

**The Monday Memo  
from Singapore  
Dr. John Stanko  
Issue 86**

Greetings from Asia. I am just about over my jetlag and getting into the thick of my ministry schedule. It is great to be back in Singapore and catch up with old friends and make some new ones. If this is your first **Monday Memo**, I want to welcome you to **The Monday Memo** family.

While I am here, I continue to work on the program for January 11 in Dallas. At that time, I am going to enlist the help of some **Purpose Partners** who will be equipped not only with their own purpose, but also with the tools to help others find theirs. If you are interested in the Dallas seminar, please write me and let me know. I will send you details as they become final. And if you want to make a financial contribution to **PurposeQuest International** and this seminar, please write and let me know. I will write back and tell you how you can do that.

I am impressed this week with how many people write me and are concerned about "missing the Lord." They want to do God's will and find their purpose, but they don't want to do or say the wrong thing. Consequently, some are so concerned about "missing the Lord" that they may actually be "missing the Lord." If your fear of doing the wrong thing leads you to do nothing, then your faith has no way to express itself, for James wrote, "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead" (James 2:17). And without faith, it is impossible to please God.

You need to have confidence in the God to whom you pray. Your ability to be heard and receive an answer does not depend on your prayer, it depends on the faithfulness of the God to whom you pray. There is no correct or incorrect formula when you talk to God. You talk and He listens. And then He answers. Let's look at two important passages that highlight this point. The first is found in Luke 11:9-13:

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

If you ask the Father to help you find your purpose, He hears you. He isn't going to trick you or send you a misleading message. He's your Father and He will give you what you ask. If you ask God to know and do His will and then think about writing a book, that isn't your idea. It's God answering your prayer!

The second verse is in John 7:17. The Pharisees were asking whether Jesus was sent from the Father or not. And Jesus replied by saying, "If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or {whether} I speak from Myself (NAS). Often the key to finding the will of God for your life is to make a commitment to do it before you know what it is. In essence Jesus said to the Pharisees, "If you set your will to do God's will, you will always know what His will is!" You may say that it isn't that simple, but I maintain that it is.

So how does this apply to purpose and productivity? If you have prayed, then God has heard you. You don't have to worry about "missing His will." You just have to act in faith on what you think you have received. St. Augustine once said, "I pray and then I do what I want." St. Augustine wasn't advocating self will; he was just confident that the God to whom He prayed was able to shape his will in response to prayer.

This week, I want you to ask God for something that you don't know or understand. Maybe you need to find your purpose or want to set a godly goal that you can work toward. Before you have the answer, I want you to commit to do or say whatever He shows you before you actually know what it is! Then I want

you to have faith that your Father isn't going to trick you and give you a stone instead of the bread for which you are asking. This week, don't be concerned about "missing God." This week be ready to find and do His will. Have a great week.

**The Monday Memo  
from Singapore  
written by Dr. John Stanko  
Issue 87**

Greetings once again from Singapore. I have had a wonderful time here that is rapidly coming to an end. I depart on Wednesday for Hawaii and then home the week following. I want to thank all my hosts and sponsors for a wonderful stay. We are already planning my return sometime next year. I have found the people here to be eager to hear and apply the message of **PurposeQuest**. I look forward to coming back soon .

At a seminar last Saturday for business leaders, someone raised an interesting question and it had to do with the issue of "availability versus capability." I thought it was an excellent question with a catchy phrase that we could look at this week in **The Monday Memo**.

In essence, the man was asking how you balance the fact that something needs done in your business, church or ministry and someone must do it whether or not they feel it is consistent with their life purpose. At one time or another all of us have had to cover the sales territory, teach Sunday School or visit the sick simply because there was no one else to do it. We were available but not necessarily capable. Here are my ideas on this important issue.

1. Know what your purpose is. Your purpose is your due-north compass point; it keeps you on track. The apostles said in Acts 6:2 in response to the needs of the widows, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables." They didn't get involved with the need of the moment and the church grew. If you know your purpose, it may be possible to wait and continue to search for the right person instead of settling for the "easy answer" of you doing it.
2. Be honest with yourself and others. Don't do what you are available but not capable of doing one day longer than necessary. When the grace for you to do whatever it is you are doing has departed, then you need to be honest with yourself, your leadership or your team. If someone pressures you to go beyond what you think you can handle, don't stay silent. I am not saying that you need to argue, but you do need to communicate in the strongest terms when you know that your time is up doing something that takes life from you instead of giving life to you.
3. Set a time limit. If you do give yourself to something for which you are available, try to set a time limit when your role will be reevaluated. Agree with your leadership that you will sit down on a monthly basis to review how you are doing. You may even want to set a deadline that you will or can do this for six months. That doesn't mean you will stop at that time, but it gives you some options as you choose service over purpose.
4. Have faith. Often we do something because we're afraid that nothing else will be there for us to do. Rather than do the wrong thing, wait on the Lord and trust Him to bring the right thing to you, something for which you are both available and capable. If you make yourself unavailable by doing the wrong thing, someone may not bring you an opportunity better suited to your purpose because you are already busy.

