

Valentine's Day - Choral Reading

(written for Sunday, February 14, 1999)

By Jerry Campbell

1) Red Hot!

2) Cool!

3) So Fine!

4) Be Mine!

All) Valentine!

1) With candy hearts

2) Loving starts.

3) Gifts of flowers

4) floral showers

1) speak of romance

2) and the chance

3) that you'll be mine

All) Valentine!

1) This is a day for love....

2) have you gotten your sweetheart

1) some candy or flowers?

2) a card or some kisses

1) for the Mr. or the Mrs.?

3&4) We hope that you do...

3) that you rejoice in this day,

4) that you celebrate love

3) in all of its ways.

1) Eros -- the hot one,

2) Philios -- the brother

3) Agape -- the giver

4) all of them

All) lovers.

1) But none can compare

2) with the big gift of love,

3) the greatest Valentine of all

All) that comes from above.

4) So in the midst of

1) the flowers

2) the chocolate

3) the candy

4) the kisses

1) the hugs

All) which are all fine and dandy...

1) as we rejoice in this day,

2) as we laugh, love and play

3) let us also listen to what

4) the Good Book has to say.

1) Ahem....Genesis 1: In the beginning,

2,3,4) Wait!

4) We can't start back there!

3) Good grief, we'd be here all day

4) If you try to share

3) everything the Bible has to say...

2) We're talking highlights

4) With details at 11:00!

1) Can't I at least read up to verse seven?

4) No! Cut it down to size!

2,3,4) Summarize!

1) The words love, loves, loved, lover or loving appear in the Bible in 715 verses: 391 in the Hebrew Scripture and 324 in the New Testament.

4) And....

1) You said summarize..!

2,3,4) Good grief!

4) A little more information would be nice...

1) Okay...the Psalmist is the most interested in love. Over 40% of the references to love in the Old Testament are found in the ancient songs of David.

2) And the most interesting references

3) in the fashion of passion

4) are said to have been written

1) by David's Son

All) in the Song of Solomon:

1) I hear my beloved.

2) See how he comes leaping on the mountains bounding over the hills.

3) My beloved lifts up his voice, he says to me,

1) Come then, my love, my lovely one come.

2) For see, winter is past,

3) the rains are over and gone.

4) the flowers appear on the earth.

1) the seasons of glad songs has come,

2) the cooing of the turtledove is heard in our land.

1) Come then, my love, my lovely one come.

2) Show me your face,

3) let me hear your voice;

4) for your voice is sweet

2) and your face is beautiful.

1) Obviously, a gift for poetry ran in the family...

2) So is it surprising

3) that centuries later

4) the angel Gabriel would be sent by God

1) to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,

2) to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph,

3) a direct descendant of the poet,

4) the lover, the man of God,

All) a direct heir in the House of David.

1) Jesus seems to have grown up in this family tradition,

2) and he and his Disciples

3) especially John and Paul,

4) speak the words of Love that are known to us all:

1) "As the Father has loved me,
So I have loved you.
Remain in my love.

2) If you keep my commandments,

1) You will remain in my love,

2) just as I have kept my Father's Commandments

1) and remain in his love.

2) I have told you this

1) so that my own joy may be in you
and your joy may be complete.

2) This is my commandment:

All) love one another, as I have loved you."

4) The Apostle John who wrote this all down,

3) apparently also looked with a frown,

2) at the hurt in the church

1) at the hatred and anger

2) that proved such a danger

3) and kept people strangers

4) to the power of love

All) come down from above.

1) So he wrote them a letter, that said,

All) you can do better!

- 4) "My dear people, let us love on another
- 3) since love comes from God
- 2) and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.
- 1) And anyone who fails to love can never have known God

All) Because God is love.

- 1) Anyone who lives in love, lives in God,
- 2) and God lives in him.
- 3) Love will come to its perfection in us
- 4) when we can face the day of judgment without fear;
- 3) because even in this world we have become as he is.

- 4) In Love there can be no fear,
- 3) for fear is driven out by perfect love.
- 2) We are to love, then,

All) because he loved us first.

- 1) Anyone who says, "I love God,"
and hates his brother or sister,

All) is a liar,

- 1) Since someone who does not love the person that he can see
- 2) cannot love God, whom he has never seen.
- 3) So this is the commandment that he has given us,
- 4) That anyone who loves God,

All) must also love his brother and sister."

- 1) But the words about love,
- 2) that we know best of all

3) were the ones written down

4) by the Apostle Paul.

1) He struggled so mightily

2) with the church at its birth,

3) sharing with them what the

4) gifts of the spirit were worth.

1) Apostles and prophets,

2) teachers and leaders,

3) miracle workers,

4) pray-ers, and healers.

1) But of all the gifts that we might desire,

2) a blessing for which we might aspire,

3) The giving of which will set us on fire,

All) We must reach for the gift that Paul says is higher....

1) If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love,

2) I am simply a gong booming

3) or a cymbal clashing.

1) If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are,
and knowing everything,

2) and if I have faith in all its fullness,
to move mountains,

All) but without love,

3) then I am nothing at all.

4) If I give away all that I possess,

piece by piece,

3) and if I even let them take my body to burn it,

All) but am without love,

1) it will do me no good whatever.

2) Love is always

3) patient

4) and kind;

3) it is never rude or selfish;

2) it does not take offense,

1) and it is not resentful.

1) Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins

All) but delights in the truth;

2) it is always ready to excuse,

3) to trust,

4) to hope,

All) and to endure whatever comes.

1) Love does not come to an end.

2) But if there are gifts of prophecy,

All) the time will come when they must fail.

3) or the gift of languages

All) it will not continue forever

4) and knowledge--

All) for this too, the time will come when it must fail.

- 1) For our knowledge is imperfect,
- 2) and our prophesying is imperfect,
- 3) but once perfection comes,
- 4) all imperfect things will disappear.

- 1) When I was a child, I used to
- 2) talk like a child,
- 3) and think like a child,
- 4) and argue like a child,

All) but now I am a man,

- 1) all childish ways are put behind me.
- 4) Now we are seeing a dim reflection in a mirror;
- 3) but then we shall be seeing face to face.
- 2) the knowledge that I have now is imperfect;
- 1) but then I shall know as fully as I am known.

- 2) In short, there are three things that last:
- 3) faith,
- 4) hope

- 1) and love,

All) and the greatest of these is love.

- 1) So this is the message
- 2) the word that's divine
- 3) while all of the other gifts are just fine.
- 4) God would be happy

1) if you would discover

2) That the best thing to do

All) is just be a lover.

1) Over the centuries

2) God has pursued you

3) with prophets and princes,

4) poets and flowers,

1) sunrises, clouds

2) and great awesome powers,

3) Through whispers and rainbows,

4) symbol and sign,

1) God has asked you,

2) Won't you be mine?

3) Won't you be my valentine?

1) And the answer my friends,

2) in case you can't guess,

All) is yes...