



## AN IMPRESSION ABOUT ETHICS

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People are bounded by their philosophies in life. One of these philosophies is what we call ethics. It deals with morality. It guides people to distinguish what is right and what is wrong. The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy points out that ethics involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behavior. People are investigated where their ethical principles come from, people are given practical tasks to reach at moral standards that maintain and regulate right and wrong behavior, and people are personally involved of examining themselves on particular issues. These may seem to be blurry in a certain point because somehow the lines of distinction may interrelate with each other. In other words, ethics examines and studies moral values and rules. These moral values and rules guide people to become good citizens. These also serve as the measure of morality of a person. We learn to differentiate and distinguish a good and bad person because of his ethical standards in the society. Sometimes we could not avoid asking ourselves on how do we apply ethics in our lives. We also ask the standard social norms that we have to follow and what we have to avoid. Some people have difficulties to distinguish them. Some people do it intentionally or with a purpose. Whatever reasons and purposes do they have in mind; they are accepted because these reasons and purposes do well for themselves.

Albert Schweitzer once quoted in his book, *Civilization and Ethics*, "True ethics begin where the use of language ceases". He emphasized about character and behavior. Without saying a word, our actions could show it all. We don't need so many words to speak just to disclose our moral values. Our actions and attitudes guarantee well than words. As the saying goes, "Actions speak louder than words". It's very true. These actions would certainly define who you are or what kind of a person you are. When a person sets a good living example to others, he is trying to bequeath the living legacy of good ethics. There are times that we do something wrong, we do cheating, we do something embarrassing, we do something unacceptable o the social norms of behavior yet we want to prove it isn't, we want to evade and hide the real cause and pretend everything is fine and okay. Can we call it an ethical behavior? Or we ask ourselves, "Where's the etiquette?" It's hard to accept this kind of behavior. The prescription for guidance of conduct seems to be useless. Because there's no proper decorum which is the major substance as far as ethics is concerned.

We know for a fact that no one is perfect. However, it's not a viable reason why do some people don't practice what is truly right. In another sense, they continue doing that because it becomes a habit. It is a habit that they have a hard time to quit. They know the real consequences. Perhaps some people really don't really care the moral values they have within. They don't know how to use it or put into practice. Whatever behavior do we have, it really matters. We have to check it from to time to be aware how far do we apply our ethics and our personal values towards other people. Our personal decisions are guided by our good manners or moral obligations. Therefore, when our ethics is affected, we need to review again and again on how far we have dealt with all the circumstances and actions having an ethical behavior which guides us to come up and apply ethical preferences in life.

Questions for discussion:

1. What images spring to mind when you hear the word "ethics"?
2. How do we distinguish right from wrong actions?
3. Why do actions speak louder than words? Give an example.
4. How do we maintain our ethical behavior?
5. Why do some people choose to do what is wrong?