

Standing Up at the Wrong Time

A pastor went to Venezuela for the first time. He was struggling with the language, and didn't understand a whole lot of what was going on.

Intending to visit one of the local churches, he got lost but eventually got back on track and found the place. Having arrived late, the church was already packed. The only pew left was in the front row.

So as not to make a fool of himself, he decided to imitate the man sitting next to him. When the man clapped his hands, the pastor clapped, too. When the man stood up to pray, the pastor stood up, too.

The pastor didn't understand a word of the sermon. When he surmised that the announcements were being read and people were clapping, including the man sitting next to him, the pastor clapped, too.

Then he saw the man next to him stand up. So he stood up, too.

Suddenly, a hush fell over the entire congregation. A few people gasped. He looked around and saw that nobody else was standing. So he sat down.

After the service, the preacher stood at the door shaking hands of those who were leaving. When the pastor stretched out his hand to greet him, the preacher said in English, "I take it you don't speak Spanish."

The pastor replied, "No, I don't. It's that obvious?"

"Well, yes," said the preacher. "I announced that a baby boy had arrived and would the proud father please stand up."

That's a rather humorous story – at the visiting pastor's expense, of course.

But hasn't something like that happened to most of us – when we jumped into a conversation believing we knew what was being discussed, and embarrassingly discovered we didn't? (My hand is up!)



This story is just another reminder of the importance of communication – and why it pays to be clear in our conversation.

Especially in the business we find ourselves.

The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips (Proverbs 16:23 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter