



Working with my grandpa taught me about a lot more than just cars.

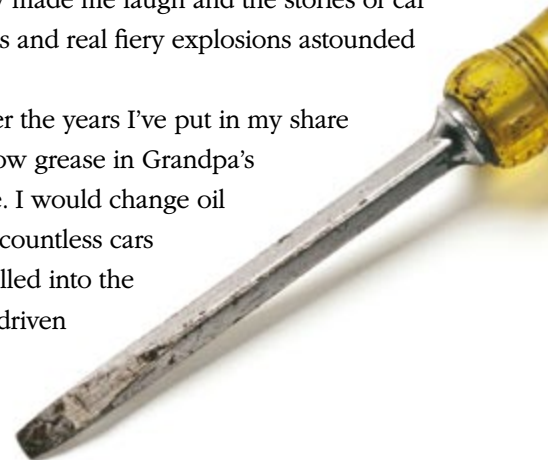
I first discovered the garage when I was seven years old and spending the day at my grandparents' house. I quickly settled into my routine of playing with toys in their living room. Just as I jumped my toy car off of the armrest of the sofa, my grandpa walked through the den wearing a set of blue overalls covered in stains and his favorite "Ford Racing" hat. Opening the sliding door and stepping over the threshold, he looked back to find me staring at him wide-eyed. With a wink, he motioned for me to follow him.

As we walked across the backyard and came to the door of the gray garage, Grandpa reached into his pocket and retrieved his keys. Slowly and methodically, he fingered through the keys with his big, calloused hands that were the result of a lifetime of hard work. Finally, he found the old brass key he was looking for, inserted it into the lock, and opened the door.

After climbing over boxes and tiptoeing around engine parts and transmission

pieces, we stood in the middle of the garage. Grandpa showed me around, pointing to various parts and explaining what they did in a way that my seven-year-old mind could understand. He pointed out the cars he was fixing and what they needed to run well again. One was a 1940s-era roadster that looked just like one of my toy cars. The other was a 1965 Mustang that was lying in pieces all over the floor. It was amazing how much my grandpa knew and how he could figure out exactly what was wrong with something so complex. His stories of growing up in a family of 12 and buying old cars, repainting them, and selling them to make money made me laugh and the stories of car crashes and real fiery explosions astounded me.

Over the years I've put in my share of elbow grease in Grandpa's garage. I would change oil in the countless cars that rolled into the shop, driven







BE THOU AN EXAMPLE OF THE BELIEVERS

“Most full-time missionaries are young men. Some are sisters; some are senior missionaries. We love each one! Missionaries serve to make life better for God’s children. Heavenly Father loves every one of His children. After all, He is their Father. He wants to bless

them with His greatest gift, that of eternal life. Missionaries so teach wherever they serve. They help people to develop faith in the Lord, repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Ghost, receive the ordinances of the temple, and endure faithfully to the end. God’s work and glory—‘to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’—is also the sacred work and glory of each missionary.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Be Thou an Example of the Believers,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 47–48.

by people asking for my grandpa to work on their vehicles. Grandpa would always smile and treat his loyal customers to at least a half-hour’s worth of conversation. I helped clean the brake drums and apply body filler to the Mustang, which soon became my favorite car in the garage. We spent many hours working in the crowded space. I treasured the time I got to spend with my grandpa working in the garage.

When I was nine, I moved away and no longer got to spend time in the garage with Grandpa. A few years later the distance multiplied when my grandparents were called to serve a mission in Hawaii. However, it was truly a blessing. My grandpa finally got the chance to serve the Lord as a missionary. Growing up in such a large family meant that money was limited, and a full-time mission wasn’t possible for him when he was young. While my grandpa had the desire to serve, a full-time mission involved a great deal of sacrifice. I had always wanted to serve a mission, and seeing my grandparents serve and the blessings that came from their service bolstered my desire. When my grandpa came back, the garage was waiting for him. The sounds of power tools and metal once again reverberated through the walls.

The years have raced by, and I am older now.

But working with Grandpa is still special to me.

Whenever I come back to visit, it seems like there is always a new project or something that needs to be done. The distance makes me treasure our time

together so much more.

I recently visited during the summer, and Grandpa gave me that familiar wink as he motioned for me to follow him. Expecting a new job, I followed willingly. As he lifted the door to the garage, what I saw took my breath away. There stood a beautifully restored 1965 Mustang. The body filler had been covered with a beautiful copper metallic paint, and the brake drums were now masked by flawless new rims. Big white racing stripes flowed up the front of the car from the chrome front bumper to the chrome rear bumper, and the shiny running horse pranced across the front of the grill. He put the key into the ignition, and the huge V-8 engine roared to life. He looked at me and smiled, then he asked if I wanted to go for

a ride. I quickly said yes, and with that, we backed the car out of the garage and took off down the street.

As I make preparations to serve a mission, I look forward to following in my grandpa's footsteps once again as I serve the Lord. My grandpa has not only taught me many things about cars, but he has also taught me many things about life. From all the hours we spent in the garage, I've learned how to be patient and take pride in my work. Because of his incredible people skills, I've learned how to approach and talk to people. And above all, he helped me discover who I truly am. Just like the Mustang, I have been piecing myself together over the last 18 years, and now, with help from Grandpa, I am finally ready for the open road. **NE**

I treasure the time I have spent with my grandpa and the skills he has taught me.

