

From



Dr. David Eldridge
Senior Pastor

Pastor David

Valentine's Day has come and gone by the time that you are reading this edition of the *Together At Dawson* magazine. I imagine that many of you contributed to the lucrative Valentine's Day industry in some special way. I read a recent study that found that Americans spent 18.6 billion dollars on Valentine's Day—1.6 billion dollars on candy, 4.4 billion on jewelry, and over 224 million roses were purchased to celebrate this day of love. That's a lot of Hallmark cards, flowers, and boxes of chocolates.

The origins of our Valentine's Day celebrations are far removed from the third-century priest named Valentinus who was imprisoned for his faith. While much of his story is shrouded in lore and legend, Valentinus fell in love with the blind daughter of his jailer. God supernaturally cured the jailer's daughter's blindness. Prior to his execution, Valentinus sent his love a note that her cured eyes could read signed, "From Your Valentine."

While it's impossible to be certain of what is fact and what is fiction in tracing the definite origin of Valentine's Day, what we can all agree upon is that true love costs. True love isn't primarily an emotion but a sacrificial commitment given to the object of one's love.

It's not surprising that when God would show us the extent of His love, it would be the sacrifice of His only Son. While we might not be able to verify all the details of the origins of Valentine's Day, we can be sure that the cross of Christ isn't the product of lore or legend. The cross of Christ is the ultimate love letter for all who would trust and believe.

I pray that as you read the ministry highlights contained in this edition of the *Together At Dawson* magazine that you would be reminded that true love always costs, and that cost has been fully displayed on the cross.

"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

John 15:13

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Eldridge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping "D" at the beginning.

Pastor David