I encourage you to be honest this week and determine if you are doing anything for which you are available but not capable. If you are, then what can you do about it? Is it time to have courage and speak up? Do you need to walk in faith and trust God for your future? Do you need to let go

of something so that God can bring the new thing? I pray that you will ponder on and pray about these issues this week and work hard to substitute capability for availability wherever possible. Have a great week!

**The Monday Memo  
written in Hawaii  
by Dr. John Stanko  
Issue 88**

Aloha from Hawaii. I depart for home today, having enjoyed my time here in Hawaii with my son. But there is much work to do as I prepare for my trip next week to southern Africa, so it is time to go home (plus I miss my wife terribly!). I should finalize the program this week for the seminar on January 11 in Dallas. I do know that the seminar will be held at the Omni Hotel in Las Colinas by the airport. If you wrote for more information about that seminar, thank you for your patience. If you haven't, let me know if you're interested. When things are finalized this week, I will send you an email with all the information you need to know about **PurposeQuest**.

It seems that everywhere I go, I find myself encouraging people to write. Without asking, many send me their stories, manuscripts, Bible studies and poems. I try to read them all and encourage everyone to write and keep on writing. There have been several weekly email offerings that have duplicated **The Monday Memo** format. I think that's great!

Perhaps you have felt the urge to create and write. I urge you to take this creative impulse seriously and begin putting your thoughts on paper (or computer). Someone once said, "You write what you hear so you can see what you think." That is why I believe it is a critical step in your **PurposeQuest** to write your purpose statement down. But don't stop there. Write out your values, your leadership philosophy and then begin to write whatever bubbles up from inside.

This week I came across three separate Bible verses that pertain to the writing dynamic. Maybe they will be of help to you as you struggle with writing and the work it takes to do it consistently (if you have any other verses to encourage writers, please send them to me):

1. "At the Lord 's command Moses recorded the stages in their journey. This is their journey by stages (Numbers 33:2)." People who want to write often feel they don't have anything to write. That's not true. Everyone has a story, something from their **PurposeQuest** that was meaningful to them. If something was meaningful to you, it will be meaningful to someone else, I promise you. Just chronicle your journey by stages and see how God uses it to bless others.

2. "Let this be written for a future generation, that a people not yet created may praise the Lord (Psalm 102:18)." When you write something down, God may use it long after you're gone! What has happened to you may not even be for this generation, but for a future one. When I write, I imagine someone stumbling on a book that I have written long after I'm gone. I like the idea that someone could read that book and be helped, even though I am long gone with the Lord. Maybe your writings won't be for adults, but for children or young adults.

3. "My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer (Psalm 45:1)." You may find it easier to speak than write. If that's true, why not use a tape recorder and speak your message and then transcribe it on paper. This may also mean that you are gifted to write music, lyrics, poems, plays or other "non - book" media. If your heart is stirred, even as you read this, then isn't it time you write?

You are facing seven days until the next **Monday Memo** arrives. I want you to try something. Don't try to write every day this week; that may not work. But I want you to set a date with yourself for one day this week. Put aside two hours and think about your story or your creative

idea. Then I want you to write about whatever you hear or sense during that date. Don't wait; set the date right now and put it on your calendar. Then determine where you will go, away from the hustle and demands of your life. Maybe you'll just write a love letter to your spouse or to the Lord! Letter writing can be a wonderful creative expression as well. Whatever you do, I hope and pray that it will spark something in you that will lead to bigger and better things. Have a great week!

**The Monday Memo  
from the desk of  
Dr. John Stanko  
Issue 89**

I am so excited! I have put the finishing touches on the program for January 11 in Dallas, which will serve as the debut for **PurposeQuest International**. I have decided to send you a copy of the program and registration details later this week, so everyone on my list will have the information. If you want to make sure you get this information and all future mailings, please write me with the word "Dallas" and I will make sure you are on a special list. If there is any way for you to come to Dallas on January 11, I encourage you to be there.

I have been thinking about David and Jonathan for the last several weeks. When my pastor spoke about them yesterday morning, it confirmed that they were the topic for this week. David and Jonathan were more than friends; they were covenant brothers. They had a special relationship and recognized this relationship by making a blood covenant as described in 1 Samuel 18. Later, when David was avoiding Jonathan's father, King Saul, Jonathan uttered these remarkable words:

**"Don't be afraid," he said. "My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this." The two of them made a covenant before the LORD. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh (1 Samuel 23:17-18).**

Why are these words so remarkable? Here is the king's son, the heir apparent and the second in command, acknowledging that David's purpose was to be king and Jonathan's purpose was to serve him as his right hand man. Jonathan was relinquishing his claim to the throne and his willingness to accept the purpose that God had for him. I find this truly amazing and it makes Jonathan a special man indeed.

