

MONDAY MANNA

9 May 2016

ACTIONS THAT SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

By Robert J. Tamasy

We live in a world in which prominent leaders in every field of endeavour make loud and brash promises. They tell us what we want to hear and presume that will earn our trust. Unfortunately, too often words are not backed up with the levels of performance we were led to expect.

The adage, "Actions speak louder than words," remains true. Bob Doll, chief equity strategist for an asset management firm, has expressed it this way: "You build your testimony when you are the best at what you do, your occupation and calling, and the best in the way you do it...how you treat people, your actions and attitudes."

Recently we have had several renovation projects underway at our home. The men who have been doing the work – a painter, plumber and contractor – all came highly recommended. Thankfully, the assurances we received about the quality of their workmanship have been confirmed. They obviously take pride in their craft, and we are pleased with the changes they are making.

For those of us who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, this should always be true as well. The God we serve has created the world around us and all we see with excellence. As people created in His image (Genesis 1:26), one of the ways we can demonstrate that is through the quality of our work, whatever that might be. In serving as what CBMC likes to call "marketplace ambassadors," what the people we work alongside every day see in us can easily influence their attitudes toward Christ. Here are some things the Bible says about how we communicate our faith to others not just through the words we speak, but even more powerfully, through the actions we undertake:

Recognise who it is we are working for. Often our attitude at work is if we can satisfy our immediate supervisor that is sufficient. But followers of Christ have an even higher standard: "*And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ*" (Colossians 3:23).

Work for others as you would want them to work for you. When we are the role of customer, we expect the people providing products or services to us to give us the best they have. In the same way, when we perform work for others – whether the persons we report to, our peers, customers, or the company as a whole, we have an obligation to offer them the best we can give. "*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...*" (Matthew 7:12).

Good work will be recognised. Looking around us, many people seem content with doing only the bare minimum in their work, enough to retain their jobs but hardly enough to require intense effort. In this environment, consistent and dedicated work cannot help but be noticed. "*Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before unknown men*" (Proverbs 22:29).

Demonstrate that our work is as good as our word. The world offers us many empty promises, ones that never will be fulfilled. Being someone who keeps promises – even strives to exceed expectations whenever possible – will build a strong reputation, and have no lack of work in the future. "*All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty*" (Proverbs 14:23).

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Do you agree with the adage, “Actions speak louder than words”? If so, can you think of an example when someone’s actions contradicted what had been promised – or betrayed what they claimed to believe?
2. How does the work we do, and how we go about doing it, affect our testimony as ambassadors for Jesus Christ – His representatives – in the workplace?
3. What does it mean, in your opinion, to work with excellence?
4. Have you had an experience when you were openly recognised and rewarded for the quality of your work? What about a time when the work you had done had been substandard, you were fully aware of that, and someone else makes certain to bring that to your attention? Compare how you felt in both cases.

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

- Ecclesiastes 2:24-25;
- Colossians 3:17;
- Ephesians 2:10;
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17

© 2016. Robert J. Tamasy is vice president of communications for Leaders Legacy, Inc., a non-profit based in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. Bob has written Business At Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today’s Workplace; Tufting Legacies; and co-authored with David A. Stoddard, The Heart of Mentoring.