

Scripture Reading: 2 Kings 2:1-12

All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.
—Charles Schulz

Today is Valentine's Day, and it is possible that someone will give you a box of chocolates. If so, you have three days to eat them, because Lent begins on Wednesday (Ash Wednesday), and you may want to give up chocolates for Lent!

But, let's not talk about Lent just yet. Today is the one day of the year when our culture celebrates love.

But what type of love are we talking about?

Valentine's Day is usually about romance, roses, chocolates and wine. And there's nothing wrong with this, as long as we realize that love is much more than this, isn't it? A special Hallmark day is fun, and we like to know that we are someone's "valentine," or we like to ask someone to "be my valentine." Perhaps, today is a day that has good memories for you.

In any event, millions of people, including school children, will be celebrating this day. They will exchange cards with little rhyming notes on them, like:

*Roses are red, violets are blue,
Sugar is sweet, and so are you!*

They will give out candies, and some will go to dinner. All of this flowery activity is about human love. Today is a day when we stop what we're doing to be nice to each other.

The Bible doesn't say too much about this kind of love — human love or affection. Of course, Scripture urges us to love one another, but the meaning of *this* kind of love is not the *romantic* love of Valentine's Day, but the *sacrificial* love of the cross.

The so-called "Love Chapter" of the Bible is 1 Corinthians 13. The love in this chapter reminds us of God's love for us, and how we should truly love one another:

*Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.
It does not insist on its own way;
it is not irritable or resentful;
it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.
It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

Today, on Valentine's Day, let's renew our vow to love one another as God loves us!

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Thank you, Lord Jesus, for your inestimable love for me and all humanity. Help me to touch someone today with a loving thought or gesture. In your name, I pray. Amen.

