

Sunday, February 14, 2021

**Title: Choosing to Love
Valentine's Day Devotional**

Text: Genesis 24

Purpose: I want to PERSUADE my congregation to BELIEVE that LOVE is an act of our personal WILL, not an emotion that we helplessly follow!

1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."

Introduction:

Review of the last Sunday's devotional:
The Habit of Giving

1. Giving is Better than Receiving
2. Giving is Love in Action
3. Giving Opens the Windows of Heaven and Produces a Harvest

History of Valentine's Day: Has its origin in the Roman festival of Lupercalla (February 14) and was changed to St. Valentine's Day near the end of the 5th century. St. Valentine was purported to be a Roman priest and physician who suffered martyrdom by the emperor Claudius II Gothicus in approximately 270 A.D. (Anno Domini).

Read: Genesis 24 (selected portions of the 67 verses)
verses 1 – 21, 26 – 27, 57 - 67

1. Father Abraham:

1.1) Father Abraham is "old, well advanced in years" (vs.1) His wife, Sarah, died at 127 years of age; Abraham was 10 years older than Sarah. Sarah was 90 or 91 years old when Isaac was born; at her death Isaac was about 36

1.2) Father Abraham was concerned for Isaac, his single son. He desired that his son have a bride from his kindred, not from the Canaanites! (vs. 3 – 4)

1.3) Father Abraham did not want Isaac to be "unequally yoked." He commissions his oldest servant to travel to his (Abraham's) kindred to secure a bride for Isaac. (vs.9)

~ 2 Corinthians 6:14, "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?"

2. Faithful Servant:

2.1) The servant was faithful to his vow (vs. 3 & 9)

2.2) The servant was faithful to God, a man of prayer (vs. 12 – 14)

2.3) The servant was faithful to his mission (vs. 49 – 56) ~ 1 Corinthians 4:2, "Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful."

3. Fair Maiden, Rebekah:

3.1) In the natural, Rebekah, is an attractive young woman. Vs. 15 - 16

3.2) Rebekah had a generous soul. Vs. 17 - 22 ~ Acts 20:35, "In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

3.3) Rebekah had a willing soul. Vs. 57 - 60 ~ Hebrews 11:8, "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going."

4. Favored Son, Isaac:

4.1) Isaac is the Divinely promised son!
Genesis 17:15 - 19

4.2) Isaac is the obedient son. Genesis 22

4.3) Isaac is the patient son. Genesis 24:63 - 67

5. Volitional Love:

Meaning of volitional (from Merriam-Webster dictionary):
1. The power of choosing or determining; will. 2. An act of making a choice or decision; also: a choice or decision made.

5.1) On the part of the Father, Philippians 1:6, "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ,"

5.2) On the believer's part, 1 Peter 1:8, "Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory."

Conclusion:

Matthew 22:37 – 40, "And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. (38) This is the great and first commandment. (39) And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. (40) On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."