

Do You Have to be Religious?

A sketch explaining that being a Christian isn't about behaving in a certain way or trying to be "good", but rather that being a Christian is wholly dependent on what Jesus has done for us on the cross. It also takes a side-ways look at the topical issue of wearing a cross in the workplace.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." ~ 1 Peter 3: 15

"These rules based on merely human commands and teachings... have an appearance of wisdom... but they lack any value." ~ Colossians 2: 20-23

"Christ himself carried our sins in his body to the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness... you have been brought back to follow the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls."
~ 1 Peter 2: 24-25 (Good News bible)

Scene: an office in a building firm. The Boss and HR (Human Resources) Person walk in and sit behind a desk, talking together as they enter.

Boss: It's a good job were having this meeting today. Let's hope we can resolve this situation once and for all.

HR Person: Yes, it's a good idea to deal with it...

Receptionist off stage knocks.

Boss: Come in!

Receptionist: Hi

Boss: Take a seat... This is Derek from HR, he's here to take notes. Do you know why we've called you in today?

Receptionist: Because you didn't want to meet outside?

Receptionist and HR Person laugh

Receptionist: There's more where that came from!

Boss: This is serious! This is a disciplinary meeting!

Receptionist: Is it? Am I being sacked?

HR Person: No, no... we're just having a chat, that may lead to a letter, that may lead to you getting sacked.

Boss: Generally we're very happy with the standard of your work and your commitment to the firm, but I do have some serious concerns. You're sat on reception, you're the first person everyone sees. In a way, you are the face of this company.

Receptionist pulls a face at audience.

Boss: I've got to think about the image of this firm, and I don't want you to be giving the wrong impression. It has come to my attention that you sometimes wear a cross...

Receptionist: Do you like it? It was my grandmothers...

Boss: No! I don't like it!

HR Person: It is a bit old fashioned. My daughter's got a blue one on a shoe lace which is much more fashionable, maybe you should wear one like that instead?

Boss: No! There's no instead! There's just stop it! Stop being religious!

Receptionist: I'm sorry, I didn't realise I was being religious. What do you want me to stop exactly?

Boss: I want you to stop wearing a cross, I don't want our clients and contractors thinking we're religious here. I've got a reputation to maintain.

Receptionist: Anything else?

Boss: Yes. You have a strange influence on my workers. This is a building firm, where men are men, but when they're around you they stop swearing and apologise for telling rude jokes. It's not natural.

Receptionist: I've never said anything to them about their swearing or jokes...

Boss: You don't need to say anything. The fact that you don't swear and tell rude jokes makes you stand out, and it makes everyone else feel uncomfortable.

Receptionist: So you'd like me to take off my cross and start swearing in the office?

Boss: Yes! And when we go out, you're the only one who stays sober...

Receptionist: I had a very nice glass of Chardonnay with my dinner at the last work do...

HR Person: I had that too, it was nice!

Boss: You need to try harder! Drink more! I know it's not just because you're a girl...

Receptionist: Woman

Boss: What?

Receptionist: Never mind...

Boss: I know it's not just because you're a girl, because Mandy and Sue in finance don't have a problem blending in. It's because you're religious, and you need to stop it, that's all.

Receptionist: You do realise that even if I take off my cross, start swearing in the office, and get drunk at work do's, I'll still be a Christian? One who raises the eyebrows of other Christians, and God, if he's got eyebrows, but I'll still be a Christian

HR Person: So, another way of looking at it is a person can wear a cross, not swear, and not get drunk, AND not be a Christian

Receptionist: That's true. Confusing, but true.

Boss: What is it that makes you a Christian then?

Receptionist: Well, since you're asking, what makes me a Christian is that there has to be a meaning to life. There has to be more to life than what we feel and what goes on around us. It's not just me. People get restless and dissatisfied and try to find meaning in their lives through all sorts of different things, like shopping all the time, or going from one relationship to the next, or extreme sports

HR Person: Hmm, that's me! White water rafting one weekend, snow-boarding the next.

Pause while Boss and Receptionist turn to stare at HR Person, then continue as if he hasn't spoken

Receptionist: What people are really missing in their lives, what they are really looking for, is their place in God's plan. And God's plan for each of us is that we should live as his children.

HR Person: Then won't any religion do, because they're all a bit like that, aren't they?

Receptionist: Well, the next question is, how are you going to get into that kind of relationship with God? Are you going to try and impress him by being really good all the time? What happens when you screw up? Basically, if it depended on our efforts none of us would be good enough. And that's where Jesus, the Christ in Christianity, comes into it.

Boss: *(sighing)* Go on....

Receptionist: *(holding silver cross around neck in hand)*. When Jesus was dying on the cross he was taking the punishment we deserve for our sins. Now when God looks at someone who's a Christian, he doesn't see all the things we've done wrong. Jesus has paid the price for all that. God sees us as clean and sin-free, and that's how we get to take our place as one of his children, in this life and the next.

Boss: I don't know what I'm suppose to say to that! Fine! Wear the blue one on the shoelace. I'll pretend it's a fashion statement.

Receptionist: Can I go now? *(gets up to leave)*

Boss: Yes. Just... oh, never mind!

HR Person: Wait for me! *(speaks at same time as standing up)* Do you really think it's Jesus I'm actually looking for?

Receptionist: Yes I do. Do you want to come to church with me on Sunday?

HR Person: I suppose I could cancel bungee jumping....