

Lifestyle of Learning™
Thoughts on Love's Actions
Part 2
Transcript—17 pages

Barbie Poling: Hi ladies, we're back, and we're going to go ahead and get started with our second half of the call. This half might be a little smaller than the first half.

We were talking about a passage in first John that we had put up.

Marilyn Howshall: 1 John 2: 3-11—We were discussing the idea of being free from stumbling into error through walking in the light. We had a couple more thoughts on that we wanted to share.

BP: It was in verse 10 where it says that, "*He whoever loves his brother, in him there is no occasion for stumbling or cause for error.*" I was thinking that there are many Christians who are quite concerned that they do not fall into error. They're aware that there is error, so they want to keep themselves from being in error and from stumbling. Frequently, we find that people believe that what keeps them from being in error, keeps them from stumbling, is knowing about God and knowing about the Bible. They believe that if they study the Bible a lot and know a lot about God that they will keep themselves from going into error. we also come across the idea, quite frequently, is that church attendance is what keeps you free from stumbling into error. a lot of people tend to call this accountability. If you don't go to a church, you won't be accountable and you might go into error. so, implying that if you do go to church, it will keep you out of error.

MH: I wonder why there are so many streams and lines of thought about the same issue with all different sides to an issue. That's the truth.

BP: Right. This verse actually gives us the method of staying out of stumbling in error. this is how you can be free from error and that is, if you love. It says, "whoever loves his brother." This is the person who will be free from stumbling into error. The way to keep yourself from falling into error is to learn how to love. The ways to keep your children from falling into error and following strange doctrines and things like that is to teach them how to love each other. It isn't found in causing them to memorize great portions of Scripture or teaching them about the Bible. There is nothing wrong with those things, but the method for keeping them out of error and away from stumbling is to teach them how to love each other.

MH: Yes, and I want to make another point about that too. Barbie and I can both attest to the fact that our children, from much younger ages had the ability to discern error.

MH: That most of our adult friends had no ability to discern. It wasn't because we taught it to them. It was because truth was operating in them at the heart level. Truth operating in you at the heart level is what matures you into Christlikeness and what aligns you with an accurate knowledge of truth the way God views it. It's like a Divine download when you're walking according to God's principles of love, He aligns your soul with truth, and you receive His truth into your life. that doesn't come through study. That doesn't mean you're not supposed to study. Study is a good thing, but you need to put these other outward activities in their proper place. They don't align you with God in a spiritual sense where your heart is changed and conformed to the image of Christ and where your mind is transformed. That can only happen through the reconciliation process. So when we're talking about learning how to love, there are many, many actions of reconciliation that you are operating in. You are letting go of wrong actions, you are repenting, and you're directly repenting to the people in your life and you're indirectly repenting in many, many seemingly insignificant ways that you've ...to your whole life and how you have pursued living your life on a day-to-day basis.

BP: Just like Catherine was describing how she turned away from her old ways in very specific ways and was adopting new ones.

MH: Yes, so you're turning to God and His ways. Sometimes I feel like we have our approach backward when we try to save someone, or get someone saved. It's not necessarily the spiritual that comes first. It's the natural that points to the spiritual. It's actually a Biblical principle where the natural comes first and points to the spiritual. When you invest in someone's life and it's your children. You invest in their life in a way that is meaningful to them. You are engaging in a natural activity that actually influences the heart at the spiritual level. So it's the natural that points to the spiritual and the natural that makes a way for the spiritual to happen. This is why we say and why the Scripture is clear on this too, that as God parents us, we need to parent our children, that this top-down approach comes through the natural parenting of ourselves from God and the natural parenting of ourselves to our children, where we are influencing them for Christ. If we're in the way of that process, unfolding for our children, we're wanting to point them to the Lord and we're in the way because our flesh is in the way, we actually create that barrier for our children not to see Christ for who He really is, because they only see us. They see all their problems with us, and they see our bad behavior, and we are actually a stumbling block to our children seeing God for who He really is. It's a true thing that we are representatives of Christ to our children and so however we are representing Him, this is how our children view God in their life and why it is so important we align ourselves correctly with God so that we can point out to our children who He really is so that their hearts will be turned to Him as well. It is important that we understand just how much of a role that we do play as parents in reconciliation process in our family. We can't just simply stand on the sideline, pray for our kids, and hope that some day they will come around.

