

Raised to Life!
Matthew 18:18-20

This past Friday was Valentine's Day!

This is the day when lovers express their love to one another.

Statically, over 1 BILLION Valentine cards are given on this day.

Valentine's Day ranks second, only to Christmas for the number of cards sent.

No one is certain how the celebration of Valentine's Day began, but the following is the best we know.

Valentine and the Emperor's edict

- ***Valentine was a priest who lived in Rome in 270 AD.***
- ***At that time, Rome had spread its empire across much of the known world.***
- ***As a result, it was very difficult to keep a clear handle on all the empire.***
- ***When Claudius II became emperor, he realized his need for dedicated soldiers.***
- ***Claudius II felt that married men were more emotionally attached to their families, and thus, would not make good soldiers.***
- ***He believed that marriage made the men weak.***
- ***So Claudius II issued an edict forbidding marriage to assure quality soldiers.***
- ***The ban on marriage was a great shock for the Romans, but none dared to voice their protests.***
- ***Bishop Valentine realized the injustice of the decree.***
- ***He saw the trauma of young lovers who gave up all hopes of being united in marriage.***

- ***So Valentine countered the Emperor's edict by secretly joining couples in marriage.***
- ***Valentine soon became known as the "friend of lovers".***
- ***Claudius II soon found out about Valentine's secret marriages and ordered him arrested.***

Valentine and the jailor's daughter

- ***God had healed many people through Bishop Valentine***
- ***While awaiting his sentence in prison, Valentine was approached by his jailor, ASTERIUS.***
- ***Asterius had a blind daughter and requested Valentine to restore her sight.***
- ***Bishop Valentine did pray for her and God miraculously restored her sight.***

Valentine sentenced to death

- ***When Claudius II met Valentine, he was said to have been impressed by the dignity and conviction of him.***
- ***Valentine refused to agree with the emperor regarding the ban on marriage.***
- ***The emperor tried to convert Valentine to the Roman gods, but Valentine flatly refused.***
- ***In fact, Valentine attempted to convert Claudius to Christ.***
- ***This angered Claudius who gave the order of execution of bishop Valentine.***

Valentine's note

- ***A deep friendship had been formed between Valentine and the jailor's daughter.***
- ***She was deeply grieved to hear that bishop Valentine was to be executed.***
- ***It is said that just before his execution, Valentine asked for a pen and paper from his jailor.***

- **Valentine wrote a farewell message to the jailor's daughter and signed it, "From Your Valentine".**
- **Bishop Valentine was executed on February 14, 270 AD.**

Valentine's Day begins

- **In 496 AD, Pope Gelasius turned the Roman pagan holiday, Lupercalia, into a Christian feast day.**
- **The pagan holiday, Lupercalia, was observed annually on February 15.**
- **Pope Gelasius proclaimed February 14 to be celebrated in honor of St. Valentine.**

Matthew 18:18–20 (ESV) — Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 19 Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

1. The Believer's Awareness

Matthew 18:20 (ESV) — For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.

➤ **The Lord's Presence!**

2. The Believer's Authority

Matthew 18:18 (ESV) — Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

➤ **The Lord's Power!**

Put the names of people that the Lord puts on your heart

- **Lost People**
- **Those that have DRIFTED from the Lord**

3. The Believer's Agreement

Matthew 18:19 (ESV) — Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.

➤ **The Lord's Partnership!**