

## True Valentine's Love

It seems that two people found a perfect match recently. They found their true love in an Internet chat room. They were both married at the time they met online, and they were online because they had decided that their spouses would never provide the happiness they deserved. They went online searching for true love.

The woman's chat room name was "Sweetie" and her new found love was called "Prince of Joy". They corresponded for hours, sharing with one another the troubles they were having in their respective marriages. Sweetie was twenty-seven at the time. She had finally found a true kindred spirit – her true love; her prince of joy!

Sweetie said, "I was suddenly in love all over again. It was amazing! My prince understood me perfectly – we both knew that we could share a friendship we both deserved. We were both stuck in miserable marriages and wanted out. We were the perfect match."

They decided to meet and have their first date. All the arrangements were made and excuses were presented to their respective spouses as to why they would be away for the evening. Then, at their place of rendezvous, they met – only to discover they were married to one another.

Sweetie and Prince of Joy were already husband and wife.

The miserable marriage they had described to each other was the same one. They had believed that the other person was perfect for them – that they were finally in love – only to discover their own self-centeredness and deception had caused them to ignore a relationship they already had and could have been enjoying. They were confronted with the irony of their blindness.

Did the truth sink in? No. This couple is now divorcing, accusing each other of being unfaithful ([Stephen Daveys' sermon](#)).

Jesus provides the remedy for this lack of true love in what is called "The Great Commandment" in Matthew 22:37-40. Jesus spoke this command to people somewhat like the couple we just heard about. They were enemies who needed God's love.

Jesus declared this command in the midst of a theological debate with political and theological liberals who were trying to discredit Him.

This debate took place in the religious setting of the temple (21:23) while the multitudes of common folk watched (22; 46; 23:1) just a few days before His crucifixion by His enemies with whom now He is debating.

Jesus rebuked the religious leaders of his day who rejected Him as their Savior with three parables.

**1. Parable of two sons in 21:28-32.** Just as one son obeyed not his father neither had the religious liberals obeyed. Obedience is an evidence of salvation (1 John 2:3).

**2. Parable of the Landowner in 21:33-46.** Just as the landowner will judge the tenant farmers on his land for killing his servants and son and not producing fruit, so will Jesus judge those who bear not the spiritual fruit of love.

**3. Parable of the Wedding Banquet in 22:1-14.** Those not properly attired were not only not permitted entrance into the banquet but were cast into outer darkness. Tragically the same will be true with those who are not attired with the righteousness of Christ.

The humiliated religionists strike back in their attempt to embroil Jesus in controversy and discredit Him and His message before the multitude.

**1. The Herodians**, the liberal politicians, asked about taxes and religion in 22:15-22. Jesus answered them with this principle: You pay taxes to the government; you also pay tithes to God. You don't mix the two. Government should not expect religious institution to pay taxes and religious institutions should not expect government to subsidize it. Employees of religious institutions should not be forced to pay premiums for government mandated health insurance that provides abortion inducing drugs.

**2. The Sadducees**, the liberal religionists, asked about life after death in 22:23-33. Jesus answered and gave this truth, there is life after death, for God is presently the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

**3. The Pharisees**, the conservative religionists who taught works for salvation. They asked, "What is the most important rule to keep to get into heaven" (22:34-46). The Pharisees had counted 613 commandments and were debating which of them was the most important.

Jesus' answer was, no one gets into heaven by keeping rules but by being in a personal relationship with Me which results in love for God and people.

Just as Jesus had asked the Herodians a question that silenced them and the Sadducees a question that shut their mouths, now Jesus asks the Pharisees a question: Who is Jesus? (Matthew 22:41-46). How you answer this question determines your eternal destiny!

1. The Pharisees answer: "Jesus is a man. The messiah is only a descendant of David."

2. Jesus asks the Pharisees a question He had already asked His disciples in Matthew 16:13: "Who is Jesus?" Peter knocked it out of the park in 16:16: "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Correct answer, Jesus is God.

Jesus went on to prove His deity in Matthew 22:43-46. If I am only man, and you say that I am only a descendant of David why did David record God the Father calling the Messiah His son who was also David's lord in Psalm 110:1.

- a. Jesus is not only the human descendant of David but He is the divine Son of God
- b. Jesus is the second person of the Trinity who is addressed by God the Father
- c. Jesus pre-existed before His birth because He is the eternal Son of God
- d. Jesus is right now at the right hand of God the Father who will some day return and defeat all his enemies
- e. Salvation is knowing who Jesus is and having a loving relationship with him

### **1. Jesus said We Must Love God.**

Does a person love God by keeping religious rules? No! A person loves God by receiving Christ as his/her Savior resulting in God pouring His love into them. Paul in Romans 5:5 wrote of this blessing: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us."

### **2. Jesus said We Must Love People.**

How do we know if we have been saved and love God? By loving as God loves: sacrificially and unconditionally.

- a. John 3:16 says that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. God proves His love by His sacrificial giving for us.
- b. Jesus proved His love by sacrificially giving Himself as 1 John 3:16 says: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."
- c. We prove our love by unconditionally and sacrificially loving people. John continues by describing our likeness to Christ: "and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso has this world's good, and sees his brother have need, and shuts up his emotions of compassion from him, how dwells the love of God in him" (1 John 3:16).

In 1975 a child name Raymond Dunn, Jr., was born in New York State. The Associated Press reported that at his birth, a skull fracture and oxygen deprivation caused severe retardation. As Raymond grew, the family discovered further impairments. His twisted body suffered up to twenty seizures per day. He was also found to be blind, mute, and virtually immobile. He had severe allergies that limited him to only one food – found after numerous attempts to find something he could digest – a meat-based formula made by Gerber Foods.

However, in 1985, Gerber stopped making the formula that Raymond thrived on. Carol Dunn scoured the country to buy what stores had in stock, accumulating cases and cases of it. But in 1990, her supply ran out. In desperation, she appealed to Gerber for help. Would they help her and her son, Raymond?

The employees of the company were given the news. They not only listened, but they responded. In an unprecedented action, volunteers donated hundreds of hours to bring out old equipment, set up a production line, obtain special approval from the USDA, and produce the formula – all for one special boy. In January 1995, Raymond Dunn, Jr., known as the Gerber Boy, passed away. But during his brief lifetime, he had called forth a surprising thing called kindness and compassion (Leadership Journal).