FamilyLife Today® Radio Transcript

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A New Year of Love

Guest:	Barbara Rainey
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Bob: Have you ever felt like the love has just gone out of your marriage completely? Or do you have children who just can't seem to get along—don't know how to love each other? Barbara Rainey says that's a symptom of a spiritual issue in your life.

Barbara: We really do not know how to love. We think we do, but we do not know how to love. We are *completely* incapable of loving on our own because we're broken. The *only* way we can love, and love well, is to be in a relationship with Jesus Christ and to know Him so that, then, His love can flow through us to other people.

Bob: This is *FamilyLife Today*. Our host is the President of FamilyLife®, Dennis Rainey, and I'm Bob Lepine. All of us have a lot to learn about love. We're going to see if we can learn a little bit today and give you some ideas about how you can spread the learning and love in your family. Stay with us.

1:00

And welcome to *FamilyLife Today*. Thanks for joining us on the Monday edition.

Dennis: Bob, I've got a question for you.

Bob: Wait, wait—wait. No, no, no. Don't take me—no, no, no.

Dennis: I've got a question for you. Who was the founder of Valentine's Day?

Bob: Saint Valentine.

Dennis: Wrong.

Bob: No, no, no. That's right!

Dennis: No, no, no. It was Charles, Duke of Orleans, who, in 1415, was imprisoned. The way he passed time was by writing romantic verses to his wife.

Bob: Yes? Is this from Wikipedia®? Where'd you get this?

Dennis: Uh—it wasn't Wikipedia. It was—

Bob: Where was it? You just googled [Laughter] —you just googled.

Dennis: That is not true! [Laughter]

Bob: You are just believing whatever you found on the internet—

Dennis: That is not true. It was "Where Stuff Comes From," I think, or something like that.

Bob: There have been a few times, on *FamilyLife Today*, when I have just brought you in the studio and you had no idea what we were going to be talking about; right?—a couple of times when that has happened.

Dennis: Slightly more than a couple. [Laughter]

2:00

Bob: Do you remember—there was one program, where I said: "Come in. Sit down, and listen to this thing Al Mohler said; and then, tell me what you think about it." Do you remember that show?

Dennis: Yes.

Bob: Well, so, I thought this is really an example of turnabout is fair play because you just said, "Come in the studio because I want to talk about something Barbara has been working on;" right?

Dennis: Right.

Bob: Just, in the providence of God, what was I reading, earlier today, on my Kindle device? You see right there? What is it?

Dennis: *Charity and Its Fruits* by Jonathan Edwards.

Bob: *Charity and Its Fruits* by Jonathan Edwards. Are you familiar with this?

Barbara: I know Jonathan Edwards. I know *of* him.

Bob: Barbara Rainey is joining us today, as well, on *FamilyLife Today*. Thank you for being here.

Barbara: Thank you, Bob.

Dennis: And charity, of course, is love.

Bob: And this is the book that Jonathan Edwards wrote on 1 Corinthians 13—the whole chapter. The reason I was reading it was because, back last fall, at our church, I preached a sermon series on 1 Corinthians 13—verses 1-7.

Barbara: Very good.

3:00

Bob: So, I have no idea what we're talking about here today. I come in, and on the wall is hanging this chain of hearts in preparation for Valentine's Day; right?

Barbara: That's right.

Bob: This is what you've been working on?

Barbara: Correct.

Bob: You want to tell us what it is?

Barbara: Well, it's a way for families to focus on love—biblical love/God's love—around Valentine's. Valentine's tends to be kind of sappy and sentimentalism; or we think Valentine's is only for couples, and it's romantic. But love is from God, and we don't know how to love unless we know Him.

He teaches us how to love, and He shows us how to love. In my opinion, Valentine's should be about learning about love—love for one another—in any relationship that you're engaged in.

Bob: I have to tell you—when I taught through 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, we most often hear that chapter read in weddings or in the context of romantic love.

