



"A must-read. You will be a better person after applying the insights in this book."

**JIM DOWNING,**  
author of *The Other*  
*Side of Infamy*

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# WORDS AND DEEDS



BECOMING  
A MAN OF  
COURAGEOUS  
INTEGRITY

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CHARLES CAUSEY

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This book is a must-read. The quotations from experts in many fields are priceless. The reader will meet himself or herself several times in this book, and each meeting will leave the reader a better person who understands others better. Regardless of whether you are an employer or employee, military or civilian, you will be a better person after applying the insights in this book, and consequently, you'll better perform the job with which you have been entrusted.

LT. JIM DOWNING, author of *The Other Side of Infamy*

As a pastor who wants to equip the men in my church to better serve their God, Christ's church, their families, and our community, I'm so grateful for this book and Charles Causey's practical, engaging, and scriptural call for men to live congruent lives—lives where our words and deeds truly please our Lord.

ARRON CHAMBERS, pastor and author, *Eats with Sinners: Loving like Jesus*

Our own fathers or grandfathers may not have needed this book. But we do. I do. We live in an age of spin. Talking a good game matters more than living a good life, and the art of persuasion is more valued than plain speech and honest action. Charles Causey steps into the muddle and issues a clear call for men to say what we mean, mean what we say, and do what we promise. It's too bad we need this reminder. But it's so good that it comes in

this form—so clear, so simple, so sane, so direct. I have a mental list of several men who need this book. At the top of the list is my own name.

MARK BUCHANAN, bestselling writer and professor of pastoral theology, Ambrose University

Weaving stories with practical God-honoring advice, Charles Causey gives us a solid study on why words and deeds are both essential in building lives that matter.

MAJOR GENERAL USAR (RETIRED) DANIEL YORK,  
founder and director, First Cause

We often have a false dichotomy between the importance of actions and words. The reality is that it is extremely important for Christian men to live out their own discipleship in a way that encompasses both the content of their words and the quality of their actions. Charles Causey does a wonderful job helping us identify the nature of our own discipleship as we speak and live while giving us practical tools to grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ.

REV. DR. DANA S. ALLIN, synod executive of ECO, a Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians

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*Words and Deeds: Becoming a Man of Courageous Integrity*

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*He which hath no stomach to this fight,  
Let him depart; his passport shall be made,  
And crowns for convoy put into his purse.  
We would not die in that man's company  
That fears his fellowship to die with us.*

SHAKESPEARE, HENRY V



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# INTRODUCTION

*You are about to embark upon a great crusade.*

JUNE 5, 1944. Despite the cool breeze and light mist, the twenty-thousand-plus men of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions prepared for their predawn airdrop behind enemy lines at Normandy. They had just received word the mission was a “go.”

The tarmac at Greenham Common airfield was filled with nervous bodies and piles of equipment waiting to be loaded onto aircraft. Paratroopers were briefed by their jumpmasters. Chaplains held impromptu worship services with clusters of men. Suddenly, a path cleared for a high-ranking officer making his way through the crowds of men.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower left his forward command post, a place called Southwick House near Portsmouth, to meet with US paratroopers who were receiving last-minute pre-invasion instructions. General Eisenhower would visit every division preparing for Operation Overlord that day, but he wanted to start with his airborne units; in a few hours, they would depart—the first division to cross the channel and drop behind Utah Beach. The Supreme Allied Commander

had been informed that more than 50 percent of the paratroopers and 70 percent of those in gliders would die before hitting the ground, so the general decided to visit them first to offer words of encouragement.

With England's fast-moving gray skies in the background, the four-star commander walked among the troops, shook their hands, and spoke to them. With more than one hundred thousand men preparing to cross the channel for the invasion of France, this would be the largest amphibious assault ever attempted. Eisenhower hoped his words would prepare the men for battle, give them courage, and make them defiant against all odds. The following is his pre-invasion battle order:

Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied  
Expeditionary Force!

You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave Allies and brothers-in-arms on other Fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely.

But this is the year 1944! Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940–41. The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground. Our Home Fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to Victory!

I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle.

We will accept nothing less than full Victory!

