

## Power Lunch 2005

### #2 REALITY RELATIONSHIPS

#### Expectations

Tuesday, February 1, 2005 • Dr. David McKinley

[Dr. McKinley, message #2 REALITY RELATIONSHIPS / Expectations ]

I'm enjoying personally my own study and challenge in preparing to speak on the subject of Reality Relationships. I wanna ask you a question! How many of you have ever had anyone in your life let you down? How many of you have ever had somebody let you down? Huh? Yeah I think that's pretty much a unanimous response in this room today. Every...yeah I see somebody in the back doin this...you know they're not just...they're not just holdin their hand up boy they're waving sayin I'm one of those, I know exactly what it is to be let down in life and it's very easy in life to feel a significant amount of disappointment because of things that don't happen the way that you expected them to in your relationship. Interestingly enough a study done in 2002 by \_\_\_\_\_ and Houston said this:

*"When asked to discuss disappointments, frustrations and other negative aspects of their lives people were 28% more likely to say something negative about their relationships than they were when asked about the positive aspects of their lives."*

Heh! Simply said, most people are very quick to say that one of the frustrations, one of the points of injury, one of the great struggles in my life is in the area of my relationships and in particular it has to do with the fact that people so often let us down, they do not fulfill our expectations and expectations are a huge issue when you talk about relationship issues in life. Now **WHY IS IT THAT WE HAVE FAILED EXPECTATIONS?**

Well, I think if you'll just stop and think about it a minute, we have failed expectations because it just makes sense, **IT'S UNAVOIDABLE** in relationships a..., that we're going to have this issue of failed expectations, we're just all so different. We don't think alike, we don't look alike, we don't act alike and because the people in your life network, just like the people in my life network are people who are also juggling many things in their lives. They're tryin to run their schedule, they're tryin to do the things that...that a..., they believe that are important in their lives a..., as a result of that is that they tend to let us down. It's sort of an unavoidable reality because of our differences and a..., because we live in different sequences and different times it's not at all uncommon that people are going to forget things, they're going to...a...they're not gonna return your phone calls, they're gonna forget your birthday a..., even people that are closest to you and so you need to know and understand that it is an unavoidable thing that we're going to have

failed expectations.

There's another reason, though, that we have expectations, not only because it's unavoidable because of our differences we have failed expectations because we often have what kind of expectations? **UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS**. We have expectations that frankly nobody can meet them and if you don't think that people have unrealistic expectation just watch *American Idol* tonight. Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh, heh! I mean folks, you don't have to see anything but a commercial to tell you there are some people with visions of grandeur and some unrealistic expectations in life and I'm telling you people get absolutely caught up in unrealistic expectations and it does a lot of damage in our relationships for us to get caught up in unrealistic expectations.

So we have failed expectations because for some reason...for many of us they're just not avoidable because of difference, because they're unrealistic and then another reason that we have failed expectations is because sometimes **OUR EXPECTATIONS ARE UNCLEAR**. B. J. Thomas is not the only one who was flipped on a feeling, heh, and there are a lot of us who are just lookin for people in our life to make us feel a certain way, but we're not really sure what we want them to do or how...how they are gonna make us feel that way, we just have unclear, unspecified expectations and a lot of us go through life just with this sense of, [clears throat] I'm waitin for somebody to come and just to charge me up and so you're constantly feeling that people are failing to charge you the way that you expect and so because you have unclear and unknown and unstated expectations many times you have failed expectations.

