

James Rabe ([00:00](#)):

With us on Rochester today is pastor Jeff Madison from Hope Summit. And last Sunday, your sermon was just fantastic. Talking about handing out flyers at a apartment complex where you didn't know anyone and you had this type of way outside your comfort zone and how sometimes it's not easy, but it really makes it easier for us in the long run to love our neighbors to be nice to each other.

Pastor Jeff ([00:22](#)):

Oh, absolutely. Yeah. We were having an outdoor movie night and we wanted to invite the neighborhood. And so we were canvassing and hope some it's real close to, uh, metal park apartments and, uh, you know, it's, it's also surrounded by all kinds of houses and, and lots of Emily's and all that. And the corn on the cob water and a corn on the cob. I am so glad they kept that. I was so worried that was going to go down. I signed the petition. I told everyone to sign it because when people ask me where hope summit is that says corncob tower two blocks east. He got it, you know? Yeah. Anyways, so, uh, we were, uh, handing out flyers and, uh, you know, that's, that's an area in the neighborhood where yeah. I guy like me steps in and I'm the minority. Right, right.

Pastor Jeff ([01:07](#)):

And now I've had all kinds of experience in places, uh, poor neighborhoods, uh, and in places where it's, where it is mostly minorities. And so I'm pretty comfortable in that situation normally. Uh, but was it, what was interesting? It was when I was asking, okay, where do you guys want to walk? You know, everyone was like, oh yeah, I'll go this way or this way towards the houses and stuff. And I was like, well, man, I'll go there. You know, I'm coming. I just, I said to him, I'm comfortable going there. Right. And then I head that way and I find myself going immediately to friendship place, which is a place I volunteered before because it was comfortable. Right. Because it was familiar. Right. And I remember looking across the street and just going like, all right, I'm going to go over there. But there was this weird, like thing inside of me saying like I was uncomfortable, you know?

Pastor Jeff ([01:49](#)):

And I mean, it was, it didn't make any sense to me. And I just remember kind of being caught bat, uh, cutback by that. And so I, but I just started heading that way. You know, we got a really cool event coming up. We want people to be a part of it. And so we start heading that way. And immediately, as soon as I step into that parking lot, like everyone who was outside, it was a nice day, really nice day. And so everyone was out the moment I stepped in that parking lot, it was, I'm not saying it felt like all eyes on me were on me. All eyes were on me. Who's this six foot four. Well, who's this six foot, four white guys stepping in here. What is he doing? You know? And, and, and it was, it was funny. The first couple that I went up to this guy was standing outside of a car and the lady, uh, sitting in a car and they're having a conversation, but literally they just stared at me as I walked towards them.

Pastor Jeff ([02:38](#)):

And I'm like, should I not head over there? Maybe they're in a conversation. Maybe, you know, maybe I'm making them uncomfortable. And I just said, you know what? I put on a smile. I handed out the flyer and I said, Hey, we got this event going on. We just, especially if you know kids, you know, we just, Rochester police department was going to be there cooking hot dogs. We had a giveaway for a couple of bikes and stuff, you know, just an awesome event. And immediately they started, they just gave me the best smiles. Right. And it was just so funny as I walked away going like, well, why was I nervous about

that? And again, like, it's so dumb and, and, and that, but that continued, right. I would, I would start walking towards someone and I would just get this dead pan stare, you know, as I approached.

Pastor Jeff ([03:19](#)):

And, but then the moment I handed out a flyer and just said, Hey, we've got this event, give a smile, beautiful smiles, even right back. Right. Even the funniest, the, well, actually the most nervous I got was when I was headed towards, uh, towards this back area, there was this fence that kind of made it a dead end. There's three guys in the back smoking. And I just thought they don't want to go watch a Disney movie outside. You know, that's like that. I just go the other way, let's turn around the other way. But I just know I'm here, you know, it could be debt and I just started walking. Right. And sure enough, as soon as I give that smile, hand out the thing, man, they were, so we stood there talking for about 15 minutes and we just, and, and, you know, the, the beautiful thing that I learned once again, cause this has happened so many times is that, is that when I take, when I take my place out of my comfortable plate, when I get out of my comfortable space, it's so funny.

