

[466: Report from Israel](#)

As you may know, I have been in Israel since last Wednesday with 24 people from my church in blog, you may want to do so [here](#). There is some pretty cool stuff there, and you subscribe to receive my daily updates. Later in the week, we are going into Egypt to see the pyramids, and you won't want to miss those updates either.

SIXTEEN YEARS

I first came to Israel in 1994 and was so moved by the trip that I determined I would one day lead teams to the Holy Land so others could experience what I have experienced. There are so many surprises, for at times things you thought would move you do not and things that you didn't think anything of before will move you to tears!

The point I want to make is that I set a goal 16 years ago and now I am ready to carry it out. I hope by God's grace to lead a trip every 18 months and teach about purpose, the supremacy of Christ and the nature of Jesus' earthly ministry. I will return in May of 2012. Would you like to be part of that tour?

WHY NOT JOIN ME?

If you would like to be a part, then why not set a goal . . . and then go for it? Why not say, "I will be there" and then begin to watch for ways you can prepare spiritually and financially. You will not get to Israel by wishing it to happen; you will have to help make it happen! Don't tell me what you may do one day. Tell me what you will do.

We are working on goals at this time as part of the PurposeChallenge I issued last month. If you haven't taken the Challenge yet, read about it [here](#) and then get with the program. And if you want to be in Israel in 2012, send me an email and I will keep you posted as plans come together. What a great goal that would be! And what a great way to improve your assessment score during this time of the PurposeChallenge. I have to run, but in the meantime, all I have to say is "Shalom!" and "Next year in Jerusalem!"

[467: To or Through?](#)

I just got back from Egypt after spending nine days in Israel. Egypt was a magnificent experience, and now it's time to put it all into perspective -- the sites, the insights, and the reflections. I will have the Egyptian updates posted to my travel [blog](#) in the next day or two. I didn't have good Internet connections, or the time for that matter, in Egypt to be able to write.

In the New York airport on our way home this morning, I asked those who went with me about our next trip to Israel in 2012. I wanted to know what they thought about an after trip for the next Israel tour; should we go to Athens and Greece, or Jordan and Petra. Why did I ask that question when we weren't even home from this trip? For that answer, you will have to read on.

GOALS

We have been talking about goal-setting in the context of the PurposeChallenge I issued last month. If you haven't taken the Challenge, it is simple. Go to my [website](#), take the Purpose Assessment and then commit to improve your score 15 points by years end. I will be writing [Memos](#) to help you improve, and I decided to start with goals. [Last week](#) I asked if you wanted to set a goal to return to Israel with me in 2012. Some took me up on that offer. If you would like to as well, just write and let me know you are interested. But now, let's get back to the question I asked in the introduction.

I asked about the next trip because goal-setting is a way of life for me. I am always setting goals. Some of them I achieve, some of them I partially reach and some don't seem to go anywhere at all. Yet I am never deterred or discouraged from setting goals. For example,

1. I am able to spend so much time in Africa because I never leave Africa before I have my next trip planned.
2. I never publish a book that I don't have a goal for the next book.
3. I have goals for the next three months, the next year and the next five years.

I even set a goal to write this Memo before I go to bed, even though jet lag is calling my name. Why is this so important? It is because productive people have learned to set goals through a point and not to a point. Let me explain.

TO OR THROUGH?

If your goal is to finish the work week and get to the weekend, you may not enjoy the weekend. Why? You set a goal to a point, which was Friday, but not through the Friday to what you will do once you reach the weekend. Consequently, you lose focus and energy and end up wasting the weekend that you wanted so desperately to reach. You can set a goal to finish college, but if you don't have a goal for after college, then you may have trouble finding a job.

I know what you may be thinking. How do I know if I can make my next trip or finish and publish my next book? I don't! If I don't set those goals, however, I may never achieve what is possible. I would rather fall short in the goal rather than set no goals at all, and consequently fall short of my potential.