Good Luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.<sup>1</sup>

The men were thankful for his visit, however brief, and were more resolved than ever to embark on their nighttime journey to attack the Germans.

\* \* \* \*

Most men inherently know the importance of deeds. Without great deeds of conquest, battles would never be won. While the US Army and other Allied forces advanced through western Europe, the US Marines and the US Navy were battling to win the island of Iwo Jima.

However, words are important too. Soldiers will die. It

is the nature of war. But well-chosen words delivered with all due sobriety can help remind and encourage those same soldiers that they and their comrades will die with meaning, that they will not die in vain. Leaders must exhort warriors to fight and must explain the cause that puts their lives in jeopardy. Throughout history, decisive battle speeches given by men like Napoleon and Eisenhower were just as vital as deeds of conquest in moving men into action.

The same is true within our families, our careers, and our communities: Our deeds as men are absolutely critical to our success, and so are our words. Even more importantly, there needs to be synthesis between the two. We cannot simply tell our children to do the right thing; they must see us doing good deeds, and they must be persuaded with our good words. We cannot only be faithful in deeds to our spouses or bosses; they need us to verbally engage with them, and they need us to be men of our word. We have to perform good deeds to accomplish goals, but it is also necessary to influence others positively with our good words.

Conversely, we may tell our children to do the right thing, but if they see us doing the wrong thing, our words are meaningless. At the same time, if we do the right thing in view of our children without drawing their attention to the value of right action and the reasons for acting rightly, our children can easily learn the wrong lessons—if they even notice our actions.

It is possible to spend a significant part of our lives without living intentionally, without thinking about the synthesis of our words and deeds. Sometimes we need a course correction.

The goal of this book is not only to develop a greater self-awareness among men but also to apply this knowledge for life change. Both words *and* deeds are important. Their alignment is important too, for to the extent that our words and deeds are not aligned (and, importantly, pointed toward the good), our lives will lack personal meaning and broader impact.

The most influential men in history were strong and mighty in both words and deeds. Martin Luther King Jr. is remembered for his speeches, but he rose to national prominence for his contribution to the civil rights movement. Theodore Roosevelt was a master of the “bully pulpit,” using the force of his words to sway the mood and will of a nation, but he is remembered even more for his military exploits and international adventures. In the Gospel of Luke (24:19), Jesus was said to be mighty in both words and deeds. Moses is another example; he spoke to the people of Israel and showed them incredible examples of God’s power. Both words and deeds are necessary for an exemplary life, and this book speaks about their integration—closing the gap between the men we are and the men we want to be.

Think about the men and women in your life who influenced you the most. What do you notice about their words and actions? Were they people of integrity?

Here are some of the questions I ask and answer in this book:

- How does a man appear to others when he is mostly talk and no action?

- What about a man with all deeds and few words?
- Which man are you?
- How do others see you?
- Is there a gap between the man you portray to others and the man you actually are?

*Words and Deeds* was written to help men identify whether there is integrity between their words and actions, and—if not—to give them tools for alignment. Men cannot embark on this kind of change alone, however; men need other men to keep them accountable and God to give them strength. I have attached a six-week study guide with individual and small group questions at the end of this book so men can make those vital connections. I encourage every man reading *Words and Deeds* to form a small group and discuss these concepts with other men. Also, you will have the opportunity for three people to assess you via an online diagnostic so you can compare your own results with what they say of your words and deeds. This experience should lead to a greater self-understanding and reveal whether the man you believe you are is the same man that others are experiencing.

Finally, I understand that something is always lost between an author's intent and a reader's perception of that intent, and this book will prove no exception. Not everyone who reads *Words and Deeds* will feel compelled to partake in the necessary alignment work to experience lasting life change. But I trust that this short book *will* make every man who reads it pause to consider the critical continuum

between his words and actions, and in so doing, move one step closer to who the Master created him to be. The material in this book changed my life, and I pray it will change yours, too.





