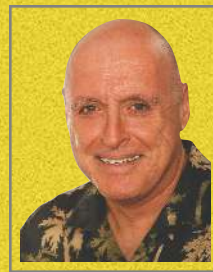


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



765 The Story of the Stolen Watch

It was a chance encounter, when a man walked into a coffee shop and met his first boss. They hadn't seen each other in over 20 years. That conversation is next, on The Extra Point.

The younger man, just shy of 40, greeted his former boss, and said, "Do you remember me, Mr. Morgan?" The older man, almost 80, said, "No, I'm sorry I don't." The young man said, "I worked for you 20 years ago, it was my first job. I'm Paul Stevens."

The old man's eyes brightened up, "Sure, now I remember. I didn't recognize you because you weren't wearing a beard in those days." They both laughed and started to share memories.

Morgan asked, "What do you do these days?" Paul replied, "After I left your company, I found a job I liked and worked my way up. Eventually, I became president, and recently just bought the company when the owner wanted to retire. So, I'm a business owner." Morgan smiled and said, "Ah, so you sort of ended up like me."

The young man looked at his first boss and said, "Yes. In fact, I wanted to become a business owner because you inspired me to be like you." The old gentleman looked at him curiously, and asked when this particular inspiration took place.

Paul explained, "One day, Greg, one of the workers came in with a new watch, a real nice one. I couldn't afford one like that. A few days later, he left his watch on his desk when he went to the break room for lunch. I saw my opportunity and I stole it. When he came back from lunch he saw the watch was gone, and he told you about it." The old man nodded, "Yes, I recall that."

Paul continued, "Just before closing time at

5:00 p.m., you got everybody together and said that Greg's watch had been stolen, and whoever did it, to please return it before we left. I didn't give it back. I wanted the watch, and was also afraid of what could happen if I did." Paul looked down, avoiding the old man's eyes.

"Then you told us all to stand up and form a circle, and to close our eyes. You said we had to close our eyes. You would pass behind us with a basket, and you wanted us to hold our hands behind our back. You would tap each of us with the basket and whoever took the watch would drop the watch into that basket."

Both men were now locked into the old event. Paul said, "You went from person to person and when you got to me, you saw the watch in my hand, tapped me with the basket and I dropped it in. The strange thing is that, out of the corner of my eye, I saw you continue to walk slowly behind each person, stopping briefly at each one. Then, when you had made it around the circle, you announced you had the watch, and everybody could go home."

The old man grinned, "Yes, I stopped at each person for a couple of seconds, giving them a chance to return the watch if they had it." Paul interrupted, "But you didn't tell Greg or anyone that it was me, you didn't fire me for stealing, and you didn't call me into your office for a scolding. In fact, you never even mentioned the episode. You protected my dignity that day, when I expected you to expose me for the thief I was."

The old man smiled and put his hand on Paul's shoulder. "So, you see, Mr. Morgan, you turned the most shameful day of my life into a lesson I would never forget. I received your message clearly."

(Con't.)

...”Thanks to you, I learned what a real leader was like and how to handle people, and tough situations. That’s the day I decided to turn my life around and make something out of myself. I wanted to be a manager like you, and someday own my own company. I’m so glad to have had the chance to see you and I’m glad you remember what happened that day.”

Morgan looked at his former employee and said, “Paul, I remember everything, but I never knew who took the watch until just now. You see, I also closed my eyes while I walked around the circle.

There are different ways to handle situations. Some managers choose to yell, or otherwise humiliate workers. Others teach lessons in different ways...sometimes changing lives.

That’s The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I’m Jerry Roberts.

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