READY TO USE PARABLE

# Imran and the implied identity

Imran shovelled chips into another cardboard carton. The day stretched endlessly on, chip after chip after chip. He was covered in a thin film of oil and he felt like he would slip over if he moved even one step from the fryer.

He’d been working at Manchesterford Fried Chicken for three weeks; he thought a Saturday job would solve all his problems – he’d be out of the house, he’d have his own money and he’d get to know new people. But all he’d done so far was shovel chips. Barely anyone had spoken to him.

“Oi, Imran!”

He turned to see his supervisor, Tonya, standing behind him. Hovering at her shoulder was a middle-aged man who looked like he had never shovelled a chip in his life.

“This is Geoff,” said Tonya. “He’s new. Show him the ropes with the chips ’n that.”

“Me?” Imran said.” I’ve only been here for three weeks!” But Tonya had already turned and gone back to supervise the drive-thru.

Geoff stepped eagerly up to the fryer: “So, Osman, what are we doing here?”

“It’s Imran,” said Imran. “*We* are placing fried potatoes into the correct hygienic packaging.”

Geoff looked confused.

“I’m putting chips into boxes.”

“Oh! Right,” said Geoff. “Can I have a go?”

“Knock yourself out,” said Imran. He dropped the chip shovel and moved aside. Geoff started to fill the boxes. In fact, he was putting so many chips in each box that they were spilling out all over the place.

“Nah, man!” yelled Imran, muscling Geoff out of the way. “It’s just one shovel per box, or Tonya starts having a go at me.”

“Oh, right!” Geoff said. “Doesn’t seem very generous. Those boxes are half-empty.” He pointed at some of the cartons Imran had filled. “Something like that could damage our public profile.”

“What are you talking about, man?”

Geoff looked shifty, like he’d given something away. “Oh, nothing.”

Suddenly a film crew appeared from nowhere, pushing the camera into Imran’s face.

“What’s going on? Back off with that camera!” he shouted, pushing the lens away from him.

Geoff paused, then stammered: “They’re just following me…I’ve…er…been unemployed…and they’re filming my first job back on the workforce.”

Imran stared at Geoff. He didn’t look like the people he’d seen coming out of the Job Centre. He looked far too well-dressed and looked after. This man definitely had money.

His mind started whirring. He realised that he’d seen Geoff before…on a video. Yes, that was it. When he’d applied for the job online, he’d seen a video of the CEO of Manchesterford Fried Chicken, Geoff Sanders. When he saw a sticker on the TV camera, it suddenly dawned on him. The sticker read *Undercover Boss*.

“Wait a minute, who are you, man? Aren’t you Geoff Sanders? You’re the boss!”

## Discussion questions

* Have you ever had a job like Imran’s? What was it like?
* What would be your ideal job? Why?
* Why do you think Geoff is taking part in *Undercover Boss*?
* Have you ever found out that someone wasn’t quite who you thought they were? What happened?
* Why is it important to know who people are and what they are like?

This story is based on Matthew 16:13-20. Read this passage to the group and compare the story to this one. Discuss what might be happening in the Bible passage, encouraging the group to think about it in a new way.

**ALEX TAYLOR**

is resources editor for *Premier Youth and Children’s Work*.