

Bethel Baptist Church

Security Training 05/02/2021

A Church Security Lesson from a Tractor Dealership

Carl Chinn relates the following story, “Our son is in the market for a farm tractor. Knowing of a local dealer, I dropped by. Pulling into the dealership, I drove through the rows of used tractors first to see if I might want to enquire about one of them inside.

As I drove back around to the showroom, an employee came out a door walking towards me. The scowl on his face made it obvious I was in trouble. As he put up his hand for me to stop, it was obvious I was about to be scolded.

As I stopped, he scowled, “what are you doing back here?” While tempted to say I was looking for keys so I could take off in a high speed getaway on an old tractor, I didn’t. I just answered, “looking at your used tractors.”

Then he proceeded to irritably inform me it was private property, and I must first come through the showroom then be escorted through the used tractor lot. As he told me “the rules” I was thinking, there were no signs restricting people from driving through that inviting display of rows of used farm machinery; and it is a *dealership*.

I just left. Neither I nor my son will ever return.

As I drove away, I thought of some applicable lessons for church security teams.

- Some serve because something in them just wants to catch somebody doing something wrong. Therefore, any stranger walking in not following unknown rules of culture is a possibility. How they are dressed or some way they act puts them into the *hopeful* category. The issue here, is how some operators *desire* a confrontation.
- While security volunteers *should be* watching for genuine suspicious activity, there are ways to approach it. Body language and facial expressions can escalate an otherwise innocent action. I had meant no harm to that tractor

dealership; but being disrespected like that made me want to steal a tractor (just a little bit).

- Training provided by law-enforcement and others for volunteer security operators helps them understand de-escalation techniques (body language, posture, word & phrases).”

Think About it

This is just one of many reasons for a church to have intentional security. Intentional programs include training, so operators do security right.

Otherwise, you just might have untrained, self-appointed gatekeepers scowling at and running off those in need of what the church has to offer.