

*The Monday Memo*  
from the desk of  
**Dr. John Stanko**  
Issue 51

People often ask me how far in advance I determine the topic for each *Monday Memo*. There are times when I know early in the week, and then there are times that I'm not sure what I'll write until I start writing. This week is definitely a faith venture. As I begin to write, I am trusting the Lord for the topic. So let's have faith together that something good will happen as I write.

I am listening to the soundtrack from *The Phantom of the Opera* as I write. That music is perhaps the most successful show music in the history of theater. I have seen the show in person twice and I am ready to see it again. Andrew Lloyd Webber composed the music and Charles Hart wrote the lyrics. Why am I telling you this? Because these men changed the world by what they did and produced. I listen to their music, but also try to read great books, watch great movies, study great business success stories, and listen to great men and women because they all inspire me to achieve and produce.

You have read in many *Memos* that I want to change the world. If God doesn't permit me to change the world, I want to change my world, that part of the world with which I come in contact. But that will not happen, indeed I cannot permit it to happen, in my own strength. It must happen like this *Monday Memo* is happening: by faith in God. Somehow I must learn to work *and* trust in God at the same time.

Many of you write me, anxious about finding your purpose, achieving your goals, having time, and knowing the will of God. I commend you for your concern, but you can't find or achieve these things through your own intelligence or energy. Relax! How can you do that while still putting forth effort? I am thinking of the verse that states:

"This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty" (Zechariah 4:6).

I also recall what the psalmist wrote:

"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain.  
Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat--  
for he grants sleep to those he loves" (Psalm 127:1-2).

I encourage you to seek the Lord for your purpose this coming week. Work hard to achieve your goals. Take some intermediate steps that will equip you for your

ultimate success in something significant in the years to come. While you're seeking and working, however, I recommend that you learn to relax. That's right: work and relax. Those two things can only make sense together in a faith context, where you are working like everything depends on you and trusting God like everything depends on Him.

If you can learn to do that, then you will have found the secret of success. Your life will unfold like this *Monday Memo* and God will use you and who you are to accomplish His will. I want to write, teach and build just like I wrote this *Memo*: trusting in God to work with and through me. I hope you will do the same. Have a great week!

*The Monday Memo*  
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Issue 52

We did it! Welcome to the 52nd edition of *The Monday Memo*. I wanted to decorate this page, but I know doing that would have made it more difficult for some of you to download. I wanted this *Monday Memo*, of all the *Memos*, to be one of the most dynamic and insightful. I was hoping that fireworks would go off in your mind and heart when you read it. I wanted this *Memo* to be nominated for the Pulitzer Prize because of its dynamic prose and witty insights. So all week I strained and prayed, thought and meditated, dreamed and schemed to make this *Monday Memo* what I considered to be the best yet.

But I sit here tonight and I don't feel particularly profound or insightful. I sense that this *Memo* needs to be simple and straightforward. This seems like a good opportunity to look back and reflect, so I thought it would be helpful to summarize some lessons I learned from writing *The Monday Memo* for the past 52 weeks. I learned that:

1. I was able to write *The Monday Memo* only because I stopped doing something else. I let go of what I had been doing to enter this new season in my life. I couldn't have anticipated the impact of *The Monday Memo* and so much of what I did in the last year, and God didn't let me see it all. He simply asked me to trust Him and that is what I tried to do.
2. You use what you have and God gives the increase. I had 500 addresses in my personal mailbox and that is what I used to start *The Monday Memo*. Only about 10 percent of those people chose to receive *The Monday Memo*. I used what I had and now there are 3,000 subscribers.

Who you are and where you came from is a mystery to me. I wasn't even sure I would have enough material to sustain *The Monday Memo* for one year. But somehow, every week the ideas came and I was able to put them into words.

3. *The Monday Memo* saved my life. Well, that may be an exaggeration, but your feedback and enthusiasm came at a time in my life and ministry when I wasn't sure anyone was listening. Your gift subscriptions, questions, stories and victories have meant a lot to me. Each has been a blessing. Monday morning is my favorite morning now because that is when I start getting your feedback and it continues all week.