4:00

The main idea I got out of it was: "This was a rebuke. This was the Apostle Paul talking to a loveless people about: 'This is what love looks like, and you don't look like this.'"

Barbara: Exactly.

Dennis: And what else is a family? Think about it!

Barbara: Yes; exactly. [Laughter]

Dennis: When we were raising our kids, it was like: “They *need* training. They *really* need training.” If there’s an area they need training in, it’s this right here because the world is sending false messages about what love is / where it comes from. Think of how Hollywood portrays love.

Barbara: It’s easy; it’s feelings; it’s romantic; it doesn’t take any work.

Bob: Well, forget Hollywood. My own *flesh*—

Barbara: Yes, no doubt.

Bob: —is telling me that love is all about *me* and about what satisfies me. That’s what jumped out at me, as I went over and over this text, and as I read Jonathan Edwards, and as I studied this subject.

Over and over again, I was just struck by the fact—

5:00

—that love is about the sacrificial service to others. Again, that’s not something that comes naturally in our lives or in families.

Dennis: I think it might just be a good idea to read the passage where Barbara has really focused on with her Valentine’s resource here for families. Let me just read it—1 Corinthians 13, beginning in verse 4—and just think about what Bob said about this being a rebuke—challenging us to get it right: “Love is patient—

Barbara: Ouch!

Dennis: —“and kind.”

Bob: And I’m neither of those. Keep going.

Dennis: “Love does not envy or boast.” Ooh. “It is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way. It’s not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things. Love believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

6:00

Love never ends.”

Bob: You know, I remember somebody—and you’ve probably heard this too—somebody, one time, said, “Take the word, ‘love,’ out / put your own name in there,”—

Dennis: Right.

Bob: —you don't get very far before you're just lying! You are just lying!

Barbara: Exactly

Dennis: Let me just read it: Bob is patient.

Bob: Okay, we're done! [Laughter] See? You see, exactly, what I'm talking about. But the other thing they said—and this is what is so critical—they said, "Take the word, 'love,' out and put 'Jesus'—and it's the description—it's who Jesus is."

Dennis: Oh, yes.

Bob: And that's the point.

Barbara: That *is* the point.

Bob: This is who we are not—this is who Jesus is. So the call to families and the call to all of us—is not just to get our love-act together—but it's to be *in Him* so that His love can flow through us; right?

Barbara: Exactly because we really do not know how to love. We think we do, but we do not know how to love.

7:00

We are *completely* incapable of loving on our own. The only way we can love, and love well, is to be in a relationship with Jesus Christ and to know Him; so that, then, His love can flow through us to other people because we're broken, and we don't know how to do it—which is why the verse, that's kind of the summary verse for this—even though these hearts go through 1 Corinthians 13—but the summary verse is: "We love because He first loved us [1 John 4:10]." We would not be able to love if He didn't first love us.

Bob: —which, by the way, was the verse on our wedding invitation. It's the verse that's engraved in Mary Ann's wedding ring—

Barbara: Very cool.

Bob: —because it's just a reminder, to us, that the source of love is Christ.

Dennis: Well, to that point, I'm just reflecting back to the summer of 1972 when I fell in love with this young lady who completely captured my heart, Barbara Peterson.

At that point—I look back, now, 41 years later, and it's like—

8:00

—that I even *thought* that what I was experiencing was love is almost laughable. It is a commitment. It is all of these statements—again, we've got a chain hanging up here in the studio that has hearts on it that proclaim each of these description on love from 1 Corinthians 13. I can guaranty you that if you go through all of them and just look and see how God has taught me how to love through my marriage with my kids, with my grandkids, with my daughters-in-law, sons-in-law. Life is about learning how to love—love God and love others.

Bob: We should say—you had known Barbara for years before the summer of '72; right?

Dennis: She was a good friend.

Bob: Yes. So what happened that summer? I mean—you just—

Dennis: All of a sudden, I stopped looking at her as a friend.

Bob: The scales fell off your eyes.

Dennis: I go: "She is a friend; but whoa, man!—

9:00

—man/woman!" [Laughter] I kind of woke up and go: "I like her, and she's running hard after God." We began our mission together—neither one of us knew what we were doing, in terms of loving, but we forged a covenant—that really is the headwaters of love—and began the process of God tutoring us—through the Scriptures / through each other of how to truly love another imperfect person.

Bob: Barbara, in the book that you and Dennis wrote, years ago, about love—you wrote a book called *Rekindling the Romance*. In that book, you talked about different seasons of love. You talked about that young infatuated—in the parking lot, at the mall, when the scales fell off Dennis' eyes and he looked at you differently. He was falling in love with you—

Barbara: Yes.

Bob: —that's infatuation.

Barbara: And that's the easy kind.

Bob: And it's wonderful.

Dennis: Well, you fall under—it's like gravity. You fall under the spell, and it just—

10:00

—you just go downstream with it.

Bob: Right.

Barbara: It's easy.

Dennis: And then, you come to the rapids. [Laughter]

Bob: There is a season where love kind of has to *fight* through the fog to stay connected. That leads you to a season of mature love, which is the richest, deepest kind of love there is; isn't it?

Barbara: But you have to go through the rapids to get to the mature love—the kind of love that's satisfying—the kind of love that we got married for. You can't get to that unless you go through the hard times and make the choice that you're going to continue to learn to love—you're going to continue to learn to forgive—and you're going to continue to depend on God to give you what you, in the rapids, realize you don't have the ability to do.

Bob: The reason is because, in the rapids, you learn how to be patient, how to be kind, how to not insist on your own way—all of the things that we find in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13. We can read that and nod our heads, but we have to go through it a few times—

11:00

—before it starts to sink into our lives.

Dennis: And that's what she's trying to do in this Valentine's resource that she's created. She's trying to, practically, bring us into the experience of love, and have us kind of have a throne-check of our own hearts, and ask the question: "How are you doing in terms of really expressing *real* love?"

Take the first one and maybe, before we get into this, you need to explain each of these hearts is like a little book. Would you like to explain it instead of me?

Barbara: I think I should. [Laughter] Well, the idea is to help us focus on what love is all about during Valentine's because, when kids are in school, they're talking about it. There's advertising everywhere. Yet, it's a prime opportunity for moms, and dads, and kids to focus on love.

There are 15 hearts that will come in the kit—14 of them are about 1 Corinthians 13.

12:00

The 15th one has the verse: "We love because He first loved us [1 John 4:19]," on the outside. The idea is that, starting on February 1st, you take the first heart and you read about "Love is patient." There's a story in there about someone who demonstrated patience.

Dennis: Well, now wait. Wait. Before you get to the story on the—

Barbara: I wasn't going to tell the story.

Dennis: Well, I want you to tell the story—it's a great story.

Barbara: Okay.

Dennis: But on the inside of the heart are some summary statements about what it means for love to be patient. If you thought the other was convicting, Bob—this is as well: "Love chooses self-control rather than speaking or acting out of impatience. Love doesn't retaliate. Love is willing to wait calmly. Love is long-suffering—another word for patience—which means waiting may be long and unpleasant, but love trusts that God is in control." And then, finally, one more: "Love is not flighty or quick.

13:00

It takes time to love well."

I think kids can catch on to some of these, and grab hold of them, and realize: "In our family, this is the kind of love we need to be practicing with one another." Then, on the opposite side, you tell a story. I think it would be good—Bob, why don't you read the story there? Just read it out loud because this is what folks would do at a breakfast before school.

Bob: Alright. So, let me read what's on "Love is Patient":

> Patience is not natural to us. We feel impatient when we can't control the circumstances or people in our lives. When our parents are late to pick us up at school or the traffic jam makes us late for work, the right response is to be patient—trusting that God is at work and He knows what He is doing.
>
> When translating the entire Bible from Latin and Greek into English, the first person to do so, William Tyndale, practiced great patience.

