



## What's Love Got to Do With It?

February is a month in which a lot of attention is given to the topic of love. The sad part is most people have absolutely no idea what love looks like or how it's supposed to act. It's no wonder. Over the last fifty years or so, thanks to an increasingly amoral entertainment industry, love has become synonymous with sex. Sad to say, most people don't know the difference.

With today's world view a lot of people are operating on the assumption love is some mysterious thing that just happens and over which you have no control. The number one reason cited for divorce is "I just don't love him/her anymore." This statement is often accompanied by a sigh and a shake of the head as though the speaker can't understand how it could have happened.

The Bible, on the other hand, gives a very different picture of love. In 1 Corinthians 13 we read, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud." And in 1 John 4:7-8 we learn that love comes from God because God is himself love. No mystery here. Love is clearly defined by God's word.

Oddly enough, even Christians have somehow bought into the idea love is a warm fuzzy feeling. But love is not a feeling. It's a choice. Matthew 5:44 tells us to "love your enemies." It is impossible to feel warm and fuzzy about people we don't like. Enemies, by virtue of the fact they ARE enemies, don't inspire those kinds of feelings. Therefore, since we know God wouldn't ask (or command) us to do something we CAN'T, it must mean love is a choice.

Jesus said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:35 By understanding the nature of love and then choosing to operate in it we declare ourselves as followers of Christ. It isn't the t-shirt we wear or the little fish on our cars. They'll know us by our love.

In the dead of winter trees are difficult to tell apart unless you're a horticulturalist. The bare branches all tend to look the same against a gray winter sky. In spring the blossoms give a hint of what will follow, but by late summer the identity of the tree is completely revealed with the appearance of fruit. There can be no mistaking an apple tree for a peach tree. The fruit is the evidence.

The same could be said of Christians. From a distance we might look like anyone else. But upon closer inspection we should find the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of our experience. In Galatians 5:22 we read, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." The fact the scriptures likens these attributes to fruit indicates they can be cultivated, or grown. As we grow in Christ, the fruit of the Spirit grows in us. Or, at least it should.

I must confess I sometimes struggle with whether I'm doing this "Christian life" thing the way I'm supposed to. "Lord, this is hard!" I whine during my prayer time. "It shouldn't be this complicated." And usually in the middle of my whining the Lord reminds me it really isn't all that complicated. Love God and love everyone else, because love covers a multitude of sins. Ah, simplicity.

So—what's love got to do with it? Just everything.

- Wendy Lanier, <http://www1.cbn.com/devotions/whats-love-got-do-it>

## PRAYER LIST

- **Pauline Alvarez** (health)
- **Lauren Babb** (health)
- **Aaron Banks**
- **John Beiler** (health)
- **Jennell Bransom** (recovering from surgery)
- **Dawn Clarke** (Shirley Kuchynka's daughter)
- **Betty Cox** (Brent Barnick's sister—homebound)
- **Dixie** (Debbie Faires's mother—Alzheimer's)
- **Jake Faires** (Air Force, deployed to Jordan)
- **Paul Faires** (health)
- **Steven Faires, and Lexi**
- **Leon Giesecke** (Jan Moerbe's father—throat cancer)
- **Herbert and Nelle Hahn** (health)
- **Debbie Jalufka**
- **Sandra Jetton** (health)
- **Kevin and Victoria Johnson** (healthy pregnancy/baby)
- **Junior and Ada Powell** (Sharron Mason's brother-in-law and sister—health)
- **Family and friends of Jacy Smathers** (Chrismons's friend)
- **Bud White** (Jacob's grandfather—hospice)
- **Adrienne Zingrich** (Susan Barnick's cousin—cancer)

If you have any announcements or prayer requests you wish to have included in the bulletin or to sign up for weekly e-mail updates, please contact Victoria Johnson: 325-518-9205, [victoria@gonzaleschurchofchrist.org](mailto:victoria@gonzaleschurchofchrist.org).

## PRAYER UPDATES

**Jennell Bransom** is home as she continues recovering from surgery. The doctors believe the cancer was contained.

Leon Giesecke, **Jan Moerbe's father**, is declining and he is losing mobility.

