

**The Monday Memo
from the desk of
Dr. John Stanko
Issue 66**

Greetings to you from jolly old England. Yesterday I spoke at the Women of Purpose Conference in Milton Keynes and yesterday morning and evening I was with my friends at New Jerusalem Apostolic Church in Birmingham. It is always good to be in the United Kingdom where many doors for the purpose message have opened. Next week I will be speaking in London, but more on that later.

I ran across another great quote this week, just as I was thinking about how hard it can be to simply be yourself. Parents, family, educators, and friends may have told you that you can't do this or that because you won't be able to make a living, or because it just doesn't make sense to them. Then at other times you have been your own worst enemy, criticizing and putting down your own creativity and tendencies. I talk with many people who are spending more time and energy trying to be who they are not instead of becoming the best expression of who God created them to be.

But now to the quote, for which I have Pastor Joe Martin in Dallas to thank. I cannot find who said the quote, so if you know, please pass the name on to me:

Work like you don't need the money.
Love like you've never been hurt.
Dance like nobody's watching.
Sing like nobody's listening.

Read that over a few times and let the words and message sink in. Those few lines speak of freedom, freedom to be who God made you to be without concern for what others think. It also speaks of freedom from past hurts, disappointments and failures to pursue the unique path that is yours. Finally, those lines set you free from yourself and your tendency to prematurely judge what you are becoming or doing.

There is a proverb that states, "The fear of man brings a snare." If you cannot be who you were created to be because you are afraid of what someone thinks, you have indeed fallen into a trap. Instead of responding to your inner voice, you are following outer voices that don't understand you or the path God has chosen for you. You need to give yourself permission to sing and dance like no one else is paying attention.

Why not spend some time this week discovering where you have limited your potential and development because of what others would think. Write down any areas or interests that you had a desire to pursue at one time only to have someone talk you out of them. Maybe *you've* talked yourself out of them. Whichever it is, determine this week to reestablish contact with the song and dance that are uniquely yours. As you do, I hope you will take some steps, no matter how small, toward freedom of the mind and heart, freedom toward the fulfillment that comes from being true to the real you. Have a great week.

**The Monday Memo
written by Dr. John Stanko
from London, England
Issue 67**

My family and I have enjoyed a wonderful stay here in London. We saw many of the sites, took in a London show, and did a lot of window shopping. I even got to preach and teach at Spurgeon's Seminary, named after the famous British preacher of the 19th century. I felt smarter just being

there, and I need all the help I can get! Of course, I continue to spread the purpose message throughout the United Kingdom, wherever and whenever I have the opportunity.

Anytime I travel, I bring several books with me to read and study. This time, I brought *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron. The subtitle of this book is "A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity," and it is a best seller that is now published in its tenth anniversary edition. The stated purpose of the book is that it provides a course in discovering and recovering your creative self. I would recommend the book as a comprehensive tool to develop the disciplines necessary for creativity. Ms. Cameron discusses God throughout the book, but she is a bit fuzzy on the concept of God and who He is.

There are many helpful tips throughout the book to help you unblock and release your creativity. Early in the book, the author pens a few admonitions to the reader. I think they warrant reproducing here:

Stop telling yourself, "It's too late."

Stop waiting until you make enough money to do something you'd really love.

Stop telling yourself, "It's just my ego" whenever you yearn for a more creative life.

Stop telling yourself that dreams don't matter, that they are only dreams and that you should be more sensible.

Stop fearing that your family and friends would think you crazy.

Stop telling yourself that creativity is a luxury and that you should be grateful for what you've got.

The author continues, "As you learn to recognize, nurture, and protect your inner artist, you will be able to move beyond pain and creative constriction. You will learn ways to recognize and resolve fear, remove emotional scar tissue, and strengthen your confidence. Damaging old ideas about creativity will be explored and discarded."

