

“Doing the Right Thing”

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Chalice Lighting: May this flame, symbol of transformation since time began, fire our curiosity, strengthen our wills and sustain our courage as we seek what is good within and around us.—Bets Wienecke

Opening Words: Integrity is doing the right thing even when no one is watching.—C.S.Lewis

Every aspect of our lives seems to be permeated by ethics and ethical decision making. Ethics is about “doing the right thing.” There’s personal ethics, business ethics and healthcare ethics, among others. Media headlines give countless examples of people seemingly “doing the wrong thing” and, in some cases, even when they thought they were doing the right thing!—excerpted from Good Samaritan Society Article, “How Can We Do the Right Thing,” by Bill Kubit M. S.

Check-in: How are things with you today?

Focus/Topic: *“Doing the Right Thing”*

Reading I: 2/9/2013 - **FORBES FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Topeka, Kan. --**

A few weeks ago, I was walking through the break room in our new Ops Building and noticed a fellow Airman pick up a scrap of paper from the floor. It really wasn't a big piece of paper and probably had been there for a while. The Airman didn't look around to see if anyone was watching, didn't even do a double take. He just picked it up and threw it in the trash. What I witnessed was a simple act, but truly a great example of integrity.—Excerpt from commentary on Integrity by Lt. Col. Russel Sakiti

Reading II: I just wanted to make a commentary on what has happened to ethics and honesty. Why is it when you do the right thing, people are so amazed, they feel compelled to comment on how unusual your behavior is? I have had experiences like this periodically, but they seem to be happening more frequently lately, so much that it has made me take notice.

Recently I checked out at Bed, Bath and Beyond, to purchase two towels. After I left, I realized something didn't seem quite right, and I discovered that I had only been charged for one. So about 5 days later when I was there for another purchase, I produced my receipt for the towels and told the cashier that after I bought them a few days before, that I realized they had only charged me for one. She asked me if I wanted her to charge me for it, and I said yes, that it was an honest mistake on the cashier's part because the towels were balled together.

She chuckled and said no one had ever come in and asked to be charged more for their purchase. I told her I want to pay for what I got. She chuckled again and said "that's funny." I said I can sleep at night. It wasn't fair for me to take advantage of the cashier's error. I wanted two towels and was prepared to pay for two towels.

Then, more recently, I went to Fresh Market and realized that one item had been left in the bottom of the cart. The bag boy said, "I guess you get this for free." and I said "no, I want to pay for it." So I went back inside and paid for the item. The lady in front of me said, "Now that's an honest woman."

I expressed to the cashier my utter dismay how often people are amazed when someone does the right thing. I could have kept the item that cost under \$5 without paying for it, but I would have lost a lot more than \$5 worth of sleep over the incident, so I decided long ago to live my life without regret. If someone makes a mistake and under-charges you, it should not be perceived as your due or your lucky day. It should've been seen for what I was. An honest mistake and a person shouldn't be a party to the mistake.

I cannot justify shorting one business because I once felt taken advantage of by another at some point in the past. How did we get to this point where honesty is now a peculiarity?---Janet Kearney: Doing the right thing for honesty's sake.

Question: (Please respond to whichever question or questions you feel moved to answer. It is not necessary to respond to all of the questions. You may also respond to any of the readings that you find to be particularly meaningful.)

1. What does "doing the right thing" mean to you? Share an example of when you did "the right thing" or witnessed someone "doing the right thing."
2. It seems that people are amazed when one does the right thing. Why does doing the right thing appear to be atypical behavior in today's world?
3. How should a person be acknowledged for "doing the right thing" or should one be acknowledged for doing the right thing?
4. "Doing the right thing" in a particular situation i.e. health, family, relationships, frequently poses an ethical dilemma. What guides you in deciding what "the right thing to do" is when it's not obvious or black and white?
5. How would you instill "doing the right thing" in the raising of our children and grandchildren?
6. What gets in the way of doing the right thing?

Likes & Wishes: What did you like about this meeting/session and what do you wish for at future meetings?

Closing Words: May the quality of our lives be our benediction, and a blessing to all whom we touch.—Philip Randall Giles