

The Monday Memo
From San Francisco, California
Written by Dr. John Stanko
Issue 96

Today I am in one of the most beautiful cities in the world, San Francisco. I will visit some family later today, but now I am writing *The Memo* looking out of my hotel room at San Francisco Bay and watching the planes land at the airport. While I am here, I am also working on the schedule for the upcoming Seven Steps of a PurposeQuest™ Seminar. Currently we are scheduled to be in Allentown, Pennsylvania in March and Providence, Rhode Island in April. If you would like information on either or both of these seminars, please write me with the name of the city in the subject box and I will keep you posted as events develop. Needless to say, I am very encouraged about the Seminar and how it is being received.

I was visiting a successful business author yesterday who lives in the San Francisco area. Patrick Lencioni (see <http://www.tablegroup.com/index.shtml>) has written three excellent business books that use parables and stories to impart important business truths. I would recommend his material to you. I had a great visit with Pat and his family and shared a story with them that I'd like to share with you today as well.

Years ago when I lived in the southern United States, I played a lot of softball. Softball is a game similar to American baseball but the ball is bigger and the pitcher throws it more slowly and underhand. I wasn't a good player, nor was my team very successful. But there was one team that was very good and they beat us most of the time year after year. They didn't look as sharp as we did because we got new uniforms almost every year. We practiced weekly yet we never saw them on the practice field. They just knew how to win.

One night we met with some of their players to interview them and see if we could gain the secret of their success. We asked many questions, but then our coach asked their best hitter, "When you're at bat, do you have an offensive philosophy? Do you try to hit it over the fence or do you try to advance the runners one base at a time?" The man looked at our coach with a surprised look, and then answered, "We don't have any philosophy. We just hit it hard and wish it well."

As you seek to fulfill your purpose and be productive, this may be a good strategy to follow. This week you may just need to "hit it hard and wish it well." In softball, sometimes you can do everything just right and not get to first base. Other times you can do things wrong, but the ball falls in the right spot and you can win the game. Maybe you're waiting for perfection before you try something, or you're frustrated that you have done everything correctly, but things haven't work out. This week you need to overcome your hesitancy or discouragement and go to bat one more time.

This "hit it hard and wish it well" is a principle found in the Bible. The writer of Ecclesiastes wrote thousands of years ago: "If clouds are full of water, they pour rain upon the earth. Whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where it falls, there will it lie. Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap. As you do not know the path of the wind, or how the body is formed in a mother's womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker of all things. Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let not your hands be idle, for you do not know which will succeed, whether this or that, or whether both will do equally well" (Ecclesiastes 11:3-6).

I spent this past week improving The Seven Steps Seminar™. My point is that I did something and now I'm going back to make it better. Last Saturday I "hit it hard and wished it well." Now I want you to take some dream, project or idea and do the same. You may strike out, but you may also hit a home run. I hope that this week brings you closer to the fulfillment of what is in your heart to do or be. Have a great week!

The Monday Memo
From South Florida
Written by Dr. John Stanko
Issue 97

I had a great week and I hope you did, too. I mentioned last week that I will be in Allentown, Pennsylvania and Providence, Rhode Island to do The Seven Steps of a PurposeQuest Seminar™. I now have dates for those events: we'll be in Allentown on Saturday, March 15 and in Providence on Saturday, April 26. If you would like to receive information about these events, please send me an email with the name of either city in the subject box and I will keep you updated. (If you already requested information last week, I will write you this coming week as the venues are finalized).

At a staff retreat this past weekend, we discussed the verses in [John 8:31-32](#): "To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" There is no more liberating power than knowing who you are and who you're not. When I was "set free" from trying to be a pastor, from trying to be someone I thought God wanted me to be, it changed my life. That truth didn't set me free from church work, but rather it enabled God to give me work that was perfectly suited to my purpose. As I travel and speak on purpose, I am still amazed by the places I go to and what I do. I have neither an agent, nor a sophisticated business infrastructure. I am simply a man pursuing my purpose, free to be who God created me to be.

One day a man attending my seminar stood up and objected, saying, "It can't be that easy." He was referring to my premise that the most important part of fulfilling your purpose is clarifying and speaking it. Once you identify the truth of who you are, the opportunities will seek you out. Many people are concerned with how they will fulfill their purpose before they know what it is. But being armed with the truth of who you are enables you to embrace opportunities and walk through the doors that God opens for you. I do believe it is "that easy."

