

Valentines, Communism, and Communicating Biblically

- I. **Biblically speaking, none of our children “deserve” a valentine, and neither do we parents.**
 - As sinners against an almighty God, we all deserve hell. Our children need to understand that. It goes a long way in helping them with discontentment and complaining. Laying this foundation will help us guide our children through the trauma of not receiving a Valentine from someone.
- II. **According to the KJV’s rendering of Proverbs 18:24, children who don’t show themselves friendly are not going to have friends, and by extension, no one will want to give them valentines.**
 - This is biblical reality fleshed out in more than just Proverbs. Too many young people in our culture feel entitled. They think they deserve to be invited to birthday parties because they’re in the same class as the birthday girl. They deserve free education because they’re American. They deserve free healthcare because they’re sick. They deserve a Valentine because it’s Valentine’s Day, and that’s just what you do! And it doesn’t matter that they’re unkind to everyone they know, they feel the right to complain and get mad when no one gives them a paper heart.
- III. **Our children must acknowledge that God commands us to love one another . . . even those who mistreat us.**
 - We’re to live every moment of our lives preferring others above ourselves in kindness, trying to out-do them in honor (Romans 12:10). Again, this too is a biblical reality.
- IV. **And, no doubt we’ve shared these truths with our children at different times, but how do we teach our children the tension without inappropriately preaching one and capriciously ignoring the other?**
 - Our children need to be guided to the simultaneous understanding that they don’t deserve a valentine from anyone, but that God expects them to love everyone. I should love all the more, even though I may be loved less in return (II Corinthians 12:15).
 - When we communicate these dilemmas to our kids, they need to grapple with the tension. “Protecting” them by sanctimoniously declaring that everyone will receive a Valentine leads to immature kids formulating conclusions for themselves. And unfortunately, their conclusions are usually false.
 - **I find the most joy in parents who speak God’s Truth into the lives of children.** I thrill when parents encourage kids to give valentines, not because *“that’s what we do,”* but because God commands that we love others as we would want to be loved, and that if we don’t receive even one Valentine in return, we can be joyful because we were able to be a blessing, and God is the source of our happiness.
 - And my eyes burn with delight when I see a parent making time to counsel an angry child about the reality of the carnage in his relationships with God and others.
 - So, by all means, encourage your kids to celebrate Valentine’s Day, but teach them to do it like a Christian, not a communist.