

Mark Driscoll: The Real St. Valentine Would Be 'Mortified' at What We Do in His Name

The real Saint Valentine would be "mortified" with the commercialized holiday of love, pastor Mark Driscoll says.

"Sadly, the holiday in his name completely ignores our Christian brother Valentine," Driscoll writes. "As a pastor, he likely would have been mortified at much of what is done in the name of love to commemorate the day his head was chopped off because of his love for Jesus."

The original—or originals, as the Catholic Church recognizes three saints with a derivation of the name Valentine—was a martyr for Christ and for love.

Like other major holidays in early Christianity, some reports indicate the church tried to re-appropriate a heathen holiday as a more godly one.

"Celebrated at the ides of February, or Feb. 15, Lupercalia was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders Romulus and Remus," reports.

Then it gets morbid. continues:

The priests would sacrifice a goat, for fertility, and a dog, for purification. They would then strip the goat's hide into strips, dip them into the sacrificial blood and take to the streets, gently slapping both women and crop fields with the goat hide. Far from being fearful, Roman women welcomed the touch of the hides because it was believed to make them more

fertile in the coming year. Later in the day, according to legend, all the young women in the city would place their names in a big urn. The city's bachelors would each choose a name and become paired for the year with his chosen woman. These matches often ended in marriage.

When the church re-appropriated the holiday in the fifth century, they made it more about romance.

Millennia later, our culture sends hearts and cupids and candy to those we love and claims it done in the name of Valentine.
{eoa}