And then there is another reason for failed expectations in life. Not only because it unavoidable because of our differences and it's unrealistic, sometimes we have expectations that no one could measure up to and not only because it's unclear and really we don't know what we want in life a..., frankly we have to be honest and say we have failed expectations because **PEOPLE ARE UNFAITHFUL** a..., in every one of our life networks we have people who not only have failed us because they were different, but because they made a decision to do something that was injurious to the relationship. They were unfaithful, a..., they were caught up in their own self and their own needs and their self-focus created a moment of failure in life and so what we have...let me get that list back up there...what we have is that we have failed expectations because of the unavoidable, unrealistic, unclear and unfaithful behaviors of others when connected to the behaviors in my life and every one of us can quickly and clearly pinpoint the fact that people have let us down. Let me ask you just this quickly; how many of you have left somebody down in life? Okay, that's about a halfhearted confession, [laughter] I know there's...everybody was quick to get em up on the other one, boy that was kinda well I, you know, yeah. [laughter] In fact, I could almost guarantee you if I walked around this room it would be much easier for you to quickly stand and rehearse and to give me a list of the ways that people have failed you then it would be for you to describe and for you to remember the way that you have failed others. Isn't that strange? Isn't it strange that whenever we talk

about expectations that it's so easy for us to pinpoint the failed expectations of others and yet that it is hard for us to really connect with our own failure in the area of expectations?

I have to admit as I stand before you today that a... one of the most difficult and one of the most embarrassing experiences in my life came when I...well when I let my wife down. Actually at the time she was not my wife it was the eve of our wedding, she was my fiancé and by the grace of God she still became my wife, but on the eve of our wedding at our wedding rehearsal I did something, I can't even believe I'm gonna stand up here and tell you this, but I'm gonna go back in history and just do it. Confession's good for the soul, so here I am. We were having our wedding rehearsal and all of our family and extended family and all of our friends were there and our pastor and his wife and all these people and we...we had a number of people that were there. We'd been in a church a long time in a local community and we both had lived in that town a long time so we had an extended group of people coming and so what I'm saying to you we were there, we were having our wedding rehearsal that evening and everything was going great. We'd been through the whole sequence of where we were gonna be and where we were gonna stand and what we were gonna do and we got to the end of the rehearsal and we did this little thing where we walked down a set of steps and went down to the...to the aisle and then we were gonna make our way up the aisle and out the doorway. Well, we got about a third of the way down that aisle and I had this brilliant idea. I had this idea that I was going to put my arm around her and swing her into my arms and I was gonna run out the back of the church carrying her in this joyous moment of celebration. Well, there was only one problem, because my immaturity did not catch up...catch up with my mental capacity I had failed to recognize that there was a gradual slope on the aisle of that church as we were going out and so when I swung her to bring her into my arms I failed to realize that before I caught her that my feet were running forward and the aisle was meeting me quicker than I could get to it and I mean suddenly there were one, two, three steps and she flew one way and hit and went up under the seat over there and I went the other way and up under the seat over here. [laughter] And all I could hear my...was my mother's voice. [laughter] You know, I felt like a 5-year-old. I could hear my mom's voice, "DAVID!" [laughter] And right there in front of God and my parents and my pastor and my friends I was so embarrassed laying up under that pew. [laughter] And it wasn't only embarrassing, we were bruised, both of us. [laughter] Don't ask me how I know that, but anyway we were both very badly bruised and I simply say that to you to say that I let my wife down that day and she married me anyway. Now that was one thing that got deleted between the rehearsal and the real deal, okay? I can promise you the next day that we carefully walked out the door of the church together. But I say all that to say that I have to be honest and tell you that that wasn't the last time I let her down either. I let her down that night and in many ways it was a real parable of what happens so many times in life and in marriage and time and time again I've had to come back to the fact that in reality of the relationship of marriage that I've had to deal with the fact that not only have I had expectations of her and expectations of others that were not fulfilled in my life, I

haven't even lived up to the expectations that needed to be fulfilled through me and so what I wanna talk to you about today is this; it is the second essential in dealing with building reality relationships. Last week we talked about the first essential and that is that **I must accept and share the responsibility for the health and well-being of my relationships**, but today I want to very carefully and very forthrightly give you the second essential and this is it...