14:00

He desired to help his countrymen have the Bible in their own language so they, too, could read words like: “We love because He first loved us,” which was the verse that changed Tyndale’s life.

But the church of that day was so violently opposed to his idea that they arrested anyone who possessed even a partial copy of the Bible. Many of these Bible owners were burned at the stake. Undeterred, William spent the rest of his life translating the entire Bible into English, while fleeing from the authorities who searched for him in every country in Europe.

His long-suffering helps us see that love trusts God’s control, even when the wait is unpleasant. The One who perfectly demonstrated how to love this way was Jesus. He told us how to do this when He said: “I do nothing on My own. I always do the things that are pleasing to the Father.”

So then, after the story is read, it says here:

15:00

Pause and ask God what to do or say, like Jesus did. Think about staying calm, about choosing self-control instead of blurting out whatever you feel like saying, and enduring unpleasantness while you wait.

And then, there’s a prayer here:

Patience is not easy for me, Lord—not with my family, not with certain people, not with my circumstances. Help me remember it’s not about me, but it’s about what You want to teach me. Amen.

Dennis: I’m picturing us reading that—and our kids would be bouncing off the walls—even though it only took three or four minutes, total.

Barbara: Well, we would have done it while they were eating so they were, at least, a little bit preoccupied. [Laughter]

Dennis: Yes; but they’ll be hearing more than you think they’ll be hearing.

Barbara: They *always* hear more than you think they’re hearing. They pretend like they’re not listening, but they’re hearing.

Dennis: It's the way to get stuff in their hearts. And it's a way to do it so that they can have takeaways that they can, ultimately, apply—

16:00

—in their relationships with the parents and, also, their brothers and sisters.

Bob: And each of these 15 hearts are clipped to a chain. In fact, when I walked into the studio, the chain was up on the studio wall. It looked like one of those "Happy Birthday" signs that you buy at the store to put up for somebody's birthday.

Dennis: Right.

Bob: So, you'd hang this over a windowsill or—

Barbara: —fireplace mantle. You could hang it across a door. You can tack it on a wall—just about any place. But the idea is that it's then up for the first 14 days of February, culminating on Valentine's Day. As a family, you're seeing this—day, after day, after day. It's just a visual reminder of what love is all about. Hopefully, it will provide opportunities for conversation as each family member runs into an opportunity where they realize they're not loving so well. After all, maybe, they'll talk about it. Maybe, there will actually be some heart change through the process of that—which is what these are shaped like—are hearts.

And, it can be left up all year.

17:00

We tend to think seasonally—that we can only talk about love, and hearts, and things like that at Valentine's. Well, it's year-round—same with Thanksgiving and gratitude. It's something that should be a part of our conversation and our lives, year-round. So, it can be left up a lot longer than February 14th.

Dennis: I have a feeling that this is going to be used, by God, in a lot of families' lives—where kids are going to walk over, and unclip one of these hearts, and say: "Hey, Mom! Hey, Dad! I think you need to read this!" [Laughter]

Bob: Little conviction reminders.

Barbara: Yes, you know it sure could.

Dennis: Well, what goes around comes around.

Barbara: Yes, that's right.

Dennis: It's not just us instructing the kids. We're trying to model this as well.

Bob: See, I was thinking, "If I was a kid, I would find the ones that were most convicting and hide them in a drawer somewhere—take them off the chain and just throw it in the fire or something—get rid of the whole deal."

Barbara: "Get rid of it." Well, see, that's one of my secret goals—is that by creating these things that moms and dads want to do with their children—

18:00

—I'm actually teaching the moms and dads, too, because we all need the truth; right?

Dennis: Yes. I was thinking back to what Bob said and what our kids did with a chore box. Remember the chore box?

Barbara: Yes. They went through and took out all the ones they didn't like.

Dennis: We had little pieces of strips of paper that were all the nastiest, dirtiest chores that you could *ever* imagine. And they contained a few others that were pretty simple—like washing a window, or mopping the floor, sweeping the floor or taking out the garbage—things that are pretty simple.