Pastor Jeff ([04:16](#)):

How often when I think I'm going to receive a bit of a pushback, people are just so ready to meet with you. They just don't know how to step out of their comfort zone. Right. Right. I was, I was invading their comfort zone. Right. And so it would be ridiculous to believe that they're going to step out to reach to me. Right. Um, and, and maybe not ridiculous. I mean, again, once I broke the ice, especially one of the guys just took the conversation and it was, it was a lot of fun just getting to know them, got to know their names, got to know the kind of stuff they're into. And I remember walking away going, you know, I don't think I'll ever be nervous walking in there, again, getting

James Rabe ([04:54](#)):

Out your comfort zone is a really important thing because your brain Nat, I think of our brains is file clerks. Yeah. There's a file clerk in there and that file clerk loves work, but it's only going to work as hard as he has to, or she has to wants to get things done, put things in the easiest place possible. So when you see someone, you don't know the easiest place possible as well, don't talk to them, they're a stranger and we need to see outside

Pastor Jeff ([05:17](#)):

That. Yeah. Yeah. And you know, that's something that, uh, I've been really challenging. My congregation with is, is so often, you know, it's funny about a thing about prayer when we pray. It's so often prayers of asking God to put us into our comfort zone. Like I'm S I'm facing a difficult thing. So God would use help me, God, this, this is a painful experience. Would you free me from this? Right. God, I, I, this is uncomfortable fix that so I can be comfortable. And, uh, we, we often challenge our people to pray that God would make them uncomfortable and that God would take them out of their comfort zones because that's where faith is. That's where we go beyond ourselves. And that's where we really see God move in. And so, uh, when it comes to places like, like friendship place, you know, um, man, we got, you know, there's a gal in our church that when I think of the gal, you were just talking about, she's at man and she's been tutoring there for so long.

Pastor Jeff ([06:11](#)):

And, and I remember talking to her, well, what was it like your first time there? Because this woman's a Saint, you would never think she would ever have a be uncomfortable in a situation like that. She's just

so perfect in so many ways, you know? And, but at the same time, she admits that when she first went in, she, uh, face some thoughts about, uh, about people that weren't true, that she had, um, misconceptions about a certain populace. Um, you know, she was, she was taking care of a lot of Muslim children and helping them with their homework, you know, a lot of refugees coming in, uh, to Rochester and we're helping them out. And it was just incredible to see, um, how this woman in the same way, man, I could never think she would have, uh, you know, she's perfect. Right? How could she struggle with this stuff when no, man, she, it really was, um, it was, it was a desire to follow God wherever he would lead.

Pastor Jeff ([07:01](#)):

It was educating herself, learning, you know, just, and, and, and then experience and that, and that, you know, what's really cool about that. That file person you were talking about that files everything away. I should just say file clerk. Yeah. So that clerk in your head, you know, once you give that clerk a new file drawer, they're happy to throw it in there. Absolutely know. And so, so, so often again, uh, that's why on Sunday mornings, we talk about these issues and we talk about things that are not comfortable because I'm hoping to educate in a way that a new file drawer starts to appear in their brains. And then we get them experience and suddenly they become more comfortable because their brain will then do what the brain does and naturally just start throwing stuff in there when it starts coming in. And then, you know, that's, that's really how we get past this stuff

James Rabe ([07:46](#)):

Where we got to experience it. Yeah. You

Pastor Jeff ([07:48](#)):

Have to get out there. You have to give a try. We, we actually talk about when it comes to discrimination, we preached on that not too long ago. Uh, we follow this thing called the Ark. It's it's about awareness growing in awareness. So learning, getting some experience, it's about relationship growing in relationship. When I met this guy and put a name, got a name, this was no longer, you know, uh, a populace, you know, this was, uh, ma uh, it was my head, my head, that was his name. And, uh, you know, so, so now it's, there's a relationship there. And then there's the commitment to saying, not just saying, well, I did it once, so I'm good now. No, no, let's, let's keep going to places where we're uncomfortable and it's really incredible how, um, in the midst of that, that we find ourselves, um, a lot more comfortable with ourselves and happy with the world around us better. Yeah. I think something

James Rabe ([08:38](#)):

That's very interesting about this whole concept is that we don't know, we don't seem to know it naturally, but we are completely aware of the idea that, Hey, if you want to work out and get healthy, it's going to hurt a little bit. Yeah. And it's the same thing.

Pastor Jeff ([08:53](#)):

So much of that is just the beauty of relationship is about. And, and that's why God created us to be relational beings that if we would just get out of the comfort zone, look each other in the eye, get to know each other a little bit. We're going to find that there's so much more about us that is similar than what is different. And, and, and that connection of relationship man, is so much about, um, what God is about. They say, God is love, right? You cannot experience it outside of relationship. And that is why when he says, number one, commandment love God, but man, don't stop there. Cause you're really

going to the best way to experience that is when we show in love to other people, not just people that we're familiar with, but with those who are very different from us when it's hard, even when it's hard, especially when it's hard, have you read or watched

James Rabe ([09:39](#)):

Raisin in the sun? I recommend it because big mama talks about how you have to love most when it's the hardest. Yep. We gotta take a break and that's the end of the show. Isn't it? I'll have just a little bit of time. All right, pastor Jeff, thanks for summit. Thank you so much. Make sure you check them out on YouTube hopes. I'm at church. This is kerosene.