

Have You Not Pleased Everyone?

Many years ago, both Peg and I gave a communication talk to couples contemplating marriage as part of their Friday night marriage preparation course in the Catholic Church. Now I need to set the record straight: Peg provided the information and I mostly sat, watched, and smiled. When I noticed some attendees not paying attention, I would stop Peg and tell a joke to kind of bring everyone around to listening again. We did this for close to ten years. At the end of the evening, the couples would fill out a survey on the class. Out of close to 100 people/50 couples, 98% were usually very positive with comments like, "We got way more out of this than we expected." However, one or two of the surveys were not happy to read. Living in a world where over 80% liked what you were doing, why dwell on the negative ones? Guess what? I still remember the negative ones much more than the positive ones.

Fast forward 30 years. This similar thing happens at our auctions. Again, a very small percentage; however, it still happens. I just received my first letter criticizing me for my radio work - too much talk. And there are a number of other things that I say that they do not like as well. As laughable as it is, they may be right. I treat the audience as family and like many families, there are disagreements. This bothered me and I ran it past a good friend. He told me a story that I understood regarding a chicken meal:

Twenty people were invited over for dinner. It was by far the best chicken meal they had ever had and everyone asked for the recipe. A month later, the same folks gathered for a chicken meal and it was not nearly so good. They asked where the chicken came from and they all told stories about getting poor chicken from that store.

The moral of the story is this: when the chicken tasted good it was the *recipe*, when it was bad, it was the *store*. It made me think, why was it not the store where the chicken was purchased when it was good and why was it not the recipe when the chicken was bad? Folks, that helped me understand why as much as I'd like 100%

approval, some folks that don't sign letters are more 'bad' chicken than a good recipe. After years of raising chickens I now know the difference.

Let's not 'chicken out' at the upcoming conference January 13-15, 2022.

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