

Power Lunch 2005

#3 REALITY RELATIONSHIPS

Expectations Part 2

Tuesday, February 8, 2005 • Dr. David McKinley

[Dr. McKinley, message #3 REALITY RELATIONSHIPS / Expectations Part 2]

We are involved in a series that we're calling Reality Relationships and a..., last week I had to face one of the great realities a..., that every speaker has to face in a relationship with a group of people that he speaks to on a regular basis and that is that sometimes you don't listen as fast as I want you to [slight audience laughter] and so what that means is though I plan and prepare and try to get here and to share all I wanna share and I had this perfect series 7 weeks, 7 principles to share a..., I now am gonna have to do 7 and a half weeks just because you didn't listen fast enough a..., last week and a..., today we're going to go back and to pick up what we started last week as we are talking about the 7 essentials that are needed to help everyone of us get real and get right in our relationships with others.

Now, a..., what we've already looked at, for those of you who are here for the first time or have not been with us is that we've been looking at the things that a..., that we really have to get down to, the reality issues in the relationships.

#1 We said that the essential in every relationship is that I must **ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY** for the health and the well being of all of my relationships. It's not a responsibility that I can shift to others, it's a responsibility that is mine and I have to take it.

The second essential that we identified last week and that we started to discuss was that that relates to **EXPECTATIONS** and we said it this way...I must expect more of myself than I expect of others. That is I must expect more of what I expect of me in effort in a relationship than I would expect of others in their response in a relationship and it is this matter of expectations that I wanna go back and pick up on again today. Now just over a week ago I receive an e-mail of a..., well, significant interest and I wanna take a moment and share it with you. When I got the e-mail I immediately noticed that it was from an attorney's office and in the space bar it simply said, notification of bequest. I opened the e-mail and it said, Dr. David McKinley, beneficiary, notification of bequest. With gratitude to God for a life well spent and on behalf of my late client Engineer Willy Bobank, I write to notify you that my late client has made you a beneficiary to the bequest of the sum of \$750,000 United States dollars in the last codicil of his will and testament signed in the year 2000. The late Engineer Willy Bobank, died of a fatal motor accident along the expressway in _____, on the 9th of February 2002. Until his death he

was the Regional ~~direction~~...Director of Nigeria with United Nation Refugees and Humanitarian Commission, a renown philanthropist who was widely traveled and a very good Christian of the Christian Fellowship of Nigeria and a man of non-denominational ~~desecity~~...society is giving you this amount of money because of your active involvement in the upliftingment of Christian activities and ministries and he wants to continue to make a investment in what you will do for the days to come and then it goes to specify what I needed to do to respond. So I read that to you today to simply come and say, "See You!" [pause for audience laughter] Well, I wish, heh, heh, heh, no, I read that to you today because all I had to do was to go back and to put Mr. Bobank's name in the space bar of my computer on Goggle Search and to find out that I am one of many people targeted through a scam to try to get your attention and to try to make you believe that if you will provide personal information that you're somehow gonna be the beneficiary of some incredible personal inheritance. But I have to admit, for one brief moment [more laughter] it was an incredible thought. Every time my eyes saw \$750,000 US dollars, but you know I couldn't figure it out cause I couldn't ever remember meeting this guy in my life. [more laughter] But you see that's just exactly how expectations are created in life. Even though I had absolutely no basis whatsoever to ever assume that some guy that I never met, who was killed on an interstate in Nigeria would leave me in his will \$750,000, it didn't take long until there was an emotion in me that said, I gotta find out about this, I'm interested in this and don't be so pious, every one of you would have done the same thing too, right? You see, it doesn't take much for us to begin to develop false expectations with people and while it is true that we have certain things that we need to require, that we need to see, that we can to some degree depend upon in our relationships with people that we know and love, the fact of the matter is that so many of the issues and injuries, so many of the disappointments of life come because of the fact that we have false expectations or worse yet, we put our expectations in the wrong person and in the wrong place. You see, I have no reason to put my expectation in that e-mail. Now, I would like to find out who that attorney's name was that sent me that e-mail. But I say all of that to say that it is an issue of expectation that creates so much disruption in life and there's only one person upon whom I can place the expectations of my life in a relationship and that is I must put expectations on me. That is the reality of relationships, that the expectations have to increase in my life as I look at others and as I consider how I relate to them. Now I told you last week that the word relate is a verb, it simply is a verb that means that I have to take action in my relationships. It's not simply a motion that happens because I sit back and wait to receive the benefit of being in a relationship it's because I invest effort and energy to make a positive difference in my relationship and so last week we started identifying the 2 positive forces that express love, care and well being in a relationship and we did that from the love chapter of the Bible, 1st Corinthians 13 because that's where we're used to finding our foundation and our basis for this series of messages on reality relationships. And here's what it tells us, 1st Corinthians chapter 13 and verse 4:

Love is patient and love is kind...