I would say the process has worked by God's grace, since I have written ten books, been to Africa countless times and Israel on eleven occasions. If you disagree with my process, let me know yours - but also let me know what you have accomplished with your process. If you haven't achieved as much as you would like to this point in your life, then I suggest you overcome your reservations and employ what I am describing here.

Since this Memo is already too long, I won't quote the passage but urge you to look at how Paul used this technique of setting goals through a point and not just to a point in [Romans 15:24-28](#). What goals can you set this week, even though you are still working on some older goals? Don't wait until you reach your goals to set new ones and, as you learn to apply this to every area of your life, your Purpose Challenge score will certainly increase, which is just another way of saying that you will be a more productive and purposeful person. Have a great week!

[468: A Values-Driven Life](#)

I trust you are one of the 328 people who have accepted my PurposeChallenge. In case you haven't heard, I am asking that you take the Purpose Assessment on my [website](#) and then accept the challenge to increase your score by 15 points between now and the end of the year. I am writing specifically to help you increase that score and I have been focusing on goal-setting as a means to be more purposeful the last several weeks.

I am regularly asked one question when I teach on goals or productivity: "There are so many things I *want* to do and feel like I *need* to do - how can I find the time to do them?" My answer is that you cannot find time; you already have all the time there is -- 24 hours every day. Often you must *stop* doing something before you can do the things you need or would like to do. I have found that a key is to clarify your values and then allow your goals and daily tasks to flow out of your values system. Let me give you an example.

A SECOND DOCTORATE

One of my ten values is that "I am a learner." I don't want to stop learning or I will stop growing as a leader and person. Since learning is a value, I set a goal every year to read or listen to five books every month. So far this year, I have finished 35 books. In the last five years, I have listened to our read almost 300 books! Do you see how my goal isn't something I have to do? It's something I choose to do. It is like brushing my teeth; I read every day because it is important to me. I don't even have to think about it.

I recently completed a grueling class schedule and study program to earn my second doctorate at the age of 61. Why would I do this? I do it because learning is a value. What's more, I do it because I love it. Identifying your values isn't the most exciting work you can do, but it's important work nonetheless. With that in mind, I have an assignment for you, especially if you have accept my PurposeChallenge.

YOUR TURN

1. Go to my [website](#) and download the article entitled "How to Define Your Governing Values." This article is an excerpt from my book, [So Many Leaders, So Little Leadership](#). (If you already have that book, refer to chapter two.) Read through the article to get an idea of how I recommend you go about recognizing and writing our your values. Don't worry if it seems a bit strange or awkward. There is no wrong way to do it. You won't be tested; this is for your eyes only!

2. Set aside one or two hours this week. Get up early each morning, don't watch television this week, but do whatever you have to do to find two hours this week. Promise yourself that you will do this and keep the commitment. (If you already have your values defined, is it time to review what you have?)
3. Once you have identified your values following my instructions, you can then begin to set goals and daily activities focusing on things that you value, things that should govern your life and time by their prominent place in your heart.
4. Most importantly, you may have to have a stop to-do list that will free up some time currently devoted to the *urgent* that you can then invest in the *important*.

There is no shortcut to being productive and self-disciplined. If you are serious about answering the question, "How do I find time to do important things?", however, you must be serious about defining and writing out your values. This exercise is an important step in being more purposeful, so get to work and write out those values today. Then let your values drive your decisions and guide your life of purpose and goals. As you do, I know that you will have many great weeks, including this one.

[469: What's In a Name?](#)

Almost 400 people have taken the Purpose Challenge I issued a month ago. The challenge is simple: Take the assessment found on my [website](#), get your score and then commit to improve that score by 15 points by December 31. The assessment is made up of 20 statements to which you mark an answer ranging from always to never. One of the statements I ask is this:

7. I listen well to others and remember their names easily.

What in the world does this strange question have to do with you being a person of purpose? To understand my rationale, you will have to read on to find out.

