

Power Lunch 2005

#7 REALITY RELATIONSHIPS

Truth Issues

Tuesday, March 8, 2005 • Dr. David McKinley

[Dr. McKinley, message #7 REALITY RELATIONSHIPS / Truth]

Grateful to see you and have you here at Power Lunch; thank you for coming and what an incredible spring day this is, huh? I know spring's not official but boy my own spring is a..., springing and sprung having seen this day, the sunshine and all the a..., goodness of it, so thankful for it and a..., I'm thankful that you're here and that we're together. Listen, I want to a..., quickly take a moment and mark your calendar for Tuesday, March the 22nd. Many of you remember the fact that back in the fall we had the opportunity to have KCBI radio a..., come and to do a forum here with us during Power Lunch. A..., we actually had them here doing set-up between 11:45 and we went live all across the Dallas Metroplex at 12 o'clock, went from 12 until 1 and we're gonna do that on March the 22nd. Joanna Fisher is going to come and a..., she's going to be here and be our host on that day and we're gonna have a wonderful program and I hope that you'll come and plan to be a part of that special day at Power Lunch with us and a..., it will be something that a..., will be enjoyable, memorable. We'll get information out to you on our Power Lunch website and a..., I just wanna go ahead and get that out there on your calendar to tell you to plan to come and be a part of it and that will be great.

Well, I hope that a..., you've come today ready to learn, ready to grow, ready to be encouraged, but I don't know if you came ready to do this or not, but it is part of the day today. We're gonna take a test. Are you ready for a test? All right, good, I'm grateful. I've been doin a lot of speaking, a lot of teaching so I wanna know if you are test worthy and test ready today, so we're gonna take time to take a test. And on this test there's a..., really just two simple questions that I need your response to today and I need you to be absolutely honest. Will you agree to do that? Huh? Okay, you say yes, all right that's good. I want you to be honest. Here we go, you ready?

Question #1, How many of you have ever...ever told a lie? How many of you? Now, hold em up, hold your hands up, I know this is public, I wanna see how many of you say I've told a lie. Okay, put your hand down. All right that's question #1 and it looks relatively unanimous and if it's not it's because somebody was lying. [audience laughter]

And a..., I have another question, here's question #2, How many of you've ever taken something that didn't belong to you? It could have been something small, something big, something off your mom's...you know out of your mom's purse, something off of the desk in school. How many of you?

All right, look around, cause you're in a room full of liars and thieves. [more laughter] I just wanna be sure that everybody sees what kind of company your keeping today. Every one of us in this room has held our hands up to say that we have told a lie. Every one of us in this room have had to admit that we've taken something that didn't belong to us. Is it any wonder that the Bible tells us that: [Romans 3:23]

...all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God...

We are all sinners by choice and by practice and a..., none of us can take the scrape goat that I'm as good as the next person. The reality is we're all bad and a..., we've all got some problems and some issues in life that we have just proven by taking this little simple test today. But in particular, the first of those questions was the question about lying and I just wanna say candidly, clearly today lying can get you into a lot of trouble. Just ask Martha. Right? Lying can get you into a lot of trouble. Now let me ask you this, one other question today. If I were to ask you honestly, how many of you really do believe that honesty is the best policy? How many of you would say that? See preachers aren't the only ones that don't practice what they preach are they? Huh? See you say that you believe that honesty is the best policy, but you've all admitted that you've lied. And I didn't ask you how recently. Now we could get down, you know, we could really get...cut this thing close to the quick if I just started to say when was the last time you lied? Was it this morning? Was it...you know all of those things; well I'm not goin there today, but what I am trying to say to you is that in all of our minds and all of our hearts we know that the issue of honesty, the issue of truth telling is one of the most important issues in life and yet every one of us in this room knows that we struggle to maintain that standard in life. It's much easier to default. It's at times easier to delete a portion of the fact. It's often times easier to misrepresent things as they really are in order to make us look better than we really are in a given set of circumstances or situations in life and therefore we struggle to tell the truth and I believe that one of the primary reasons for so much injury and fragmentation in many of our relationships comes right out of the fact that we struggle with the issue of dealing with and telling the truth. When you don't tell the truth you bring problems into a relationship, because whenever truth is evaded trust is eroded. Whenever true is evaded in a relationship, trust is re...eroded and the one thing that is the fundamental foundation of every relationship is that a relationship has to be built on the foundation of trust and you cannot have trust apart from truth. In fact what I'm trying to say in a very simple way is this, that trust building comes from truth telling. Trust building comes from truth telling, so here we come to the 6th essential of *Reality Relationships*. Are you ready for it today?

#6 Here it is, YOU HAVE TO TELL THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH IF YOU WANNA BUILD HEALTHY, HAPPY AND HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIPS.

Let me say that one more time. You have to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth if you wanna build healthy, happy and harmonious relationships, because trust building comes from truth telling and so

therefore we have to focus on these things together. That's why we've been looking at 1st Corinthians chapter 13, the love chapter of the Bible, the Bible that tells us, really, the premium of what the standards are to be for getting along together in life. And 1st Corinthians chapter 13 in verse 6 tells us this, it says love:

does not rejoice in iniquity, but it rejoices in the truth;

Real love cannot rejoice in iniquity. Real love cannot be satisfied with things that are wrong. I loved what my dear friend and mentor Dr. George Sweeting has said when he said:

"Love cannot find satisfaction in wrong."

And so when the Bible speaks of iniquity, when the Bible speaks of something that is wrong, what it's telling us here is that it is wrong doing, evil, injustice, deception and you cannot build loving and lasting relationships if you make it your practice to be a deceiver, to be a manipulator, to not be honest in the building of your relationships with other people. And so therefore love has to rejoice in the truth. In other words truth is at the core of every relationship and if you're going to have at the core of that relationship health and well-being then you've got to be sure that it's built and based upon truth. It's the seed of life in a relationship. Have you ever cut into an apple to find it rotten at the core? You see there are relationships that are rotten at the core. They may even look okay on the outside, but there's a rotten core because the seed of truth that is needed to give that relationship strength and health and the ability to flourish has been eroded and destroyed because of a lack of truth and because of the presence of dishonesty and every relationship...every relationship, I don't care what arena of life it's in, every relationship finds it's cohesion in the twin relationship between truth and trust...truth and trust. I tell every couple this when I have the opportunity to do pre-marital counseling with a couple. I tell them that there's nothing more essential in building into their relationship the pattern and the standard of love that is built on truth and trust. And I tell them that truth and trust are just like pedals on a bicycle. Have you ever tried to peddle a bicycle with only one pedal? Have you ever tried to do that? It's hard to maintain balance, it's hard to gain any momentum. You can make it happen for a while but I can tell you if you pick up enough speed and you try to...to really go somewhere you're very likely to either wear yourself out or you're very likely to have an accident. And when in a relationship truth and trust are not present then that relationship begins to get out of balance. You see the more there's truth in a relationship it's like pumping down on the pedal. That relationship gains momentum because of truth and then the trust rises in the relationship and then truth meets that trust and trust meets that truth and truth and trust and truth and trust helps to make a relationship go and to move forward. And when that happens it builds health into the relationship, but when that is absent the relationship struggles for balance, the relationship struggles for well-being. Mike Abershaw said this:

"Trust is like a bank account. You've got to keep making deposits if you want it to grow. On occasion things will go wrong and you will have to make a withdrawal. Meanwhile it is sitting in the bank earning interest."

Now when he's talking about a withdrawal he's not talking about a withdrawal of honesty. What he's saying is sometimes even trust has to be put at risk, we have to do things, we have to go through things that test us and try us in a relationship. But what really makes a relationship stay and stand is that, that relationship has a lot of truth and trust credibility in it. It's built and founded together in that a..., arena of life and this is just true in each of the relational arenas that we're involved in.

It's certainly true in a marriage. You cannot have a healthy marriage if you do not have truth and trust. Marriage is based upon commitment. That's what marriage is, it is a commitment of a man and a woman to live to fulfill the well-being, of the other and not just their own well-being and therefore there has to be commitment that is based on truth and trust to stay true to one another and to trust one another. What kind of marriage would you have is you said, you know what sweetheart I'm gonna be faithful 6 days a week. [audience laughter] 6 days a week you can count on me I'm gonna be faithful, most of the time. You know, no, I don't think that works does it? It's gotta be an all or nothing proposition. It's gotta be a sense that I'm gonna count on you to be true and I'm gonna trust you to be true 7 days a week.