Love is patient and love is kind...

Your want expectations in a relationship? You want your relationship to be right? Than place this expectation upon yourself, that you will focus on being a person who exhibits patience and kindness to those with whom you relate from day to day, week to week and throughout all the seasons of life. We said that we have to **PRACTICE THE POSITIVE POWER OF PATIENCE** and that's what we took time to look at and to examine last week and if you need to pick up those notes, they're available on our website on the Internet. Just go to prestonwood.org/powerlunch. You can even listen to last weeks message if you need to catch up with us. But we talked about patience and someone has well said:

"For the friendship of two, the patience of one is necessary."

"For the friendship of two, the patience of one is necessary."

And a part of building positive expectations in your life is to build them up based on the expression of patience.

But the second point, the one we didn't get to last week and we're gonna pick up with today is that we must consider the constructive **CHARACTER OF KINDNESS**. Not only must there be patience, but there must be kindness, because kindness is what helps to make me a positive contributor in every relationship in my life. So the issue of kindness in 1st Corinthians 13, verse 4, the Philips translation says:

~~Look...~~Love looks for ways of being constructive and kindness is the opposite of so much of the harshness, the cruelty and the rudeness that is seen and that is expressed in so many relationships.

Christian _____ said this:

Kindness is a language that the dumb can speak and the deaf can hear and understand.

You don't have to be able to speak or ultimately even hear to be able to see and to know what kindness is and yet so many of us want people to be kind to us but we are not creating a personal expectation of being kind to others. So I wanna talk to you today about how can we express kindness? How can we be constructive in the expectation of relationships, in order to be a positive contributor to a relationship with other people? Well let me give you a list of some things that will help you to build up and to build out kindness in your relationships with others. Give me just a moment. I've got too many things up here left on my podium so let me just get rid of that so I've got some room here and make that little adjustment. But, that being true, what are the things that we can do to build up kindness in relationship?

Well #1 kindness begins with a **POSITIVE EXPRESSION**...a positive expression. How you speak to others and how you communicate to others says everything about how you really value them in a relationship and the people around you who are the recipients of your daily broadcast need to know whether or not what you're broadcasting is consistent with what you've said to them about the way you care about them and the way that you value them. Mark Twain once said:

"I can live for 2 months on one good compliment."

That's a good word isn't it and do you know that there are people who are around you, fellow workers, people who are your employees, your employers, your friends, your children, your mate, people all around you in life who are just dying for a compliment from you? And one of the greatest things that you can do is to give yourself to the activity of kindness by giving positive expression of your care, your interest and your value in them and if you do compliment them make sure that it is clear and simple and plain. I had a season in my life where I had someone who kept coming by and saying to me over and over again, you are a model pastor. And I thought that was such a great thing, I mean boy it made me feel wonderful, you are a model pastor and then one day I looked up model in the dictionary and it said:

"A cheap imitation of the real thing."

Heh, heh! [pause for audience laughter] Well, if you're gonna communicate with somebody, do it positively, do it productively, do it in a way that they know what you mean and there's not any mistake about it. Be somebody who communicates positively. Listen to the wisdom of Proverbs, Proverbs chapter 10 (12) in verse 18, it says:

There is one who speaks like the piercing of a sword, But the tongue of the wise promotes health.

If you read through the book of Proverbs, by the way there are 31 chapters in the book of Proverbs, it's a great portion of Scripture to read every day. You kinda have a one a day in Proverbs. You can read through those chapters and one of the primary things of this book is the difference between the wise man and the foolish man. And one of the primary points, the watershed points of distinction between wisdom and foolishness is how we speak to other people and here this passage says there's so many of us:

...who speak like the piercings of a sword,...

Do you know people like that, always jabbin you always cutting you? But he says instead:

...the tongue of the wise promotes health.

Listen again Proverbs 15:2...

The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of a fool pours forth foolishness.

Proverbs 15:4...

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit.