**I MUST EXPECT MORE FROM MYSELF IN EFFORT THAN I EXPECT FROM OTHERS IN RESPONSE.** Now that's just straight up talk but it's true, I must expect more from myself in effort than I expect from others in response. What I'm trying to say here is that so many times when we talk about the issue of expectations and relationships, we often talk about lowering expectations or removing expectations. But I want you to know expectations are important in a relationship, the problem is, is that we put our expectations on the wrong person. We're all so prone to put our expectations on the person out there instead of the person in here and a part of the reality of relationship is not that you just go out there and find somebody who's going to fulfill your expectations, it's that you decide I have got to become a person who has high expectations of me in order to be effective and positive in building healthy relationships with others. Everybody wants to enjoy a great relationship in life, they just don't wanna take the time or invest the effort to build it and may I remind you today that the word relate is a verb. Relate is a verb, it's something that requires action, intentionality, effort and if you're going to build relationships in your life; whether it's with you wife or with your children, outside of your family, in the business sphere of life, those contacts and connections that you have every day a..., your friendship network, whatever level of life you want to examine and evaluate, the reality is, is that if you are going to maximize and build great relationships it's only going to happen because you've increased the expectations that you have placed upon yourself. Relate is a verb, it's unlike the word reciprocity, reciprocity is the idea of...of trading back and forth, it's a legal term and...and it sounds that way. When we talk about being involved with others we don't talk about having reciprocity, we talk about having relationships and relationship means that I am willing to take and to invest and to extend myself in a way that I can make a positive difference in the lives of others around me and I am going to give energy and I am going to give effort and I'm going to do everything positively possible to increase expectations on me and to increase the benefits for others. Now, I introduced this subject last week by taking you to a very well known passage of Scripture and of course I've done that because this passage of Scripture has probably been read publicly at more weddings a..., than any other passage that I know. It's called the love chapter of the Bible, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13, but whether you're talking about getting married or whether you're talking about any other area of relationship, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13 isolates, defines and as though it were, magnifies the characteristics and the qualities of the kind of love that makes a difference in people's lives and in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians chapter 13 we read together last week the opening verses that said if I live my life and I don't have love then all that I say is

ineffective and all that I do is ultimately unimportant because love is what matters in life. But I want you to begin today to see with me the second section of this great chapter on love and this is what it says, it says:

*Love is...*

Positively, it defines love, the positive expression of love in two ways.

*Love is patient, love is kind...*

Interestingly enough the word love actually only appears two times here and as we go through the remainder of these verses what we're gonna find is that a..., it just simply gives us two positives and a whole bunch of negatives what love is not. But today we're looking at those positive dynamics of love and it's as though the apostle Paul who penned this chapter literally took and put in the showcase the essential qualities of what love looks like and what is not becoming of real love. And so what do we see today?

*Love is patient, love is kind; it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud;*

The showcase, here's real love, now you know what a showcase is? You know what it is to feature something don't you? Ladies, you know what it is when you go to a store, a beautiful store; when you go over there to the counter areas they have the counters lit up and down inside those counters there are some incredible articles that are there that glisten and that glow. Typically they're jewels, they're diamonds, they're gold, they're silver, they sparkle, they glisten. You all know that's where the real stuff is, they put the cheap stuff out where anybody can go by and handle it and look at it, but the real stuff is down in the counter, right? Now guys, I know you're getting scared just me talkin about that, you know Valentines is out there and you're thinkin don't even go there. But you know what a display case is too, don't you? You go to the store and you can go over in that meat section and they got all that meat wrapped up in plastic on those little white, you know, Styrofoam things, just that little old meat sittin over there? But then you can walk over by that counter and they got those big pieces of meat over there where you can pick your own steak, you can choose...I mean guys I know that's what you think about. When you think about display you think about is it rib eye, is it filet, is it, you know what is it? And that's exactly what Paul is doing, he's saying okay let's take some time to look in the case and let's look at the real stuff and what is it that needs...that you need to expect of you and that I need to expect of me in building reality relationships? Well, he says simply:

*Love is patient, love is kind;...*

Patience, kindness, they're the two sides of the positive coin, as though it were, of what kind of love is required of you and of me in a

relationship and they're also the two things that you need the most extended to you through a relationship. Will you permit me to kinda get up in your face just a little bit today? I wanna say something that's not all that a..., palatable to hear, but it's important. I don't care who you are, how congenial you are, what your basic temperament or personality type is, I want you to know that just as much as there are many wonderful things that make you the person that many people light up to talk about, you have some qualities in your personality that are like fingernails on the chalkboard of people in your life network. Did you know that? That it really doesn't matter what your personality is you've got some really difficult qualities for people to deal with in you and therefore what you need the most is for people to give you some patience and kindness because no matter how good and beautiful and wonderful you may be, no matter how much people may like to look at you and be around you, you have got certain qualities in you that really...they're just like a chalkboard, just somebody...ummm...and when people are around you long enough they start to feel those qualities and that's what you feel in the lives of others. You get around them and you've enjoyed seeing them and knowing them and getting to know them, but boy when you get up close and personal after a while there're just some things that grate on you and so consequently you have to begin to discern and to determine how is this going to impact our relationships and the greatest thing that can happen is for you to begin to engage in your mindset what must be expected of me to make a positive difference and here it is; **PATIENCE AND KINDNESS**.

Now let's look at the first one. The first one is what I wanna call the need that we all have to **PRACTICE THE POSITIVE POWER OF PATIENCE**. Practice the positive power of patience. I love that word practice, cause I need some practice when it comes to that last word patience. I don't know about you but patience doesn't come easy for me. Anybody else in my boat, or am I just with a whole bunch of patient and wonderful people here today? [laughter] I'm telling you I struggle with patience. It's easy for me to be impatient with people in my life and therefore I have to practice the positive power of patience. Now I love the fact that if you study the background of the word patience that's found there in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13; if you study the etymology, the background of that word, what you find is that the Greek word patience literally means...well, let me just tell you what it is, it's called "*makrothumia*" Now, what is anything that's macro? Macro is big right? Micro is tiny and miniscule, but macro is something that's big, that's large and then the other word is "*thumia*" thumas, thermos, we get our word thermos, something that maintains heat or heat quality, that insulates, but it also means fire or fuse and so when the Bible says that love is patient, it literally is saying love has a real long fuse. How bout you? Is that how you treat people in your life network? Are you a person who when people are around you they say about you that you're a person who has a long fuse? Or is it that you bear the moniker and the reputation of being a person who has a short fuse? There's a lot of injury done in our relationships because of impatience and impatience greatest expression, ladies and gentlemen, is anger. Listen to a significant study done in 2001 by Berry & Worthington, they said this:

*"People who get angry quickly experience more arguments in their relationships."*

I bet they paid a lot of money for that study and that was a profound thought wasn't it? [laughter]

*"People who get angry quickly experience more arguments in their relationships and their arguments continue 81% longer."*

And I'd like to know how you measure that; 81% longer than people who are prone to remain calm. Literally anger does so much damage in our relationships and it's when we do not practice the positive power of patience that we begin to come unraveled. Listen to the ancient writer and the wisdom of Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes when he said: (7:8-9)

*<sup>8</sup>The end of the matter is better than the beginning. The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. <sup>9</sup>Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, For anger rests in the bosom of fools.*

