

Commentary: Christians' lives should match talk of love

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Christians are not called to a life of fame, worldly greatness and fortune. Jesus is calling us to live what we know is right, to step out and do what we say we believe, to live our faith.

One person who acts on his or her beliefs is worth more than 10,000 with beliefs they only chatter and babble about.

We should be people of integrity and action. What we say and what we do should be synonymous. There should be no difference between what we say we believe and how we live.

Saying one thing, doing another

Most people's actual lives and beliefs are not in sync. That also goes for Christians.

Think of all the largest corporations. They have slogans, mottos and logos about making our world better, serving our nation and working today for a better tomorrow.

They say you—their customers—and your well-being, safety and happiness are their top priorities, while their stockholders and CEOs grab and pocket as much of your wealth as they possibly can.

Think of all the world's governments that talk of peace and meet in the name of peace and cooperation, while they keep spying on one another and spending their countries more into debt, buying weapons of war instead of plowshares for peace.

And there are those strident voices for peace who simultaneously laud the strength of their armies and subsidize huge corporations devoted to war and death, and export those weapons to other “peace-loving” nations.

Think of the Christians who say God’s love and love for their fellow man is the cornerstone of their beliefs, while they criticize and wag their fingers at those with different beliefs, talk negatively about their neighbors, yell at the driver who cuts in, neglect the emotional needs of their children, and daily whiz by the homeless on their way to the mall.

Most everyone believes no one should die of starvation, live in abject poverty, or live without access to proper medical care and clean water.

It has been said extreme poverty and much sickness could be erased from the Earth overnight if we would turn our creative abilities from preparing for war to teaching life skills and raising the living standard of the poor of this Earth.

Yes, we proclaim, publish and broadcast our beliefs in peace, prosperity, liberty and justice for all. Yet, we continue on with war, poverty, needless sickness, injustice and bare-sustenance living standards for much of our world.

“Never again,” we say. “The war to end all wars,” the slogan. “Peace on earth, goodwill toward men.”

Love means being in sync

Do you see? Do you see how rare it is for a person’s life to be in harmony and in sync with his or her professed beliefs?

Many call this being in harmony or in sync “integrity” or “alignment”—when what you say aligns with who you are and how you live. When those three notes of your life are played together, that chord will

resonate and cause others to want the same harmony running through their lives.

But when what you believe, who you are and how you live are not played together as one chord, the result will be a discordant sound that may rattle the bones momentarily but never will bring anyone to life.

As Christians, the words and example of Jesus should reign supreme and be lived out daily through each of us. We are called to a life of compassionate service and to be a force for good in the communities in which we live.

We are called to love the homeless, the widow and the poor, to be a voice and advocate for those with no voice, to welcome into our circle the disenfranchised, and to love those whom others disdain.

We are called to feed the hungry, educate the unschooled, give shelter to those with none, and treat each person as the divine creation they are, knowing, "Therefore, but by the grace of God, go I."

We are called to love those who don't love us, even to love those who hate us, even when we feel they don't deserve love.

There are those souls who do these things and have stayed true to the voice of their conscience, but they are the few, not the many.

As Christians, we should be known universally in every nook and cranny of this good Earth for our love, giving, support and compassion, regardless of nationality, religion, color or political affiliation.

We are called first to love. Anything and everything else is secondary (Matthew 22:37-41).

Robert Ritzenhein, after retiring from full-time missionary service, volunteers at Friends Shizuoka in Japan, organizing Christian programs for area rest homes, and is the yearly Santa at the city's hospitals. This opinion

article was inspired by his reading "[Christians urged to answer biblical call to peacemaking](#)" by Ken Camp. The views expressed are those of the author.