This month is all about determination, deciding it’s worth it to finish what you’ve started. Have you ever run a race? To get a medal you have to keep going, even when it seems like you can’t go one more step.

This is true in life too. Sometimes we’re tempted to quit when things get hard. But for those for follow Jesus, we receive a crown that lasts forever! Because Jesus can do anything, He can give us the power we need even when all we want to do is quit. We can keep going even when it seems impossible.

This week, we’ll highlight four real life stories of determination. Read the determination story below and then unscramble the letters to reveal the name of the person who kept going. Rejected by 29 medical schools before being accepted by mistake to Hobart College, she became the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States in 1849. She opened a medical practice, served poor families, and established the first medical college for women. Who was she?

LIBETEZAHLBWLLCKE

Ask God to help you run the race or finish what you start, even when it seems impossible.

One of the awesome things about following God is that He promises to be with us, no matter what. When you have a big job to do, when the job seems way too hard, God can help you stand strong, be brave and finish with determination. That’s what Paul is talking about in today’s verse. Even when the task seems impossible, God is with you.

Let’s take a look at another story of determination. Can you name this famous inventor? Considered unteachable at a young age, this inventor continued to try and try again. While many would say he had failed, he would say that he simply found over 1,000 ways not to create a light bulb. Who was he?

HTMOSANEISDO

Ask God to give you the strength you need to remain strong, and keep going to finish what you’ve started.
Read Isaiah 41:10  
**DAY 3**

Do you ever feel like quitting? Maybe you’ve tried and failed and you’re afraid you’ll NEVER get it right. That’s when you have to remember that God is with you. He can make you strong, help you and hold you safe. His way is always right. God will give you the strength you need to keep going, even when it seems impossible.

Check out this story of determination. Can you unscramble the name to discover the answer?

This famous “colonel” didn’t start on his idea until the age of 60. He worked from age 60-73 to create and grow his business, sometimes even living in his car. Today, you can find a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant in 118 different countries. Who was he? (Hint: The first name starts with an “H”)

L D R A A H N  D D A V I  N D S A E R S

Thank God for the reminder that you don’t have to be afraid even if you need to try again.

Read John 15:5  
**DAY 4**

Ever popped a juicy grape into your mouth? Did you pluck it from the stem first? That stem is connected to the vine which supplies all the water and nutrients that grape needs to grow and become your snack.

Jesus described Himself as the vine. You are the branch. When you stay connected to Jesus, He can help you keep going, to keep doing the right thing, and to keep loving others the way He loves.

Our last story of determination is about a man who kept going even when he faced SO many setbacks. Can you figure out who it is?

He lost his beloved mother, his business failed, he ran for state legislature and lost, he got fired from his job, he couldn’t get into law school, he borrowed money from friends to start another business but that failed too. Despite many unsuccessful runs into politics, he was elected president in 1860. Who was he?

H A A A B M R  I O L N L N C

Ask Jesus to help you stay connected to Him so you live the way He wants you to live.
When Paul wrote the words “I can do all things” was he thinking maybe he could . . . walk through walls or make a gazillion dollars?

Not so fast, friends. When it comes to following God, we have to remember that God has a plan and a purpose for each one of us. So when Paul said, “I can do ALL things,” he meant all the things that line up with God’s will for him. In other words, God won’t ask something of you that He won’t help you actually do.

Instead of thinking of this verse in superhero, super-human terms, think about the things God asks of you that are hard to do—like being kind, sharing what you have, or telling the truth. God will give you what you need, when you need it to follow His will for you. Because God gives you what you need to keep going.

Thank God for the promise that He will help you do ALL the things He’s asked of you.

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Read 2 Corinthians 4:8-9

When Paul wrote these words, he had faced so many hard things just for telling others about Jesus. You can find just a few examples in 1 Corinthians 4:11-13. But Paul reminds us that while others might make us suffer, God never abandons us.

Have you ever seen one of those weighted wobble toys? They’re inflated (like a big punching bag) with a weight on the bottom so that when you knock them down, they rise right back up. This is a picture of what Paul is talking about in today’s verse. When it comes to following God, you might be knocked down, but you aren’t knocked out. God will give you what you need to keep going because He promises He will never leave you.

If you have one of those wobble toys, say the words of the verse as you kick it around and watch it rise again. If you don’t have one, ask an adult to help you blow up a balloon. Practice tapping it to keep it in the air as you repeat the words of the verse.

Thank God for the reminder that you can keep going with determination because He will never desert you.
Has someone ever let you down? Maybe the friend you thought was your “best friend” decided she didn’t want to be friends anymore. Maybe someone said something about you that wasn’t true or blamed you for something you didn’t do to avoid getting trouble.

People let us down all the time because people aren’t perfect. Everyone, including you, messes up. And sometimes people hurt us on accident or on purpose.

