PPBC Missions Training Moment

In our last *Missions Moment* newsletter, we explored three keys to understanding a different culture. Remember we are all shaped by a worldview and understanding how a culture “thinks” is a key to introducing Christ. The Parkway Place Missions Team defines culture as “*referring to the total way of life for a particular group of people – their ideas, customs, traditions, language, belief system, social structure and norms.*” When you find another culture rubbing against the grain you are used to, what do you do?

First. Make a constant effort to **respect** other cultures and the people to which God is calling you to serve. ***“Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way...”*** – 1 Peter 3:15-16 (NLT). **Humility** is the primary attitude you must have as you serve. God has been at work among the people you are going to serve, and He will continue to work out His will in His church. Always be ready to explain your hope!

Next. Honor the God given values that exist in the culture and in the local church that exists in an indigenous location. When trying to understand and adapt to a different culture use this process:

**Observation:** What are you seeing, hearing, and feeling while in a local culture?

**Interpretation:**  What do you think your observations mean?

**Validation:** What do at least 3 people from the culture say about your observations?

**Application:** What do you need to adapt or change in order to be culturally sensitive and effective in this culture?

Even with the best of attitudes, it is easy to get frustrated with a different culture. Your heart knows all people groups are part of God’s kingdom, but your brain can get exasperated at times. Using the above process is a great starting point. Need more pointers? Standby for next month’s edition!