

MISSION: 'MARKETPLACE AMBASSADORS'**By Robert J. Tamasy**

Way back in 1981, I heard about something called "CBMC" for the first time. I was seeking an employment change and responded to an ad in a trade journal. The job was with an organization that at the time was called Christian Businessmen's Committee, although it is now known globally as Connecting Business and the Marketplace to Christ.

The job description seemed perfect: I would become editor of the CBMC magazine and other publications, and also would be working with the ministry's president – Ted DeMoss at the time – in writing a book about his life and experiences. Wow! Since I had been a newspaper editor for 10 years, two of my professional goals had been to one day write a magazine article and to write a book. These goals would no longer be mere aspirations – they were work assignments!

What I did not realize at the time was this was more than a career move. It was an extremely unusual opportunity to grow spiritually. I served as editor for the CBMC magazine for 17 years, and the book I was assigned to write – *The Gospel and the Briefcase* – turned out to be just the first of more than 20 books I have been privileged to author, co-author and edit. But I am often reminded of Ephesians 3:20, which says, "*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine....*" Another translation says God is able to do "exceeding abundantly," and He certainly did that for me – not just in my career but even more important, in my life.

Over the years, I have met countless individuals who were sold out to Jesus Christ, "satisfied customers" who embraced the truth of Acts 17:28, "*For in Him we live and move and have our being.*" They became role models and informal mentors for me, and through hundreds of workshops, conferences, retreats and training sessions, I learned much about what it means "*work as for the Lord, rather than for men*" (Colossians 3:23).

Fast-forward to the present: The latest book I have written has just been published. Titled *Marketplace Ambassadors*, it recounts the history and heritage of CBMC since its founding in 1930, giving stories about its pioneer founders and leaders, and telling how the ministry has changed and grown over the decades. In a sense, this book brings my career full-circle as it has allowed me to recapture incredible, inspiring stories of people who have devoted their lives to serving Jesus Christ and others in His name and strategies they have used.

The title for the book is taken from 2 Corinthians 5:20, which declares, "*We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.*" This says that every follower of Jesus is called to serve as His ambassador within their sphere of influence – and there is no sphere where the Good News of God's love, grace and mercy is more greatly needed than the marketplace.

CBMC was started in 1930 with the goal of offering hope and spiritual answers for people in great despair because of the Great Depression. Today, CBMC still brings the message of hope that is found only in Jesus Christ. However, the focus is exclusively on the business and professional world, serving as His ambassadors not only in the United States but in 96 countries around the world!

We typically think of ambassadors as representing a nation or government entity. People in CBMC have a similar responsibility, except they represent something far greater – the eternal kingdom of God. In many ways, as Ted DeMoss used to say, the role is simple: "One beggar showing another beggar where to find bread."

©2019. Robert J. Tamasy has written numerous books, including Marketplace Ambassadors: CBMC's Continuing Legacy of Evangelism and Discipleship; Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today's Workplace; Tufting Legacies; The Heart of Mentoring, coauthored with David A. Stoddard; and edited other books, including Advancing Through Adversity by Mike Landry. Bob's biweekly blog is: www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com.

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What has God done in your life that could be described as “exceeding abundantly” or “Immeasurably more than all we think or imagine”?
2. Has there been a time when you made a job change that proved to be much more than simply a career move? If so, what has that experience been like and how has it affected your life as a result?
3. When you hear the term “marketplace ambassadors,” what images come to your mind? Can you envision yourself as a marketplace ambassador for Jesus Christ? Why or why not?
4. How important is it to strive to effectively represent Christ in the business and professional world? How great is the need, in your view?

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

Ecclesiastes 9:10; Matthew 6:19-21,33; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:17,23-24; 2 Timothy 2:2