MH: This is gross irresponsibility. God has so much more for us to participate in with Him. This should give us hope, ladies, because it gives us something to do. God wants you to have something to do. He wants you to cooperate with Him and have many things to do in cooperation with the work He wants to do in you and your children toward the reconciliation process. There are many, many actions in these Love's Actions Seminars that are really good help along the way. Thank you Lord. I think we want to get a testimony heard here. Do you have somebody lined up for that, Barbie?

BP: Yes, I wondered if Lisa would be able to join us on the call? Hi Lisa!

MH: Hi Lisa!

BP: Thanks for joining us. We're glad to hear your testimony today.

Lisa: I'm comparing mine to Catherine's and hers was so wonderful.

BP: I'm sure you have some wonderful testimonies too. You write them on H.E.M. frequently, so I'm eager to hear your testimony too.

MH: Me too, Lisa. Go ahead and share with us a little.

Lisa: What I wanted to say is, after I did the coaching programs, I was excited about how I learned to listen to the Lord and obey Him. I wanted to love my family, and I didn't know what love was like, even though I learned a lot about love from the coaching. The Love's Actions audios are exactly what I needed, and I refer to them all the time. They were so specific and practical about what love looks like between spouses, between parents and their children, and between siblings. Many of the things, I never even thought of, but just needed to hear them so I could stop and ask the Lord to show me and help me with them. Some of them, I didn't even understand before, like enduring evil and discomfort in order to become patient. I really like how each audio has a verse to love and a motivation and a reason to love and what the verse really means to me as a parent today. The way that Barbie explains the dictionary definition of each word is so deep, what it really means, and what it really doesn't mean, what I used to limit it to.

One thing that really helps me with my anger was to learn how to understand where the other person is in their growth process, then I can cooperate with the Lord in what He's doing in them. If the other person is having a hard time with something and mistreating me, I can focus on the Lord and what He wants to do instead of how I've been hurt. I've also learned lots in the *Love's Actions* book. I was going to say how I could use the book. I printed it out and I left it open, then I read one or two verses as I walked by and I use little sticky flags as bookmarks so then I would just move the flag down to where I was on the page.

Lisa: In the back of the book where there is specifics in what parenting in the flesh and parenting in the Spirit looks like, I highlighted the things that I knew I needed to change and when I went back to it, I could see where the Lord was working in me and how He had set me free from my flesh and was working in me through the Spirit.

Even yesterday I was back on the coaching facebook page, and I felt stuck and two ladies recommended two Love's Actions audios to me again, and I needed to go back to them again even though I heard them before, I could now go deeper with what the Lord was showing me. That was really good. I actually had a really big revelation. As you were talking on the phone about knowing Him, I was thinking about knowing and sometimes in some translations it talks about how Adam knew Eve and how intimate that is to know and how when we're obeying, that's what we're doing, we're becoming intimate with God and becoming one with Him because we're doing what He wants us to do. We're listening to Him and we understand Him and we know His heart and what He desires, and because I need Him to help me to love, and that happens when I live every moment looking to Him to lead me. I'm working alongside Him by doing what He shows me and then as I continue obeying there's this continuous knowing and keep obeying and I get to know Him more and more just even in the process of leaning on Him to show me how to love and actually love through me. I think that's what you were saying, but I never really got it like that before. It's really, really deep about really, really knowing Him and being one with Him.

BP: Right, because as He shows us what we're not supposed to do, He convicts our conscience that it isn't loving. He's showing us what He is not like and that He's showing us what we are to do, and directing us toward loving actions, He's showing us what He is like. The process of obeying is coming to know Him. When we don't engage in those activities of obeying our conscience, we stay in this play where we don't actually know Him.

Lisa: It just kind of hit me like I guess because now that I've experienced it, I get what you're talking about. I'm knowing Him! I'm like knowing Him!

MH: Oh, that's precious. That is so true.

BP: That reminds me of what we were just saying, the passage where in the passage of John we were reading, John was saying that He was giving us a new commandment because now we can actually hear it and now we can actually understand. It's like that same thing that's happening with you right now, Lisa, where you heard that before, but now you understand and know it much more deeply and because of obedience, and because you've been walking in obedience, it makes much more sense to you now. You're coming to understand more and more deeply.

Lisa: Yes, that's for sure. I'm actually re-listening to them all and re-reading them all. It makes so much more sense this time.

MH: Oh, Lord, that is so good. You have made a major connection.

Lisa: Yes.

BP: Can you say a little bit, Lisa, about how the dynamic in your home has changed since you have been learning how to love more?

