

The Measuring Stick
Robin Lee Hatcher

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Hi, Janet

I began writing my first novel, a romantic historical saga, in 1981. Back then, there wasn't a great deal of fiction published in the Christian market, and so when the time arrived to attempt to sell the manuscript, I targeted publishers in the general market. That first book sold, along with its sequel, and they were published in mass market paperback in 1984.

Over the next thirteen years, I continued to write novels for the historical romance market. But during that time, God was doing a work in my heart, bringing me back into right relationship with Him. Finally, in 1997, I knew that He was calling me to write stories of faith that would glorify Him. And so I signed with a Christian publisher. My first CBA (Christian Booksellers Association) novel, *The Forgiving Hour*, was released in February 1999.

Some time after that, I was asked what sort of stick I use to measure my success. It was a good question. In the general market, success is measured by the size of your advance, by how many copies of a book are sold, and by your book's appearance on bestseller lists, how high it goes, and how long it stays.

Now I'm not saying those things aren't important in the Christian market too. I make my living as a novelist, so it matters that readers buy my books in high enough numbers for me to pay my bills. Still, I knew success

couldn't—or at least, shouldn't—be measured by those things any longer. Not once my writing became my ministry as well as my career.

I went to the Lord in prayer, asking Him how could I know I was succeeding, especially when my books didn't land on bestseller lists or win certain awards. My answer came from Joshua 1:8 when the Lord said to Joshua: *"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."* (NASB)

In the margin of my Bible, I dated it and wrote: *"This is the only success that matters!"*

That verse has seen me through a number of high and low points over the years. It's a reminder to, first and foremost, seek to please God and to serve Him—in my writing, in my words, in my relationships, in my life. When I do that, I am a success.

His pleasure in my meditation and in my obedience is my measuring stick.

Warm regards,

Robin

Robin Lee Hatcher

Meridian, ID

~~ Robin Lee Hatcher ~~

From her heart . . . to yours!

Web site: <http://www.robinleehatcher.com>

Write Thinking blog @ <http://robinlee.typepad.com>

On Shelves Now: *Home to Hart's Crossing* and *The Perfect Life*

Upcoming: *Wagered Heart* and *Bundle of Joy*

BIO:

Robin Lee Hatcher is the winner of the Christy Award for Excellence in Christian Fiction, the RITA Award for Best Inspirational Romance, and the RWA Lifetime Achievement Award, Robin Lee Hatcher is the author of over 50 novels.

Robin enjoys being with her family, spending time in the beautiful Idaho outdoors, reading books that make her cry, and watching romantic movies. She is passionate about the theater, and several nights every summer, she can be found at the outdoor amphitheater of the Idaho Shakespeare Festival. She makes her home near Boise, sharing it with Poppet the high-maintenance Papillon.

Letter sent to **Janet Chester Bly**, P.O. Box 157, Winchester, ID, 83555, janet@blybooks.com, www.BlyBooks.com