## CHAPTER 1

# THE MAN IN THE ARENA

*Just pray that I shall be adequate.*

WHEN I WAS A YOUNG MAN, my army chaplain father told me a true story about 672 men who perished in the middle of the night during World War II. On January 23, 1943, the SS *Dorchester* departed New York City harbor, heading east across the icy North Atlantic with more than nine hundred servicemen on board.<sup>1</sup> Most were newly trained American soldiers on their way to Europe to serve in the war. Four of these men—Methodist minister Rev. George Fox, Rabbi Alexander Goode, Reformed Church minister Rev. Clark Poling, and Roman Catholic priest Father John Washington—were recently commissioned army chaplains who worked hard to keep up the morale of the troops in a ship claustrophobically packed to capacity.

Close to one o'clock on the morning of February 3, a German submarine spotted the *Dorchester* 150 miles from the coast of Greenland and fired three torpedoes toward its middle. One of the torpedoes struck the starboard side far below the waterline, causing irreparable damage and immediately killing scores of men. The entire vessel would sink to the bottom of the Atlantic within thirty minutes. The captain gave the order to abandon ship. In the pandemonium that followed, men searched for life jackets and rafts in the dark, desperately trying to save their lives.

The four chaplains, who had organized a variety show in the enlisted men's galley earlier that evening, quickly went into action, quietly and calmly guiding men in the blackened ship. They led their fellow soldiers to where they could evacuate the vessel, opened a deck locker filled with extra life jackets, and distributed them to the panicked soldiers. They gave up their gloves and hats; eventually, when there were no more life jackets, the four chaplains took off their own vests and made others put them on. Witnesses such as Sergeant Kenzel Linaweaver<sup>2</sup> of the 304th Infantry and Robert C. Williams recounted that it was the most astonishing act of courage they ever saw. Two men already floating in the oily water, Sergeant Thomas Myers and Private First Class John O'Brien, remembered hearing screams of panic from the men still on board, followed by words of courage and hope from the chaplains. At last glimpse, the four chaplains were seen arm in arm, singing and praying together as the *Dorchester* slipped under water.

My father, Calvin Causey, knew Clark's father, Dan Poling, personally. Once, on a walk together, Poling explained to my father that he had spoken to Clark a few days before the *Dorchester* set sail. The young army lieutenant told his father, "Please do not pray for my safe return; that wouldn't be fair. Just pray that I shall be adequate." My own father choked up before he could finish the story. "The four chaplains were more than adequate," he said softly. "They did their duty."

\* \* \* \*

What would inspire men to take off their life jackets, give them to other men, and go down with the ship? It is obvious that, in a very short time, the four chaplains had developed a very robust identity as servants of God. That identity and their calling to serve shaped them more than the very natural instinct of self-preservation. No doubt, not all four men had the same courage that night, but witnessing each other's bravery and fortitude bound them together in a united mission to serve their fellow soldiers.

As men, our main purpose in life radiates around taking care of other people: our immediate families, our work associates, the communities we are part of, our aging parents. Like the four army chaplains, we are called to serve others and lead by example, to occupy our space and not shrink back from it. Trust comes from delivering on our promises and commitments. When men speak encouraging words to others and perform deeds of valor, they become everything the Master made them to be, and they encourage other men to do the same.

King David declared in Psalm 19:13-14, “Keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins. . . . Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight.” David knew both his words and his deeds were evident to God, and he wanted them to be pleasing to Him.

Here is the three-point premise of this book:

- The words we say as men are very important.
- The deeds we do as men are equally vital.
- Aligning our words and deeds is crucial for an impactful life.

## **Deeds**

So what is meant by *words* and *deeds*? Starting with *deeds*, most men fundamentally comprehend that deeds are important. But what is a deed? A deed is an *intentional action*. In the context of this book, a deed is something beneficial, a good work, a kind act, an aid rendered. It is an act that *accomplishes* something in life, and there are many quotes about being a man of deeds.<sup>3</sup> In fact, there is an entire nursery rhyme that denigrates words that are not complemented by deeds.