Well, I began to notice that the chore box had fewer and fewer strips of paper.

Barbara: Well, what we noticed was that, when the kids got in trouble and they had to choose a chore, as a discipline, they always managed to pull out a slip of paper that was the easiest thing in the box.

Dennis: Yes.

Barbara: And it's because they threw away all the hard ones. [Laughter]

Dennis: They had edited the inventory!

Barbara: Yes, they did. [Laughter]

Bob: I think you guys need to read through this love stuff! You were putting messy chores in the box.

Dennis: Oh, no!

Barbara: You don't think that is love? [Laughter]

19:00

Dennis: It was very loving, Bob! You know that. You disciplined your kids as well.

Bob: That's right. Well, again, this doesn't have to be done at Valentine's Day; but I'm just thinking of all of the parents who are going to the Walmart® and buying those 32-pack of valentines. The kids are filling them out and giving one to everybody in the class. To have something like this, up around the house at that time of the year, is going to make sense to your second-grader or your senior in high school; right?

Barbara: Right; exactly. That's the idea—is that it's something that we all need to learn—whether we're in kindergarten, or whether we're in high school, or whether we're an adult. There's always something to learn about being more loving.

Dennis: I did a little research on Valentine's besides finding out that Charles, Duke of Orleans, had started it in 1415.

Bob: Wikipedia is not research; okay? I'm just telling you.

Dennis: And—it wasn't on Wikipedia, Bob—but—[Laughter]

Barbara: So, you have more information for us?

Dennis: Yes, I have some more information.

Barbara: Okay; good.

20:00

Dennis: In the 1840s, a woman, by the name of Esther Howland, sold an *unbelievable* number of cards around Valentine's Day for $5,000. It was a *catastrophic* event. Now, fast-forward to today. Did you know there's only one holiday of the year that sells more cards than Valentine's?

Bob: I bet I know what it is!

Dennis: I'll bet you do too.

Bob: Mother's Day; right?

Dennis: No.

Barbara: Christmas?

Bob: Oh, Christmas!

Dennis: Christmas—Christmas cards.

Barbara: Christmas cards; yes.

Bob: I didn't even think about those.

Dennis: There's over one—

Bob: Valentine's Day beats Mother's Day?

Dennis: Yes.

Bob: Interesting.

Dennis: —over one billion cards—second only to Christmas. Eighty-five percent of them are purchased by women. It's interesting, you know. You start thinking about all of the cards that you purchase—they don't have any eternal significance, usually. Now, there are some that are being created now that do; but these cards here will equip the human heart—

21:00

— to better exemplify God's heart whether it's a child, or whether it's a mom or dad, or husband or a wife. Isn't that the kind of Valentine's Day we ought to celebrate?

Bob: *FamilyLife Today* is brought to you by FamilyLife of Little Rock, Arkansas. And although FamilyLife is located in the United States of America, we have found that the issues facing families, issues like forgiveness and communication, taking care of our kids, all of the issues transcend national borders. Those issues profoundly affect marriages everywhere.

FamilyLife is a subsidiary of Campus Crusade for Christ. Our mission is to effectively develop godly families, the kind of families that change the world one home at a time. A key part of our mission includes strengthen marriages and families all around the world. We want to do whatever we can do to bring timeless truth to bare on the challenges you face as you seek to strengthen your family.

You can find out more about FamilyLife by visiting our website FamilyLife.com/Global. Again that's FamilyLife.com/Global.

Now, tomorrow, Barbara Rainey is going to be back with us. We're going to continue to talk about the qualities that make up *real* love. I hope you can tune it for that.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, and our global broadcast manager Michelle Hill. I also want to thank our editor Larry Loraine. For Dennis Rainey, I'm Bob Lepine inviting you to join us again tomorrow for another edition of *FamilyLife Today*.

FamilyLife: Help for today. Hope for tomorrow.

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