One of the most foolish things that you do in your relationships and that I do is that when I get impatient, I get angry and then before long I am injuring people that I love and people that matter in my life and so therefore I've got to practice the positive power of patience. Now I can't help but smile while I'm up here telling you all this today. I'm all dressed up, I've got these notes in PowerPoint and you're listen to me speak, but I have to tell you I was under pressure gettin finished doin this last night. Another confession; I mean man I'm just pouring it out up here today, you all are my support group. What can I say? [laughter] And I'd been at the office and working on this all day and I'm goin home and I'm workin on it and I'm telling you I'm...I'm bilingual when it comes to computers I use both MAC and PC's and so I'm at home working on my PC there, I have a MAC here at the office; I'm home working on my PC, I don't know what it is about the word processing program in a PC, but there is this certain thing that you can do when you're typin along and you can just kinda mis-stroke somehow and all the sudden it just starts eatin your text. [laughter] And you try to move it back it'll come back to that place but instead of typing any more it just eats everything in front of it. So I'm in the middle, I had just finished typin that passage in Ecclesiastes about how important it was to maintain your spirit and I mean my word processor's just eatin every word I've got up there. [laughter] And about that time the telephone rings, my cell phone. I ignored it. And then my home phone rang, I couldn't ignore it. And I did what anybody would do who is mad and impatient in that moment. I reached over, I grabbed that telephone, I picked it up and you know what I said? Hello...[laughter] amazing what I was able to do with patience. I was absolutely burnin it up at the computer, burning it up waiting for all these interruptions and the struggle, but I did just what you would do. And you see the problem is we can control our patience when we have to, but a lot of times we just don't want to. And that's really what the issue is. If I'm going to practice the positive power of patience in my life I have got to come to the place where I am willing to extend patience even when I don't feel patient and I

need patience with people. I need people patience because, you know I just have to be honest, and I just wanna vent, I'm just gonna get it all up here, okay? I need patience with people because, well, they don't cooperate with my plan, they don't fulfill my expectations, they don't share my concerns, they don't understand my schedule, they don't respond the way I desire, they interrupt my plans, they cost me money, they expect me to meet their needs and they cause me a lot of problems. [laughter] And all the people said...AMEN! That was a good amen, that was the best one I've gotten in a long time. [laughter] Whew, I'm glad I'm not alone in this. [laughter] Did you ever get the idea that the problem in this world is people? [laughter] Have you ever just stopped to think about it? There's an old saying that we have around the church that goes like this:

*"To dwell up above with those that we love, oh that will be glory, but to live here below with those that we know, well that's a different story."*

[laughter] Because people do a lot of things to mess up my life, but it's people that I need in my life to give my life meaning more than anything else. And so I have to get connected with this idea that I have to practice the positive power of patience in my life. It was the psychologist, Maslow??? who said:

*"If the only tool you have in your tool box is a hammer you tend to see every problem as a nail."*

Well, I wanna just wrap the few minutes I've got left with you today by talking about how you can develop a new tool called patience and I wanna give you five positive expressions of patience for your life and for your relationships, to help you in this area of expectation, because you are going to have expectations; the question is...which side of the see saw is it gonna land on? Is it gonna be on the side where you're friend, your mate, your partner, your co-worker is or is it gonna be on your side? And the key is that we have to increase the expectations that we put on ourselves. So how do I give visible expectation to the positive power of patience.

Well, #1, **PATIENCE IS KEEPING YOUR HEAD WHEN YOUR FEEL LIKE FLYING OFF THE HANDLE.** You know that's...I was thinkin about that last night; what...what is that phrase flying off the handle? And then I did a little bit of study while I was tryin to cool down over the fact that my word processor was eating every else and I took a little journey on the internet to find out where...where did that come from? You know where the phrase "flying off the handle" comes from? It's the idea of someone who is working with a hammer or with an axe and you continue this process of work until all the sudden the head flies off the handle. I mean you loose your head and that's exactly what happens when I get impatient. What happens when I get impatient is instead of keeping my head I just fly off the handle. And it's when you fly off the handle that you get in trouble. Sort of like this little cartoon that I picked up of a lady comin back from her vacation. She's looking at her neighbor, she's got her kids and her husband standin there, she says "We've been on one of those fly-drive



holidays. He kept flyin off the handle and the kids drove me up the wall." [laughter] Flying off the handle! Practicing the positive power of patience means that even though I feel the impulse to fly off the handle I'm going to maintain my head because of what I know about the people that I'm talking to and interacting with on a daily basis in my life. It may be an employee or an employer, it may be a friend, it may be a family member, but I am going to guard it.