Lisa: I was thinking about how you asked Katherine that, so I was thinking about how I would answer that. I actually think that my children do trust me now. I can only think of one specific area with one specific child where he is still working on that, and I'm trying to remind him that he can trust me now. It's like he needs to be told, or just more time. It's definitely a huge change with my children and how I relate to them and how they relate to me and how we are so much more calm. This is really funny if you want a good laugh. This is kind of a big thing for me. I used to get upset all the time, and I wanted to be calm, and I bought this planter to put flowers in and it said "calm" on it. I thought that would help me to remember to be calm. It's just a planter. Yesterday I noticed (I'm not a very good gardener), but noticed there's all this green growth in there like moss or something. That's how I learned how to be calm, I had to grow. It has nothing to do with having a little planter remind me, because I didn't know how to be calm without the Lord.

MH: A little spiritual metaphor there.

Lisa: Yes, but I really, really appreciate every resource. I definitely learn from all of them and just keep learning.

BP: Good. Thank you, Lisa, for sharing with us. I'm glad to hear your voice and hear your testimony.

MH: Yes, thank you, Lisa, for getting on the line. I really appreciate it. Have a good day, sweetie.

BP: Did you want to have another testimony, Marilyn, or would you like to look at another verse that we have.

MH: Let's look at one verse—Luke 1: 74-75.

BP: Go ahead a talk for a minute and I'll see if I can get it up on facebook for our friends.

MH: I'll just read it. Luke 1: 74-75. *"To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our foes, might serve Him fearlessly in holiness (divine consecration) and righteousness [in accordance with the everlasting principles of right] within His presence all the days of our lives."* So the thought I wanted to bring out there is serving Him fearlessly so that we might serve Him fearlessly in holiness. It's a divine consecration, meaning that we belong to Him, that we have allowed ourselves to be so drawn to the Lord's side, that He is working in us and through us day in and day out, moment by moment, to the extent that we receive from Him. This consecration knowing that we belong to Him, that we belong to His work in our lives—Brings us to a place where we must learn to serve Him fearlessly because we, often, as moms, and wives, need to speak fearlessly into the lives of those whom we love in order to serve the Lord and be the vessel He wants us to be—the helper—He wants us to be to our family. I know many moms are fearful of their own children and even more fearful of their own husband. This is not from the Lord. Fear is not from the Lord. This is the enemy. God wants us to serve Him fearlessly and boldly and to not withhold the truth when the Holy Spirit is nudging us to speak the truth. Yes, there are times when He wants us to be quiet, but there are many times He wants us to speak forth truth, and we must learn to do that fearlessly, ladies, of course, in accordance with principles of what is right and as we are above reproach walking with Him. So be encouraged that the Lord doesn't want you to just stay quiet about everything. God wants to use you as a vessel of insight, wisdom, help with practical application of relational truth in your family. God wants to use you in a mighty way to shape your children's character, to turn their hearts to you and to the Lord. God wants to use you in your husband's life to be a true helper to him, not just to do whatever he wants you to do, but it's not being a true helper. A true helper comes alongside and sees what the real need is and usually a true helper has something to offer that the other one needs. This is why you are married, because you have something to offer that your spouse needs. God will show you wisdom on how to conduct yourself as a godly wife who is a true helper to your husband, so choose to serve Him fearlessly, as you have the knowledge and understanding of how to make proper communications, and that you are above reproach allowing God to do deep works in your heart. Thank you, Lord. Did you have anything else that you'd like to add to that, Barbie?

BP: As you were talking, it just reminded me of so many times when I needed to serve the Lord fearlessly in my relationship with my husband because I knew what the Lord was showing me to say to him, and I just knew in my conscience that that was what I was supposed to say to him, but I was afraid of how my husband would respond and how he might react to me. The Lord was leading me anyway, so I chose to serve the Lord instead of to serve that fear. Instead of respond to the fear, I chose to serve the Lord, which means I actually had to put down that fear and go ahead and share it anyway and tell my husband the thing the Lord was showing me to tell him.

BP: Frequently, the things I'm talking about were things that had to do with the way, for instance, he was treating the children or a habit he had that the Lord was needing me to shine His light on and to be more specific in, like Katherine was saying about the way we talk to people, we just put it there and say the truth and speak it out loud. In my marriage with my husband, speaking the truth out was not the thing to do.

MH: It wasn't even an option.

BP: It was something I was very fearful about, but the Lord brought me forward in maturity as I served Him fearlessly and I spoke about the things the Lord was telling me to share, and I put aside the fear and decided not to obey the fear. I decided to obey the Lord instead, in holiness, out of love for my husband and what the Lord was showing me he needed, just like Marilyn was just saying about actually becoming a true helper to him. That's what I was thinking about as you were talking about this verse, Marilyn.