**Herb Hahn** remains hospitalized, but was moved out of ICU into a room and is improving

We extend sympathy to the family and friends of **Jacy Smathers**, the Chrismons's friend, who died as a result of a gas leak in her horse trailer. Jacy was 22 years old and a student at Tarleton State.

**Bud White**, Jacob's grandfather, is in hospice care in Waco.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Youth & Family Super Bowl Party

Youth and their families are invited to a Super Bowl Party at the Chrismons **TONIGHT at 5 p.m.** Tacos will be provided. Please bring chips, dip, cookies, or other snacks, desserts and finger foods to share. Please talk to Kevin or Victoria if you need transportation.

### Youth Sunday: Valentine's Luncheon

Everyone is invited to Valentine's lunch in the annex **next Sunday, February 12!** The youth are serving salad, lasagna, bread, and dessert. Please sign up in the foyer to help with this event.

### Monthly Men's Meeting

The men have their monthly meeting **next Sunday, Feb. 12, at 8 a.m.** at the building.

### Wednesday Evening Meal & Bible Study

Please join us **at 5:15 p.m. this Wednesday** for dinner in the annex. This week's entrée is **meatloaf**. Anyone who is able is asked to bring sides to share, but please do not let that prevent you from joining us. Classes for all ages follow at 6 p.m.

### Volunteers Needed: Wednesday Night Meals

Volunteers are needed to prepare the entrée for meals on Wednesday evenings. To help, please sign up in the foyer. **If you signed up to prepare a meal, please send your menu to Victoria by Wednesday the week before your turn.**

### Volunteers Needed: Communion Prep

Volunteers are needed to prepare communion in the coming months. This task takes very little time and is a great service to the congregation. Please sign up on the large bulletin board in the foyer.

### Sunday Night Small Group

There is a small group that meets in the annex each Sunday evening from 6-7 p.m. The Lord's Supper is available.

### Tuesday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast

All men are invited to the annex each Tuesday morning at **6:20 a.m.** for a time of breakfast, prayer and fellowship.

### Ladies Bible Class

Ladies Bible Class continues this Tuesday at **8:30 a.m.** at Jennie Chrismon's house in Shiner. The book for class is *Wives After God: Encouraging Each Other in Faith and Marriage* by Jennifer Smith. Please contact Jennie if you would like more information.

### Canyon Lake Ladies Day

You're invited to Ladies Day at Canyon Lake Church on **Saturday, March 4, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.** Lunch is provided. This year's theme is "Making Christ the Lord of Your Life in Every Season of Your Life!" and features speaker Becky Blackmon, author of *The Pearl Seeker* and *The Begging Place*. **RSVPs are due by Saturday, Feb. 25.**

### Mark Your Calendars:

**Feb. 26**

- Fellowship Meal
- Singing at The Heights

## YOUTH ZONE



**MONDAY, FEB. 6**  
*JUNIOR HIGH BOYS BASKETBALL*  
**SHINER @ LOUISE, 5:30 P.M.**  
*JUNIOR HIGH GIRLS BASKETBALL*  
**SHINER V. LOUISE, 5:30 P.M.**  
**TUESDAY, FEB. 7**  
*HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL*  
**GONZALES @ SCHULENBURG, 5 P.M. (SCRIMMAGE)**



**FRIDAY, FEB. 10**  
*HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL*  
**GONZALES @ POTH, 5 P.M.**  
**SATURDAY, FEB. 11**  
*HIGH SCHOOL TRACK & FIELD*  
**GONZALES TRI MEET**  
*HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL*  
**GONZALES V. BLOOMINGTON, 10 A.M. (SCRIMMAGE)**



Caden Chrismon—Shiner Jr High Boys Basketball  
Jacy Chrismon—Shiner Jr High Girls Basketball  
Coach Kevin Johnson—Gonzales HS Girls Track & Field

Morgan Mason—Gonzales HS Girls Varsity Softball, Track & Field  
Carly Pustka—Shiner Jr High Girls Basketball