

## 526: Collaboration

We are almost finished with our discussion of the five c's in succcess. To date, we have covered Curiosity, Creativity, and Competence. This week we will take a look at collaboration. Without further ado, let's get into it.

### **YAY TEAM!**

God did not create you to do everything, just certain things. If you could do it all, you would not have need of anyone else. The same is true for organizations. Even large corporations need to collaborate with others or else build an organization big enough so that everything they need is under one corporate umbrella. In a sense, they are then collaborating within their organization, but still must at times build partnerships with other entities.

Here are a few examples of teams working together in the Bible:

1. Joseph and Pharaoh made a great team in Egypt, with Joseph providing the administration and Pharaoh the leadership.
2. Moses and Aaron led the Israelites out of Egypt.
3. Saul and David enjoyed success early in their partnership as they defeated the Philistines again and again.
4. Nehemiah partnered with the king her served to secure permission and resources to rebuild Jerusalem.
5. Daniel had his three friends serving with him in Babylon.
6. Jesus had twelve disciples with whom he collaborated and worked closely.
7. Barnabas and Saul, Paul and Silas, Paul and Luke, and a number of other combinations worked together to spread the gospel to the Gentiles in the early church.

I hope you get the idea that is you are going to be succcessful, you are going to need to collaborate or partner with others, whether you are looking for individual or corporate succcess.

### **SOME SUGGESTIONS**

Here are some quick suggestions to enable you to collaborate effectively:

1. **Find those who share your values and ethics.** Don't collaborate with those whom you can't trust.
2. **Partner with your opposite.** This assumes you know your strengths and are willing to collaborate with those who are strong where you aren't.
3. **Know your purpose.** If you know where you are headed, you can join up with people who are on the same road.

4. **Network.** Get out and meet people. Build relationships before you even think of collaborating. Don't just build a card file of acquaintances, but listen and learn what motivates other people.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive teaching on partnerships and collaborations. Rather it is an attempt to help you get out your own little world and learn to "play well" with others. If you want to do great things and enjoy succccccc, then there is usually no such thing as a one man or woman act. Succccccc usually comes through strategic collaboration.

Stop going it alone and playing it safe, and learn to partner with others so that you can enjoy the synergies of joint ventures that will allow you to reach your goals. Have a great week!

### **527: Commitment**

This week I wrap up the fifth c in succccccc, the first four being curiosity, creativity, competence and collaboration. You can catch up on any you didn't read [here](#), but let's move on to this fifth and final c and wrap this series up!

### **THE WINNER IS**

When I think of one who had to perservere and endure but who was totally committed to God's plan, I think the winner is Joseph in Genesis. Joseph had his visions from God indicating that he would lead his family when he was just 17 years of age. After that, all hell and parts of heaven broke loose for him and before he knew it, his brothers had sold him into slavery, then covered their deed with their family by concocting a story that Joseph had been devoured by a wild animal.

Joseph prospered in Potiphar's house and then languished in prison until he was 30 years old. It was then that Pharaoh had his two dreams and Joseph was summoned to the palace to interpret the dreams. Joseph not only interpreted that there would be seven bountiful years and then seven of famine, but he also came up with a plan that pleased Pharaoh of how to prepare for those lean years. Joseph went from the dungeon to the palace in a matter of minutes, but he had been in Egypt for 13 years up to that point.

It the story ended there, it would be a good one - but it doesn't! Joseph serves Egypt during the seven good years, storing up grain and establishing Pharaoh's throne. Then the lean years begin and Joseph's family, not knowing he is alive or in Egypt, came down to buy food. They appear before Joseph and he recognizes them, but they don't recognize him. Joseph told his brothers, "[I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute](#)" (Genesis 45:11).

What's my point? Joseph was 39 when his brothers came to get food and he revealed himself to them. That means he lived in his dreams before they became reality for 22

years. Can you wait for your dream that long, preparing for the day when it will come to pass?

## **YOU MAY BE NEXT**

If you have done all you can do, are you prepared to wait? Are you committed to see success in the long run, whether that is in business, ministry, publishing or some other purpose expression? You can be the next Joseph, if you are willing to pay the price for success as I have spelled out over the last five weeks. Like Joseph, you can wait long, but then have your life change for the better in five minutes.

I am 61 years old, and I have yet to see some of the things I believe God put in my heart. That is why I keep writing, praying, learning and growing. I am committed to do what it takes to see my dreams, and that may mean I see them from another vantage point after I am gone to be with Him. Whatever it takes, I won't give up.

I invite you to join me in the pursuit of success. Let's not stop until we run as far and fast and as long as we can, as He empowers us. I hope these last five weeks have helped you and that you have learned something. Have a great week!

## **[528: Give Thanks](#)**

In the ten-year history of the Monday Memo, I have never done one with a Thanksgiving theme. Since this coming Thursday is the Thanksgiving holiday here in the States, I thought it was about time that I did so. Without further ado, let's celebrate Thanksgiving together, no matter where in the world you live.

## **THE OLD FOLKS**

When I was younger, I would ask some older folks in church, "How are you doing?" They would answer, "I got up this morning, so I am fine." I remember thinking, "That's kind of simplistic." Now I am 61 years old and I have buried some of my friends and peers. When I arise in the morning, I now find myself thanking God that He gave me another day. Suddenly what those older folks had to say doesn't sound so strange.

In fact, when I get up these days, I have a litany of things for which I give thanks. I won't go into them here, but with age comes the realization of and appreciation for what the Lord had done for me, in me and with me. I meditate on what the psalmist wrote: "**Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom**" (Psalm 90:12). I don't know how many days I have left, but let's say I live to be my mother's age of 92. That means I have about 11,000 days left. If I live to be my father's age, I have about 7,000 left. While that would be nice, I may only have one left, so I want to make the most of each one of them, whether one or 11,000.

