



Ask Alice

Dear Alice,

One of the owners of the company where I work is a well-respected woman who serves on the boards of several nonprofits. She is a member of my church, and she is there with her family every Sunday.

Recently at work, she has called me into her office, asking me to do personal things for her: pick up laundry on the way home and bring it to work for her in the morning; go get lunch for her; pick her up on the way to work because her car was being serviced. These requests are becoming more frequent and are cutting into my time to do my own errands. What should I do?

Stressed Out

Dear Stressed Out,

The Bible says, “Render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and unto God what is God’s.” (Matthew 22:21) This applies to your situation.

Once I was administrative assistant to two managers, one woman and one man. It worked well because they cooperated in prioritizing the workload. Right after Christmas, however, the man put a Sak’s Fifth Avenue box on my desk containing a pair of women’s slippers and asked me if I would exchange them on my lunch hour. I knew he was having an affair, and something told me these were not his wife’s slippers. I had a huge

workload from my other manager that had to be accomplished by 5 pm. so I had already decided to work through lunch hour. I did not tell him this.

At 4:45pm, he asked if I had exchanged the slippers. I said “no” because I hadn’t had time to do it due to the workload from the other manager, and I thought work came before personal errands. He was angry for a second, and then he hung his head and said, “You made the right decision.” Then he walked away.

He never asked me to do anything personal for him again, and we continued a mutually-respectful working relationship until I left the company.

Your boss is taking advantage of her position and taking advantage of you. If you do not nip this in the bud, it will continue and probably increase.

Ask her for a minute of her time and start by saying something complementary such as how much you admire her volunteer work or something similar. Then get to the point with something like this: “I appreciate how busy you are, but I am concerned that my own personal time to do my own family’s errands is being used to accomplish things for you, and sometimes my own errands do not get done. I enjoy helping people, and I enjoy working for you, but, I have to ask, ‘What can we do about this?’”

If anything she hears in church has sunk in, she will respect you for speaking up and will hire a professional errand-runner. And you will have time to do your own errands on your personal time. •••

Alice Anderson, Certified Life Coach, Minister and Author of 41 books in 10 years, dispenses no-nonsense answers to your questions based on Scripture and proven Christian coaching practices. You can reach Alice at www.AskAliceNow.com.