



# Love is...

*By Alexander S. Brown, Minister*

**F**EBRUARY IS, as we well know, the month of love. After the down-time of January, the decorations go back up in February, and our world is suddenly bathed in a sea of pink and hearts as Valentine’s Day kicks off another year’s round of holidays.

*When Christ  
 went to the Cross,  
 He went as the  
 ultimate example  
 of someone  
 seeking another’s  
 ultimate good.*

Now, we know that Valentine’s Day is in many ways an artificial holiday. Even the more sentimental among us can’t help but concede that the cynics have a point – this holiday has, in large measure, been blown out of proportion by corporations seeking to make money in between Christmas and Easter. But no matter where you stand in relation to this holiday, you have to admit that it has taken root and seems to be here to stay.

And so, February, it seems is the perfect month to consider the true nature of love. As everyone around us is thinking and talking about love, it is good for us to ask what exactly love is.

**O**UR CULTURE tends to think of love mainly in terms of romantic love. Certainly our culture understands love between parent and child, and between citizen and country, and even it understands some level of self-sacrificial love – I think if you ask most people about Mother Teresa, they would describe her work as a work of love. But if you were to ask most people what connotations the word “love” brings to mind, I think they would almost exclusively identify love with feelings, and romantic feelings in particular.

*But is that really what love is?*

The Bible is no stranger to that kind of romantic love. In Genesis 29, we read that Jacob loved Rachel, and in Judges 16:4 we are told of Samson that “he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.” In many other places we find this attraction between a man and a woman being characterized as “love,” just as our culture would understand.

*(Continued on the next page)*

## February Calendar

### - Sundays -

9:30 a.m. Sunday School  
*Knowing Scripture*

10:30 a.m. Morning Worship  
*Exodus: God, our Savior*

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship  
*Daniel: Faith in the Furnace*

Children’s Church, Nursery available

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- Sun 2/3 Communion, AM
  - Tue 2/5 “Beyond the Pages”  
 Book Group for Women  
 (6:30 p.m., Brown home)
  - Each Tuesday: Officer Training  
 (6:30 p.m., GIPC)
  - Wed 2/6, 13, 20, 27  
 Midweek Prayer Meeting  
 (6:30 p.m., GIPC)
  - Sat 2/9 “Second Saturday” Men’s  
 Breakfast & Bible Study  
 (8:00 a.m., Brown home)
  - Wed 2/13, 20, 27  
 Women’s Bible Study  
 (9:30 a.m., Brown home)

- Committee Meetings:
- World Missions—1st Thursday
  - CE—2nd Thursday
  - B&G—3rd Thursday

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# Love is...

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HOWEVER, there is, of course, a much deeper understanding of love that fills our Bibles. When Jesus was asked which is the greatest commandment in the Law, He replied "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-39) This is a command that cannot be based on how we feel. Jesus gives us no qualifiers, nothing to narrow down who we should love – if someone is our neighbor, then we must love them.

*But what does that mean?*

C. S. Lewis famously struggled with this, and reasoned through it:

"You are told to love your neighbour as yourself. How do you love yourself? When I look into my own mind, I find that I do not love myself by thinking myself a dear old chap or having affectionate feelings. I do not think that I love myself because I am particularly good, but just because I am myself and quite apart from my character. I might detest something which I have done. Nevertheless, I do not cease to love myself. In other words, that definite distinction that Christians make between hating sin and loving the sinner is one that you have been making in your own case since you were born. You dislike what you have done, but you don't cease to love yourself. You may even think that you ought to be hanged. You may even think that you ought to go to the Police and own up and be hanged. Love is not affectionate feeling, but a steady wish for the loved person's ultimate good as far as it can be obtained."

This is the true goal of true love – not the satisfaction of a feeling, but the pursuit of "the loved person's ultimate good." True love is not focused on ourselves, but on the other. But that is incredibly hard to do. Our selfish hearts want to seek our ultimate good, not that of someone else – especially if that person is not particularly lovable. In fact it is so difficult, that we will not truly be able to do it, until we see that it was with this same love that God, in Christ, loved us.

In John 15 Jesus said to His disciples, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12) When Christ went to the Cross, He went as the ultimate example of someone seeking another's ultimate good. And He did it for us in spite of the fact that our sin made us completely unlovable, with nothing about us to earn or deserve such love. It is only when we see so much the unmerited love of God, that we will be free to truly love our neighbor as ourselves, even when they don't deserve it.

