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“Fudge Factor”

by
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What In a script on ethics and integrity, a self-professing Christian has a strict view of a co-worker's actions, only to "fudge it" when it comes to his own.

Themes: Integrity, Ethics, Judging, Compassion, Honesty

Who Mark
Ron
Amy

When Present

Wear Business casual attire.
(Props) Setting is in an office break room, so small table and chairs and coffee maker.
Cell phone for Ron

Why Matthew 5:37, Colossians 3:17, Psalm 25:21, Titus 2:7

How Keep the dialogue conversational.

Time Approximately 3 minutes

A corporate breakroom. Ron sits checking his phone. After a moment, Mark enters, goes to get coffee.

Mark: Hey, Ron, how's it going?

Ron: Not bad, Mark. How about you?

Mark: Looking for cat videos again?

Ron: Nah. Social media is so negative these days. It used to be fun! But now—such a downer!

Mark: Now, now Ronny-boy, that's not like you. I thought 'guys like you' always found something to be happy about.

Ron: Guys like me? And just who are 'guys like me'?

Mark: You know, you church-going types. I thought you were supposed to have a different outlook on the world.

Ron: And we do, but sometimes even us church-going types are entitled to a bad day once in a while, don't you think?

Mark: Yeah, I guess. *(A beat)* Hey, did you hear about Turner over in research?

Ron: What, that gall bladder of his acting up again? 'Bout time he got that thing taken care of. How long will he be out?

Mark: Permanently.

Ron: Permanently? With a gall bladder attack?

Mark: No, more like an attack of "sticky finger-itis"

Ron: What are you talking about?

Mark: He got caught red-handed stealing one of the corporate laptop computers.

Ron: Oh come on. I've known Mike Turner for years. Our kids played on the same little league team together. Our wives were on the same PTA committee. He's no thief. Surely he was just borrowing it.

Mark: Well, I might agree with you, but he turned in a stolen property report on the same computer just that morning.

Ron: Oh, man. *(Beat)* Well, I guess he's getting exactly what he deserves then.

Mark: Wow, that's pretty heartless. I thought Mike was your friend.

Ron: He is. But friend or not, he was wrong. There are always consequences for doing wrong.

Mark: Ron, this is not some faceless sinner you talk about down at the church. This is our friend Mike. I thought you Christians were all about compassion.

Ron: It's got nothing to do with compassion, Mark. Mike was wrong.

Mark: Oh come on. In a company this size, things disappear every day. Mike just got caught.

Ron: It's bigger than just getting caught. It's a matter of ethics and personal integrity.

Mark: Integrity?

Ron: Sure. Knowing that's its wrong, whether you get caught or not.

Ron returns to his phone. Amy enters, goes to coffee pot.

Amy: Don't send me any more cat videos, Ron.

Mark: Hey Amy, what's the word from sales?

Amy: 'Frustration' is the word today.

Ron: Why's that?

Amy: *(sitting)* It's the new travel expense vouchering system we're on now. It's driving me crazy! You know, when you're in sales, you shouldn't have to be burdened with all that paperwork. You ought to be able to be out in the field selling! *(Beat)* Hey, your department converted to this system a while back, didn't you?

Ron: Yeah. We don't travel as much as you guys do, but what's the problem? Maybe I can help.

Amy: Well, you know how when a single meal is over \$25, then we have to provide an itemized receipt, right?

Ron: Right.

Amy: Well, not all restaurants automatically provide itemized receipts, so lots of times I have to make the client wait while I request the server to generate an itemized receipt. It's embarrassing!

Ron: Oh, that's easy. All I do is fudge a little toward another meal.

Amy: What do you mean?

Ron: Well, if a single meal is over the limit and another meal is under, then all you do is take part of the meal that's over, and make it look like it's part of the meal that's under. You're reimbursed the right amount and the system never asks for the itemized receipts!

Amy: And that works?

Ron: Like a charm. I do it all the time.

Mark: You know, Ron. You're amazing.

Ron: It's nothing...really

Mark: No, I mean it. Bearing the burden of all those ethics—and you hardly even break a sweat.

Mark exits. Lights down.

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