

## **Monday Memo 321: Your Board of Directors**

I'm confused, which may not be big news for you, since you figured this out a while ago. There seems to be a glaring contradiction in the Bible.

At one point, John wrote this:

As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him (1 John 2:27).

All right, I have no need for anyone to teach me, according to John.

Yet Paul wrote this:

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11).

Paul declares that teachers are in the "big five." One wrote I don't need a teacher; the other stated that teachers were critical to my development as a believer. Which one is correct? How can we resolve this contradiction? To find out, of course you must read on.

### **JOHN WAS RIGHT**

John wrote his letter to some who had teachers telling them that Jesus was not the Christ. John identified those teachers are liars, telling the reader that they knew better. The "anointing" inside them taught them and bore witness that Jesus was indeed who He said He was. There were some things, according to John, that believers knew just because the truth was in them. They had no need for anyone to confirm or teach them.

One of those things that believers "know," in my experience, is the truth about their purpose. No one can give or assign you a purpose. It is in you and, when you hear or see it, it rings true. I would say it is part of the "anointing" that John refers to, for it is something that is personal and directly assigned by the Lord Himself.

Yet your purpose increases your need for the church and the "big five," which includes pastors and teachers. You can't stand alone once you find what only you can find and know -- your purpose.

### **PAUL WAS RIGHT, TOO.**

As usual, there is no contradiction in the Bible on this point. There are some things you know, like your purpose, but there are other things you need to learn, like doctrine, right behavior and values. Your purpose sets you apart, but your need for coaches, mentors and teachers makes you part of a team, and that team is often found in the church. This doesn't mean that your purpose isn't relevant in the world of business, medicine or education. It just means that you won't be as effective as you could be if you don't embrace those in the church who are assigned to instruct and guide you in the ways of God.

I hope you aren't waiting around for someone to tell you what your purpose. That is something only you can find out and only you can recognize when it comes. At the same time, if you know your purpose, I hope you are a part of a team that can help equip and train you to be effective and relevant. Purpose is personal but your expression is not, and that's where some miss it. Often no one can help you find your purpose but many can help you fulfill it.

I have written in the past about your need for a personal board of directors, people who are living or dead who can train and teach you. (I have included below a past memo that discussed this issue.) Who is on your board of directors? Who inspires you to better performance? Who challenges you to grow and develop? Who helps clarify your values and then helps insure that you live them? This would be a good week to first clarify your purpose and then to recognize and maybe even formalize your team of teachers and mentors who give you life and direction. Make a list of who they are, or make a list of who you would like them to be. Don't be confused, however, about their role. Only you can find your purpose but only they can help make it all that God wants it to be. Have a great week!

### **Monday Memo 322: Here I Am!**

I've been in a seeking mood lately as I usually take some time as the year ends to seek the Lord for the future. This week I've been revisiting Moses and his encounter with the Lord at the burning bush. There are some lessons in that encounter I've been thinking about, and I invite you to think along with me. To do that, however, you will have to read on.

#### **THE BURNING BUSH**

Moses approached the burning bush because he was curious. I'm sure he had seen many burning bushes in the scorching desert heat, but this one was different because it burned and wasn't consumed. There are two

purpose lessons there. First, if you follow your curiosity, it will often lead you right where you need to be. Second, when you are in your purpose, you are like that burning bush. You burn but you aren't burned out or consumed. Your purpose energizes you.

So Moses went over the bush and a voice, the voice of the Lord to be specific, spoke to him. Moses' response was interesting and appropriate. He said, "Here I am!" I am sure the Lord knew where Moses was, so this comment wasn't for God's benefit. It was Moses' way of saying, "I'm here and I'm ready to hear." What's more important, he indicated that he was ready to do God's will before he knew what God was going to say.

When you and I say "Here I am" when we are seeking the Lord for purpose and direction, we are really saying, "Lord, I trust you and I say 'yes' before I know to what I am saying yes." That is faith and we know that faith pleases God. So "here I am" is pleasing to God's ears.

