

~Other Speakers G-L: Hymn Stories:

An American Folk Hymn taken from Ingall's Christian Harmony, 1805

"O love the Lord, all ye saints." (Psalm 31:23)

**"Blest be Thy love, dear Lord, that taught us this sweet way,
Only to love Thee for Thyself, and for that love obey." --J. Austin**

Secular songs of romantic expressions abound on this day. For the Christian, a hymn about love is also appropriate for Valentine's Day, and no sweeter expression of one's love for Christ can be found than these anonymous lines from an early American folk hymn.

For the early Christians, February 14 was a special day. Tradition tells us that a man by the name of Valentine was a Christian doctor who went about doing good deeds wherever he could, in imitation of his Master. Valentine became a good friend and helper to the Christians, who were being persecuted by the cruel powers of the Roman Empire. It is believed that the good doctor was eventually imprisoned because of his loyalty to his fellow "followers of the Way." After he was beheaded on February 14, that day was observed each year in Valentine's honor by the early Christians.

As time went on, however, Valentine and his deeds of kindness were forgotten. Because February was near the beginning of spring, with its feelings of romance, the day became a secular holiday celebrating romantic love. Tokens of love and affection were given to sweethearts and friends, starting the custom that we sun practice today.

Dr. Valentine gave his life for his fellow Christians because of his deep love for Christ. We too can express our love for the Savior with these simply stated yet profound words... "but how much I love Thee my actions will show."

"I love Thee, my Savior, I love Thee, my Lord; I love Thee, my Savior, I love Thee, my God: I love Thee, I love Thee, and that Thou dost know; but how much I love Thee my actions will show.

"O Jesus my Savior, with Thee I am blest, my life and salvation, my joy and my rest: Thy name be my theme and Thy love be my song; Thy grace shall inspire both my heart and my tongue.

Oh who's like my Savior? He's heaven's bright king; He smiles and He loves me and helps me to sing: I'll praise Him, I'll praise Him with notes loud and dear; while rivers of pleasure my spirit shall cheer."

For Today: Deuteronomy 6:5; 30:20; Luke 10:27; 1 John 4:19

On this special day dedicated to expressions of love, we can make it truly a "holy day" with our love for Christ and by sharing His love and concern for others.