

I am Determined

Spiritual Guidance to Being Victorious Through and Beyond
the Challenges of 2020



Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14

By

William E. Thrasher, Jr.

Have you ever noticed how determined nature is? A blade of grass pushes its way up through the concrete; a tree, like the one on the cover page, grows up out of a giant rock; a cactus stands tall in the middle of a dry desert. Phenomena like this would seem impossible, but it happens all the time. Nature has a way of pressing through those things that seem impossible. There is an innate determination built in nature's DNA that wills it to survive. Not only does nature survive, nature thrives. We should learn the lessons that nature demonstrates before us. Listen as Jesus explains:

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. -Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, Matthew 6:28 – 30

Simply stated, what Christ is telling us is that since our Heavenly Father infused determination like that in nature; imagine how much more he has determined us! If ever there was a time when we should learn the critical importance of that lesson, that time is certainly now!

With all of the challenges facing the world in 2020 (the SARS COVID pandemic, the racial and social unrest boiling over

here in America, the economic chaos and record setting unemployment) an **I Am Determined** spirit is what is needed for us to be victorious!

While the trying of our faith in 2020 worketh patience, it should also embolden that **I AM Determined** zeal.

Determination is defined as: a fixed purpose, the power and will to persist, resolve, to have drive, to have the grit, to go the distance, to be hell-bent on reaching a goal and getting it done no matter what. That's what I mean when I say **I Am Determined**. This pandemic is ravaging our country. The whole world is dealing with it, but America, because it is bereft of leadership is suffering as though we were a third world country. **I Am Determined** to get through this pandemic. That means I'll do whatever is required, wearing a mask, social distancing, washing my hands, and most importantly looking out for the safety and welfare of others as well as my own. **I Am Determined** to live in such away that my life reflects the fact that Black Lives Matter! **I Am Determined** to push through this season of civil unrest and be a voice of reason in the midst of this chaos. **I Am Determined!** **I Am Determined** to see the realization of the true spirit of the American dream that all men are created equal and are

endowed by their creator with certain enable rights among them being life liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

What fuels my determination? My faith in the Word of God. I believe that I was designed to be determined. *The scriptures says that "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."* Psalms 139:14

I was built with determination in my heart, soul and sinews.

4 - What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 - For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Psalms 8:4-5

I was divinely engineered for determination;

6 - Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: Psalms 8:6

In the midst of these, vexing times **I Am Determined!**

In our background scripture for today, Paul exemplifies the very essence of what it means to be determined; *"Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."*

Philippians 3:13-14

The most commonly held belief among theologians is that Paul wrote this letter to the church at Philippi from Rome while in prison there. In fact, it is widely believed that this was his final imprisonment and from there he would be executed. Imagine, Paul held in prison, facing execution and rather than giving in to what should have been a very depressing situation, Paul instead, encourages his church with the message of perseverance and bull dogged determination.

The full measure of his faith is being tested, but his focus is not on his predicament, but on his desire to be all that he can be. He, like all of us, recognizes that he has fallen short of the glory of God. He has not reached the level of spiritual perfection that he desires: “*Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended*” He does not however use his shortcomings as an excuse or an explanation for what some may consider defeat. He is not going to look back and lament. He is not going to blame his past for his status, “*but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind.*” Yesterday is dead and gone. I cannot look back and say; I wish had done this or that. I cannot fix yesterday. I cannot even long for the good old days or pine for things to go back to as they used to be. Things have changed. It is time to turn the page. It is time

to move on. It is time for determination to kick in. *“And reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”* Philippians 3:13-14

Paul may be in prison, but he is determined to reach the mark. Execution maybe lurking in the shadows, but he is determined to possess the prize. The high calling of God is within his grasp and he is determined to let nothing hold him back or separate him; ³⁸For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38 & 39

As we face this season of challenge in 2020, we must embrace Paul’s **I Am Determined** attitude and just like the blade of grass that pushed through the concrete we must be determined to push through this pandemic. Just like the tree that grows up through the giant rock, we too must go through the giant rocks of racial and social injustice. Like the cactus that stands tall in the dry dessert, we must be determined to stand tall, though troubled on every side, Just say **I Am Determined** and you won’t be distress, perplexed, declare **I Am**

Determined and you won't be in despair, persecuted, shout it out **I Am Determined!** And you won't be forsaken, Cast down reach for the prize, let the world know that **I Am Determined** has kicked in and you cannot be destroyed! Tell 2020 I got this, cause **I Am Determined!**