4. The Internet is a powerful tool. For the cost of my time, I have sent thousands of messages around the world. Those messages have been sent to others and from my desk and laptop computer, I have entered countless homes and lives by invitation or recommendation. My weekly Bible studies have been circulated to places I will probably never visit and to people I will never meet this side of heaven. I have built relationships with people through my website, which is averaging 75,000 visits per month. The content there has changed lives and perhaps the course of history. That may sound like an overstatement, but maybe not. One person who found their purpose there could in turn change the world.

There is so much more I could add, but I want to close by thanking God for these last 12 months. He has sustained and directed me and added many new friends and exciting adventures. I also want to thank you for your support. It is a privilege to have entrance into your life every week. I want to encourage you, on this *Monday Memo* anniversary, to start something that has the potential to take on a life of its own. It may not be the best there is or grow very large. But it will be yours and you can put it in God's hands and see what He wants to do with it. Remember, what is in you has potential, but it remains potential until you do something with it.

I am not sure how much longer I will write *The Monday Memo*. But as I enter this second year, I feel like there is a lot of life left in this concept. May God use it for His glory and may you continue to benefit from its content. Happy Birthday, *Monday Memo*. And God bless you, its faithful reader!

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Issue 53

I may not be more "cultured," but I feel more cultured. This past Friday night, my wife and I went to see an opera in Philadelphia. Kathryn wanted to see an opera

for her birthday so we went to see *Don Giovanni*, which Mozart wrote 200 years ago. Then on Saturday we visited New York City. While there, we went to the Solomon Guggenheim Museum and for the first time in my life, I saw several original paintings by Pablo Picasso. (We also visited the Ground Zero viewing platform where the Twin Towers once stood. It was moving and sad.) I think hearing a Mozart and seeing a Picasso in the same weekend increases my culture level, don't you?

I doubt if either artist ever imagined what would happen with the works they produced and I don't think either expected to impact the world as they did. At the opera, I saw people of every age and many ethnic groups in the audience. At the museum, large numbers of people walked past each painting, trying to comprehend its meaning and pattern. That is the case with what we produce; we don't know what will happen with something or how it will be used until we produce it. Then the world can accept or reject it, but until we produce, there is nothing for people to like or dislike.

Why don't you bring forth what is in you? You may be afraid of the rejection. Others may not like or understand what you've done. They can ignore it at best or worse yet, laugh at it and you. At other times, you may try to figure out how people will react before you even produce something. When you "see" them not liking what you are thinking of doing, you may not do it, fearing the worst. I remember a young housewife in one of my seminars many years ago. She went home and wrote her first children's song and today she is published all over the world. It started with her overcoming that attitude that her song was insignificant or that no one would be interested. Today she takes her place beside Mozart and Picasso and others who produced something that people pay to enjoy.

Take my books, for instance. One of them is published in China and another has been translated into several different languages. They are passed from person to person and I have received email letters and questions from all over the world. Not everyone has agreed with all that I've written, and I am not ready to quit everything I'm doing to live off the proceeds from my sales. Yet I have produced something that God is free to use in whatever way He sees fit. I think it is interesting that in the case of Mozart, he is more popular today than he ever was when he was alive. My books will outlive me, I hope, and who knows what God will do with them then.

When I write, I use one passage from the Bible as my inspiration. It is found in Paul's epistle to the Colossians, which states: "**Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving**" (Col 3:23-24). If I strive to do my very best and do it with the right motives of serving and glorifying God, then I can trust the results to Him. But I must produce it for God to even be able to use it for His purposes. I write, because that is what I can do and trust God for the results and increase, because

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that is what He can do. That makes me a partner with God and I must do my share for the partnership to be successful.

How about you? Are you pursuing excellence by producing what is in you with all your heart? Are you then trusting God for the results? Don't try to figure out what God will do; you just do your part. There are only a few Picassos and Mozarts throughout history, and there is also only one you. Do what you can to the best of your ability and do it for God. The rest is up to Him. Have a great week!