### **HERE-I-AM ATTITUDE**

I know someone who was once struggling to find their purpose and a pastor gave that person some good advice. He said, "During your search, why not thank God for your purpose before you know what it is?" I think that was here-I-am advice and leads to a here-I-am attitude. You present yourself at attention, like a good soldier, awaiting your orders. Then you wait to hear what they are, giving thanks in the meantime.

I wrote in my journal this morning, "Lord, I'll do whatever you want me to do, wherever you want me to do it." I am listing all the things that have me curious at this time, to see if any of them will lead me to a burning bush. Whether they do or not, I am waiting, listening and thanking, and that puts me in a perfect position to hear from Him. So this week say "Here I am" and then wait and see what comes your way. If you do that, I know you'll have a good week!

### **Monday Memo 323: I Am Not the One!**

I am sitting at a computer in a safari lodge in Kenya, and I went on a great game drive today. You can check out my upcoming report on my blog if you are interested, but right now, we have other important business to which we need to attend.

Last week, I mentioned Moses and his encounter with the burning bush. Moses started out strong by declaring, "Here I am!" It was downhill from there, however, as Moses presented excuse after excuse of why he could not do what God wanted him to do. I actually turned this series of

excuses into a message that I gave entitled, Moses Produces the Best Excuses.

Let's take a look at Moses' first excuse and see if it has any relevance for your own PurposeQuest.

### **I AM NOT THE ONE!**

When God told Moses what he was to do, he said in so many words, "I am not the one!" To be specific, Moses responded, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11). It seems that Moses was suffering from low self-esteem. God had just confirmed Moses' purpose to him, something Moses already knew, yet Moses tried to explain why he wasn't the one to do the deed. Have you ever done the same thing? Are you doing it now?

You pray to know and fulfill your purpose. When God reveals it to you, however, you are most surprised when God complies with our request. A litany of excuses often follows that revelation when you inform God that you don't have the talent, time, money, education, experience, or permission from your spouse to do His will.

Are you struggling with low self-esteem or lack of confidence in your PurposeQuest? Then you can take some consolation that Moses struggled with the same thing, yet went on to do great things. If you need some additional and more personalized assistance, however, you will need to read on.

### **THREE VERSES**

Here are three verses that I recommend you study this week if low self-esteem is your problem.

1. "As God's fellow workers, we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain" (2 Corinthians 6:1). You are not alone. When you function in your purpose, God is with you. He is your co-worker. If you were alone, you may have cause for concern. God is working with you, however, to help you accomplish the task.

2. "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20-21). More than simply being with you, God lives in you. You can learn how to surrender to the Jesus who lives in you and works through you. That makes you a carrier of something and Someone special, and that Someone empowers you to fulfill your purpose.

3. "But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16). The Spirit came to give you the mind of Christ. Why are so surprised when you have it? You should be surprised when you don't. When you realize that you have this mind, you will be more confident in your abilities, or rather God's abilities, to finish the job He assigned you.

The coming week is as good a week as any to confront your low self-esteem or lack of confidence. Honestly assess where you are in regard to God's purpose for your life. If you are thinking or saying, "I am not the one," you can simply start saying, "I am the one." That simple confession can change your life from one of purpose drifting to purpose cruising. Move beyond your limitations this week and join others who have stopped putting their faith in their own abilities to put their faith in God. As you do that, I know you will have a great week!

### **Monday Memo 324: What Shall I Tell Them?**

There is no one greater than Moses in the Old Testament, but we have seen the last few weeks that Moses was just like you and me. He was willing to do God's will to a point, but then he began to produce excuses that he hoped would exempt him from going back to Egypt, a job he clearly didn't want to do. Last week we looked at Moses' first excuse, which was, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt" (Exodus 3:11). That was an expression of his poor self-esteem and low estimation of his ability to carry out the task.

Next Moses tried a different ploy -- that he wasn't ready to go. I know you have never offered that excuse, but just in case you are ever tempted to do so, perhaps you should read on and see how to handle this thinking.

#### **WHAT SHALL I TELL THEM?**

What did Moses say exactly? I'm glad you asked. He said, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" (Exodus 3:13). Moses was trying to talk God out of His decision to send Moses, and Moses was saying in so many words, "I don't have all the information I need. I need to know more about God and be better equipped to handle people's objections and questions."