Do any of these statements apply to you? As you approach this week, why not examine your own attitude towards creativity. Is your definition of creativity restricted to artists and writers? Maybe your creativity lies in other areas. Do you like to work with wood or metal? Are you a sculptor, or someone who likes to work with ceramics? Or perhaps you are a seamstress, a cook or a baker? Then again, you may have a house you've always wanted to design and build. Or maybe an idea for a business. Whatever the expression of creativity that is yours, what are prepared to do about it this week? If nothing else, you may have to take steps to overcome your bias toward it and go to the kitchen or workshop and get your hands dirty.

This issue is critical if you are going to find a purposeful and productive life. You must learn to trust that which is within you, that which has come from God who is the source of all that is creative. Tomorrow, I'm going to Paris and while I'm there, I'm going to see some great art. I'm going to use those museum visits to spur on my own creativity. I'm going to study the art masters so I can become a master in my own right. Will you join me this week as I explore and develop my creative side? I hope you will and that you'll have a great week.

**The Monday Memo
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Issue 68**

I am sitting in my hotel room in Innsbruck, Austria. As I look out my window, I can see the Austrian Alps and there is some snow on them! In fact, Innsbruck has glacier skiing 365 days a year. But I decided to pass on skiing and went shopping instead. And of course I had an opportunity to share with a group of new friends about how to find their life purpose. The message was as well received here as it has been everywhere else in the world. Everyone wants to know their purpose and I have found that God is only too willing to reveal it to anyone who will ask.

My wife and I had said we wanted to bring our daughter to Europe when she graduated from university. This trip was a gift from God that enabled us to fulfill that dream. Is there a dream that you have? What have you said you would like to do "one day?" Is it time to set a definite date and say, "I'm going to do that no later than such and such a date?" Why not believe God for something beyond your capability to achieve? It's always good to reach a destination that you only dreamed about.

These last two weeks have been a good break for my wife and daughter who are with me, and for me as well. We spent a lot of time on trains and planes, and spent many days doing things together. I did just enough work to stay current on my emails and The Monday Memo. I return home refreshed, and at the same time I feel like I have a new perspective on some things I have been pondering. All in all, it's been a good trip.

What are you doing to refresh yourself? Often we can feel a sense of guilt when we do something just for ourselves. We tell ourselves that we have duties and responsibilities, and can't allow ourselves such a luxury. We work and work and try to fill every moment with activity. As I write this [Memo](#), I stop to stare out the window at the beauty of the Alps. Rays of the setting sun are breaking through the gaps between the magnificent mountains. The church bell in the town square lets me know that time is moving on. A truckload of Brazilians just went by celebrating Brazil's victory in the World Cup soccer tournament. But I am at peace and I am resting. I am even resting as I write.

I want you to do something nice for yourself this week. Do something that will energize and refresh you. Maybe you should make plans for your own vacation sometime in the near future. Or maybe you should go out to your favorite restaurant or make an appointment to receive a massage. How about a hike or trip to a favorite spot where the scenery inspires you? Or you can rent your favorite movie and watch it with some friends. Go to a museum or art show or go on a date with your spouse, without the children. It shouldn't be too hard to figure out what to do; now just find the time to do it! Have a great week!

**The Monday Memo
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Issue 69**

I learned something new this week. I learned that the famous psychologist, Dr. Abraham Maslov, coined a term using a name from the Bible. What name do you think he used? Moses? Joseph? Jesus? Paul? If you answered any of those, you are wrong. He used the name Jonah and the entire term was called "the Jonah Complex." What did Maslov mean when he referred to "the Jonah Complex?"

We know that Jonah was a prophet in the Old Testament; he even has his own short book that relates part of his life story. Jonah was given an assignment by God to go deliver a harsh

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message to a city and people he didn't like. He didn't want to do it, so he ran. He got on a ship and went in the opposite direction from where he was told to go.

A storm arose during the trip and it soon became clear to the sailors that Jonah was the cause of the storm. When they threw him overboard, the storm ceased and Jonah was swallowed by a whale; Jonah then spent three days and nights in the whale's stomach. After Jonah relented and agreed to go on God's mission, the whale spit him out and Jonah went on his way.