MH: I think Mary just posted the 2 Timothy verse that, "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind." A sound mind, ladies, is thinking right about life. That's where you're thinking right about life and having a sound mind. You have no idea, well some of you have an idea how much the flesh twists and turns every thought and every idea and everything that is opposed to its mind. The flesh turns and twists it and makes it into something that the other person never intended for it to mean, but that is what the flesh does. The flesh does not want to die. The flesh has pride and control and does not have a sound mind and will twist and turn everything to suit its own purposes. So it can agree with Scriptures and even pontificate on Scriptures. It can pound the Bible. It can pretend to be serving the Lord, but when that truth is applied relationally to a person's life that is in pride, they will twist and turn it to mean something that it does not mean. *This is why you can't actually say you are walking in truth unless there is heart level reconciliation because truth and searching the Scriptures for truth and to know God, like Barbie was describing earlier, isn't even a possibility unless your heart is receiving the correction and instruction of the Holy Spirit. When that is taking place, that's when you are understanding Scripture correctly. If that is not taking place, you are not, absolutely are not, receiving the truth correctly as God intended it to mean.*

There are many Scriptures that bring this idea out, but remember, ladies, that if fear is operating in you that prevents you from obeying the conviction of the Holy Spirit, this is not from God. God gives you power through love and a sound mind that thinks right. Sometimes when you are brand new in a process, and these right thoughts are locked up inside of you, you can stay pretty confused for a long time. You really have to act on right thoughts to make them real and change you, so act on them. Speak the truth in love. Take the actions of love that need to be taken and then don't hide in that. Talk about it. Talk about what God is showing you and share it with your husband for you, yourself, what God is showing you.

MH: Be open about how you're changing and make it real, because you are actually breathing life into the process that is locked up inside of you and breathe life and make it give birth into reality. Force it out into the open, don't hide your sin inside yourself and don't hide any righteousness either. It doesn't make it real when you keep it all locked up. You've got to take real actions of reconciliation where you're rebuilding trust with people, where you're speaking forth the things that God is showing you. Make it real. When you do that, you are disarming the enemy in your life and confusion leaves your life when you make your process real. Don't go your process alone. Even though my husband didn't understand what I was going through, when I went through all of that, I talked about it all the time. He listened all the time.

He did not always get what I was saying, but he listened all the time. I didn't keep it locked up inside of me, and that was one of the first things that the Lord taught me when way back in my very first experience was an answer to prayer, a direct specific answer to prayer, that was miraculous to me at the time. The Lord told me to speak about it to my husband and my son at the time. That gave me cause to be nervous and I didn't know what would happen, because we were very private people and we didn't talk about such things. Overcome those tendencies, ladies. Whatever tendencies you have in your relationships, ladies, just overcome them and decide that you are going to make your faith real, you're going to make your process real. You are disarming the enemy every time you turn around. Every time you speak out, one more finger of the enemies grip is being loosened off the soul of your life, so get rid of him. Be fearless in your approach to the spiritual dynamic of God's work in your life. Be fearless in it. Allow the Lord to do wonderful, mighty and powerful things in you and through you. Thank you, Lord. Develop that sound mind. Barbie, did you want to get another testimony?

BP: Yes, I wondered if Monica could get on the line with us? Are you here with us?

Monica: Yes, can you hear me?

BP: Yes, I can hear you.

MH: Hi, Monica, thanks for getting on the line with us.

Monica: Yes, thank you.

BP: Go ahead. We'd love to hear your testimony about the Love's Actions.

Monica: I was just thinking that my understanding of love used to be so much about making other people happy, so I made myself a victim to this goal that was impossible to ever reach.

Monica: I just thought that if people weren't happy with me and approving of me then I was doing something wrong and unloving, and so just what you guys have been talking about—telling the truth—that's what God has been putting on my heart through the Empowering book and the Love's Actions Seminars. They just helped me learn so much about what love really is. It's not about just making people happy. It's not just saying, "I love you." People can say that a lot and it doesn't really mean anything. One of the quotes from that Barbie said was said to stop telling yourself that you love your children while you continue to mistreat them and hurt their hearts. It's like love is action, not just words. It's something you have to do or it's something that you're doing that is unloving, so that's been really helpful to me. As I listened to each one, I'm learning so much about what that looks like and it's helping me to grow. It's hard for me to tell the truth and to be bold and to say the right thing because I'm a people pleaser, but to not be truthful is not loving. I guess I spent so much of my time, I don't mean neglecting my kids, but it was like a distraction trying to teach them. It was like I have to please all these other people.

