
My Grandad and Just a Barber

I will never forget my granddad that cut hair at his shop for a living and preached at a Church of Christ church on Sunday. Elmer, as I called granddad, had his own way of doing things and he really enjoyed conversation with his patrons.

Men and boys alike would come to the barbershop for a haircut or a shave. What they would end up with was a haircut or a shave and bits and pieces of my granddad's sermon for the next week. He would ask his captive audience about right from wrong, for better or worse and then based upon what the customer would say granddad would quote certain scriptures that he would be planning on using in the sermon that Sunday.

Based upon reaction by the patron granddad would decide on whether or not he would use certain notes. After Saturday's at the granddad would come home and rewrite all the notes over that he intended to use in Sunday's sermon based in part on what the customers would answer when questions were presented to them. Sometimes granddad would leave things just as they were and preach just like he had planned. One Sunday preceding a Saturday sermon, I will never forget, Granddad came home and was not really happy. It was as if a light bulb had gone off in his head. Granddad came up with a theory, he was going to test it on his patrons if the theory was correct or not.

He realized when sharing his sermon notes with the members from the congregation who had come in for their Saturday evening haircut. These same patrons would not make the service Sunday. When asked about why they would not come to the Sunday service they would explain that Elmer had told everything about the sermon and that they felt like they did not have to attend that service that week.

Grandad went home and consulted Grandma about what to do and grandma explained to Granddad that he should not be upset with his friends and that they were just being human and no harm was being done! Granddad explained that he was just making conversation while he was working and never assumed that his patrons would figure it out, however, grandma had to explain that they would and as such would not feel like they had to go to church the week of their haircuts because Granddad had told them everything.

Grandma explained the harsh reality that if granddad wants his congregation back he was going to have to learn about other conversation and not the sermon for this week Granddad agreed and went to the Barbershop to cut hair as his patrons filed through they started noticing that Granddad had stopped talking about his sermon notes and started being more general about things to talk about. That next Sunday as the service started the usual folks started filing into the church for the service.

Granddad kept count and a watchful eye for the men that let Granddad cut their hair on Saturday before his service and most of Grandad's patrons returned to the morning service and some even came for the evening service as well. At one point grandad told grandma that they would have a full house the first one in several Sunday's. The lesson grandad had chosen to preach was about loving and supporting the preaching. Knowing the barber not only talks too

much for just a haircut.

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