### A MAN OF WORDS AND NOT OF DEEDS

*A man of words and not of deeds  
Is like a garden full of weeds  
And when the weeds begin to grow  
It's like a garden full of snow  
And when the snow begins to fall*

*It's like a bird upon the wall  
 And when the bird away does fly  
 It's like an eagle in the sky  
 And when the sky begins to roar  
 It's like a lion at the door  
 And when the door begins to crack  
 It's like a stick across your back  
 And when your back begins to smart  
 It's like a penknife in your heart  
 And when your heart begins to bleed  
 You're dead, and dead, and dead indeed.<sup>4</sup>*

ANONYMOUS

The reasons for doing deeds are self-evident. In order to live a good life, it is necessary to do good deeds for others. The reason many men—Moses, King David, Jesus, Constantine, Charlemagne, Gutenberg, Michelangelo, Mozart, George Washington, and Thomas Edison, to name a few—are called great is because they accomplished great deeds. These men did more than the average man; they put their lives to work for other people.

I often think about the four chaplains from the beginning story. These men positively impacted other human lives with their words, deeds, and example. It did not take an entire lifetime for them to accomplish something great; they took a step of faith in a harrowing moment and now will forever be enshrined in the annals of brave deeds. Though many of us may never know the extent of our actions while living

here on earth, we must realize that simple steps of faith and courage on a daily basis can echo in eternity and imprint on lives we will never meet.

Here is an excerpt of a speech given by President Theodore Roosevelt, entitled “Citizenship in a Republic”:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.<sup>5</sup>

Do you ever feel like the man in the arena? With a face marred by dust and sweat and blood? Do you sometimes feel alone, fighting a battle no one else can see? So many people remain outside the arena, easily able to point out how the strong man stumbles and where he could have performed

better. It is much more comfortable outside the arena. It is safer where there is no sacrifice. However, men outside the arena will never fully experience victory or defeat. They will not know the deepest joys and pains in life. One thing history teaches us is that there are no great accomplishments without great effort. Thus, deeds are important for a successful life.

### **Words**

Have you ever heard someone say to you, “Put in a good word for me”? What they mean is to build them up and elevate them somehow in another person’s eyes. What is a good word? A good word is speech or writing that is desirable, approving, or morally right. It is normally used to encourage someone or to motivate them to action. When Abraham Lincoln warned that “a house divided against itself cannot stand,” he was not only offering his own good words—he was drawing on good words from the Bible to mark a moment and direct the course of history. When Ronald Reagan told Mikhail Gorbachev to “tear down this wall,” he invested a simple phrase—four syllables in four words—with the weight of history and the force of moral courage.

Words are incredibly powerful and can be a force for good or for harm. As many of us men realize, the old preschool saying “Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me” is not true. Words can hurt people deeply and have a lasting effect.

One problem we face is that we live in a society where a man’s word does not have much value anymore. A friend of



mine told me that when her grandfather was a young man purchasing part of a neighbor's farm, the two only shook hands and the farmer said, "Your word is better than a piece of paper." Now, a simple handshake will not do.

When we make promises to one another, we often "give our word" and offer assurances that "our word is our bond." The other person decides whether to "take us at our word." We might reinforce our position by offering, "Don't take *my* word for it" and refer them to some independent source of verification. In each case, "my word" is an allusion to "my character," an implicit acknowledgment that the words we say have real meaning; our character can in fact be judged by them. But the sad flow of history has meant that one person's word—a simple *yes* or *no*—is no longer supported by confidence in his character. Instead of "my word," we resort to pages and pages of words—not our words but the words of our lawyers, densely written, highly technical legal language packed with caveats and conditions and exit clauses. This is what happens when we fail to follow through on what we say.

Societal promises are broken repeatedly, even when a man gives his word. Marriage vows are an example of this duplicity: On average, they are only kept half the time. Political promises are kept even less often than that. A recent report<sup>6</sup> from Barna, a market research group, highlights this mismatch by revealing there are 114 million adults in America who have nothing to do with church, yet 41 percent—46 million—of these people say that their religious faith is very important in their lives today. How is this possible?

The words we say as men are paramount. I could even argue that they are critical to sustaining life. Sometimes, the mere act of saying words has a beneficial result. Take, for instance, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's assurance to the nation that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." This is an example of words strengthening an entire society—not a preamble to a policy but a moral, rhetorical declaration. Words are more important than we can ever imagine: Good words can help win wars, help conquer racism, allocate life-saving funds, and strengthen churches, marriages, friendships, communities, and human lives.

