

Title: THE KISSES OF THE BIBLE

Text: Luke 22:47-48

Intro: Modern culture has a lot to say about kisses. Songs, poems, movie and TV shows are filled with kissing. (See Lovapalooza 2004 world record for 5200+ couples kissing). A kiss is an expression of affection and love. A study of the word "**kiss**" (mentioned 20X) gives us amazing insights. What can we learn from Bible kisses?

1. The Kiss of Charity (I Pet. 5:14). [See also **Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 16:20; II Cor. 13:12; I Thess. 5:26**] Repeatedly, the apostles urged Christians to greet each other with a holy kiss. In our society this would be negative and risky! The "**holy kiss**" was similar to our heartfelt handshake or a hug with a shoulder tap. The greeting with a holy kiss was encouraged to believers. It was not immoral or impure but a symbolic gesture of godly and brotherly affection. Cultures changed but the Bible command to love one another is never outdated. God wants us Christians to continue loving one another (**John 13:34-35; I Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1**).

2. The Kiss of Separation (Acts 20:36-38). The Ephesian believers loved Paul greatly. They knew his journey to Rome meant that he will never be able to visit them again. Imagine the sadness that they had that day. The verse says "**they all wept sore...**" In the Christian life we are sometimes compelled to say goodbye forever. Whether by reason of duty or death, we must sometimes cut ties and bonds with our friends and brethren. For example, a missionary family leaves the comfort of home and says farewell to the brethren. It is their duty to follow God wherever He leads. The pastor who must leave his longtime congregation to lead in another church or ministry also knows the kiss of separation. When death calls a parent home and leaves weeping loved ones behind, we see the kiss of separation as they say goodbye to one another.

3. The Kiss of Idolatry (Hosea 13:2). By the time of Hosea, Israel had been corrupted with idol worship. There were statues all over Israel and even smaller personal idols that could be carried anywhere. The custom was to kiss the statues to show honor and respect. Hosea shows the foolishness of such idol worship. He says that the idols are the work of man's hands. Christians today would not pray to, kiss or worship idols. Yet, idolatry still lives today in the heart of mankind. Today's modern idols are money, sex, drugs, power, entertainment, etc. (**Col. 3:5**). In direct rebellion to God, men bow to "**kiss the calves**" of modern idolatry (**I Cor. 10:14**)!

4. The Kiss of Betrayal (Luke 22:47-48). Doubtless, this is the most contemptible passage in the Bible!! Judas' kiss was not only to pinpoint Jesus to his enemies but a blatant attempt to fool Jesus into thinking that Judas was doing well. Jesus exposed Judas in letting him know that He had been betrayed by a kiss – a sign of fidelity and love (**Prov. 27:6**). We hate what Judas did but there is always the danger of hypocrisy like Judas' in the Christian life. We become like Judas and betray Jesus when we love the world and the things in it and sell our Christian beliefs & testimony for passing material or financial gains. Don't be a Judas to Jesus my friend!

5. The Kiss of Compassion (Luke 15:20). This is one of the happiest passages of scripture. The love of the prodigal's father is a picture of our Heavenly Father's love. Sometimes people perceive God as cruel and uncaring. This passage actually reveals God as a loving and understanding Father. The prodigal expected rebuke and punishment from his father. Instead, he got from his father a kiss of compassion, and joy that he had finally returned! Friend, if you are unsaved, never think that God will reject you if you come to Him. He stands ready to meet you and accept your repentance if you will step out in faith today. If you are a Christian who is out of God's will, arise from where you were fallen and return to God now.

6. The Kiss of Salvation (Luke 7:37-38). Simon the Pharisee had a problem with this "sinful" woman. For him, he thinks this scene invalidated the ministry of Jesus. He said, "**...if he were a prophet, would have known...**" (v.39). Simon expected Jesus to feel the same way that he felt. Why would a sinful woman be acceptable to Jesus? Jesus went on to tell Simon a parable on forgiveness. Simon had not properly honored Jesus when He came into his house; but this "sinner" had continuously honored Him. True salvation brings a great difference in one's life. The man who has been forgiven seeks ways to honor Jesus in his life. Our attempts to honor Him are like kisses to Him. Friend, have you "kissed your Saviour" lately? Do you honor Him in your life?

Conclusion: As we have examined these "Bible kisses," one fact stands out – a kiss can mean different things. It can be a sign of love or affection. It can also be a hypocritical sign of betrayal. But a true kiss to the Lord can bring many benefits and eternal blessings. The Bible declares in **Psa. 2:12, Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.**