

MONDAY MANNA

27 June 2016

EXCITED ABOUT EXCELLENCE

By Robert J. Tamasy

One of the enjoyable things in life is being the beneficiary of work well done. Recently we have had several craftsmen engaged in improvement projects at our home. These included a bathroom tile specialist, a carpenter, painters, a tree cutting service, and a tree stump grinder. In nearly every case their work was excellent, and I would not hesitate to hire them again if needed.

These workers shared several common characteristics: They took pride in their work, doing it at a very high-quality level. They were meticulous, attending to important details. They were prompt in arriving for the job. They were friendly. And they made a point to clean up after performing their work, even if the project extended into the next day. They left the scene as clean and orderly as when they arrived.

I think we all appreciate and admire such diligence. However, too many people, it would appear, are content with “good enough,” doing the bare minimum to technically fulfil their assignments or commitments. Pride in workmanship has become increasingly rare. This is probably why it seems noteworthy when it is displayed in the workplace.

From the beginning of creation, excellence has been a hallmark, an attribute of God that has been passed on to all who have been made “in His image.” After each day of creation, recounted in Genesis 1, we are told, *“God saw that it was good.”* In a similar way, despite our human imperfections, we should be able to look back at our own work and “see that it was good.” Here are some practical observations from the Bible about the quality of our work:

We are equipped for good work. When confronted with a challenging job, we face the temptation to offer the excuse, “I can’t” or “I am not up to that task.” However, the Scriptures teach God will not ask us to do something He has not made us capable of performing – with His strength. *“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”* (Ephesians 2:10).

Good work will be recognised. The satisfaction of doing work with excellence should be a reward in itself, but we can also have confidence that our diligence and quality work will not go unnoticed. *“Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men”* (Proverbs 22:29).

Good work increases our value. As a friend of mine often says, “To earn more, you have to be worth more.” Excellence and devotion to performing good work makes us more valuable to our companies, current and future employers, and our customers. While unmotivated, uncaring workers complain about not getting pay increases and promotions, excellent work will usually propel us to positions of greater responsibility, more authority, and greater compensation. *“Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in slave labour”* (Proverbs 12:24).

Good work should be constant. Being known as a worker of excellence should be a 24/7 pursuit. *“Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let not your hands be idle, for you do not know which will succeed, whether this or that, or whether both will do equally well”* (Ecclesiastes 11:6).

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of a recent time when you benefited from someone else's high-quality work? What was it about the work – or how they did it – that particularly impressed you?
2. How high of a priority do you personally place on performing your work with excellence? Explain your answer.
3. Why do you think that excellence in work seems to be more the exception than the rule these days? Do you even agree with this assessment? Why or why not?
4. What can you do to become known – if this is not already the case for you – as a person who strives for excellence in your work? What could motivate you to pursue this goal?

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

- Matthew 5:16;
- Proverbs 27:18;
- Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, 9-12, 12:13-14;
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17

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