

## The Power of Exposure

I have been fortunate to be developed by many wonderful people in my lifetime. One of the mentors during my young adulthood was a female health care executive with roots in both Quakerism and Judaism. She explained to me a principal that has remained a staple in my development as a parent, a pastor, a professional and a person.

It was about exposure. She shared that the difference in groups of people – those that advance and those that don't; those whose children rise to corporate heights and those that don't; those that perform academically and those that don't are the people that invest in experiences as opposed to spending on things.

Those of poorer socioeconomics spend more on clothes, cars, sneakers, and electronics. They spend on "things" that will depreciate and provide no lasting significance to the receiver. While those who are more affluent will invest on trips, education, books, tickets to theatre, the arts, music lessons, sporting lessons and the like. Basically, anything that will provide a return on investment.

I call this the power of exposure.

I have often attended the E.K. Bailey Conference on Expository Preaching hosted by Pastor Bryan Carter and Concord Baptist Church in Dallas. Being there reminds me of this powerful lesson and so I wanted to offer a few reasons to begin exposing yourself and those you love to the broader society and the offerings of this wonderful world we live in.

1. **It humbles me.** The more we are exposed to the more we realize this life is bigger than me. Exposure teaches me that there are others that do it better than me. Exposure teaches me that someone else has good ideas, an area of giftedness and something worth sharing with the world. This is particularly helpful for your young people who excel in a local high school or youth program. They need to see that while they are rising to the top there is a lot of competition out there that screams for them to be on a path of incessant improvement. We all need standards, benchmarks, and loftier goals. We generally don't get them intrinsically but because of seeing it done at a level we hadn't seen before.
2. **It harasses me.** Eventually we must go back home and when we do, we can't ignore our experiences and exposures. Once you see better, feel better and witness the possibility of what could be and might be it makes us very uncomfortable with home. That could be a hometown, a church home, or the house we live in and the family we live there with. Once you sleep in a more comfortable bed, drive a faster car, swim in cleaner water, breathe fresher air, hear better words, taste better food, hold a softer hand, have a more tasteful date, have your car door opened for the first time, enjoy better service, climb a higher mountain, witness a more impactful church, encounter a more philanthropic company, have a more intelligent conversation, see a wonder of the world, step foot on another continent, ride the elevator in a higher building, land in a different city and engage in more meaningful activities it forever changes you making you so dissatisfied with home that it will haunt you to know that you are just settling.
3. **It hypes me.** One of the greatest motivators to doing better is witnessing better. It is so easy to live in our bubble of regularity, mediocrity, and the status quo. Once we have experience and exposure it provides a motivation for us to be about the business of improvement. It puts gas in my tank, quickness in my stride and a sense of urgency to my routine. Now, something is on the line. We begin to recognize that there should be a desire for better and more. Not necessarily more stuff but more awareness and more fulfillments.

In the same way that getting enough sun is vital to good health our getting out of our normal environments is necessary for emotional, spiritual, and social health and growth. So, get out more and expose yourself. There is a caution. This is largely what separates the “haves” from the “have nots.” You are going to be shocked by how many people want to stay “in” and do nothing and be nothing but have no fear you will quickly find new friends, new colleagues and new associates with like passions and interests and the quality of those relationships will be greatly improved by your shared exposures.