I have to make sure they approve of me so I kind of put that on the back burner and it was really hard for me to start speaking truth to my husband because I didn't want him to be mad at me.....what if he's not okay with what I say and he rejects me, so I would just be quiet and not say anything, but God has really transformed our family in the last few months and just really kind of helped me to put away all the thoughts about others and be able to focus on my husband and my children and how am I showing them love. So the Love's Actions gives such practical, "this is what it looks like" and so I can walk in that. That's been really helpful to me. Like the verse says, love covers a multitude of sins, Barbie had said that it doesn't mean pretending like the sin never happened. So in order to please people, I thought that's what you had to do. I did that with my husband and I did that with my kids.

MH: Oh my goodness. So back up just a moment, Monica. So you thought that verse meant—love covers a multitude of sins—means that you are quiet about it and cover it over, deny it, and pretend it isn't there?

Monica: Yes, be quiet about it and don't make a big deal about it. I did it. I totally thought that way. Although I see the error in that now, that's definitely how I operated. I don't know if I really did that with my kids but with my husband, I guess and with others. If I'm quiet and don't tell them something was hurtful or don't tell them it's wrong, then I'm loving them. I thought that was expected of me.

MH: Yes but what is your perception of that now—the meaning of that for you now?

Monica: I guess God has just made me bolder in speaking what's true in a loving way trying to empower other people and my husband, so it's not about telling someone they're a failure.

Monica: It's not like I'm going to point something out and you've failed, but to embrace the fact that God forgives us. Lets acknowledge we have these sins, repent of them, and find healing from them. There's no healing when you're just covering over it or ignoring it or not doing anything about it. But there can be healing. You don't have to all of a sudden become a victim of your sins because you've done wrong, but we can have the victory over it. So in that sense, I don't feel like I'm just being mean. I feel like we have hope in Jesus, so we can uncover those things and deal with them and strip off that flesh and be free from it.

MH: Love is powerful. Love empowers and covers a multitude of weaknesses.

Monica: Yes, it's just been really hard to be really vulnerable especially with my husband and people outside of my family and whom I love. To just have them not necessarily agree with me and say that's okay. I'm just going to do what I know is right and what the Holy Spirit is telling me to do. It's the stripping off of my flesh is not worrying about what other people think. That's been a really hard thing for me to do, but it's been powerful and I'm seeing the fruit of it. Love isn't an obligation. You don't do it because you're part of the family, so you help. You do it out of the overflow of love and so many things like you're saying, this moral blindness—I feel like that's what I'm coming up against is how do I keep showing love and speaking the truth when people have blinders on and they don't want the blinders taken off? Now what do I do? I see how it's going to work in my family and of course I don't think we've totally overcome everything. There's so much, this training and loving and showing them to be able to trust me in my own home. I can see how it's going to be a daily thing. But now it's like from the outside of home, what if they don't want to hear the truth? That's been hard for me.

MH: You're only responsible for what God gives to you right now. You need to entrust the rest of it to the Lord and when He wants to give it to you, He will. You can sense in the spirit what He is giving you and what isn't. That kind of tension in the spirit where you have a burden for people but that doesn't mean you're supposed to be doing something. Just because you have a burden for people doesn't mean you're supposed to be taking action. The best action we can take is to pray for people. I always find and I still do and I tell my kids this, that when they have a repetitive burden that is weighing on their soul but it's not necessarily conscious but in the back of their mind while they are going through the duties of life, and suddenly you realize you've had this in the back of your mind for days, and you suddenly realize you've been thinking about a certain situation or a certain person for days, I tell them they have got to turn that into prayer.

It doesn't mean you are supposed to do something because what the human wants to do is find a solution for whatever it is that you are feeling distressed over or burdened for that other person. It can cause you to take actions God doesn't want you to take.