But even though Jonathan knew this and spoke about it, it never came to pass. Jonathan died in battle with his father: **"The Philistines pressed hard after Saul and his sons, and they killed his sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malki-Shua" (1 Samuel 31:2)**. I have a question to ask you. With the knowledge that Jonathan had, what was he doing with his worthless father, going into a battle that could never be won? Because Jonathan could not deal with his father, he forfeited his right to fulfill his purpose. He died and David mourned him for the rest of his life.

So what does this have to do with you and me? It is important that you follow God's will for your life and not let relationships hinder you. You cannot allow your supervisor, pastor, friends or family hinder you from pursuing and fulfilling your purpose. Now I hope you are not facing a situation as difficult as the one presented by Saul, Jonathan and David. But no matter how tough the situation, you must steward your purpose. By that I mean that you must oversee it and not allow anyone to talk you out of it, or keep you from being the fullest, best expression of who God created you to be.

As you enter this week, you need to take an honest look at your life and purpose. Have you listened to a negative, discouraging report from someone about you and your abilities? Have you put your purpose on the shelf to please or serve someone else? Have you spent time trying to tell God why you aren't the one to do what it is that is in your heart? As you answer these

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questions, please remember Jonathan who knew his purpose but lost it because he could not admit that his father was a scoundrel who did not have anyone's best interests at heart but his own. You will answer to no one but God for the results of what He has assigned you to do. I urge you this week to determine in your heart to make pleasing Him your top priority. Have a great week!

**The Monday Memo**  
**From Johannesburg, South Africa**  
**Written by Dr. John Stanko**  
**Issue 90**

Greetings from South Africa. I had a wonderful although short time in Zimbabwe, where I hope to return in February. Now I am here in South Africa and go on to England later this week to see my good friends Melvin and Yvonne Brooks. I know I promised to send you information about Dallas last week, but I couldn't connect my computer to do so. I **promise** that you will receive something this week about the January 11 **PurposeQuest** seminar in Dallas, Texas. If you haven't already, send me an email with the word "Dallas" in the subject box and you will get not only this week's mailing, but also all subsequent releases. If you need help finding your purpose or want to help others find theirs, you need to be in Dallas on January 11.

Several months ago I was teaching a seminar and thought about my friend Nancy. I was telling of the impact one of my first purpose seminars had on her and wanted to make sure I had her "story" correct. Through a mutual friend, I contacted her and asked her to write about what has happened in her life the last 12 years. Here is her reply:

I remember hearing you teach on purpose in your "Life is a Gold Mine; Can You Dig It" seminar. At that time I was at a critical point in my faith journey. I ached for more creative expression in my life. Being the daughter of the sports editor for our local paper, writing came naturally and easy for me. I loved words and I had always loved music. Little did I realize that your seminar would be one of the things God would use to help me find the courage to believe and pursue the desires of my heart, namely songwriting. First, I had to acknowledge the desire that I wanted to write to myself, to God, and to family and friends. Then I began to actively pursue this dream and desire one day at a time, one step at a time. I remember the phrase "Never despise small beginnings." Maybe I heard it from you.

Now some years later, I have published more than 300 songs, written 12 musicals (children and adult), have had four songs nominated for a Dove Award, and created the children's praise character Miss PattyCake. The Miss PattyCake line now has 6 videos and 2 CD's, which I helped to write and create. I just finished my first book to be published and released in March, which will be A Miss PattyCake Easter story. There's so much more, but I don't know how much you want to hear.

As a speaker, writer, worship leader, and a creative consultant, I desire to increase my speaking venues and to write several books. I now have my own publishing company, Mother's Heart Music and Mother's Heart Ministries. They both exist to nurture, inspire and encourage all people to experience and know the love of God.

You would have to know Nancy to fully appreciate this report. She is neither wealthy, nor is she "well connected" in the music industry. (I write this because very often we put successful people in a special category and lose the encouragement they can be for us.) She is a "regular person" like you and me who decided one day to step out "to actively pursue this dream and desire one day at a time, one step at a time." She gave God something to bless and He did. And the

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exciting thing is that she isn't finished. God has more for her to do and she is still young (well, she's around my age, which is looking younger all the time!).

Like Nancy, your journey can begin one day this week. And your journey will start where hers did: By acknowledging to yourself, to God and others what it is that you want, that you were created, to do. They may laugh, they may yawn or misunderstand. Their reaction (or lack of it) isn't important because you're not saying it for them. You're saying it for **you** and for God who put that dream in you in the first place. And you're saying it to release the dynamic of a spoken vision as outlined in these two passages:

Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name (Malachi 3:16).

Surely then you will find delight in the Almighty and will lift up your face to God. You will pray to him, and he will hear you, and you will fulfill your vows. What you decide on will be done, and light will shine on your ways. When men are brought low and you say, 'Lift them up!' then he will save the downcast. He will deliver even one who is not innocent, who will be delivered through the cleanness of your hands" (Job 22:26-30).

If you don't have anyone else to tell this week, then write and tell me. But tell someone and then get started. Have a great week!