2. Love and salvation

(a) Love is the essence of the original gospel - "an old commandment which you heard from the beginning" (1Jn 2:7). "This is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another" (1Jn 3:11).

(b) Lovelessness results in death. "We should love one another, not as Cain who slew his brother... Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer... He who does not love abides in death" (1Jn 3:11-15).

(c) Love assures us of salvation. "We know we have passed out of death and into life because we love the brethren" (1Jn 3:14). "If we love one another... his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us" (1Jn 4:12-16).

(d) We cannot love God (and therefore be saved) without loving one another. "The one who does not love his brother... cannot love God... Whoever loves the Father loves the child born of him... we love the children of God when we love God" (1Jn 4:20 to 5:2).

(e) Lovelessness is inimical to our fellowship with God -- we are hostile to God when we lack love. "The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness... the darkness has blinded his eyes" (1Jn 2:9-11). "Anyone is not of God who does not love his brother" (1Jn 3:10). "The one who does not love, does not know God" (1Jn 4:7-8).

3. Love and obedience

(a) Love is deeds, not talk. Most people would think of love as an attitude, but love is much more about action. "Whoever has this world's goods and beholds a brother in need, and closed up his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? ...Let us not love with word or tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1Jn 3:17-18).

(b) Love consists in obedience. "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments" (1Jn 5:3).

(c) To emphasise keeping God's commandments does not show a legalistic spirit or a lack of love. Quite the contrary. "Whoever keeps God's word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected" (1Jn 2:5).

(d) A judgment about a person's love should be based on that person's performance, not personality. "We know that we love the children of God when we love God and do his commandments" (1Jn 5:2).

4. Love and the cross

(a) Christ's example obligates us to love. "We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1Jn 3:16).

(b) Love is manifested in us through the cross of Christ. "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." (1Jn 4:9). [Note: the word MANIFEST means to show clearly].

(c) The initiative for love is in the cross. "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins... We love, because he first loved us" (1Jn 4:10,19).

5. Love and fear

(a) A mature or "perfected" love for God allows us to look forward with confidence, rather than fear, to Christ's return and our appearance before his judgment seat. "Love has been made perfect among us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment" (1Jn 4:17).

(b) Perfect love drives out fear. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear is associated with punishment, and the one who fears is not made perfect in love" (1Jn 4:18).

Do you remember how love is perfected? "Whoever keeps his word, in him the love of.