*The Monday Memo*  
written from England  
by Dr. John Stanko  
Issue 54

Nobody enjoys failure. It often results in pain, suffering and embarrassment. Some people never get over the affects of a major failure, spending the rest of their lives in regret and anguish. Yet failure along with a proper attitude and response to it are crucial if we are going to be successful. That's right, failure is an important part of success.

My sister-in-law sent me an article from the March 25 edition of **Newsweek** magazine this week entitled "Failure is the Best Medicine." The opening paragraph read:

The dot-com collapse may have been a disaster for Wall Street, but here in Silicon Valley, it was a blessing. It was the welcome end to an abnormal condition that very nearly destroyed the area in an overabundance of success. You see, the secret to the valley's astounding multiple-decade boom is failure. Failure is what fuels and renews this place. Failure is the foundation for innovation.

Failure is the foundation for innovation: what an astounding statement! But when you think about it, it makes sense. We often learn more from our failure than success, and failure causes us to ask "what went wrong?" so that we can do a better job the next time. Failure shows us what didn't work and why and sets the stage, if we endure, for ultimate success.

If that is true, then why are you so afraid of failing? If failure is the foundation for innovation, why haven't you recovered from your last failure? *The Monday Memo* encourages you every week to focus on your purpose, to embrace ideas within you that can lead to success and productivity. Yet if you are to be a person of purpose and productivity, you must see the role that failure may have in your ultimate success.

Christians of all people should have a special view of failure, for we are people of the Bible. The Bible has many stories about failure. Moses struck the rock; David found Bathsheba; Israel turned its back on God; Peter denied Jesus; Saul persecuted the early church. Yet each of those failures was the basis for innovation and success. Moses gave way to Joshua, who led the people of God to the Promised Land; David and Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon, a great king; Israel came back to God and brought forth the Messiah for the world; Peter founded the early church; and Saul became Paul, the great leader of the Gentile church.

Christians of all people should view failure in light of the great truth found in Romans 8:28, a verse so often quoted but so infrequently applied. This verse states: "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"(NAS). Armed with this important truth, why are you still agonizing over your past failures? If this verse is true, why are you so paralyzed at the possibility of making a future mistake? Learn what you can from the past failures you've had and move on, or be prepared for your future failures that will help teach and mold you into the person you are striving to be.

The **Newsweek** article ends by stating:

The dot-comers are already hatching new companies. Many are revisiting good ideas executed badly in the '90s, while others are striking out into entirely new spaces. This happy chaos is certain to mature into a new order likely to upset a tottering establishment, as it delivers life-changing wonders to the rest of us. But this is just the start, for revolutions beget revolutions. So let's hope for more of Silicon Valley's successful failures.

Wouldn't this week be a good one to "hatch" new things? Isn't it time you busy yourself with your next "successful failure?" Use the week ahead to deal with your attitude toward failure. Allow the truth of Romans 8:28 to get down deep inside you, then move on and take steps toward achieving your dream. Have a great week!

*The Monday Memo*  
written from London by  
Dr. John Stanko  
Issue 55

It is Easter Sunday evening and I am homesick, but I am happy, too. I am sitting in my hotel and I am grateful for the opportunities God has given me. I spoke this morning at a church in East London and I marvel at how I got there. One of *The Monday Memo*-readers wrote and asked if I would come and it worked out for me to be there; that much I understand. But this morning I was in one of the world's great cities, speaking at a church made up mostly of African

believers, doing what I love to do. It is too much for me to comprehend so as I write, I am simply grateful to God for the chance to fulfill my purpose.

I thought this week I would include some of the letters I have received over the last few weeks. I want to do this more often and will soon be setting aside some space on my website for you to read and learn from the feedback I receive. My publisher gave me the idea of "opening up" *The Monday Memo* for guest writers and I will share more with you in the next few weeks on how to submit a Memo for consideration.

The letters below are in no special order, nor do they follow any special theme. They are just letters from people like you telling me (and now the world) what is going on in their life.

