

[556: Book Work](#)

Yesterday I sent my corrections and edits off for my new book, which is really a re-write of my old book, *So Many Leaders, So Little Leadership*. It will be out on July 15 under a new title, *The Price of Leadership*. This version is 50% larger than my first one, perhaps because I have a lot more to say about leadership than I did in 2001. In 2001, my book was more like a book report on what others had to say about leadership; this time I wrote more of what I think about leadership.

As I get ready to publish, I think it's time I write again about creativity, so that will be my focus for the coming weeks. For this week, here are some thoughts on writing and publishing for your reading pleasure.

1. Many people don't write because they say they don't have time. You have all the time in the world - 24 hours a day - so it's what you do with that time that determines whether or not you write and create.
2. Many times the "I don't have time" is just an excuse to cover fear and doubt.
3. It has been said that you don't produce a book, that a book produces you. There is some truth to that.
4. Some don't write because they don't know who will purchase it. If you don't write it, no one will purchase it.
5. Some don't write because they don't know who will publish it. If you don't produce it, no one will publish it for sure.
6. Where creativity is concerned, Franklin Roosevelt was correct: We have nothing to fear but fear itself!
7. The idea that you need six to ten weeks of uninterrupted time to write is probably not realistic. You cannot stop your life to write, unless you are prepared to write full-time. Otherwise, you have to learn to write with the time you have available every day.
8. If you write two pages a day, in four months you will have about 150 pages.
9. Some don't write because they can't spell or don't trust their grammar. Hire an editor to correct that for you, but no one can write what's in your heart to say.
10. If you want to write interesting things, you must do interesting things.

There are some thoughts as I wrap up this project on book number 13. I already know what I do for next year's book project, but for now I want to wait for the proofs on my changes and make sure this one gets finished up this week.

Do you have a creative project in you that has yet to be released? Then join with me on this creative online review the next few weeks and let's see if we can't drill into your creative wells and see what we can bring to the surface. Have a great week!

[557: Why We Write \(or Create\)](#)

Last week I wrote about finishing up my next book (the final edits just got submitted) and that led to a list of thoughts that focused on the reasons and excuses why you and I don't write or create more often. If you missed that post, you can read it [here](#).

I promised to start a series on creativity this week and thought I would look at the other side of the coin and make a list of reasons why we do (or should) write. If you aren't a writer, then substitute the word "create" for the word "write" and see if any of the reasons fit with your life's situation. Here's the list:

1. Writing allows us to clarify our thinking and means to express it. Someone once said, "You write what you hear so you can see what you think." Makes sense to me. I am a better speaker because I write!
2. Writing helps provide a legacy, for your writings may outsurvive you, God willing.
3. When you write, you can generate an audience over and over again, every time someone picks up your book to read or passes it on to someone else.
4. When you write, you generate an audience far beyond those you can touch personally. Many of my books are published in other countries and are there when I cannot be.
5. You can make money from writing. I know I have. Sometimes you pray for money and God gives you an idea. You have to convert that idea into reality and then the money comes.
6. You honor what God does in your life when you record it and make it available to help or encourage others.
7. You write so you don't forget what the Lord has said and done in your life. There is an old saying, "The problem with taking mental notes is that the ink fades so quickly." Even writing a journal enhances your faith as you look back on your history with Him.
8. When you give yourself permission to create, you give the same permission to others.
9. Writing is a great means to influence others, which is the essence of godly leadership. Some want authority to lead; I choose influence and writing gives it to me.
10. When you create, you are functioning in one aspect of you being created in the image of the Creator. He creates and gave you the same capacity.

There you have this week's list. Do you agree with my list or not? Did I miss any reasons that you can think of? If I did, please enter them on the site where this entry is posted so others can see them. And remember, don't dismiss this list if you are not a writer. If you are sculptor, business consultant, poet, speaker or painter, go through the list and see if any of those reason are or can be motivation for you to create. Tune in next week as we continue our discussion of creativity.

558: You Can't Help It, But You Can Stop It!

Several weeks ago, we began talking about creativity. (If you haven't read my previous *Memos* on creativity, you may want to go to my [site](#) and review them now.) I often hear this comment from people whom I serve as a purpose coach: "I'm not that creative." That just isn't true! Most people assume that unless they have a thought or think of a design or invention that no one in the world has previously conceived, then they don't fall in the creative category. You need to expand your idea of creativity in order to see that you have abundant creativity, for you are created in the image of the Creator!

YOU CAN'T HELP IT!

A creative God created you to be creative. Creativity is programmed into the very fabric of your being. Consider these expressions of creativity that are part of who you are:

1. I don't want to be offensive in any way, but you were made to create other human beings. When you reach maturity and marry, in most cases you must take precautions to *limit* your creativity, your offspring.
2. Scientists tell us that every seven years you have a totally new set of cells in your body. Your cells are constantly dividing and creating new cells.
3. One of the first things I did when I returned home recently was to get a haircut. In most cases, your body is creating new hair, nails and whiskers (men only, I hope) on a daily basis.
4. Your body is constantly creating what it needs to carry on life. Your stomach creates gastric juices, sweat glands produce sweat and your ears create wax!
5. What happens when you go to sleep? You create dreams; you are a "dream machine." For every eight hours you sleep, you dream almost two hours. Your mind is constantly creating symbolic sleep scenarios that help you maintain your psychological equilibrium.
6. Every day you create thoughts and ideas; you also daydream, creating potential scenarios with you in them.
7. You talk every day, stringing words and ideas together creatively.

YOU CAN STOP IT!