MH: We have a limited understanding how God can work in that situation that we feel burdened about. What we need to do is turn it to prayer for that situation and that person, and trust God to act, because He can act in so many ways that we are unaware of and that we might not even know about in real time and maybe after the fact, or maybe never we would know about it. I've often had answers to prayer that way. You just turn it over to the Lord and really pray over the thing that has kind of consumed the back of the mind of your soul for a few days. You realize it is God through the Holy Spirit that is burdening you to pray. That's what you do. You practice that and you learn how to do that, ladies. This develops your prayer life for other people and you can become an intercessor that way and it releases you from a practical responsibility that God isn't giving you. If He gives you a practical responsibility, it is going to come through your prayer life. It's not going to come through you coming up with ideas for how to solve a problem or a false sense of responsibility to speak to someone about something in their life just because you see they have a need to know something. Just because the need is there doesn't mean that God is calling you to act on it, so pray over those things and God will make you aware whether or not you are supposed to take action on things. Then you don't have to carry a false sense of responsibility toward people.

Of course, I've been in ministry for a long time and have had to do that a lot because I can't possibly talk to everybody who contacts me. I can't possibly do that. I would need to live a few more lifetimes and a few more weeks in every week to be able to answer everything that comes my way. I can't do it. I get frustrated sometimes because I want to, and I can't I have to entrust things to the Lord, and in my life, it's the squeaky wheel that gets the grease, so if they come at me more than a few times, I start paying attention.

Thank you so much, Monica, for sharing. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us before we move on?

Monica: No just that I'm so thankful for truth to be spoken to me so that I can go forth with confidence with how the Lord is leading and this is what it means, like you said, ...understanding what that really means in a practical way. That's just been such a huge help to me and I've been very thankful for that.

MH: Thank you for sharing how Love's Actions is impacting your life; and sharing a little bit about what God's doing. It's very encouraging, I can tell, just from your posts, too, that things are going well. I haven't known you like I have some of the other moms, but I really appreciate you being willing to share a little with us on the line today.

BP: Yes.

MH: Barbie, did you want to wrap up with one more Scripture? I'd rather hear a testimony.

BP: We have one more testimony. Carlise would like to share with us. Are you there with us, Carlise?

Carlise: Yes I am, but I just realized my battery is running out on my phone so I have to get my other one.

BP: Okay.

MH: A lot of different topics come up just talking about what we think is one topic, don't they, Barbie? Lots of different topics.

BP: Well, yeah, if we're talking about love, like when we started the meetings that we had at the church, we could talk about it forever, right?

MH: Everything stems off of it. I did want to make a note to the coaching program that is about faith—we were talking about fear awhile ago—we have quite a bit of instruction in that program on faith and fear and helping to identify legitimate fears as opposed to illegitimate fears just for those of you who might want to know that that teaching is available in the Your Faith mini coaching program in Making Heart Level Connections Mini Coaching Program.

Carlise: Hi, I'm back. Thank you, I'm sorry.

MH: It's all right. Thanks for getting on the line with us.

Carlise: Okay. You know, you were talking about confusion leaving your life when you're walking in love. I've tried so long for so many years to avoid sin, but I wasn't consciously being loving in my actions. I thought I was but I wasn't, and it's like I pictured a funnel going upward. It was really wide at the bottom, and it was full of confusion. I was unrestrained in my life going many directions. It's been narrowing and narrowing and it's been coming to a point where the narrow part is love, which is what all your messages are about forever. It's all about being loving. As that has been becoming narrow, my capacity to love is growing, so it's kind of going in the opposite widening direction. There's less confusion and I'm becoming more restrained in what I do in a good way.

MH: Thank you, Lord.

Carlise: I have really loved the Love's Actions and listen to them over and over and over. It is such practical advice that Barbie gives that has helped me see. I've had such a hard time seeing because I've always tried to see through my flesh and never realizing that as I become more loving in my actions, I am able to see more and understand more.

Carlise: Your messages are helping me to see practically what love looks like in my relationships. I love the way you put it, in relationship with our spouse, with our kids, and our kids to each other, and us with the Lord. My two favorite ones, I like them all, but what have really made a difference to me is Kindness and Understanding. So when I heard the message about kindness and what it looks like in relationships, I knew I needed to act on that. But I didn't quite know how to put it into practice even though I had been changing over the years, I still had to learn a lot and understand a lot more of what it looked like, practically. I would listen to it over, and over, and over again, and I was still slow at getting it. The reason is because I lacked being understanding towards my family. That didn't come out till several messages later, when you had that Love's Action about Understanding. To me, in order to be kind, you need to understand someone. I was all wrapped up in my own thoughts about myself and how I could do this instead of being more concerned and having more care for someone else and seeing actually what was going on in their life, and understand why they were doing what they were doing or how they got there.