Boy that's a powerful statement to parents in this room. How careful you must be about whether you are being a tree of life to your children. I'm not saying you don't ever correct them, certainly not. That would be not only unwise, that would be unbiblical. The Bible is very clear, we need to give correction, instruction and direction to our children. I'm concerned that we have a generation of parents who aren't doing any of those things, but the fact of the matter is, is that too much of what we do, we do in a way that breaks the spirit, it criticizes, condemns and devalues the person because that's the kind of culture we live in, that's become the common chatter of our world today. And so it's very important that as a wise man or a wise woman that if you want to be positive and realistic in building relationships you're not gonna build healthy relationships with negative, condescending, critical and...and...and...and...and...and dangerous words. Woo, I'm glad I got that out. [pause for audience laughter] The problem with your tongue, you get your tang all tongued up when you're not even tryin. Proverbs 18, verse 21:

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

You see ladies and gentlemen there are some very specific and practical instructions about how you and I are to speak and one of the most vital ways that...which we communicate kindness to people around us has to do with the way that we communicate to them. Is it positive or is it negative? I don't know who said it but it's a wonderful statement:

"To speak kindly does not hurt the tongue."

"To speak kindly does not hurt the tongue."

So kindness, the constructive power of kindness is seen in positive communication.

But there's a second way in which kindness is seen in our lives and that is in **RESPONSIVE ACTION**. If kindness is indeed love in action then you need to live up to the value that you have for others by expressing that to them through acts of kindness; not just words of kindness, but the consistency of deeds of kindness in your life; not only the way that you communicate to them, but the way that you express commitment to them, taking initiative for doing good things that will build and encourage health, wellness and...and goodness in a relationship. What I'm trying to say to you is the only way any of us are ever gonna have good relationships at work, in our homes, in any other capacity is that we must

invest effort in our relationships. You know I don't know what it is about us but it seems to be that we think that if we can just establish a relationship that's enough. That we...we just establish it but we don't need to maintain it. Well, can I be really straightforward with you today and say that to have any relationship in your life is to remember every single day that quote "assembly is requires." There are no pre-assembled relationships and every day you will face the challenge of having to deal with building up that relationship. I like to think of it this way, relationships are like cars they run out of gas if they're not refueled. Now, I wanna ask you, what is the fuel of your relationships today? What is the status, what does the gage tell you about the aspects of like and relationship with others? Is the gage full or is it empty? I'm afraid far too many of us are running on empty in our relationships and you know why? Because we're looking for somebody else to fill it up and we need to take that responsibility and we need to fulfill that expectation in relationships. We have to give it attention. We have to work on it. We have to be people who are committed to being lifters of others day after day after day. You see I keep wanting people to lift me up, but I have to do is expect that I will lift others up. Listen to these words written by Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

Which Are You?

*There are two kinds of people on earth today,
Just two kinds of people, no more I say.
Not the sinner and saint, for it is well understood,
That the good are half bad, and the bad are half good.
Not the rich and the poor, for to rate a man's wealth,
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.
Not the humble and proud for it is life's little span,
Who puts on vain airs if not counted a man.
Not the happy and sad for the swift flying years,
Bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.
No, the two kinds of people on earth I mean,
Are the people who lift and the people who lean.*

What about you today? Are you lifting or are you leaning? For so many of us what we're trying to do is to lean into others, but what we need to be doing is to lift them up, to be responsive in action, because responsive action is the expression, the constructive expression of kindness in a relationship.

There's a third thing that reflects kindness and that to be **SENSITIVE IN SUPPORT**...sensitive in support. Be a person who sees beyond the face of others and reads the signals of their life. Be a person who seeks to find a need that you can fill, a place that you can touch, a word that you can speak and let that be the expression of kindness in your life. We've given away several copies of Dr. Maxwell, John Maxwell's new book called *The Winning With People* and in it he a..., has a principle called the Exchange Principle, and this is what he says, he says:

"The best way to keep from stepping on other people's toes is to put

yourself in their shoes."

And so many of us fail in life because we're always stompin around instead of being careful to look at life through the eyes of others. A great salesman Art Mortell has said:

"I love playing chess. Whenever I'm losing at chess I consistently get up and stand behind my opponent and see the board from his side. Then I start to discover the stupid moves I've made because I can see them from his viewpoint."

Then he goes on to say:

"The salespersons challenge is to see the world from the prospects viewpoint."