But fulfilling your purpose is difficult, often more difficult than finding it. When you step out to fulfill your purpose, you will encounter opposition. Often you will have something to do that is beyond your ability to do it. That is why you need God's help. But first you must have the truth of who you are, how you work best, what motivates and what de-motivates you. As Peter Drucker wrote:

The answers to three questions. "What are my strengths? How do I perform? What are my values?" should enable the individual, and especially the knowledge worker, to decide where he or she belongs. . . . But also knowing the answer to these three questions enables people to say to an opportunity, to an offer, to an assignment: "Yes, I'll do that. But this is the way I should be doing it. This is the way it should be structured. This is the way my relationships should be. These are the kind of results you should expect from me, and in this time frame, because *this is who I am.*"

In another seminar, I had someone tell me, "Wait a minute. What about where it says in Paul's letter to the Philippians that I can do all things in Christ?" [Philippians 4:13](#) does state, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength." But that verse was written in the context of Paul discussing financial abundance and lack. And I contend that you cannot be anything except who God made you to be. When you function in your purpose, you can do great things. When you try to be someone you're not, you will have limited results or fail.

Are you ready to face the truth this week? You may need to face who you're not, but more importantly, you may need to face who you are. This truth will set you free and set you on a new course of purpose and productivity. This truth is where your PurposeQuest begins. Join with me and countless millions who are on the same quest, and have a great week!

The Monday Memo
From the desk of
Dr. John Stanko
Issue 98

In two weeks, I will write the 100th edition of *The Monday Memo*. Little did I think that I would still be writing *The Monday Memo* when I started two years ago. You never know how God will use what you do, so that is why you must always strive for excellence. I thank you for being part of *The Monday Memo* family, whether or not you have subscribed from the beginning or are reading for the first time. And I want to wish all our Chinese readers a Happy New Year!

I had promised to have the information out this past week for the Allentown, Pennsylvania Seven Steps of a PurposeQuest™ Seminar scheduled for March 15 and the Providence, Rhode Island Seminar scheduled for April 26. The contracts from the hotels have been delayed and I don't want to send the information to you until those are finalized. But circle your calendars. I am coming! And I have decided to add a second day in Allentown, so you will have a choice to attend on either Friday, March 14 or Saturday, March 15. If you would like to receive updates concerning the seminar in either city, send me an email with the city's name in the subject box, and I will put you on the mailing list.

This month is Black History month in the United States and today I was thinking about George Washington Carver, the famous African American scientist who lived in the period following the American Civil War. At a time when Black Americans suffered from unspeakable conditions and prejudice, Carver single handedly revolutionized agriculture in the American South. And he did it through work and prayer.

From his platform at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, Carver urged farmers to plant peanuts, having discovered that peanuts were a perfect crop for the Southern soil and climate. There was only one problem: at that time there was no market for peanuts! Farmers were angry and Carver was embarrassed. But George Washington Carver prayed and God gave him the solution to his problem.

The story has it that Carver began his prayer by asking, "Oh Lord, teach me about the universe," to which the Lord responded, "That is too much for you." Then Carver prayed, "Then Lord, teach me about man." Again the Lord responded, "You are thinking too big." Finally, Carver cried out, "Lord, then please teach me about the peanut!" From that prayer, Carver went back to his simple laboratory and discovered more than 300 uses for the peanut over the course of his illustrious career. He found ways to make fertilizer, paint and glue from peanuts. He also discovered peanut oil and peanut butter. While he was at it, he also discovered more than 100 uses for the sweet potato.

The lessons from Carver's life for you and me are basic. First of all, prayer works. If you need wisdom or insight, why not ask God for it? Second, we need to keep things small. You don't need to think about changing *the* world to serve God; you just need to think about how to change *your* world. Armed with the knowledge of your purpose and prayer, you can discover a significant breakthrough that will touch a few or many. You may be able to take what seems like a simple interest and turn it into a historic career, just like George Washington Carver. Third, there are many discoveries yet to be made. Why can't you and I be the ones who discover them?

Let the next seven days be days of prayer. Ask God for wisdom concerning the interests you have, no matter how small or simple they may seem to be. And then expect God to answer you. Be ready to learn new things this week about the seemingly small interests in your life and then yield them to God. From that, there is no telling what God can do with you and through you. Have a great week!

The Monday Memo
From Dallas, Texas
Written by Dr. John Stanko
Issue 99

Since Friday, I have met one-on-one with 16 people to help them clarify their purpose. Last Saturday, I had the privilege of talking about purpose to a group of 60 people. And I will meet with another 16 people in the next two days. I depart for Zimbabwe this Saturday where I will conduct a Seven Steps of a PurposeQuest Seminar™ in Harare on February 21 and 22 (see below for details). I will follow up the Harare Seminar with two seminars in Allentown, Pennsylvania on March 14 and 15 and two seminars in Providence, Rhode Island on April 26. I am still waiting for the day when I tire of talking about purpose. It hasn't happened yet.