I was always trying to help and change and do these other things without this understanding and no wonder there was a lot of confusion and a lot of pain and so forth. Then I began to purposely pull back what I was doing and begin to listen more and to try to understand more. When you talked with the Love's Actions, it was about the husband and it was my biggest area at the time, so I began to purposely try to understand him and get to know him better and in turn be able to love him more. The end of last year, we knew my husband was really sick with cancer and with the affects it was having on his body. We didn't know how much longer he had to live. With all of that, we had to make a lot of decisions about treatments and to put our finances and paperwork in order and prepare for his death. It wasn't that I was without hope, but practically, we had to deal with some of these things. I couldn't just ignore that. We lived each day the best we could and none of it was easy, but because previously before that, with the coaching calls especially the conscience, and learning about listening to my conscience and obeying God, because of listening to these Love's Actions, it put me in a place where I could truly love my husband and understand him and what he was going through and how to meet his needs.

Before it used to be about me trying to get my way or trying to get my husband to do what I thought was best, and all of that was changing. I kept listening to the messages over and over. My heart and mind were changing. Instead of trying to love and trying to be kind and trying to understand, going to the filter of myself and my own self-centered ways, I was truly looking at him for who he was; not for who I wanted him to be, not who I thought he should be, not trying to make myself feel better, but to really be able to meet his need. This really touched his heart. It changed him also. That's not the reason I was doing it. I wasn't doing it for that or to expect anything in return, but I did get a return.

Carlise: During the last months, we both changed dramatically. We grew more in love with each other and even though it was hard and sad, we grew to appreciate one another as we never had in all of our years of marriage. It was real. It wasn't just because we had a baby, and you know how special that couple weeks with everything all new and he'd always treat me special. It was so different and so real and it met both of our needs. We weren't perfect in our love but we were growing in it, and that was the best place we needed to be and I knew that. One of those decisions we made while the hospice nurse was there, she asked him that it might be easier for his family if he'd go to the hospital. I was sitting there thinking that I want him home and want him here with me. I want to be with him, but I didn't say anything. I just waited to see what he wanted. He said he would really rather be home if that's okay with me. I said yes, and we just cried. It was just so different to be able to yield my heart, to understand his need and to be able to meet that. Something that was a big discovery for me was that as I was coming to understand and know him without expectation of return, my needs were getting met. I was no longer trying to meet my needs. It was a gift and so precious to go back and remember these times, because my life has been really busy lately and I hadn't thought of some of the particulars, so it was really precious. I was really grateful.

So because I was meeting my husband's needs, he was meeting my needs by telling me that he loved me. He was at the point where he couldn't do the things physically, I was doing that for him, but it was just his words were kind, grateful and loving. He said that he could never do what I was doing and didn't know how I did it. He'd pause and say that it was the Lord working through me. what that showed me was that I was really loving him with the Lord's love and there was no greater desire than what he did right there to give honor to the Lord and to acknowledge how good He really is and what He had done. I knew it wasn't in my own...in my bathroom I have a Scripture from the amplified Bible, Philippians 2:13, "Not in your own strength, for it is God who is all the while effectively at work in you energizing and creating in you the power and desire both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction..." so that was another precious gift that the Lord gave me. I would tell him all the time how much I loved him and I would look into his eyes and before he was real busy and wouldn't want to take time. But now because he was experiencing my love, he allowed me to touch his face and hold him close and it felt like, as I look back, to me it's the greatest love story, the ending here on earth, but I don't feel it's the ending at all. I feel like it's kind of like a beginning. It's sad to me to think that we won't be able to walk this out. We'll never be able to continue to experience that here on earth, but I know that I know that we will some day, when I go and see him and Jesus.

MH: It's a real interesting point that you brought up about love being the beginning. It really is and there isn't an end to it and that is the hope you have in Christ knowing that even though the beginning started late, it's going to go on forever. There is no ending to what you'll get to explore with Rich in the future.

MH: Love coming into your life is, like in my life, felt like a before and after, and it's always seemed like that to me. There is before love and there is after love, and all of my life before the Holy Spirit came and moved Christ's love into my heart through the Holy Spirit was just a before and it's like a dim shadow of what I've had in my life ever since. Love is so powerful to change our lives and to bring us into the light and where we are walking in light. It's a never-ending life that goes with us through eternity. You're blessed that you had that opportunity with Rich. I know you knew that already that you're very blessed to have had that opportunity with him. It's like love culminates everything, culminates your life together, wraps it all up and takes you forward.