HARD TO HEAR AND REMEMBER

Have you ever been to a party or at work or in church and been introduced to someone, only to forget their name as soon as you heard it? Isn't that embarrassing? It's often too awkward to ask the person's to repeat their name, so you usually just proceed to act like you remember when you don't. Why don't you remember?

You don't remember for a number of possible reasons:

1. It isn't important, so you don't invest any mental energy to remember.
2. You are nervous meeting new people, so the name goes in one ear and out the other.
3. You don't listen well, and so you don't even hear the name.
4. You are self-conscious so you don't ask the person to repeat the name.

5. You don't repeat the name and use it in a sentence to help secure it in your own mind.

There may be other reasons, but those should do for this discussion.

THE SAME PROBLEM WITH PURPOSE

If you don't listen carefully, you may hear and not maintain your purpose or clues that will help you understand it. People may pay you a compliment that holds a clue to your purpose, but you don't pay attention, so you miss it. Your mind may be so preoccupied that you hear but lose what you heard quickly. You may not journal, so you take mental notes, only to have the ink of those mental notes fade all too soon.

The basic problem with hearing your purpose may be the same basic reason you don't hear names: You just don't pay attention. So what is the solution?

The solution is to train yourself to pay attention and listen more carefully to what is being said around you? You can do this by:

1. Being more diligent to journal.
2. Ask more questions to ensure that you understand.
3. Share what you learn and hear quickly by teaching, talking to others or writing.
4. Be more concerned with retaining what you hear than what others think about you.

Little things are significant where purpose is concerned, and simply learning to retain another's name can be an important habit that can lead to other benefits. I suggest you start to pay more attention this week to others around you. While you learn a new name today, you may hear an important clue tomorrow that will unlock the secrets of purpose in your life. Have a great week!

470: Write It Down!

We are in the midst of our PurposeChallenge, which has been accepted by more than 400 people the world over. What is the Challenge? It is to take the Purpose Assessment found on my website, receive your score and then commit to improve that score by 15 points between now and the end of the year. Are you game? If so, then go to my [homepage](#) and get started by taking the Assessment. Then you may want to review the [Memos](#) from the last month as I write to help you improve your score.

Last week I wrote about listening to names as a means to help you pay attention to the little clues around you to help you understand your purpose. This week let's look at how you can maintain those little clues so you can build a purpose profile for yourself or someone else.

WRITE IT DOWN!

Let's first look at what the prophet Habakkuk said:

I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint. Then the Lord replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay." "See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous will live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:1-4).

Habakkuk asked the Lord some complaining questions and fully expected the Lord to respond. He positioned himself to hear what the Lord had to say. That's faith! When he asked, He believed the Lord would respond. Are you listening when you ask? Do you truly believe the Lord can get a message through to you? How can you position yourself to hear?

And notice what the Lord told Habakkuk to do. He told him to write down what the Lord was about to say! Why is that? It's because of the truth in an old saying: The problem with taking mental notes is that the ink fades so quickly.

WHERE IS YOUR JOURNAL?

So the Lord told Habakkuk to write down what He was about to say and to wait for its fulfillment. The Lord then uttered a verse made famous in the New Testament but which was actually an Old Testament truth: The righteous will live by faith.

In this context, the righteous will live by faith -- faith that God will respond. Part of the faith is to be expressed in writing and waiting. Most believers have the waiting down pat; few do the writing.

Your assignment if you have taken the PurposeChallenge is to secure a good journal (the nicer the better) and to begin regular entries into that journal. What will you write about? You will write what you hear in response to the questions you ask the Lord. You will write about what you see, hear, taste experience and think about. You will no longer be uptight about what you write. You will no longer say you don't like or have time to journal. You will begin to write things down, just like Habakkuk did.

As I have studied the Assessment scores that have come in so far, journaling is a weak or nonexistent habit among those with lower scores. That is why we will write about this habit for the next few weeks. Right now, it's important you start or re-start. Once you do, I will talk to you about what you are writing in the weeks to come. Have a great week, but don't forget to get that journal going this week!