You see it's true in the relationship of parenting, children need to know that what we tell them is true and that they can trust us and we need to build into their lives a sense of what is right and what is wrong by the character and the credibility of the influence of our life in their lives. And children have to be disciplined to know what is right and what is wrong in life. Heh! Any of you seen the new show *Super Nanny*? Oh it's an amazing show, my goodness, this little British lady goes into homes with horrendous kids, I mean it's just unbelievable. I caught just the tail end of a..., one of the segments last night and I couldn't help but just a..., laugh out loud as I listen to a..., the events unfold as they went into the home of a little 4-year-old a..., boy, they had...there was a mom and a dad, they had 2 older children, but they had this 4-year-old and I'm tellin you he literally was like a...a tackle in football, he was...every few minutes he'd just come runnin and grab around his mom's legs and just cling to her and scream bloody murder and they had to teach him how not to cling to mom and how to not have mom reach down and pick him up every time he did and carry him around on her hip all day. But the thing that was humorous about it was that the nanny came in and tried to tell them what to do to bring discipline to this child and they went through this thing for about an hour where this child just screamed his head off until he wore himself out and they interviewed the father and he said it was just like an exorcism, it was just like the demons were removed. [audience laughter] Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh, heh, heh. I tell you we do wonder if our children are demon possessed sometimes, but, if your honest, but a..., just the same I

say all that to say that children need in parenting a relationship of trust and of truth.

It's certainly true in a...in a church. I'm very involved in a highly relational organization called the church and a church is a wonderful place for fellowship and friendship, but one of the things that we have to come to again and again at the very core and the foundation of who the church and what the church is about is that the church is first a believing community and then it is a belonging community. We're not just here because we belong to one another, we're here because of what we believe and if we do not have a standard of truth, then we cannot have the right standard for building the trust and the relationships that are necessary.

And is it not true that this is what's so essential in business. That if you're really going to have a healthy and harmonious business relationship there is got to be a sense that the...that the people that you work with and the people that you are doing business with are people who are credible because it's when the credibility factor is gone and eroded that the business cannot be...survive and cannot sustain. Partnerships in business can thrive when there's truth and trust, but you let there be a partnership where there is some form of division and...and undertow going on that relationship is gonna explode because truth and trust will divide and destroy every relationship in life if it is not present. So I'm simply saying to you today we've gotta tell the truth. And there is nothing more essential in the reality of relationships than understanding the fundamental necessity of being a person who is committed to telling the truth and building on truth. George MacDonald said this:

"It is a greater compliment to be trusted than to be loved."

That's a powerful statement.

"It is a greater compliment to be trusted than to be loved."

But may I say to that statement if people learn they can trust you they will love you. If people learn that they can trust you they will love you because they will realize that you are a person of credibility and consistency in a world that is so often nothing but image and many times deception. Well, let me just challenge you in 3 areas of life to build the truth of your relationships. **3 LIFE STRATEGIES, 3 INSIGHTS THAT I WANNA GIVE YOU TODAY** that will a..., take away from here on this subject of *Reality Relationships*.

#1 You have to make a commitment to **TELL THE TRUTH**. I just really wanna challenge you today to go back to square one and say, you know, if truth is that important in my relationships then I have got to tell the truth. I have to make it the aim of my life to **BE A CREDIBLE PERSON**, a person that when people see, a person when people meet they will know that I am credible. Jesus Christ said in *The Sermon On The Mount*, the greatest sermon ever preached. [Matthew 5:37]

"Let your yes, be yes and your no be no..."

Because the #1 thing that people want in every relationship is that they want to believe that the people they're connected to are credible people. There is nothing more injurious, nothing more disheartening, nothing more painful than to wake up one day and realize that what you thought somebody they are not. Recently the news has just been filled with this horrendous life story of the guy who's been identified as the BTK killer and all that I can think every time I hear these articles and these stories; is what must it be like to have been this man's wife and this man's daughter. Now I don't know what they've known or what they've lived with throughout their life. There are many things I don't know about that and of course this man has not been through the system of...of final a..., judicial review to ultimately be sentenced for something that he's done, but all of the evidence points to the fact that there was a guy who subversively has lived out this horrendous life as a brutal murderous killer and yet he managed to live as an upstanding citizen in his community. Well, what do you think his wife must feel? What do you think his daughter must feel to discover that this man that they thought was a business man, was a church leader, is simply a man that has no credibility whatsoever? Well, I can just tell you that people wake up to discover that every day and the killers in their lives are not necessarily those who have committed murderous acts but they're those who have killed their love because they've broken their trust and therefore it is important for us to see and to understand that truth has got to be at the core of my heart and the core of my character. The Bible says:

A good man is guided by his honesty, but the evil man is destroyed by his dishonesty.

That's Proverbs chapter 11 and verse 3.

A good man is guided by his honesty, but the evil man is destroyed by his dishonesty.

Here's what I'm trying to say, here's the point I'm trying to press to your heart. Lies will sabotage all of your successes in life. Lies will sabotage all of your successes in life and it doesn't matter what you achieve or what you accomplish that if you are hiding something in your life one day it will be exposed and lies can sabotage all of the successes in life. Every day we live in the arena of a world that surrounds us with lies. Now you're involved, many or you or all of you in the business world, you've taken a break from work to come in and to be here today. I was interested to read a..., recently the top 10 lies in American Business. Do you know those? Have you been familiar with the top 10 lies.