You see so many of us go through life wanting to underscore with everybody what our viewpoint is. This is how I see it! But you know the way you see life and the way I see life is kinda the way everybody feels about life, we all have an opinion and opinion are like noses, everybody's got one, you know? But what's important is not just for you to tell people how you see it, but for you to communicate to people how you see them and it's when you communicate how you see them that you increase the value of that person in life and that you can build into them out of the spirit of care and well-being and kindness. It's so easy for us to lose our sensitivity to people, especially in our families. How easy is it for us to suddenly become the drill sergeants of the house? Where we're always looking at people basically saying, pick it up, suck it up, keep goin. In other words, serve me and don't inconvenience me. But you see that is not what builds relationships, that destroys relationships and therefore it is that sensitive support that is communicated to others that helps us to be able to build positively with kindness and to increase the good expectations, not of them, but of us and what they receive in that relationship with us. And you know you can do this anywhere and everywhere. You can be a person who expresses sensitive support to people everywhere and as you do you will add value to people everywhere you go. You will be a builder, a lifter. How bout next time you're in the grocery store, offer somebody your place in line. How bout next time you're on a parking lot and you see a...a mom with a child; now don't run up on her and scare her to death, but...but you know, if there's a way that you can help or if you can offer her your basket coming out of the store in order to try to help her not have to carry everybody and everything in first. What about taking a meal to a single parent, a single mom or a single dad who's struggling to balance all of life. What about inviting a friend to go to church and offering to pick em up and take them and buy them a meal, not just to tell them they ought to go to church, invite them to church and take them to church with you. What about helping to do some extra things around the ho...house and sending some notes, hand written notes of thanks. Now, I've quit doing handwritten notes cause nobody can read my handwriting and it's not a note of thanks they're afraid it's a...they're afraid it's a threat, but a..., but I've learned how to...to still find a way to get notes to people

and to encourage them and then to let them know that I support them and I'm cheering them and I wanna help them in every way possible. Give to people! Smile at people! So many of us have just gotten used to scowling, everywhere we go, everything we do. Put a smile on your face and let that smile say to people I'm a person who's here to encourage you today. Be sensitive in your support.

And then there's a fourth way to express kindness and that is **PROTECTIVE CARE**; to hear, to hold, to help people in need. Not long ago I was in a restaurant on an evening and there was a family just a few tables away and as I was looking at them I was thinking back to how it just seemed like yesterday I was there with my own children, where they were busy movin up and down during the meal, the inevitable happened. Finally this little boy who'd been wigglin back and forth managed to tip his chair over and fell out of the chair and fell on the floor. Suddenly there was a shriek and a...and a scream, but you know what happened don't you? His mom reached down and picked him up and despite the scenes that had occurred in that restaurant that day, that mom pulled that little boy close and began to hug him and to check him and to be sure he was okay and he was just in her protective care, even though it had been a...a...a moment that created a scene in that restaurant. And you know everyone of us needs people in life who will offer their protective care, showing up in the moment of need, in the moment of crisis, being a fire fighter in their life. You know fire fighters are some of the greatest people in the world. They show up when you need them, they stay as long as they have to and they stay until the fire is out. Many times they respond when there's really not a crisis and they just turn around and go back, but you know what? Everybody needs fireman and fire people in their lives to help them, to encourage them, to strengthen them, to support them, to say you matter to me and if something is tough in your business then it's my business.

In July of this past year I walked through the tearstained pathway of saying goodbye to my mom, someone who's been an incredible, positive influence in my life and I have nothing to complain about because God gave me my mom for so many years. She saw so many of the great joys of my life and I thank God for that. But that did not take away the difficulty and the pain of making the journey. But there's a man in this room today who when my mom died knew that there were a lot of friends that I had here who wanted to come join me in my hometown of Memphis. Through his business he had access to two airplanes, he filled those airplanes with staff members of this church and flew them to meet me at that graveside. I'm gonna tell you that was an act of kindness, a protective step of care in a moment of need and obviously something that made all the difference in my life. But whether or not you can fly people in, you can show up and people need your protective care.

There's a final thing that I would point to you...and point out to you as being a part of the constructive character of kindness and it's not only to be positive in expression and responsive in act...action and supportive in the way that you respond to them in a time of need and their protective care, but here's the other one and this is the hard one. This is the