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Thanks for being such a source of inspiration. Truly it's not everyone in life who gets people to encourage you to seek out your purpose and set goals to achieve them in order to have a fuller life. Thank you so much. I am still on my search to my purpose, but in the meantime, I believe that whatever God allows me to do and to go through is ultimately connected to my purpose. So what I have set my heart to do is to have realistic goals on a daily and weekly basis, and not only make the goals but set up realistic plans to achieve those goals in a step-by-step fashion.

This has turned out to be so important for me because I am an expert on procrastination. And as I look back, I think I have missed out on fantastic opportunities because of delaying or doing things later. So to amend this, I have been setting up small goals and achieving them. This has really helped me believe that I can achieve whatever I set to do. With time I had realised that I procrastinate a lot because I do not believe that I can achieve whatever it is that I am facing. So rather than face up to it and know if I can actually do it or not, it has always been safer for me to simply delay till later, which at times has ended up being "never". So I am finding it a bit tough, but I know I will change to being an achiever, and achieve on time.

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I have always cried out to God and said to him "I want to be a giver." So this being my practical year at university (I am doing my fifth year in Architecture), I decided that every morning as I walked to the taxi rank, I would buy a loaf of bread and give it to the needy. At the moment I feel that this is what I can do but I am asking God to enlarge my vision and territory so that I may be able to do much more than I could ever think of or imagine.

I see God using me to support children orphanages; I see God helping me educate hundreds of the less fortunate in the society through offering them scholarships. I further see God using me to send tons of relief aid to war-stricken countries in my continent like Somalia and the D.R.C. Finally, I see God using me to set up a global organization that will have a life-changing impact on our world.

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I have just finished reviewing, hopefully, the last proof for my book and I can hardly wait. Again, the inspirations I've received from your *Monday Memos* over the past year have aided me to press on to finish my book. I held myself accountable to the promise you encouraged us to make and follow through with the passion in my heart to write my first book. When I first started to write my book, and sometimes while writing, I was confronted with negative thoughts like "No one was going to read my book" or "My writing wasn't good enough for a book." But once I finished writing my book, God had transformed my life in such a way that my concerns changed from who would read my book into "thanking God that He inspired me to write a book, and that I finished writing it." I know that God would not have inspired me to write this book if he did not have a purpose for me to write it. So, now I am preparing myself for the next episode to play out in my life.

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I have started studying at the University of South Africa, and they prescribe studying each subject four hours a day. I am doing eight subjects so that makes 32 hours of study a week. I have to wake up at 3am to do my quiet time and then read. As I was struggling with this one morning I thought about your teaching that we had to believe God for time. God bless you, because that little piece of truth saved me hours of anguish. I can faithfully read on knowing that God will help me make time and manage time better. Today I was on time for work using that simple procedure. I took my daughter to my school and normally we make it in time for hers but seldom for mine. Well, God does work in amazing ways.

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This week's *Monday Memo* encouraged me so much, as I am one of those people that uses his hands to make things. I do not have a gift for healing, prophecy, the list is long, but God has given me many gifts when it comes to running businesses and doing what I am doing. I have a boat building business, a carpentry business, etc. and I thoroughly enjoy every day of my life organizing guys to make things. God has blessed my companies with so much work to do that we will be busy for this whole year, even though the economy is not going through a great time at the moment. When God is involved, nothing is impossible.

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This is Dr. Stanko again. In the coming weeks, I want to try and connect you, the readers, not only with me, but with one another. I want to establish a forum where you can share how you found your purpose or how you achieved a goal. Occasionally, I will join you for some online conversation where you can ask me questions about purpose or time management. I want to revamp purposequest.com to make it a more helpful place for you to find the assistance you need or the outlet you desire.

So keep the "cards and letters" coming. I am a bit behind on my correspondence due to my travel schedule, but don't let that stop you. Not only do I want to hear from you, but I want to use what is happening in your life to impact others. Together we can make a difference and change the world, one life at a time. Have a great week!