

486: Talk the Walk

We are marching onward toward the completion of the Purpose Challenge that began last August. In a few weeks, you will be able to take your Purpose Assessment one more and I am confident that, if you have applied my advice since August, you will increase your score! We still have a few weeks to go, however, so there is time for you to review and cram for the big exam - well, it's not that big, but there is still time for you to review the lessons shared since August [here](#).

Have you ever said something about yourself or referred to something you wanted to do and then thought, "Why did I say that? What are people thinking of me right now? They must think I am boasting or have a big ego!" If so, then that may be why you can't clarify your purpose, simply because you are not comfortable talking about or referring to yourself. Don't worry, however, for I have someone who can help you. Read on.

DID HE REALLY SAY THAT?

Last week we looked at one aspect of the story of David and Goliath. We saw that David could not wear Saul's armor to go and face Goliath. He had to wear and use what was most comfortable for him. I pointed out that you cannot walk in someone else's expectations for you, no matter how well-intentioned they may be.

So David, armed with the right equipment (a sling and some stones), stepped onto the battlefield to face this fearsome giant. Immediately he was confronted with some daunting threats from this behemoth:

[He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" \(1 Samuel 17:43-44\).](#)

Now if David was like some people I know, he would have then said, "Well, maybe, I mean perhaps the Lord may want to use me, but don't get me wrong, I'm not saying I know for sure and if something good does happen, it will be the Lord and not me. I don't want you to ever think it's me."

Fortunately, David was of a different mindset. When Goliath verbally attacked, David was quick to retaliate:

["You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands" \(1 Samuel 17:45-47\).](#)

What bravado! What courage! What confidence David had! There was nothing tentative in what he said or planned to do. He was bold and specific. Many think that kind of talk alienates God. Are you one of those who thinks that? If so, then you need to change the way you think!

God isn't repelled by such talk; that talk drew Him to David's cause. He promptly went out with David to meet the giant. David made good on his promises, while Goliath died trying to figure out what went wrong.

TALK THE WALK

How can you apply this lesson to your life right now? First, David had a track record from which he could draw. He had killed lions and bears, and he saw killing this giant as a continuation of those exploits. You must allow God to put you in challenging situations so that, when you overcome, you will be able to refer back to those experiences to help you fight future battles.

Second, you must know who you are and what you want to do. David did not hold back; he was clear and concise. He said, "I am a champion of God and you, Goliath, are not. You are coming down, in spite of your size, words and confidence."

Finally, David said what he was going to do without fear of what others thought of him. He spoke positive, affirming, and powerful words and then set about fulfilling them, even though he was young - a lot younger than all those soldiers, his brothers, and even King Saul.

What are you speaking these days? A better question is what aren't you speaking? Tentative, faithless words produce tentative, faithless actions. Positive, powerful words produce similar actions. Stop being hesitant and fearful of making bold statements where your purpose and dreams are concerned. Dream great things, talk about them and don't worry about how you sound to other people. Only be concerned with how you sound to God.

Many people are concerned with walking the talk, but if you aren't talking about what you are going to do with God's help, you won't have anything to walk! Dream great things, talk about doing them and then go for it! It's simple to describe but not simple to do, I know. I also know that you can only do great things once you stop stumbling and mumbling through your purpose and dreams. Every day this week, you need to watch what you don't say and follow David's example. That's what I will do this week and I plan on having a great week. I invite you to join me.

487: What To Do With a Big Head

This is it. This is the last Memo before you will take your next purpose assessment if you accepted my Purpose Challenge last August. If you need to review before the big day next week, you can read my past Memos directed to help you improve your score here. This week I have one more thought to share with you before we move on next week.

What do you do when you do something well? What's more, how do you handle it when someone compliments you for something they admire about you? If you're like some, you may not know what to do in those situations. You don't want to appear proud or egocentric, so you actually may minimize your strengths and achievements in your eyes and in the eyes of others. This may seem spiritual or noble, but it's actually detrimental!

What should you do when you succeed or receive a compliment? I'm glad you asked. For the answer, however, you will have to read on.