I have encountered people who do the same thing. They have a clear mandate and burden to do something. Yet they tell me things like, "I'm praying about it," but they really aren't. Sometimes they tell me, "I don't have the education or training," or "I am not spiritual enough; I have to

get this or that fixed in my life before I go and do." Have you ever offered those excuses? Are you employing them now in some aspect of your life, ministry or work?

You may need more training or education, and you may need to address a lack or problem in your life. Yet those issues don't disqualify you from doing something today to see God's will furthered in your life. Usually, you can address your issues while you are fulfilling your purpose instead of before even trying to fulfill it. Don't try to figure out all the implications of God's will before you start doing it; start doing it and make your changes and improvements as you go.

## **MIGHTY IN BATTLE**

Hebrews 11:34–35 states, "Whose weakness was turned to strength, and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies." I thought it interesting that the heroes of the faith didn't wait until they had strength, rather they received strength after they entered the battle. You may be saying to yourself, "If God gives me strength, I'll go and do." Instead God may say, "If you go and do, I'll give you the strength, wisdom, power or ability -- whatever it is that you need." If you are waiting to be ready to go before you are ready to go, you may never be ready to go.

Are you procrastinating, delaying the first steps you need to take where your purpose or goals are concerned? What excuses have you come up with that sound logical, which have almost become second nature to you? Are you ready this week to face the truth of why you are delaying? I hope you are, for God knew of your lack and weakness before He gave you the idea or directive. In spite of your lack, He is offering you a chance to fulfill your purpose. Are you ready to stop delaying and to take action? This week could be the week when you finally stop asking questions and offering excuses. I hope it is and that you have a great week!

Feel free to add your comments to this entry on the [site](#) where it is posted.

## **Monday Memo 325: Fear Not Failing**

I am in the Nairobi airport with just a few minutes until my flight to Amsterdam. I was unable to get online in Zimbabwe the last two days, so I apologize for being a day late. Just consider this the Tuesday Monday Memo.

The last several weeks we have considered the fact that Moses was less than enthusiastic when the Lord ordered him to Egypt from their

encounter at the burning bush. In fact, I entitled a message one time, Moses Produces the Best Excuses, because that is exactly what he did. His first was that he wasn't capable; the second was that he didn't have enough information to respond to the people's questions (you can read the two entries about those excuses by clicking here). I hope you are ready to learn about excuse number three; if you are, then please read on.

## **FEAR FAILING**

Moses' third excuse was, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you?'" (Exodus 4:1). Moses was asking, "What if I fail? What if I'm obedient but the people don't respond?" From my own experience as a purpose coach, I have found that fear of failure is the primary stumbling block for people trying to be more purposeful and productive. You can be so afraid to do the wrong thing that you do no thing, missing opportunities that could be significant.

Are you afraid of failure? Is that what stands between you and any attempt to fulfill your purpose or achieve your goal? In 2004, I began advocating that one week be set aside as Celebrate A Failure Week. I urged readers to talk about what they learned from failure and then to celebrate that failure as a great learning experience. We celebrated again in 2006. Maybe it's time for another celebration. (You can read Memos 111-117 to discover more about the role that failure plays in your success.) This week, let me quote former American president, Theodore Roosevelt, and what he had to say about failure:

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, and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming. But who does actually strive to do the deeds. Who knows the 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 worse, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

## **FEAR NOT FAILING**

If what Roosevelt said is true, then we should fear not failing. It is better to fail trying to do something great than succeed at doing nothing, for the latter isn't really success at all. I have often been more concerned with

what other people were thinking and that kept me from trying. I have also been too concerned with trying not to fail than trying to succeed.

Are you ready to face your fear of failure this week? Are you ready to replace it with a fear of not failing? When you fear failing, you won't even try and when you don't try, you won't ever do much of anything. When you fear not failing, you will make every effort to do something, concerned less about what people think and more about the consequences of lost opportunities. Are you offering God and others the same excuse that Moses offered? Are you asking, "But what if things don't work out?" The way to avoid the answer to that is to never take action. I urge you, even beg you, to stop allowing fear to paralyze you and to take action this week. Be more concerned with the consequences of being purposeless than the consequences of trying and failing. As you do that, I know that you will have a great week!