Maslov used "the Jonah Complex" to describe anyone who was running from their true life calling. He went on to say, "If you deliberately set out to be less than you are capable of, you will never truly be happy." This complex accurately describes the condition of many people with whom I come in contact. They are running from the greatness and challenge that is in them. They are afraid not of failure, but of success.

Author Marianne Williamson wrote:

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

So what do these people do that are trapped in "the Jonah Complex?" According to my experience, they spend a lot of time trying to weather the storm. They try to stay on the ship where they are instead of jumping into the waves of life. They tell me they are "praying about it," whatever the "it" is for them. Yet day after day and sometimes year after year goes by and nothing happens. Their prayer is actually a delay tactic, waiting for God to do something that only they can do.

So what about you? Are you suffering from "the Jonah Complex?" Are you running from your purpose or from some significant thing that God has for you to do? Is your ship being tossed by the waves of financial lack, unhappiness, and lack of productivity, yet you stubbornly cling to the ship's mast hoping that things will get better? I have found that many know their purpose but are afraid for whatever reason to speak it out. Perhaps this is the week when you will face who you are and what God wants you to do. And perhaps this is the week that you will take steps to get off your sinking ship and into the purpose of God. It may look more dangerous "out there," but the only danger lies in you avoiding the great things that God has for you to do.

I trust that this week will be the week that you face and overcome any "Jonah Complex" in your life. As you do, please write me and let me know what you did and how you did it. We may be able to use your story to encourage others to do the same. If you need help in finding your purpose, please go to <http://www.purposequest.com/articles.htm> or <http://www.purposequest.com/purpose.htm> where there are articles and other resources that may help you. Have a great week.

The Monday Memo
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Issue 70

I was in Memphis, Tennessee this past weekend and stayed over for the service at the church I was visiting. During his message, the pastor referred to a promise that Jesus made in John 14:12, which states:

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

If you are like me, you may immediately think of the more "dramatic" things that Jesus did; you may evaluate how well you fulfill this promise by whether or not someone you have prayed for was healed or raised from the dead. After all, that is what Jesus did and if I have faith, I should be able to do the same. The problem is that something like that seldom if ever happens in our lives. Does that mean that only a select few can fulfill this promise? Did Jesus overpromise? Is this something that is yet to be seen in the life of the church?

As I understand His work, Jesus focused on three objectives, which were: 1) touch individuals; 2) build community; and 3) fulfill His purpose, which was "to seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10). Jesus did all this through faith and left us an example and legacy of how to do what we were created to do.

Why is it that I connect faith with only certain miracles found in the Bible? Why can't I see that it takes faith and miraculous power to do more than just heal the sick and raise the dead? After all, Jesus never wrote a book, recorded an album, started an orphanage, built a church building, established a company or planted a church. Now don't get me wrong. It's not that Jesus didn't have the power or ability to do those things. It's just that He left those things for you and me to do with His help. He went on to say that this understanding should affect our prayer life:

And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it (John 14:13-14).

What do you have faith to do? Are you "holding out" for certain miracles to suddenly be manifest in your life, or do you have faith to see the fulfillment of your purpose and dreams? Why couldn't you build the building or write the song that you have thought and dreamed about from time to time? Why couldn't that be part of the "greater works" that Jesus promised you and I would do?

Waiting for what will never happen is a source of frustration, and it also keeps us from doing the great things that are within our gifting and purpose to do. I think this week would be a good time to evaluate your prayer life in the context of this promise to do greater things than Jesus. What are you praying for? What greater work has Jesus given you to do that will require great faith? What are you doing about it? Do you see this faith object as insignificant, or do you see it as a greater work?

I know I've asked you a lot of questions this week, and I hope you will have a lot of answers by the end of this week. I also hope those answers will lead you to see your life from a different perspective and that you will begin to consider yourself a doer of "greater works" as you pursue your purpose and goals. Have a great week!