

Valentine's Day – The Heart of the Matter

It's a day that is filled with ancient mystique and inspiring legends, but at this point in our culture, I'm not sure that the history of **Valentine's Day** really matters. What does indeed matter, is what we do with its legacy, and what it means to every man and woman with a sense of modern tradition and a desire to matter long after the gifts have been forgotten.

By tradition, for women, it may mean **flowers**, **chocolates**, and a fancy card with **loving** words. For men it may mean a functional gift or perhaps a card with words of praise for past heroics. And for both it certainly has the potential of making the heart skip a few beats. Perhaps it's the excitement for a woman who receives a tangible glimpse of **love**, and often enough for the man, it's the elation over having remembered at the very last moment – just before the gift store closes.

But in the highest sense, Valentine's Day means that we all have the opportunity to exhibit our love in a particular way – one that says to the recipient, "I'm thinking of you and I've taken the time to show it." It's a moment when even the most unlikely veterans are provided a fresh start – one that doesn't have to be driven by the pressures of advertising, but instead can be acted upon with a genuine desire to affirm one's love for another. Because the truth is, we all have a built-in desire to matter, which ultimately means that we need intentional **affirmation** far more than last minute trinkets.

Even for those Valentine's cynics who've decided that commercialization has made it a shill; somehow, it still matters, because even when the **gifts** are forsaken, the opportunity to love intentionally cannot be ignored without

consequence. In other words, if not today, then when? If not now, then how will our intention ever really begin?

For the believer, our first and best source of affirmation comes directly from the **Creator** Himself. A giant Valentine's gift, if you will, intended by Him to be received, and by example meant to be given by us to those we love. Below is just one example of His intention to affirm His loved ones. If we can pause long enough to consider and be encouraged by its meaning, we will gain a deeper desire to offer the very same blessing to those we love.

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of **God**," (1 John 3:1). This single verse offers us a peek into God's personality and reveals why He created us and He placed a desire to be affirmed within each of us so that He, in fact, can have the pleasure of loving and affirming His own family. If we are to imitate Him then we must act in the way that He does, do what we see Him doing, and love according to How He does it.

So now that Valentine's Day is upon us once again, perhaps we should add a new spin by taking the opportunity provided us by florists, confectioners and greeting card companies to not only give those things, but to live those things. In other words, let our spirits be as vibrant as any **bouquet**, and as enjoyable to those we love as any sweet confection. And let our words be as satisfying to them as the ones God gave us – the very best **greeting card** on earth.

And let this day be special in a new way – a way that transcends the expectations we've placed upon it – by making it the first day of many where we ambitiously live out God's legacy by sharing it. By all means, give to one another all these fun things too, but don't let go of the boxes, vases or envelopes without looking your loved one in the eyes, and first giving the thing that matters more – in your own words – **blessings**, affirmations, honor and **respect**. By being truly

intentional, you will set the benchmark and begin the passing on your God given heritage – your very own royal legacy.

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