**#2 PATIENCE IS LISTENING EVEN WHEN I KNOW THE ANSWERS AND CAN COMPLETE THE SENTENCES.** That's one of the hardest things to do in life, is to keep listening to someone even when you know the answer and when you could complete their sentence. But it's important for you to give them the value of your time and of your attention and so sometimes one of the greatest ways that you can communicate positively love and you can increase the expectation of what you deliver to other people is by being a person who is careful to listen to other people. When you listen to someone, you say to that person in a big bold fashion, you are important! You know I know all of us have outgrown the stage of life where we turn in our assignments and the teacher puts a star on our paper, but do you remember what it was like when you got a star on your paper? I mean, boy, you were important and when you listen to somebody you're putting a star on the paper of their heart and you're saying to them, you're important to me. So patience is keeping your head when you feel like flying off the handle. Patience is listening even when I know the answers and can complete the sentences.

**#3 PATIENCE IS ALLOWING OTHERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN BY EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN COERCING THEM TO LEARN FROM EVERYTHING I'VE EXPERIENCED.** Isn't it interesting how many times we want to let our experience circumvent the growth and development of others? Now I know there's a time and a place, please hear me here, I'm not saying parent you don't need to let your children learn from things you know and have experienced. Your maturity is a valuable part of your life. I'm not saying that as a employer or an employee in a specific job situation that you don't need to do everything that you can to fast track the growth and development of others, but what I'm saying to you is that far too many times in life instead of really letting other people learn and grow by experience we coerce them to learn everything from my experience. It's all about me! And many times helping others to grow and adding value to their lives is making it more about them.

**#4 PATIENCE IS ~~giving people to make room to make mistakes...~~GIVING PEOPLE ROOM TO MAKE MISTAKES AND FINDING A WAY TO FORGIVE THEM WHEN THEY DO.** I need forgiveness and so do you. I need somebody who will stand in my life when I have miss-stroked and will hand me an eraser and say I'm here to help you get rid of the marks. Now I'm not covering wrong things and things that are destructive things, but I'm talking about failed expectations. Whenever somebody fails to meet your expectations, the greatest thing you can do is to hand them an eraser, to hand them the delete key on the keyboard of your heart and say okay, let's take that out. You see that's patience. Patience is giving others the ability to make a mistake and then finding a way to help them, to forgive them and

make it right.

And then **PATIENCE IS BEING SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS AND THE STRUGGLES THEY FACE AND UNDERSTANDING THAT THE STRUGGLES THEY FACE MAY BE GREATER THAN MINE ON ANY GIVEN DAY.** It's just being sensitive to the needs of others. It's seeing people in the midst of...of dealing with difficult things in their lives and being sensitive to that and trying, instead of adding to their struggle, helping them in that struggle. We've all had the experience of standing at a counter trying to buy something and there's somebody on the other side of that counter and for whatever reason they are the biggest obstacles of my next step and my next opportunity in life. They can't get the computer to work, they can't check me out, they can't get things done and it's very easy for me over a period of time to stand there, to lose my patience and before you know it treat them in a very unbecoming fashion. But you see the opposite of that is patience, patience that realizes that their day may be a worse day than my day, that their burden may be a bigger burden than my burden and it's helping to see that and understand that that begins to make a difference. Now let me just wrap it and say this today when I speak of being patient I'm not talking about being passive. To say patience is not to say be passive. Being passive is never good in any relationship. In fact one of the most negative things that you can communicate to a person in your life is to be passive with that person and to be ambivalent in your attitudes towards them. Ambivalence and passivity do nothing to grow relationships but I want you to know that when you practice the positive power of patience, patience will begin to turn your relationships around. The question is where are your expectations today?

[loud noise] That man needs somebody to help him pick up those a...,  
[laughter] he isn't gonna go by that next door I can tell, he's gonna...no there he goes. [laughter] Figure out what's expected of you more than what you think of others and it'll change your relationships. That is reality!