#10 You're table will be ready in 10 minutes. [audience laughter]

#9 This offer is limited to the first 10 callers. [more laughter]

#8 This sort of thing a..., never goes out of style.

#7 One size fits all.

#6 I'm sorry I'm late I got stuck in traffic.

#5 It's not the money it's the principle of the thing.

Have you ever heard that one?

#4 Open wide this won't hurt a bit. [more laughter]

#3 This cars in mint condition.

Yeah, maybe the air freshener.

#2 We have unbelievably low prices.

#1 I'm from the IRS and I'm here to help you.

Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh, heh. [audience laughter] Well, every day we encounter some of these lines and some of these lies that we know they're not true and of course what we learn is not to trust. If something's not true we don't trust, we become suspicious and that's exactly what happens. And you know there's not any profession in the world, hardly, that is not under some form of suspicion. Now, studies have been done to determine what people believe to be...what group of people they believe to be the most credible and interestingly enough and thankfully firemen and paramedics come at the top of the list of the people that most people believe to be credible in what they do in life. Do you know who's down at the bottom of the list? Well, I'd like to share it with you but a..., it could indict my character and could ultimately be the cause of judicial a... concerns and legal issues in my life. [audience laughter] No, I'm just teasin, a..., but indeed car salesmen, lawyers and guess who else? Preachers come at the bottom of the list. What a tragedy, what a tragedy that people who are in important arenas of life would often be discredited. Why? Because there've been so many public scandals and so many public issues and schemes and problems along the way. You see all of these things remind us that we have to tell the truth and telling the truth means making a commitment in your heart and in my heart that I am going to be a credible person. If you don't make that decision there's not any relationship in life that's gonna be able to reinforce your lack of credibility and there's not any relationship in life that will not be impacted by your lack of credibility. So tell the truth, be credible.

#2 **TELL THE WHOLE TRUTH.** Tell the whole truth, **BE CAREFUL**, it's easy to say well I basically tell the truth. But can I remind you that a half-truth is a whole lie? And some of us become wonderful practitioners of telling half-truths. We use the truth but we use it to our own means.

It's sort of like a woman that I heard about who's husband had been put in

prison and incarcerated for stealing ham...ham. And she was frustrated and struggling with the issue of trying to be there with her children and so one day she continued to work through the system, ultimately managed to get a hearing with the governor and to plead her case to try to get him a pardon. And when she sat there with the governor she said, "Governor my husband is in prison, our family is in need." And he said, "Well maam tell me about it." She said, "He's been put in prison for stealing ham." Well, the governor wanted to understand more about it and he said, "You know, that doesn't seem all that serious," he said, "was he a good husband? And she said, "Well no frankly he really wasn't to be honest with you he never said a kind word, he a..., really didn't do much around the house, he drank a lot." The governor said, "Well, was he a good father?" She said, "No not really, he always yelled at the kids, he really rarely did anything to provide correction or instruction for them." He said, "Well maam was he...was he a good worker and a good provider?" She said, "No he never worked a day in his life." [audience laughter] The governor finally looked at her and said, "Maam, why in the world do you want this man back?" She said, "Because we're running low on ham." [more laughter]

You see sometimes we just don't tell the whole truth do we? And we use the truth wrongly in life and so what is important is that you not only be credible, but that you be careful to be a person who in your communication and in your interaction with people help to develop a platform for truth. Proverbs 10:10 says:

Someone who does not tell the truth causes trouble...

And so be careful to tell the truth. Now I'm not suggesting that by saying that you tell the truth that every thing that pops in your mind, needs to pop out of your mouth. Okay? That's not being careful. I'm not saying that everything you think you just need to say and just say well that's how it is cause that's what I think and that's the truth. No, that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about being careful to check your motives, being careful to examine your words, being careful to determine where are really pointing someone and directing someone and what are you making someone else believe about you and about what you're saying because of the fact that you are talking with them. Problems are increased in our relationships and intensified when we are not honest. Now, honesty can hurt, honesty can be hard, honesty can take us to the edge of our own...a...of our own integrity many times and yet it's in the process of pressing ourselves to be honest and to tell the truth that we are ultimately able to build good relationships. You see the motto of my mind is:

Honesty is the best policy.

But the motto of my emotions is:

Find the easiest way out.