A BIG HEAD

We have looked at the story of David and Goliath the last two weeks. (If you didn't read or receive those Memos, you may want to go the site where they are posted and get caught up.) Last week, we saw how David made specific declarations of what he was about to do to Goliath. David made good on his promises and killed Goliath with one stone from his slingshot. It's what he did next that answers the questions I raised above.

David cut off Goliath's head! That was one big head not only to cut off but also to carry around.

The armies of Israel were encouraged by David's victory, and went forth to win a great victory over the Philistine army. That was one byproduct of David's success. Then David did something else that would be quite uncharacteristic for many I know, perhaps even for you:

[David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, and he put the Philistine's weapons in his own tent \(1 Samuel 17:54\).](#)

What did David do with the head? I doubt if he kept it in his tent or made a keychain out of it. He did what most champions did with such spoils of battle. David probably hung the head on a post for everyone to see. David celebrated his own victory and advertised his achievement! What's more, he kept a souvenir of the battle by keeping the giant's sword in his trophy case.

How does that answer the question of what to do when you achieve success? How does this give you insight into how you should respond when you receive a compliment?

DON'T WORRY THAT A BIG HEAD WILL GIVE YOU A BIG HEAD.

David celebrated his victory. He wanted people to see Goliath's head so that they would be encouraged to fight their own battles. As a good leader, David wanted the people to see that they didn't have to cower in fear. More importantly, David didn't minimize his success. He didn't say, "Well, it was nothing. You know, it was a lucky shot and God really did it, it wasn't me."

No. David said, "Look what I've done. What can you do?" That's what you need to do as well.

If someone compliments you on something you've done or for something you are, say, "Thank you." Don't push their praise away.

If you have done something and no one compliments you, then compliment yourself! Admire what you've done. Savor the moment, without being self-conscious or worrying about what others will think of you. If you achieve a goal for which you have worked hard, throw yourself a party and invite your friends to celebrate with you. Take a trip in honor of your new job, degree or completed project.

David knew how to celebrate his victories and use them to spur himself and others on to greater things. You and I need to do the same. Don't worry about a big head; there will be enough tough knocks and challenges to keep your feet firmly planted in reality. When you do something great, however, don't be afraid to acknowledge that, well, that it was great! And if others acknowledge that as well, then it is all the better.

This whole process may help you see that you may not be afraid of failure, but of what you will do if and when you succeed! Can you handle success and the admiration of others? I hope you will learn to broadcast your victories rather than hide behind mediocrity so that no one is offended and you aren't uncomfortable. Aim for great things, do them and tell the world if others don't. Have a great week!

[488: It's Time!](#)

Last August, I issued what I called a Purpose Challenge. The Challenge consisted of taking the Purpose Assessment found on my website, and then committing to address the disciplines in your life that would enable you to increase your score by 15 points. In the last six months, I have written about purpose, goals, time management, creativity and mentoring as means to that score increase. You can review all the Memos I wrote for this Purpose Challenge [here](#).

And now it's time to take the profile again to see how much progress you have made. As you re-take the Assessment, I urge you to give yourself the benefit of the doubt as you respond and not be too hard on yourself. You can find the Assessment [here](#).

This Assessment is not scientifically sophisticated. It is simply a summary of things I have found to be critical components in your PurposeQuest. Since measuring your progress in intangible things like purpose is almost an impossible task, you still need to try and determine how satisfied you are with your current state of affairs.

So that's it this week. If you did not take the Challenge, then go to the Monday Memo [archives](#) and do some reading if you need something to stimulate you this week. And remember, the Monday Memo turns 10 years old next month and I am collecting money for Kenyan orphans and widows to honor the event. You can read about it [here](#).

[489: Living Your Dream!](#)

Last week I invited you to re-take the Purpose Assessment on my [website](#) as part of the Purpose Challenge I issued last August. Many of you did, but a lot more have yet to do so! Maybe you are taking more time to prepare, and if so, that's alright. If you are procrastinating, however, it's time to take the Challenge! The goal was to try and increase your score by 15 points over the first time you took it.

Today I am thinking about Joseph in Genesis. Joseph was a man of purpose and in a real sense he saved the world while also saving his family from famine. If you have time, why not read Joseph's full story from [Genesis 37-50](#), but if you don't have the time, let me summarize it for you.