Without even trying, you are naturally a creative being, but you may be hindering your own tendency to create. The big problem may be your mind. You have been conditioned to believe that you *aren't* creative, so it is possible to go through life thinking that you aren't and consequently not creating or recognizing when you are. The Pacific Institute has taught me this truth: "We act like the person we know or believe ourselves to be."

When you think you aren't creative, you won't produce or won't recognize your creativity for what it is. For many years, I saw myself as "only" an administrator who got things done. Now I see myself as an administrator who creatively gets things done. That slight change of thinking and speaking changed my life - and released my creativity.

So if you don't do anything else this week, reassess your attitude toward your creativity. You may not be as creative as someone else, but that doesn't mean that you aren't creative. Take out a sheet of paper and begin to list all the areas in which you creatively express yourself. The list may be longer than you thought it would be. (If you need some help, download the "creative expression list found at the end of this *Memo*.) From that, begin to gradually change your mind and see that you *are* creative. When you do that, it is just a matter of time before your creativity blossoms and becomes all that God intended for it to be. Have a great week!

559: Too Late

We are in the midst of a series on creativity and I am not sure how long it will run. I guess that depends on my creativity! I ran across a quote by Martin Luther King Jr. a few years ago that is relevant to our current discussion. Before I share that quote, however, I want to share a passage from Isaiah that people recite and even sing to me regularly (it was put to music years ago). It is their life philosophy and approach to missions, creativity and action, and it reads like this in the NAS Version:

"He gives strength to the weary,
And to him who lacks might He increases power.
Though youths grow weary and tired,
And vigorous young men stumble badly,
Yet those who wait for the Lord
Will gain new strength;
They will mount up with wings like eagles,
They will run and not get tired,
They will walk and not become weary" (Isaiah 40:30-31 emphasis added).

A CLOSER LOOK

The key phrase in that passage for many is "those who wait on the Lord." The implication is that if you are going to serve the Lord, you need to wait. There is only one problem with that philosophy. Everything else in that passage speaks to action, not waiting. It speaks of strength, flying, running and walking. Those who are waiting aren't do any of those things, but the entire context of the passage is God giving strength to those who "wait." I would propose that those who wait don't need the strength.

The NIV for once is more accurate in its translation of the word "wait," for the NIV states, "but those who *hope* in the Lord will renew their strength." Insert that phrase back into the longer quote above, and you will see there is a big difference between hoping and waiting. Most already have the waiting down pat. I want to be one who hopes as I run, fly and walk, and I hope that we can run together toward our purpose and creativity.

THE QUOTE

And now for the quote from Martin Luther King's speech "Beyond Vietnam," delivered on April 4, 1967 in New York City. Here is what he said:

We are now faced with the fact, my friends, that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time. Life often leaves us standing bare, naked, and dejected with a lost opportunity. The tide in the affairs of men does not remain at flood - it ebbs. We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage, but time is adamant to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residues of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words, "Too late." There is an invisible book of life that faithfully records our vigilance or our neglect. Omar Khayyam is right: "The moving finger writes, and having writ moves on."

You are not guaranteed tomorrow, next week or next year. So what are you waiting for? You are waiting on the Lord to write and publish poetry? You are waiting on the Lord to start your business? You are waiting on the Lord to take that trip? Waiting will not help you do any of those things. Taking action steps and hoping along the way will enable you to take steps and give God something to use and bless. the choice is yours, waiting or hoping. I choose hope and that's why I create every day and plan on doing that, with God's help, for the remainder of my days. I invite you to join me. Have a great week!

560: Firework

We are in the midst of a series on creativity, and it occurred to me this week I never wrote about one of my favorite purpose songs by Katy Perry, *Firework*. (No, I am not endorsing Katy's lifestyle or theology, just interested in her song.) I first paid attention to the song last year at a baseball game on the Fourth of July in Washington DC and came home and listened to the song, paying attention to the words. But what really blew me away was the number of "hits" that were on the YouTube version of the song. There were more than 210 million! (A year later there are 320 million!)

I would say that song caught the attention of the world, would you agree? So what was it that caused so many to pay attention and listen like I did (albeit a few years after the song was released - I may be slow, but I get there eventually)? Let's take a look.

GET COMFORTABLE

The song basically speaks about being comfortable with who you are. I am going to give you a link to listen and watch the lyrics later, but for now, let's just look at one of the verses, which says,

*It's always been inside of you, you, you
Now it's time to let it through, through, through.*

If you are going to express your creativity, you are going to have to be comfortable with who you are. For instance, you will never paint if you judge your paintings before or

even after you paint. You have to let your painting "through, through, through" especially if it's been inside of "you, you, you" for a while. The same is true for your business idea, your poetry, your invention or anything else of a creative nature. You cannot fight who you are and what you are doing and expect to be creative.

GET BUSY

Once you get comfortable, then you need to get busy! I set aside time every day to write, but I have been doing that for ten years. There was a time when I did not write at all. My point is that you don't have to start every day expressing your creativity, but can you start with once a week? Author Julia Cameron calls this an 'artist's date,' and she recommends that you set two hours once a week to do something that stimulates your creative. (She also recommends three hand-written pages of journaling every morning, but I don't want to scare you away.)

You have the potential to be the 'firework' that Katy sang about, but only if you summon the courage and faith release what's in you. Join me during this creative series in taking new steps to recognize, accept and release your creativity and be like the firework in in the song, going 'boom, boom, boom' across the sky of your world. Oh yes, here is the [link](#) to the song with the words (I had nothing to do with the typos). Enjoy and then go light up the sky for God's glory. Have a great week and happy Fourth of July if you live in the U.S.