But God isn’t like us. He is perfect, righteous, holy and completely good. We can put all our trust in Him. We can keep doing the right thing when we remember that God is with us and that He will give us what we need to keep going.

**Set a timer for two minutes.**  
**Jog in place as you repeat today’s verse.**  
**Can you repeat the verse as you jog without giving up?**

Ask God to help you keep doing the right thing, no matter what others are doing because He is with you.

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**Read Psalm 118:6-8**

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**Read Exodus 14:14**

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Ever tried the cookie challenge? With an adult’s permission, grab a cookie or cracker from the kitchen. Look up at the ceiling, place the cookie on your forehead and then, using only the muscles in your face, move the cookie from your forehead to your mouth. Were you tempted to reach up and grab the cookie to put it in your mouth?

Being still is hard and it was really hard for the Israelites, God’s chosen people. They were trapped between the raging Red Sea in front of them and Pharaoh’s mighty army coming up fast behind. When Moses spoke these words, he had no idea what God was going to do. And then in one miraculous act, God parted the sea and the Israelites walked forward to freedom.

Being still was probably the last thing the Israelites wanted to do, but they chose to trust God. Sometimes determination requires us to be still, to listen to God and then move when He tells us to move. We need to stop and listen, instead of moving ahead in our own strength.

**For a few moments, bow your head and just be quiet.**

Read today’s verse and ask God to help you understand what it means to be still and let Him fight for you.
Read Psalm 23:3-4

Think about the last time you played a game of tag. At the beginning of the game, how did you feel? And what about at the end?

**When it comes to following God, there is some good news.** When we’re tired of doing the right thing, God will guide us with new strength. And when things are really hard and it seems like everything is working against us, God promises to guide and comfort us.

Grab some sticky notes. Break today’s verse up into 3- or 4-word phrases, writing each phrase on a sticky note. Stick them on the floor to create a path. Step on the notes as you read the verse aloud. Spend some time thanking God for leading you and giving you the determination you need to keep going even when it gets tough.

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Read James 1:12

Wouldn’t it be so awesome if every time you completed a big job or task, someone handed you a beautiful jewel covered crown?

That’s not the kind of crown today’s verse is talking about. The crown here is life, eternal life, forever with God. When you trust in Jesus as Savior, you can keep going with determination even when things get tough. Even when we’re the only doing the right thing. God promises that one day we will be with Him forever in a perfect place. And that’s way better than a crown that could be stolen or lost.

Grab a large piece of paper, draw the outline of a crown and cut it out. Write out the words of today’s verse on one side and decorate the other. Bring the ends together and staple to secure.

**Ask Jesus to help you follow Him so that you can keep going even when it gets tough!**
Do you remember our definition for determination? Determination is deciding it’s worth it to finish what you’ve started. That’s easier said than done right? Because sometimes we get tired. Sometimes the task ahead seems impossibly big.

What if you took a cue from Anna in Frozen 2 and simply chose the next right thing? In the song, Anna sings about not looking too far ahead and making the next right choice.

Anna sang this song because she felt completely alone.

**But when it comes to following God, we are never alone.**

Maybe instead of thinking about the great big thing in front of you, you should start smaller instead. Just do the next right thing—the thing right in front of you. Ask God to remind you that He is with you every step of the way so that you can keep going, even when it’s tough.

Following Jesus is a bit like running a tough race. The twists and turns on the course a runner faces are like the hard things that happen to us. Just like a runner gets tired and has to push on, we have to keep going even when we’d rather give up.

With an adult’s permission, challenge yourself to run around the block. If that feels fairly easy, challenge yourself to run around the block again.

**Ask God to help you push forward with determination.**

He will help you even when it gets tough.
When you receive a new book, do you flip to the last page and read the ending first? Reading the ending would ruin the story! When it comes to following Jesus, knowing the end is a good thing. Why? Because God has already had a plan to make everything right. In the end, God wins!

That was true for God’s people in 2 Chronicles. God told them not to worry, that the battle had already been won. The next morning, God’s army took their battle positions but instead of charging toward the enemy, they begin to praise God. The opposing army became confused and turned on one another. God won the battle just as He said He would.

Sometimes we forget that we already know the end of the story. We don’t have to be afraid or lose hope. God is with us and there isn’t anything too big for Him. We can keep going, keep moving forward with determination because God knows the end of the story.

Ask God to help you remember that with Him on your side, you win! So you can keep going knowing He is with you.

What happens when you get tired? Are you cranky? Do you push through it or do you fall asleep the minute you sit down somewhere?

Everyone gets tired. Our bodies need rest. But the kind of tired this verse is talking about doesn’t involve a pillow and a comfy blanket. This kind of tired happens when doing the right thing doesn’t seem to be getting you anywhere. This tired happens when everyone else is doing the wrong thing or when it seems like no one is paying attention to your wise choices anyway.

