

DETERMINATION

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Determination is firmness of purpose. It is resolution. Determination is persistence. Determination is to make up one's mind firmly on what he wants to become or achieve in life.

All achievers are determined people. Without determination there can be no success or accomplishment. No one ever makes it in life without a strong determination to make it. People, whose minds are not made up about what they want, don't get anything and anywhere. Until you firmly resolve within yourself about what you want to achieve in life within a given time frame, you will live a wasted, fruitless and disappointing life.

Determined people are achievers. Determined people never give up until they see their heart desire come true. Nobody ever made it without determination. Even our God couldn't have succeeded in winning anybody back to himself without determination. It was his determination to reconcile man back to himself that made him to sacrifice his only begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Life is full of challenges, obstacles and problems capable of cutting one's destiny short if yielded to. It is only those who are determined that face the challenges with boldness and confidence, and win. Determination will turn you into a winner.

NEVER QUIT

Determined people never quit. They don't take no for an answer because they are resolute about what they want, they will stop at nothing until they achieve their goals, obstacles and challenges not withstanding.

In Genesis 32:22-32, we are told the story of Jacob and his determination to be blessed.

"That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maidservants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, 'let me go, for it is daybreak'. But Jacob replied, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me'. The man asked him, 'What is your name?' 'Jacob' he answered. Then the man said, 'your name will no longer be Jacob but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome. Jacob said, 'please tell me your name'. But he replied, 'why do you ask my name?' Then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared'. The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon".

Jacob before this encounter has been living a life of tricks - tricking people and he himself being tricked. As he was contemplating on how he was going to face his

senior brother Esau whom he deceptively collected his birth right and blessings many years ago, he also kept in mind his encounter with Laban his uncle whom God used to teach him that a man will always reap what he sows. It doesn't matter how long it takes, he will always reap. Laban had cheated him many times of his wages, made him marry his two daughters and almost turned him into a perpetual servant. As a matter of fact, he ran with his family from Laban. Though Laban caught up with him and settled the matter, he was still faced with the problem of how to settle with his brother.

So it is obvious that Jacob needed a change badly. He knew his name was affecting him, for Jacob means trickster or cheat. In his heart, he sought for a change. He made up his mind. He was resolute in his decision. Because of his determination, he refused to let the angel go free until he did something about his situation. He was so determined, that the injury at the hip did not deter him. He held the man tight until he got what he wanted. Determination always pays. If you are determined you will see all your heart desire come true. You will see your needs met. You will see your ugly and unpleasant situations changed. Determined people don't give up - they don't quit. You will not quit until you receive your answer.

Matthew 15:21-28 tells us another beautiful story about determination.

“Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession. Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, ‘send her away, for she keeps crying out after us. He answered, ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. The woman came and knelt before him. Lord help me!’ she said. He replied, ‘it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs. ‘Yes, Lord, she said, ‘but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table. Then Jesus answered, ‘Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted. And her daughter was healed from that very hour.’”

Determination is an act of the will. It is a state of mind that does not accept no for an answer. This woman is a very good example of a determined person and the end - result of determination.

She had heard about Jesus and his ministry to the afflicted. She had concluded in her mind that Jesus alone can and will heal her daughter from the demon that tormented her. She left her house determined to secure her daughter's freedom. But Jesus did not give her attention for a long time. That was enough reason for her to quit. She even heard the Apostles pleading on her behalf, and the unfriendly and unsympathetic answer Jesus gave them. She didn't quit. She believed that persistence which is a manifestation of determination will pay off. Eventually, she finds her way to the presence of Jesus the healer, and her only hope that seems not to be interested in helping. Kneeling before him, she made her petition again. And Jesus used a harder and harsher word. It was like Jesus was saying to her, 'you are a dog, and what I have is not meant for you'. This woman because of her determination and humility decided to swallow it as long as she was able to get what she wanted. She acknowledged herself as a dog and argued that dogs don't eat the food meant for children, but the crumbs that fall from the children's table. By her wisdom, humility, and persistence in faith that Jesus

will heal her daughter, Jesus acknowledged her and healed her daughter. She got what she wanted at last.

