I. Introduction
   A. The supernatural love of God—Greek *agape*—is made available to us in two main ways:
      1. Romans 5:5—Poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Personal testimony of love imparted in this way for the people of the Sudan.
      2. 1 John 2:4–5—Worked out in our character by diligently obeying God’s Word.
   B. 2 Peter 1:5–7—The starting point is faith. The seven ascending steps of character building:
      1. Excellence
      2. Knowledge (primarily of God’s will)
      3. Temperance (self-control)
      4. Patience (perseverance or endurance)
      5. Godliness
      6. Brotherly kindness (toward fellow Christians)
      7. Charity (divine love—*agape*)
   C. Two common obstacles that love encounters:
      1. Rejection
      2. Betrayal
   D. 1 Peter 2:21—In each case, Jesus is our pattern
      2. John 6:70–71—Jesus chose Judas, knowing he would betray Him
      3. Matt. 26:47–50—When Judas came to betray Him, Jesus greeted him as a friend
   E. Two lessons we need to learn from Jesus:
      1. When He was rejected, He did not withdraw love.
      2. When He was betrayed, He did not lose faith.
   F. Divine love does not draw back or turn away. Divine love totally exposes itself at the cost of embarrassment, shame or betrayal.

II. Rejection
   A. In dealing with human problems, we move downward from twigs, branches and limbs to the trunk and finally the roots.
      1. The root of all roots is rejection.
      2. The remedy for every human problem is provided by the cross.
      3. Matt. 27:46—On the cross Jesus was rejected by the Father that we, in turn, might be accepted.
   B. Rejection is most commonly felt by a child toward his parents. The remedy:
      1. Recognize your problem
      2. Forgive your parents
      3. Set your will to honor them

III. Betrayal
A. This common problem arises between husband and wife. The remedy:
   1. First forgive
   2. Then trust your husband (or wife)
B. Few American wives really trust their husbands. But without his wife’s trust the average man will never be what he could be and should be.
   2 Cor. 2:3; 7:16—God gave Paul grace to trust those who had proved unworthy of his confidence

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