hardest thing to expect of yourself, **FORGIVE WRONGS**...forgive wrongs. The easiest thing to do when somebody wrongs you is to say, hey, I know what you did I'm gonna write a note and it's gonna go in my pocket and I owe you and I'm gonna get you for that some day. Jim Wilkinson! Heh! [audience laughter] I guess I do owe you Jim, I picked you so I guess I need to give you a book after we're finished today. I'll try to take care of that. But I say all that to say that the easiest thing to do is to put an IOU in your pocket against someone else. The hardest thing to do is to forgive others when they wrong you. Now, it's hard because people disappoint us, people do let us down, people do not fulfill their commitments, people are often unfaithful in the things that they do and sometimes they're down right mean with what they do. In fact let's just get it off our chest today. I want us all to just stop, I want us all to just say it, say it out loud, it's up here on the screen, let's say it together are you ready? PEOPLE DO STUPID THINGS! Do you feel any better? Let's just say it one more time, let's really get it off now, are you ready? PEOPLE DO STUPID THINGS! You don't seem like you really mean it. [audience laughter] I mean, think about who it is, don't look at em, think about who it is. [more laughter] and I want you to say it like you mean it, you ready? Let's say it! PEOPLE DO STUPID THINGS! Now here's the other part, say this with me too, AND I'VE DONE A FEW TOO. [more laughter] PEOPLE DO STUPID THINGS AND I'VE DONE A FEW TOO! Right? I have, we all have. It was George Herbert who said:

"He who cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass."

And a part of expressing the constructive power of kindness in life is being a person who forgives. Joseph _____ said it this way:

"Kindness consists in loving people more than they deserve."

Do you have people in your life who don't deserve your forgiveness? Yes! You do and so do I, but that doesn't mean that I do not need to forgive them, because when I fail to forgive it not only impacts that relationship it impacts all of my relationships, because the hurt that I harbor within; it's only a matter of time until it skews out onto someone else and so it's very important for me to forgive wrongs and to expect forgiveness because it is in that expectation that I'm able to get my life right with others. Some of you are thinking, man that is tough, I'm not sure I can do it. I'm not sure I'm really able to forgive some of the things that have happened in my life and you know what? You're right, for you and for me it's a tall order and it's a tough pill to swallow. Now let me take you back to something I showed you the first day and that is that all of us are engaged in 3 realms of relationships. We're engaged in a relationship with God, a relationship with ourself and a relationship with others and can I tell you that the primary motif of God's response in relationship with us is one of forgiveness and it's only when we experience and know His forgiveness and begin to see life and the injuries of life through my relationship with Him that I'm ever able to be able to have a right relationship with others who have injured, failed and disappointed me. You

see it's that relationship that matters and the thing that the Bible tells me more than anything else is that God love me this way, He is patient with me and He is kind to me and His kindness is so great that though I had a debt of sin He paid that debt for me.

Many of you know the name LaGuardia, primarily for the airport. But Theorello Henry LaGuardia was the Mayor of New York City from 1933 to 1945 and during that time because he was a man who had a legal career and background, Mr. LaGuardia a...a..., over heard and sat on a number of court cases and apparently just after the years of depression and during that time there was a man who came and stood before Mayor LaGuardia, when he was Judge LaGuardia and was brought there because he was caught stealing food. As he was there that day and stood before LaGuardia the case was presented and LaGuardia said to him...

"Well, I've got to punish you."

And then he said...

"The law makes no exception. And I can do nothing less than what the law requires, I am fining you \$10."

But then he added, reaching into his pocket.

"And here's the \$10, I'm remitting on your behalf."

He paid the man's debt. But then you know what he did? He was known to wear a big hat, he took that big hat that was laying there at the bench and he said and not only that, he said, I'm requiring every person in this courtroom to submit 50¢ because it's a crime for a man to live in a city where he had to steal a loaf of bread to feed his family. And the old guy that day not only had the fine remitted, but he walked out of there with \$47 and 50¢ because of what the judge did on his behalf. Now that was a great act of kindness in a desperate day wasn't it? But did you know that's what God's done for you. God in His kindness and His love for you has forgiven all of your sins and He has given you all the grace that you need in life and what you're not able to do on your own He is able to do to enable you to fulfill an expectation of patience and kindness that we frankly are not capable of doing. Here's the great picture of it in the Bible, it's found in the book of Galatians, Galatians chapter 5 and I want you to read:

¹⁹*Now the deeds of the flesh are evident...*

What is it that we do when we do what comes naturally?

...immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outburst of anger, dispute, dissention, factions, envy and drunkenness, carousing...

Kinda sounds like most relationships doesn't it, huh? [laughter] And it

says...

...of which I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²*But...*

Listen to this:

...the fruit of the Spirit...

When you have a relationship with God and you're connected to Him in your human spirit, the fruit of the Spirit working in you is...

...love, joy, peace,...

look at the next two side by side.

...patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control...

Lord it's easy for us to live out of control, it's easy for us to blame others, it's easy to nurse our wounds. But Lord I pray that You would do a work in us that would help us to get real in our relationship, first with You and then with others, that what we expect would be what we expect of ourselves, relying on Your strength, that we may go and make a positive difference through patience and a constructive difference through kindness in Jesus name. Amen.