Carlise: It really does, because there were regrets over the past years and sadness of missing him, but his last words, like the end and the beginning, to me that morning were, "I love you." The memory I carry of that carries me and is so complete. I know that the Lord's kindness towards my husband is what led him to be reconciled to his family. That's why these messages are so important because they are truths in practical ways towards others, and it's all about love. Not only be reconciled to my family but to a friendship that was broken for 20 years also knowing where Rich is at is one of the greatest kindnesses the Lord has given me.

MH: Yes, thank you, Lord. Thank you, Carlise. Thank you for sharing that with us and with the ladies on the line. Many of them know you've been in a mourning season and that you're not fully out of that yet, so I appreciate you being willing to share.

BP: How the Love's Actions seminars have impacted your life and brought some joy into this sad time.

Carlise: Thank you for sharing and going through all that you do to bring all of these messages of hope and of love and truth so we can be changed and spread the goodness of God.

MH: Thank you, sweetie. I appreciate you getting on and sharing with us today. God bless you, Carlise.

BP: Thank you, hon.

MH: I wanted to make a point in closing here, Barbie, I think that people sometimes begin taking actions when they are in their flesh and they try to take good loving actions in their own ability still and trying to make changes in their own ability, it can often feel like you are just modifying your behavior. *Understand the Scripture that it is the law that leads to Christ. It is the constraining ways of the Lord that make the way possible for Him to work in our heart, so the goal isn't to just stay in our own efforts.*

MH: *The goal is to receive God's grace more and more and more and be walking in faith toward the overcoming life to where we're receiving more of His power in our life to make those changes so that we're not working so hard in our own ability to change our own life.*

It's just like parents with children. Your children are not self-governed by the Holy Spirit. They are not born that way. They have to be trained and you have to apply the law to their life while you are working in their hearts to lead them to a desire for Christ to dwell there. It's the same way that God is working in us. He is leading us by constraining our actions to the conviction of the Holy Spirit and giving us the instruction we need to make some changes in our actions. He is leading us to a fuller desire of Christ reigning in our lives through the Holy Spirit. Added desire increases through the process of making things right, because the more you attempt to make things right, the more ugliness you see and the more tired of it you become and God brings you to the place where you give it up. You are willing to give up more and more of your self-life for His Spirit to rule and reign in you.

It's this love that leads us to Christ, so don't be dismayed and discouraged when it feels like only you working. If you're making any changes at all, I guarantee you are receiving God's grace to do it. God is involved, but He is not necessarily on the throne of your heart yet. You're working toward that and your ways are in the way still and you need to become hungry for Him, and that is the key toward getting set free of your self ways—

Becoming hungry for the Lord and the expressions He wants from you are prayer and worship and thanksgiving and just being grateful for the work He's doing in you. No matter how hard it is, be grateful. Always be grateful, and learn to express gratefulness to the Lord, and learn to express worship because He is worthy to be honored and glorified no matter what is going on in our lives, ladies. Be encouraged. Love is the way God has for us. That is the way He has for us to live our Christian lives. It's all about love. Love is the purpose...

BP: And the goal of the Christian life. We're glad that you joined us here, ladies.

MH: I want to thank Katherine and Lisa and Monica and Carlise again, too, for getting on the line with us. It's special to be able to hear a little bit of your life and testimony of how God is working. It's always a blessing to hear what is going on in people's lives for God's glory. Get yourself a little word study going, ladies, on a passage that has to do with a love's action. I'm going to give you a couple passages you can take to heart. Luke 3: 8 is one we were going to discuss if we had the time and an idea that came from that is a heart that abhors sin.

MH: Then Luke 9: 48 about welcoming children and revealing God's love to children for Jesus' sake. Was there another one here? Yes, 1 John 2: 15-16 and this one has to do with ... the things of the world and 2 Corinthians 1:12 having to do with relating with others with pure motivations and Godly sincerity. Look up your own and get going on a little word study of your own. God will give you a Scripture study that He wants you to have and the word He wants you to study and the understanding He wants you to have and this particular need you have in the moment. That's where He is a very personal God. You know that already.

We want to tell you we love you. We are grateful for you. And most of all, we really wish for you and desire for you all the blessings of God's spiritual fruit in your life and in your family above and beyond anything you could even ask or think of. I know for me that I ended up with fruit that I could not even envision because I could not see it anywhere around me. I ended up with fruit I could not envision. So it's above and beyond what you could ask or think, ladies. That is what we want for you is what God wants for you too. Thank you, Lord. We thank you for getting on the line with us today. The Lord go with you, bless you, and keep you and your heart close into His will for your life. thank you, Lord.

BP: Thank you, ladies, for joining us today.

Callers: Many thank-yous are extended.