Sometimes it just seems easier or even more fun to follow the crowd. That’s when you have to tap into determination. Just like the end of a race is way more important than the beginning, we have to keep making choices that honor God and others. Because God sees every good deed, every kind word, every act of obedience. He knows when you’re tired and when you ask for His help, He will give you the strength you need to keep making the wise choice.

Write out the words for today’s verse on a card and place it near where you sleep. As you go to sleep tonight, ask God to help you keep doing the right thing with determination.
When someone helps you, do you remember to say, “Thank You!”

Saying thank you is important.

One of the keys to determination—to sticking with something to the end—is thankfulness. Why? Because God has already done the most amazing thing ever by sending His only Son Jesus. Following God isn’t just about doing the right thing so we can be seen as “good.” Following God and obeying Him is a big way we show Him that we love and trust Him. When we live the way God wants us to live, we are showing gratitude for all He’s done for us by sending Jesus.

So let’s practice! Think of one way you can thank God (besides just saying “Thank you”). You could write God a song or poem. You could thank God by choosing to do one thing tomorrow that He’s asked you to do that’s really hard for you. Let’s thank God for the determination He gives us to keep going!

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According to today’s verse, who can make you strong?

God is the one who can give you the strength you need to keep going. His power is unlimited. Remember, He’s the one who created the entire world. He’s the one who sent His only Son so that you could have a relationship with Him, forever.

You can depend on God—put all your trust and confidence in Him—because He loves you. There isn’t anything you will face tomorrow or the next day or twenty years from now that is too big or too hard for God.

How many chairs are there around the table at your house? Grab that many index cards or scraps of paper. Write out the words of today’s verse on each one, then tape them to the back of each chair. Every time you or a family member sits in one of those chairs this week, talk about how you can depend on God’s mighty power just like you trust that chair to hold you up. Spend some time thanking God for His mighty power that helps you keep going with determination!
Do you know why the Bible is important?

Maybe that’s a question you’ve never really thought about. The Bible isn’t just another book that tells us about events of the past. The Bible is God’s word to us. When we read it, just like you’re reading it today, it can help, teach, comfort and guide. When you have questions about God, the Bible is the best place to go for answers.

We all have questions for God. Some questions might seem silly (like “why are there mosquitoes?”) and some are more serious (like “why is my grandmother sick?”) Questions aren’t bad! That’s how we learn. Don’t be afraid to ask questions, to search the Bible for answers and to talk to other people who love and follow God too. This week, if you find yourself wanting to give up, read this verse. Thank God for His word. And remember, you can keep going, even when you have questions.

Read Romans 15:4

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Read Acts 17:24-26

Do you have a friend that doesn’t go to church? If you wanted to tell that friend about God, where would you start?

Use the word bank to fill in the blanks from today’s verses.

God made the _______________________.
He made ________________________ in it.
He is the ________________________ of heaven and earth.
He doesn’t ________________________ in temples built by human hands.
He doesn’t need ________________________.
He himself gives life and breath to all ________________________.
From one man, he ________________________ all the people of the world.
He decided exactly ________________________ they should live.
He decided exactly ________________________ they should live.

We learn a ton about God from these verses! And while these words don’t answer every single question about God, they tell us quite a bit about who He is. We all have questions about God. Questions help us learn and grow. But even with our questions, we can still trust God. And just like Paul did in these verses, you can tell others what you know about God too. Remember, you can keep going with determination even if you have questions.
Do you know how your Mom’s car works?
Can you take apart a washing machine and put it back together?
When you turn on your TV, do you understand how the images appear on the screen?

You put your trust in stuff every day without completely understanding how it works. The same is true in our relationship with God. You might be tempted to give up, to quit living the way God wants you to live when things happen that you don’t understand.

But trust means that you choose to believe, even with all your questions, that God is good and that He loves you. Even when things don’t make sense or when you have questions you can’t answer, you can still trust God and obey what He’s asked of you.

Pick one thing in your house that you depend on but maybe don’t completely understand (like your washing machine or refrigerator). Write out the words of today’s verse on a notecard and tape it to that item. Ask God to help you continue to obey Him, to keep going, to keep trusting, even when you have questions.

Do you know what the word “distraction” means? A distraction is something that takes your focus off the task in front of you. What are some things that distract you or keep you from finishing your homework? Write your answers below.

_________________________________________

It’s easy to get distracted and let other things get in the way when we’re trying to get something done. When we stay focused, not looking to the right or to the left, we have a better chance of limiting the distractions around us.

What are some things that keep you from doing what God wants you to do? What are some things that often distract you or get you off track?

When it comes to determination, focus is super important. When you look ahead and keep going, not looking to the right or to the left, it’s much easier to finish what you start. As you pray today, ask God to help you stay focused so that can finish with determination. He will help you be strong and brave as you follow Him.