And so I've got to really be careful to reconcile my mind and my heart, my words and my emotions, my thoughts and my emotions in order that I can

tell the whole truth. So tell the truth, be credible. Tell the whole truth, be careful.

TELL NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, but **BE CONSIDERATE**. Tell nothing but the truth, be a person who as you tell nothing but the truth when you speak, you're known as being a person who is reliable and that people can count on what you say. But say what you say in the best way to build relationships and not to destroy relationships; to be a person who speaks not only truth, but truth with consideration. The Bible calls it speaking the truth in love, but be sure that it's true and then be sure that it's loving.

I read a letter of recommendation that was written for a woman who had worked for a family in their home. It simply said this:

The bearer of this letter was our employee for one month. We engaged her to do light housework and she couldn't have done it any lighter. [audience laughter] We found her very careful to break only our best dishes and glassware. She was neat about the house, always hiding the sweepings under the rug where they could not be seen. When serving meals she always exhibited good training by never putting her thumb in the soup when it was too hot and she never spilled it except in the presence of our company. Her cooking was exceptional; in fact we took daily exception to it. [more laughter] We will always be grateful to remember her stay with us, as it was short.

Heh! Well, I don't know how you do what you do in talking about others but be sure that you tell the truth, be sure that you're considerate and be sure that the two can be reconciled; that you're careful to speak in a way that is beneficial and helpful to others. What I'm tryin to say is tell the truth, but always think before you...you speak. I love the fact that just before we get to 1st Corinthians 13, verse 6 that says love:

does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.

It tells us that love:

...does not think evil;

That it thinks no evil and so before we get to the issue of dealing with truth we start with the issue of what we think and how important it is that we guard our thinking in our relationship with others and if we let our thinking be the filter to our talking then we will be able to tell the truth and we will be able to build trust in relationships. Thomas Carlisle once said:

"It is the thought of a man by which man works all things whatsoever. All that he does and brings to pass is the vesture of thought."

And so we need to let our thoughts, as we think of others and as we think of our relationships and as we think of our value of them and the value of

the relationship then guards the talking that goes on in life. The apostle Paul said it this way in the book of Philippians. He said: [4:8]

And now dear friends fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

And if you'll put a filter on your thinking and your talking it will help you to be the kind of person who will tell nothing but the truth, but who will be considerate, kind and compassionate in your relationship with others. I've shared this with you here before, but I think it bears sharing and repeating today, that if you want to think before you...you talk use these questions to ask yourself what you should say. If you're gonna be a person who tells the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth do that, but think about what you're saying and if you're gonna think let this be the test.

#1 Is what I'm saying **TRUE**? Is it true? Is it really something that I know to be factual.

Secondly, is it **HELPFUL**? It may be true but it may not be helpful. It may that mean that it's wrong or that it's inappropriate, but ask yourself first is it true, second is it helpful?

Then ask yourself the question is it **IMPORTANT**? Is it something that's really important to said, that needs to be delivered, that needs to be transmitted from me about someone or about something to someone or with someone about something in life?

"N" Is it **NECESSARY**? Is it something that is necessary to say.

And then "K" is it **KIND**. Is it true, is it helpful, is it important, is it necessary, is it kind?

If you will use that it will give you a litmus to determine truth that will build trust in your relationship. It is impossible to build healthy relationships, trusting relationships without the truth and I hope that you will embrace this 6th essential and will let it guide and direct you in your relationships in life. And as Michael said earlier, of all the relationships in life the greatest is the relationship that we have with God. I'm convinced that integrity begins in the heart when I have a sense of concern about God's awareness of my life and how I live it; not just how I live my life or how others perceive me, but how God sees me and the gospel truth is that God knows that we all have a problem with this. God knows that we all have a fault called sin. We've already admitted it today didn't we? That's how we started today. We don't all tell the truth. We don't all do the things that we know to be right, there's a gap between what we believe to be proper standards and what we know to be issues in life and so the Bible tells us that we all have a problem and the problem is called sin. The Bible tells us that we can't solve that problem

ourselves, that we can't just deliver ourselves out. Most people see religion as an effort to pull yourself up by your own bootstraps, so to speak, to pull yourself out of your own crisis, but we don't have the ability to do that. But God, knowing us and loving us stepped out of heaven 2000 years ago in the person of Christ and He came and became one of us and Jesus Christ did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves. Jesus died on the cross for our sin, He paid the penalty of our sin and He offers us the gift of life and all we have to do is to receive it. That is the good news of the gospel and that is the gospel truth. And if you've never believed the truth of the gospel you start there and it'll change everything else about your character, about your credibility and about the love and the affection that you have in relationships with others in life.