AS WE think about love this month, let us resolve to take Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves seriously, and to not be distracted or diverted by the world's understanding of love. Instead, let us be driven by the greatest act of love that ever was performed when Jesus died on the Cross for sinners. ▪

## GOLDEN ISLES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Phone: 912.638.2563 E-Mail: office@gipc-pca.org Web: gipc-pca.org  
48 Hampton Point Drive, Saint Simons Island, GA 31522

## Finance Committee

### GIPC Update: Loan Balance

Loan Balance 1/1/12	\$840,102
Principal Paid YTD	\$ 32,794
Loan Balance 12/31/12	\$807,308
2013 Average Payment:	
Interest	\$ 2,574
Principal	\$ 2,678
Total Payment	\$ 5,252

## Men's Ministry

### "Second Saturday"

#### Men's Breakfast & Bible Study

February 9th, 8:00 a.m.  
Brown home

*Current Study:*  
*Disciplines of a Godly Man*

## Women in the Church

### Women's Bible Study

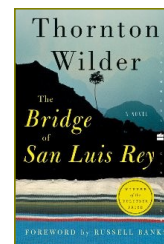
#### Each Wednesday (except the first)

All women are invited to meet for Bible study on Wednesday mornings at the home of Sara Brown. *Current Study: Hosea*

### "Beyond the Pages"

#### Women's Book Group

##### First Tuesday



In keeping with Glynn County's "The Big Read," the February book group will be discussing *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* by Thornton Wilder. Set in Peru, the story centers on a fictional bridge collapse, during which five travelers are killed. The interwoven themes of the search for justice and the role of Christianity in human relationships are explored, and a priest interprets the story of each victim in an attempt to explain the working of divine providence.

This book is small and easy to read, and every page holds the interest of the reader.

**The book group will meet at the Brown home, 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 5th.**

**FEBRUARY**

"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

**Family Worship**

**Old Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<b>Genesis</b>	33	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		34	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		35, 36	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		37	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		38	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		39	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		40	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		41	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		42	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		43	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		44	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		45	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		46	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		47	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	48	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16	49	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18	<b>Exodus</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	11, 12*	<input type="checkbox"/>	

\*through 12:21

**FEBRUARY**

"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

**Family Worship**

**New Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<b>Mark</b>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		<b>Luke</b>	1:1-38
15	1:39-80		<input type="checkbox"/>
16	2		<input type="checkbox"/>
17	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
18	4		<input type="checkbox"/>
19	5		<input type="checkbox"/>
20	6		<input type="checkbox"/>
21	7		<input type="checkbox"/>
22	8		<input type="checkbox"/>
23	9		<input type="checkbox"/>
24	10	<input type="checkbox"/>	
25	11	<input type="checkbox"/>	
26	12	<input type="checkbox"/>	
27	13	<input type="checkbox"/>	
28	14	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**FEBRUARY**

"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

**Private**

**Old Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<b>Esther</b>	9, 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		1	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	14	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16	15	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17	16, 17	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18	18	<input type="checkbox"/>	
19	19	<input type="checkbox"/>	
20	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	
21	21	<input type="checkbox"/>	
22	22	<input type="checkbox"/>	
23	23	<input type="checkbox"/>	
24	24	<input type="checkbox"/>	
25	25, 26	<input type="checkbox"/>	
26	27	<input type="checkbox"/>	
27	28	<input type="checkbox"/>	
28	29	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**FEBRUARY**

"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

**Private**

**New Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<b>Romans</b>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		<b>I Corinthians</b>	1
15	2		<input type="checkbox"/>
16	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
17	4		<input type="checkbox"/>
18	5		<input type="checkbox"/>
19	6		<input type="checkbox"/>
20	7		<input type="checkbox"/>
21	8		<input type="checkbox"/>
22	9		<input type="checkbox"/>
23	10		<input type="checkbox"/>
24	11		<input type="checkbox"/>
25	12		<input type="checkbox"/>
26	13		<input type="checkbox"/>
27	14		<input type="checkbox"/>
28	15	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Week beginning JANUARY 27**

**Colossians 4:6**

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

**Week beginning FEBRUARY 3**

**Psalms 27:1-3**

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.

**Week beginning FEBRUARY 10**

**Psalms 27:4-5**

One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple. For He will hide me in His shelter in the day of trouble; He will conceal me under the cover of His tent; He will lift me high upon a rock.

**Week beginning FEBRUARY 17**

**Psalms 27:13-14**

I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

**Week beginning FEBRUARY 24**

**Philippians 2:10b-11**

At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.