This week my sister-in-law sent me an email message from Dr. Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade. You may have ideas or even a purpose that has been in your heart for quite some time. If so, I know you will find this story helpful.

If God has given you a vision that will glorify Him, don't ever give up! As a new Christian in 1945, God gave me a vision to produce a film for evangelism on the life of Jesus, to be shown throughout the world. Following the impression that I was to do such a film, I visited Hollywood giant Cecil B. DeMille and reviewed various films that had already been done on the life of Jesus, but found none that I felt was satisfactory for what I felt the Lord wanted me to do. We were limited in funds so for 33 years I prayed. The Board of Directors of Campus Crusade for Christ joined me in prayer and we waited for the day when funds would be available. Then one day in a brief moment of God's eternity, He raised up three people to make that dream a reality.

It was a glorious, unforgettable day in 1979 when Bunker and Caroline Hunt, then one of the richest couples in the world, and John Heymen a Hollywood producer of 45 major films, were visiting our Arrowhead Springs headquarters. As I shared my vision with Bunker and Caroline, they were so taken with the idea that, this being Saturday, on the following Monday the money was released to underwrite a film that within a decade had already touched the lives of over a half-billion people in 245 languages of the world. Now, since its release in 1980, it has been translated into more than 750 languages and viewed or listened to by some 5 billion people in 236 countries.

Never give up. Don't be impatient. God's timing is not our timing. To Him a day is as 1,000 years and 1,000 years is as a day (Psalm 90:4; 2Peter 3:8). Be obedient to the heavenly vision and trust Him that in His divine timing the dream that He has placed in your heart will become a reality. If God gives you a vision don't be discouraged if it doesn't become a reality immediately. Some of the most important impressions that God has placed in my heart, such as the JESUS film and the International Christian Leadership University, have taken decades to become reality. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Habakkuk 2:3), KJV). (Copyright (c) 2002, Bill Bright. All rights reserved. However, readers may copy and distribute this message as desired, without restrictions in number, as long as the content is not altered. Forwarding this e-mail to friends is encouraged. For many free evangelistic and spiritual growth materials, visit the Campus Crusade for Christ Web site at <http://www.ccci.org>. See <http://www.newlifepubs.com> for Bill Bright's own materials.)

If you are discouraged that your dream or purpose is yet to be fulfilled, may Dr. Bright's story encourage you today. Have a great week!

The Monday Memo-Early Edition
From the desk of
Dr. John Stanko
Issue 100

The Monday Memo has reached 100! A lot has happened in the last two years since I first started *The Monday Memo*. Think of where you were two years ago and where you are today as you walk your own PurposeQuest. I hope you are further down the road to purpose and productivity than when you first began to receive *The Monday Memo*, whether that was last week or two years ago.

I am leaving in two hours for Zimbabwe, so this week's edition will be short. This past week I was on a plane at 8:30 pm after a long day of work and interviews. I was tired and everything in me wanted to rest. But I looked at my "to do" list, pulled out my computer and began to write. I had just a few days to complete my study in James and there was work to do. What was the key to help me overcome my fatigue and spend an hour finishing the study?

There were three things that helped me. First of all, I have it written down. Every day I make a prioritized to-do list, and prayer, reading and writing are on that list. I am not saying that I do all those things every day, but I cannot ever say I forgot to do them because they are in my face by my own hand. Second, I have made commitments. Right now there are 2,500 people waiting every week for my Bible studies. That's a lot of people to disappoint. Third, I have a big dream and I have now set a goal to see that dream become a reality.

For the last 15 years, I have said to myself, "I would like to write Bible commentaries one day." In August, 2001, I took a step toward fulfilling that dream when I published **The Faith Files**, a study of faith in the New Testament. Having finished four more studies and commentaries since then, I now have a goal: To do a devotional commentary on every New Testament book in my lifetime. This is the first time I have announced this goal and this announcement is an important part in completing it. That goal now guides my daily activities and writing had better be part of those activities or that goal is but a dream.

This week I ran across a great quote from T. E. Lawrence in **Seven Pillars of Wisdom**: "All men dream: but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible." How about you? Isn't it time you transfer your dreams from the night to the day? Isn't it time to fill those idle moments with some activity of purpose, some activity that is close to your heart? What is your dream and are you ready to announce it as a goal? Are you ready to work to make it happen?

I am off to Zimbabwe, doing what I love to do in a place I love to do it. I want to change the world, or at least my world. Doing that hinges on my ability to pull out my computer some nights at 8:30 pm to write when I could be doing something else. I pray that this week you will be able to do the same. Have a great week!