

## **Buying a Car with Daddy**

One day, when I was about 16 years old, and for some reason unknown to me, my Wesleyan father took me along with him when he went out to buy a car. The first dealer we went to made us an offer to sell us the car for X dollars. We then went elsewhere, and got an offer for the same car which was somewhat higher. And so my father said to the second dealer: "I've got a better deal." And the dealer asked: "what is it?" And my father replied: "if I tell you I won't be able to deal with you." "Why is that" the dealer asked? And my father replied, "because you would have an advantage that the other dealer doesn't have." The dealer then said: "I understand; that's OK with me." And so then my father said: "I am buying it for X." And then they shook hands and we departed.

I was terribly, and I suppose even visibly, embarrassed in front of the dealer. For I saw that my father was an idiot. For he had given away more than he had to, and to a total stranger! For we didn't know these dealers from Adam.\*

\* To understand the severity of the shock the reader should realize that my mother's people came from Scotland, where thriftiness is a national virtue, and that my father's people had lived for a 100 years or so in Swabia (in Germany) before coming to America. And the Swabian are known throughout Germany as being so tight with money that "they would rather sell the dog and bark themselves." And so my entire financial heritage was: watch out for the money.

It was only years later, when the transforming work of God had begun in my life, that I finally realized that in my father I was facing one of those souls who had already entered into eternal life and for whom the rules of prudence were no longer supreme. He considered both of these dealers, though strangers, in much the same way as did Jesus' Samaritan considered the man beset by robbers on the way to Jericho, i.e., as entitled to love and respect. He lived in a different realm, that of the Kingdom of God, and I was no more able to understand him then than was [Francis' father \(in Assisi\) able to understand Francis](#).

I can only thank God that he has worked his grace in my heart so far that I am now able to see the spirit of Christ that possessed my father, and about whom I am able to testify to the world: he was a man after God's own heart; and who has become the grandest example for my own life.

I am convinced that my own salvation was orchestrated by God as a gift to my father, who had asked for that in faith. And I shall be eternally grateful that I was allowed to be raised by Edmund Daniel Rudisill, Jr., a Methodist preacher of northern Georgia of the mid 20th century.

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