What if she had quit at the initial stage when:

- Jesus behaved as if he didn't hear her cry as they walked on the road, or
- When Jesus answered his disciples as if he didn't care, or
- When Jesus indirectly referred to her as a dog?

Of course, she would not have secured her daughters deliverance. Never quit! Hold on until it happens as you are expecting it to happen.

Few things come out from this woman and Jacob's stories.

1. Determined people are resolute in their desires.
2. Determined people always apply persistence in working towards achieving their heart desires.
3. Determined people never quit when situations or circumstances signals to them that it may not be possible.
4. They don't take no for an answer. They believe there is always a way out of every difficult and unpleasant situation.
5. Determined people are stubborn in their faith.
6. Determined people are humble people who always maintain a meek and gentle spirit. They in humility accept insults and bashing so long as they get what they want.
7. Determined people walk in wisdom. They know when there is an opportunity. They make most of every opportunity. They know how to use words to their own advantage. They allow their minds to be tuned to the frequency of God where ideas flow from to help them out of difficult situations and get them to the accomplishment of their heart desire.

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

Courage is the absence of fear. Fear cripples a man and makes it impossible for him to take the right steps in life or pursue the things that he ought to pursue. Fear binds and demoralizes a man. Courage is the result of inner strength. Strength comes by knowledge of the person of God and the inheritance of the believer in Christ Jesus. Daniel said in Dan. 11:32,

"...but the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits."

If you have deep revelation of God and of yourself in Christ, and you work in the consciousness of that revelation, you will manifest strength and carry out great exploits that will distinguish you as a star.

Courage is the quality of being brave. For you to be successful, you need to be courageous in order to overcome the challenges along the way. God told Joshua in chapter one, verse nine to,

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go”.

It doesn't matter the challenges and oppositions that comes your way, you must courageously face them and overcome them. If David had been fearful, he would not have been able to overcome Goliath or the lion or the bear. Courage will make you an overcomer and a conqueror. A man with a chicken heart always ends up defeated. They can't attempt new things because of fear. They throw away golden ideas and opportunities, and melt like wax before fire because of fear. That is why God encouraged Joshua to be courageous. He gave him an assurance that he will always be with him. This is to serve as a moral booster. Always remember that God is with you and on your side. Don't forget that he lives on the inside of you and that His thoughts towards you are for good and not evil.

Be strong and courageous, and you will always overcome. He has made you an overcomer.

“For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.” (1 John 5:4 NIV)

Fear does not overcome; Discouragement does not overcome the world. It is our faith that overcomes life's challenges. Build up your faith through the word of God.

Let the word of God charge you up, motivate and strengthen you. If your knowledge of the word of God is shallow, you cannot be strong and courageous. That is why God encouraged Joshua in chapter one of the book of Joshua to meditate on the word of God day and night, and to be careful to apply all that he learns from the word without deviating to the right or to the left.

Believe that *“all things are possible to him that believes (that it is possible)”*. (Mk 9:23) Believe also that you can do all things through Christ that strengthens you. (Phil. 4:13)

MAINTAIN FOCUS

Determined people are focused people. They never take their eyes from where they are going. They do not permit distractions. Broken focus is the enemy's strategy for failure and defeat

Lot's wife became a pillar of salt when she stopped focusing on the town they were fleeing to, and looked back at Sodom. Nehemiah succeeded because he did not allow himself to be distracted from the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, despite many temptations and oppositions.

“Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus” (Phi. 3:13-14)

Focusing has to do with concentration. In this case, concentrating on your field or work. Focusing creates momentum. Focusing increases strength. It helps one to

channel all his energy to a given vision or goal. Your energy will only take you to your focus. Remember, *"The me I see, is the me I'll be"*.

"Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your feet from evil." (Prov. 4:25-27)

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." (Col 3:1-4 NIV)

BENEFITS OF FOCUSING

1. Focusing brings fruitfulness and abundant prosperity

"He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty." (Prov 28:19 NIV)

"Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth." (Prov 10:4 NIV)

2. Focusing produces skills and mastery.

"If the axe is dull and he does not sharpen its edge, then he must exert more strength. Wisdom has the advantage of giving success." (Eccl 10:10 NASU)

"Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise." (Ps 33:3 KJV)

"So give orders that cedars of Lebanon be cut for me. My men will work with yours, and I will pay you for your men whatever wages you set. You know that we have no one so skilled in felling timber as the Sidonians." (1 Kings 5:6 NIV)

3. Focusing leads to excellence and perfection.
4. Focusing will take you to the top.
5. Focusing aids diligence, and diligence brings prosperity. Diligence is not just hard work, but focused work - work that has direction or directed work.

"Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth." (Prov 10:4 NIV)

6. Focusing involves planned labour or work.

- Daily diary needed.
- Make a list of what you want to achieve daily, weekly, monthly and yearly.
- Goal setting is focusing.

THERE IS A WAY OUT

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are

tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” (1 Cor 10:13 NIV)

Determined people believe there is always a way out of every ugly situation. They believe they will overcome all obstacles that come their way. They believe nothing is in its final stage; it can always be improved upon. Determined people believe they can overcome any mountain that comes their way - they may climb it to the other side, tunnel through it, demolish it, and make it skip, or go by the sides. Somehow, it must be overcome.

Determined people never believe that they have reached a dead-end. They believe when one door closes, another opens for their dreams to come true. Determined people will stop at nothing until their goals are achieved.

Jacob determined to marry Rachel, and he didn't care how long it took him to serve her father Laban to get her. After Jacob had stayed with Laban one month, he contracted to serve Laban for seven years for the hand of Rachel in marriage as his price. Because of his love for her, seven years was like a few days to him. But Laban played tricks on him. The brides normally wear a veil during the marriage ceremonies, and they will be brought to the room of the bridegroom in the night after the marriage rites. That was why Laban succeeded in cheating Jacob. He sent the senior daughter Leah to him. It appears to me that Jacob slept half drunk or fully drunk. This must have been one of the reasons he failed to recognize she was not Rachel. He realized the woman he made love to in the night was not his Rachel but her senior sister.

He had to work another seven years for Rachel because Laban will not release her except he put in another seven years. Jacob laboured a total of fourteen years for Rachel. That was determination in action. He refused to give up on the one he loves, and served a whole fourteen years. (Read Genesis 29:15-30).

Again the Bible tells us how Jacob pursued his dream to go back to the land of Canaan with great possessions. He had in Genesis 28:20-22 showed his desire to return to Canaan Prosperous.

“Then Jacob made a vow, saying, ‘If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my Father’s house, then the LORD will be my God and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God’s house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth”.

Jacob went to Laban with the intention of acquiring wealth. He was determined to achieve that goal. His determination paid off. Your determination will pay off also. Laban didn't want Jacob to leave his service. He wanted to keep him by all means, even by tricks. Jacob approached Laban with the request for his wages so that he can go back to the land of promise. Laban asked him to name his wages. He said he wanted every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark-coloured lamb and every spotted or speckled goat from Laban's flocks. Laban agreed, but played a fast one on him. He removed all in his flocks that fell into the category Jacob requested as his wages and placed in the care of his sons and sent them away. He put a three-day distance between himself and Jacob. Jacob found nothing in Laban's flock to make his own. He

looked up to God for help determined not to remain with Laban, and not to go to Canaan poor but wealthy. God gave an amazing idea that has never been tested before that time. He practiced it and raised large flocks for himself from Laban's strong and healthy flocks.

He "took fresh-cut branches from poplar, almond and plane trees and made white stripes on them by peeling the bark and exposing the white inner wood of the branches. Then he placed the peeled branches in all the watering troughs, so that they will be directly in front of the flocks when they came to drink. When the flocks were in heat and came to drink, they mated in front of the branches. And they bore young that were streaked or speckled or spotted".

This was how with a determined heart and mind Jacob raised for himself a large flock. (Read Genesis 30:25-31:21). Even Laban and his sons became envious of Jacob, and he had to explain how God through a dream had shown him to make Laban's flocks breed for him the sheep and goats that are speckled or spotted. So Jacob went back to Canaan a wealthy man with many flocks, camels and servants. His determination made it happen.