In order to do that, however, I must flow from a foundation of gratefulness, to God first for His unmeasured grace and to others, who have also extended me much grace in light of my imperfections and sinful tendencies.

## **THE QUOTE**

This past week, I posted a quote on FaceBook that caught a lot of people's attention. Picasso, the great painter, once said, "Only put off until tomorrow what you are willing to die having left undone." While I am very thankful for today, I want to make the most of it by doing what I can with what I have. I want to run as fast, as far and as long as I can, and if that is a month longer or 30 years, I am already thankful for whatever opportunities the Lord gives me.

As we approach Thanksgiving Day this week in the U.S., I urge you to make it a day of thanks that won't exist in isolation but will become a regular part of your daily devotions and discipline. Then once you have thanked God for His goodness, I want you to attack the days you have left, to number them as the psalmist wrote, so you will have a heart of wisdom.

If you live in the U. S., Happy Thanksgiving. If you live outside the U.S., I invite you to join me in a day and a lifestyle of gratitude. Have a blessed week!

## **529: Exile**

I am back in Zimbabwe for the first time in four years and it is great to be back. I have seen a lot of friends and have a ton of memories that I am processing from all my visits here from 2001-2008. I often refer to those years as my years in exile, for most of the work and ministry doors closed to me in the States and it was the people of Zimbabwe and several other countries that saw me through my hard times. There were nights when I was traveling that no one knew where I was but the Lord. It was an eerie feeling, but He always went with me.

## **I NEEDED THAT**

Frankly, I needed my time in exile. Those years taught me a lot about myself and helped me find and develop my voice, the message that I carry today to the world via my speaking and writing. I needed silence and the lonely nights in some hotel or guest house gave me just that - a lot of time to think and process. I needed the time to grow, learn and unlearn.

In 2009, when my so-called exile ended, I was almost sad to see it go. It was such a special time and I was grateful for what it had done in me and for me. Now the results of that exile are flowing through me and I like what is coming out.

## **DANIEL IN EXILE**

In [Daniel 5](#), we have the famous story of the handwriting on the wall during a drinking party hosted by the Babylonian king, son of Nebuchadnezzar. No one was found who could read and interpret the writing, until the queen recommended that they summon Daniel. Now my question is: Why wasn't Daniel present in the court? He had served the kingdom faithfully, but a new king came along who did not include Daniel in his inner court. Daniel was summoned and did interpret the writing, which forecast the king's demise, which occurred that very night.

My point is that after Daniel had been used mightily by God and served with distinction, he went into a season of retirement, perhaps involuntary. He was the main man in one man's rule, and forgotten in the next. Daniel came back, however, stronger and wiser than ever. I wonder if his exile served him like mine?

Perhaps you are in exile, not close to the influence or power you once enjoyed. Or maybe God has taken you away, sort of on an extended spiritual retreat, so that you can think and learn. If that's the case, I urge you to do what I did: Make the most of your time. Have faith that you will be used again and use the time to prepare for what's ahead. Confront your fears, doubts and inadequacies and make the most of every day. When I look back (and ahead), I thank God for my exile and I thank God He has brought me back to my own special place to show me how far I have come since 2001. Have a great week!

### **[530: Live Like You Were Dying](#)**

I had some time in my hotel room this week, and decided to listen to some music on iTunes. It was then that I listened to a song that I downloaded years ago and wrote about in a 2008 Monday Memo. It's sung by country western singer Tim McGraw, and it's called *Live Like You Were Dying*. I thought I would share the lyrics with you again and let you draw your own lessons from what they have to say. (If you would rather watch it performed, you can do so [here](#).)

#### **THE SONG**

He said, "I was in my early forties  
with a lot of life before me,  
when a moment came that stopped me on a dime.  
And I spent most of the next days  
looking at the x-rays,  
talking bout the options  
and talking 'bout sweet time.  
I asked him when it sank in  
that this might really be the real end."  
How's it hit you when you get that kinda news.  
Man what would you do?

And he said,

"I went sky diving,  
I went Rocky Mountain climbing.  
I went 2.7 seconds on a bull named Fumanchu.  
And I loved deeper and I spoke sweeter,  
and I gave forgiveness I'd been denying.  
And he said someday I hope you get the chance  
to live like you were dying."

He said, "I was finally the husband  
that most the time I wasn't.  
And I became a friend a friend would like to have.  
And all of a sudden going fishin  
wasn't such an imposition,  
and I went three times that year I lost my dad.  
Well I finally read the good book  
and I took a good long hard look  
at what I'd do if I could do it all again."

"And then  
I went sky diving,  
I went Rocky Mountain climbing.  
I went 2.7 seconds on a bull named Fumanchu.  
And I loved deeper and I spoke sweeter,  
and I gave forgiveness I'd been denying.  
And he said someday I hope you get the chance  
to live like you were dying."

"Like tomorrow was a gift and you got eternity to think about.  
What would you do with it? What did you do with it?  
What did I do with it?  
what would I do with it?"

"Sky diving,  
I went Rocky Mountain climbing,  
I went 2.7 seconds on a bull named Fumanchu.  
And then I loved deeper and I spoke sweeter,  
and I watched an eagle as it was flying.  
And he said someday I hope you get the chance  
to live like you were dying."

## **ARE YOU READY?**

Are you ready to live today and everyday like it was your last? If so, what changes do you need to make? Do you need some calamity to make those changes, or do you have the courage to make them today? I am ready to live today like I was dying. Will you join me?

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