting to marry each other, and joined them together in Holy matrimony secretly, all while preaching the message of Jesus Christ, another offense not taken lightly by the Romans. Valentine was known in the underground as a "friend of lovers," but eventually his defiance of the law caught up to him. When Emperor Claudius learned about these secret marriages, he sent his soldiers to have Valentine arrested, and demanded that he be brought before him. After all, Valentine would be, in the eyes of Emperor Claudius, responsible for weakening his military.

The Legenda Aurea, a record compiled in medieval times, and preserved by the Catholic Church, recalls this meeting. Since this exchange is written in an outdated dialect of the English language, I have with great care, consideration, and deep research, re-written it in script form to fit today's English. If you would like to read the original exchange anyway, in the old English, you can find it posted at www.catholic-forum.com/saints/golden169.htm

And so, Valentine was arrested and brought before Claudius and his council for a trial. Claudius was impressed with Valentine's conviction and loyalty to his God. Claudius, like many Roman Emperors believed that if you broke the law made by an Emperor, including your own law, you break the law of the gods, and Claudius saw himself as a god. Claudius tried to make a deal with Valentine, proposing to remove the charge against him if only he would renounce his faith in Christ, and pledge his soul to the Roman gods. Valentine, set in his convictions did not want to exchange his living faith only to yield to idols, and Valentine told him so. And on top of it, Valentine tried to convert Emperor Claudius to Christianity.

Here's the gist of the exchange (translated in today's English).

Claudius: Does my ears deceive me? Why will you not accept my agreement, worship our gods, and renounce the worthless opinion of your beliefs?

Valentine: If you only knew of the grace of Jesus Christ, you would not be saying what you're saying, but you would deny your idols and worship the one true God.

A council member of the Emperor then asked

Council: What do you say regarding our gods and of their holiness?

Valentine: I say nothing of them, other than that they were mere mortal men, mean, and full of filth and evil.

Claudius: If Jesus Christ is surely God, then why say that you are not speaking the truth?

Valentine: Surely, Jesus Christ is the only true God, and if you believe in him, your soul will be saved, your kingdom will prosper, and he will always give you victory over your enemies.

Claudius: (Claudius turns Valentine over to all that were in the Council) Lords! Romans! Do you hear how wisely and reasonably this man speaks?

Immediately, the jailer of the city replied, "The emperor is deceived and betrayed. How can we carry on the traditions we've been accustomed to holding all this time since this empire began?"

With these words the emperor turned and changed his courage, and Valentine was sentenced to jail and was placed in the hands of General Asterius, the prison keeper. Once placed in the prison, Valentine prayed that those who jailed him would see what they were truly doing. He began ministering to his jailers as well as his fellow prison mates. Asterius felt the hope that was in Valentine, and then thought of his own daughter, who had been blind for two years. While Valentine was in jail, he prayed..

Valentine: Lord Jesus Christ, the very God which is the light of the world, illuminate this jailhouse in such ways that those who dwell in here may know you to be God.

Asterius: I stand in awe that you say that your God is the very light, and nevertheless, if he can make my daughter hear and see, since she has been blind for a while, I shall do what you command me and will then believe in your God.

Knowing full well that his life would be in danger if he so much as associated with this Christian, General Asterius brought his daughter to Valentine. In fact his daughter brought Valentine his food. In so doing, both Valentine and her would talk for hours. In fact, they formed a bond. Both Valentine and the General prayed for the restoration of her sight, and by faith, he placed his hand through the bars of his cell, touched the lids of her closed eyes, and when she opened them again, she could see. Her sight was fully restored. The news of this miraculous event spread, as such news would be very difficult to contain and suppress, yet the news of this miracle eventually reached the ears of Emperor Claudius. When the Emperor learned that Valentine was preaching to people from within the cell (despite his arrest from the first "offense"), he

e was furious, and felt defied. The Emperor then gave the orders for Valentine to be put to death by beheading.

Valentine was scheduled to be executed on February 14, 270 A.D. The night before his execution, he requested a pen and a piece of paper to write a final "goodbye" letter to the General's Daughter. When he finished the letter, he ended with the line, "From your Valentine." On February 14th, he was beaten with clubs and then beheaded.

Later on, the tradition of sending loved ones a "valentine" became widespread. The story of Valentines Day is a story of love, faith, and tremendous courage in the midst of an oppressive and controlling atmosphere. And yet, this account serves as a chronicle of what can occur when one trusts in Christ to deliver them through the turbulent and chaotic times.

And on that note.....
Happy Valentines Day!!!!