Your determination can make impossible cases possible. **A determined person always wins.** Persist in your efforts to make your desire come true.

CONCLUSION

Be determined. It pays to be determined. It takes people of rugged faith to survive in times like this. You are more than a conqueror.

- Don't give in to obstacles and misfortunes.
- Don't give in to lack and financial difficulties.
- Don't give in to failures and disappointments.
- Don't give in to barrenness and unfruitfulness.
- Don't give in to sickness and diseases.
- Don't give in to Satan and his forces of darkness.
- Be determined.
- Doubt your doubts.
- Have faith in your faith.
- Believe all things are possible to him that believes all things are possible. (Mark 9:23).
- Believe you can do all things through Christ that strengthens you (Phil. 4:13).

You are destined a winner and a star. Therefore arise and shine, for your light has come and the glory of God has risen upon you. Don't give up for God has not given up on you. Don't quit. Trust in the Lord with all your heart for he has not abandoned you, and will not abandon you. Don't throw in the towel. Resist every resistance. Challenge every challenge. Don't accept that there is no way. There is always a way. Find it. When you find it, walk in it to the top. Nothing and no one will stop you. You will make it in Jesus name. Amen.

SUCCESS TIT-BITS

1. Don't underestimate your problem or your potential power to cope with it creatively.
2. Don't exaggerate your problem. Play it down, and pray it up.
3. Don't wait for the problem to solve itself. There is a time and place for patience. That is after you have tried every avenue possible and have planted as many seeds of solutions as you can.
4. Don't aggravate the problem. We have the power to make any problem better or worse depending on our reaction.
5. Never throw away an idea just because it seems impossible to you. Give it a chance.
6. Never underestimate the value of an idea. Every positive idea has within it the potential for success if it is managed properly.
7. There is something wrong with every good idea. Therefore never reject an idea because you see something wrong with it. Isolate the negative from the possibility. Neutralize the negative. Exploit the possibility.
8. Never reject an idea because you won't get the credit! God can do tremendous things through the person who doesn't care who gets the credit.
9. Never go to bed a loser, always get up a winner.
10. Intensity of desire, a definite goal, a worthy purpose and perseverance are what it takes to achieve success.
11. When you are committed to serving God, God is committed to blessing you.
12. Until you know where you are going, you will get know where.
13. Never give up believing for it is your faith that will give you the breakthrough you need.

WISDOM FOR ASSOCIATION

1. There are those who add to your life, and there are those who subtract from it. Pay attention to those who add to you.
2. God does not relate with a man except on the basis of a covenant. Pay attention to your covenant with God and make sure that you are faithful to it.
3. You need good willed people to get to where you are going. Learn to nurture and keep relationships that are clean and rewarding.
4. Just as you are a solution to someone's problem, someone is a solution to your problem.
5. You will always attract the kind of person you are.

6. **There are those who are difficult to relate with. Are you one of them?**
7. **Kind people always get connected to people that will greatly bless their lives, though that is not their motive for showing kindness.**
8. **The one who shows favor will be favored.**
9. **Respect other people's feelings and your feelings will be respected.**
10. **Getting along well with people is not a gift, but an act that must be learned and practiced.**

RENEWING THE MIND

1. **When one is worrying, he is literally strangling or choking his own creative powers.**
2. **It requires 64 facial muscles to frown and only 14 to smile. Be joyful always and you will always look young and fresh, and your creative powers will function better.**
3. **What you hear repeatedly, you will eventually believe.**
4. **A change of mind leads to a change of experience.**
5. **The way you think determines the way you act. The way you act determines your habit. And your habit determines your experience.**
6. **You are a sum total of your thoughts.**
7. **Your thoughts reveal who you really are. What kind of thoughts do you think?**
8. **Faith is the conclusion of the meditations of the mind based on the information fed it.**
9. **Worrying is an oppression of the mind. That is why worrying makes the body to malfunction.**
10. **Understand the way the mind works and you will understand why things are the way they are.**