In warfare, words are used not merely as persuasive pre-battle speeches, as mentioned in the introduction; words are used throughout the day, in every battle, for the entire war. Battle plans are communicated to subordinate commanders ahead of time in an operations order; fragmentary orders are given by military leaders to provide a change of plans at decisive points during the battle; speeches are given by commanders after the battle; and combat experiences are retold by soldiers when they return home. Words of strategy are written in regulations, field manuals, and the magazines soldiers read in order to learn their military occupational specialty. Written war plans are encoded via secret messages, the Internet, walkie-talkies, and military radios. All of these methods effectively utilize words to help win a battle.

In marriage, words are used to win a mate, commit to her in the marriage ceremony, and support and encourage her throughout the relationship. As the years progress, words are

used to continually woo a wife and make her feel like the girl from that first date.

In a family, words are used to teach children manners and coax them to eat their vegetables, do their homework, or mow the lawn. Words are also used to speak truth into people's lives, expressing their worth to you and to God. Encouraging words give elderly parents satisfaction in their parenting and sometimes hope for a future. Words also encourage siblings who are down on their luck to continue to run the race and fight the good fight.

Another area where intentional word usage is paramount is our careers, where words are utilized in numerous ways: to communicate the organizational mission, to hire and fire, to sustain a labor force, and to market and exchange goods and services. In our communities, we use words to greet neighbors, hire babysitters, organize car pools, and care for neighbors. In churches, exhortatory words are preached in sermons, delivered by teachers and leaders, and conveyed in small groups and the church nursery. Also, God's spoken Word is the foundation of Christian theology. Jesus is introduced as "the Word" who "was with God, and . . . was God" (John 1:1). In the book of Revelation, "His name is called The Word of God" (19:13).

Conversely, the lack of good words can influence a society negatively: Adolf Hitler's speeches and writings implicated an entire country in racist, imperialist, genocidal practices; the legendary royal snub "Let them eat cake" fueled the fires of revolution in France; a cult leader's self-promoting words induced nearly a thousand followers to drink poison.<sup>7</sup>

Good words are absolutely vital to function in society. We cannot merely be men of deeds and not words. Words are necessary. Words can be used for great good. We can protect someone from tripping over an obstacle, save a marriage, shield a child from an accident, or save a life by offering hopeful words. In my work as an army chaplain, sometimes a soldier whom I've never met will come into my office with tear-filled eyes, and the words I communicate to him or her in the next moments are critical. The words we men say to our spouses, our bosses, our work colleagues, our friends, and our neighbors are imperative to sustain our relationships here on planet Earth. Therefore, even though there may not be nursery rhymes elevating words over deeds, words are also crucial for a successful life.

\* \* \* \*

A Presbyterian preacher by the name of Nathaniel Randolph Snowden captured an event in his diary of remembrances, and it remains a testament of history to this day.<sup>8</sup> In the document, Rev. Snowden describes meeting a man by the name of Isaac Potts who lived and worked at Valley Forge in the late 1770s. They shared a carriage, and Potts told Snowden about running into George Washington during the Revolutionary War.

Isaac Potts, a British sympathizer, owned and operated a gristmill at Valley Forge during the time of the Continental Army encampment. Potts told Snowden that on a snowy day in 1777, he was walking through the woods at Valley Forge and heard someone deep in prayer, beseeching God for the

success of the Continental Army and the American cause. When he walked closer, he noticed a lone man, and that man was none other than General George Washington. When Potts returned home, he told his wife that America could prevail. Then he immediately changed his loyalties, became a patriot, and did whatever he could to support the colonists.

Think of the impact of George Washington's prayer at Valley Forge. It not only caused Isaac Potts to shift from British Loyalist to American Patriot, but it might have also influenced his neighbors, family, church, town—and thus the entire war. Reflect also on the heroic actions of George Washington during the Revolutionary War. General Washington utilized both words and deeds to win the war. His prayers and letters to Congress urging them for more resources are testaments of his use of words; his leadership and involvement in battles against the British are testaments of his use of deeds. Words and deeds are absolutely indispensable to life. And the two must be aligned.

Whatever you do, whether in word and deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

COLOSSIANS 3:17, NIV