

The Exchanger

Volume 04, Issue 2

February, 2004

THE NEWSLETTER
OF
FELLOWSHIP
BIBLE CHURCH
WHITE ROCK

The Mission of
FBCWR:

*Connecting People
to God's Life-
Changing Power*

*We've Got
Connections!*

**Open your mouth
and taste, open your
eyes and see— how
good GOD is. Blessed
are you who run
to Him.**

*Psalm 34:8
(The Message)*

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Fall in Love

Well slap my face and shoot an arrow at my heart, the chubby little angel is in the news again. It's February, the month of love.

Now's the time that the culture celebrates romance and pairing



up. And preacher's emphasize the greatest love of all—God's love.

Gushy with God?

There may seem, however, to be a huge disconnect between the love of God and the romance of lovers. Does "Intimacy with God" - the title of the Discovery Series book that we are studying together as a church sound a little "out there" to you? Can a person have romantic love for God? Isn't that a little weird for women because God has taken on the identity of the male gender? Isn't it weirder for men for the same reason? Think about it. When was the last time you heard a Christian man stand up and declare how much he loves Jesus?

It's All Greek to Me

Many have handled this dynamic by stressing the varied words for love in the Greek language in which the New Testament was penned. The word *philos* means "brotherly love", which is the love which all Christians are summoned to have for one another. The word *eros* describes romantic love - picture lovers walking



through the park with butterflies flitting about. *Agape* love is the industrial strength love. It is most intense because it is the type of love Christ modeled when He laid down His life for us. It is unconditional and selfless. It is also foundational for the other loves—the elusive *eros* love in a marriage, and the *philos* love of church friends. So should we emphasize that our love for God be all about sacrifice and obedience? After all, our feelings are worthless if we deny Him by our actions. True, but should our love for God be limited to the will and not saturate our emotions as well? Should we be inclined to "fall in love" with Him?

Jesus' Emotional Love

Imagine the raw emotion and the powerful display of Jesus' feelings displayed for the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before He died:

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. (Hebrews 5:7)

Today, Jesus' behavior would get Him ostracized right out the door of many churches. We can be so prim and proper and distinguished that we extinguish the very fire of God in us. This flame is stoked with emotion and passion and yes even deep *feelings* of love for God. SO don't be afraid to fall in love with God with your whole heart and all your emotions.

-Joe Fornear