THE PROCESS

When Joseph was 17 years old, he had two dreams, both of which were interpreted by his family to mean that one day they would all bow down to Joseph as the family leader. This brought a rebuke from his father but active hatred from his brothers, who eventually sold him into slavery. Joseph was carried down to Egypt, where he became the servant of a man named Potiphar. Joseph excelled while serving Potiphar, but Mrs. Potiphar had romantic ideas and tried to prevail upon Joseph to sleep with her. When Joseph refused, she lied and accused him of rape.

Mr. Potiphar was angry and sent Joseph to the prison, where Joseph again excelled in service and leadership. After correctly interpreting the dreams of two fellow inmates who were Pharaoh's servants, Joseph was eventually brought before Pharaoh to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. The dreams indicated that the world would suffer a tremendous famine and Joseph saw in the dreams a plan by which the world could have food during the seven years of lack.

By this time, Joseph was 30 years of age (see [Genesis 41:46](#)). He was promoted to second-in-command after Pharaoh and he gave oversight to the seven years of plenty, when grain was stored for the famine. That is when the story gets even more interesting.

LIVING A DREAM!

Joseph's father Jacob thinks Joseph is dead and his brothers are simply glad he is gone. Joseph's family is also affected by the worldwide famine, however, so they went down to Egypt to buy food. Joseph sees and recognizes them, but they do not recognize him. Moses wrote, "[Then he remembered his dreams about them and said to them](#)" ([Genesis 42:9](#)). Since the brothers came in the second year of the famine, Joseph was 39 years old when he remembered the dream.

Now I ask you: If you don't remember your dreams from last night, how did Joseph remember his for twenty-two years? He remembered them because he "lived" in them. He lived in them on the long trip after being sold into slavery. He lived in them during those early years serving Potiphar and in the later years in prison. He remembered them during the first years of Pharaoh's favor, when he married a foreign woman and started a family. So when the brothers came in after twenty-two years of living in his dream world, Joseph saw his dream become a reality.

The implications for you are clear. If your "dream" carries, live in it. Visualize the dream and see yourself in the midst of its fulfillment. Hold onto that dream no matter what, and no matter how far away from its reality you may be. When Joseph's brothers came in to beg for bread, Joseph was ready to assume his place in the real-life version of the dream and the dream became a reality -- and yours will too, but only if you live in it today so you can live in it tomorrow. Have a great week living in your dream!

490: It's Your Turn!

In two weeks the **Monday Memo** turns ten years old! I can still remember writing to those first few subscribers, using my Microsoft Outlook until I had 18,000 names and my Outlook crashed. It was then that I transitioned to the current format, but those early years were great fun - and a tremendous learning opportunity.

Now I plan on taking a few weeks off and I want to hear from you! That's right, it's your turn and I want to read something you send me. Here are the three things to which I would like you to take time to respond.

1. **I need your stories.** I would like to gather testimonies of what the **Monday Memo** has done for you. This can include lessons learned or purpose found through the regular teaching included in the Memo.
2. **I need your definition of purpose.** I am finishing up my project for my Doctor of Ministry and my advisor recommended I have a stronger definition of purpose. I have a lot of statements about purpose, but I would like to put together something fresh with some punch. I want and need you to help me do that this coming week.
3. **I need money for my anniversary.** No, it's not for me, it's for my work in Kenya. If you missed my post a few weeks ago entitled "I Want Money for My Anniversary," you can read it [here](#). I don't care if you only send \$1, send something to help the children. You can read the latest updates I wrote yesterday about Kenya [here](#) as well. Once you do, I know you will give and give generously.

You can email me your stories and definitions at johnstanko@gmail.com, but the best option is to post your responses on the [site](#) where this entry is posted, so people around the world can read what you wrote. If you email me, I will probably turn around and post your comments anyway, so you may as well do it yourself right up front.

So there you have it -- you have an assignment or two to finish this week. I look forward to hearing from you as we all celebrate the fact that God has used this very simple tool called the **Monday Memo** to touch thousands of people around the world. I look forward to reading what you have to say! Have a great week. (Excuse all the colors but I thought I would try to make the **Memo** a bit more festive to celebrate.)