

## MONDAY MANNA

19 April 2021

### PURSUING YOUR PROFESSION WITH PASSION

By Robert J. Tamasy

Many of us spend 40 hours a week or more at work, whether in a traditional office, traveling from city to city, or increasingly, from our homes. The home office, or “hoffice” as some have called it, has shifted from being a rarity in years past to commonplace – especially in the wake of pandemic restrictions. Regardless of where we perform our jobs, there is a sad reality: A lot of people are absolutely miserable.

Perhaps it is because as we go to work, we have a wrong mindset. We might perceive our jobs as the means for earning money to pay our bills. Or we might regard them as necessary inconveniences as we pursue more prominent positions or try to enhance our résumés so we can qualify for a better job.

These could be symptoms of a very simple problem: We lack passion for the work we do. We have no vision for the difference we can make in even the most menial assignments. The solution might be to take a step back and re-evaluate what we do, why we do it – and how we do it.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was well-known for his work in the area of civil rights, and rightfully so. But he could also inspire his audiences to start looking beyond themselves, striving to set higher standards for themselves and others. In 1967, speaking to young people at a junior high school in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., he challenged them to consider “What’s Your Life’s Blueprint?” One statement he made during that speech was particularly memorable:

*“If it falls your lot to be a street sweeper, sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures. Sweep streets like Beethoven composed music.... Sweep streets like Shakespeare wrote poetry. Sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will have to pause and say: Here lived a great street sweeper who swept his job well.”*

The Scriptures tell us motivation like this should be the rule, rather than the exception:

**Not only what you do, but also for whom you do it.** Performing your job well enough to satisfy a human boss or to earn a promotion or bonus can provide motivation, but imagine being “on assignment” for God? *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.... Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward”* (Colossians 3:17,23).

**Work hard while you have the capacity to do so.** Early in one’s career it seems like we have forever to accomplish whatever we set out to do. But as we get older, we realise our time is limited – along with our strength and stamina. Opportunities to leave our mark start to dwindle. *“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge or wisdom”* (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

**Diligent labour usually is recognised and rewarded.** When people see the enthusiasm, the passion we pour into our work, it draws attention. Our work can speak for itself, leading to greater responsibilities. *“Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men”* (Proverbs 22:29).

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### Reflection/Discussion Questions

How would you define "passion"? What are some of the things you feel passionate about?

Do you think that you approach your work with a sense of passion – boundless enthusiasm that others can readily notice? Explain your answer.

Who is the most passionate worker you have ever observed or worked with? What were some of the qualities that person exhibited that reflected his or her passion and enthusiasm?

In terms of feeling passionate about work, whatever that work might be, why should it make a difference who you perceive you are working for? Do you think that "working for the Lord," regardless of what the specific work might be, should heighten the level of commitment to excellence? Why or why not?

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

Proverbs 12:11,24, 14:23, 18:9, 21:5, 24:30-34

Ephesians 2:10

2 Timothy 3:16-17