

PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK

**A Study on Biblical
Determination**

PASTOR JERMAINE L. HAWKINS

Introduction: The Resolve



Determination in the New Testament is more than willpower; it is **Hupomonē**—the ability to remain steady under pressure.

This study explores how we can move from mere "interest" to a "finished course," following the footsteps of the Apostle Paul.

Faith + Focus = Determination

Spiritual Definitions



Steadfast

The internal resolve to stay the course when the initial excitement fades away.



Intensity

To pursue with energetic movement.
Determination is active, not passive.



Purpose

The conviction that the mission is larger than our current comfort or emotions.

The Mark

"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 (KJV)**



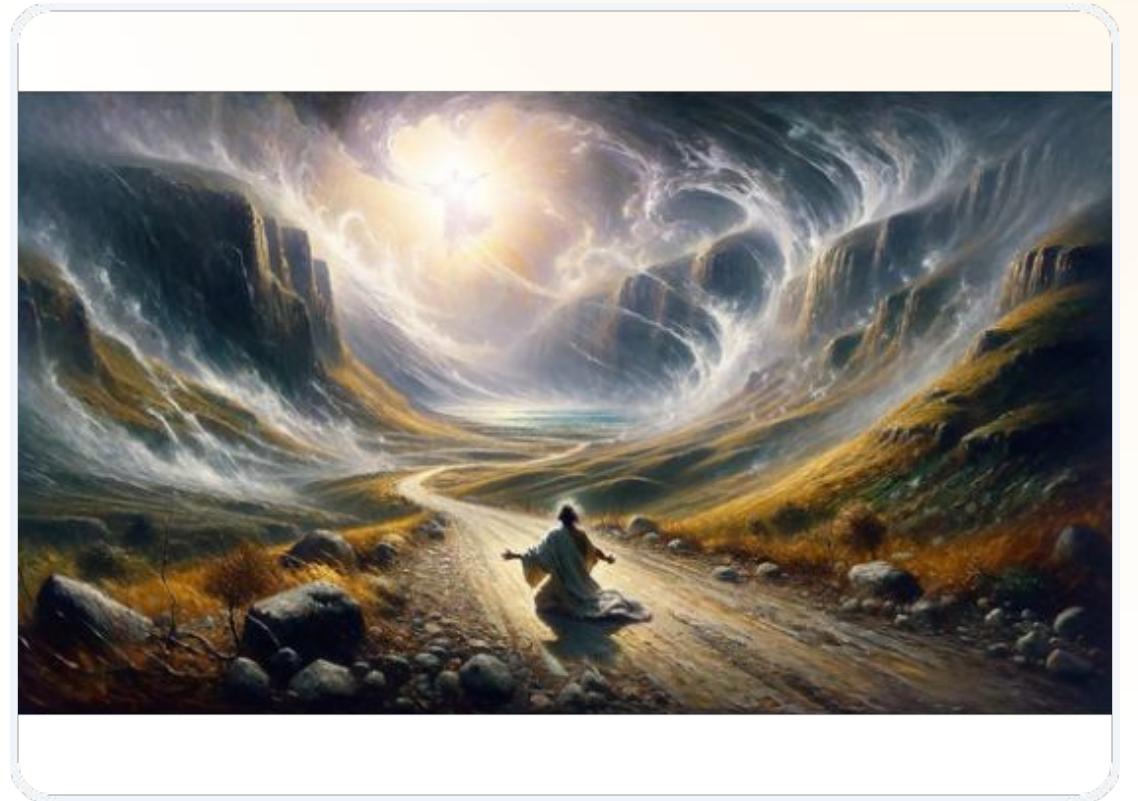
Paul's History: Transformation

Before the "mark," Paul was **Saul**—determined to destroy the church. His grit was misplaced but immense.

On the road to Damascus, his determination found its true North. He traded Pharisaic prestige for a life of "pressing" toward the Messiah.

☀️ **A Radical Shift:** From persecutor to prisoner of hope.

⚡ **Unrelenting Drive:** He redirected his intensity to the Gospel.



Resilience in Hardship



Paul wrote Philippians from a **Roman prison**. His determination wasn't based on freedom, but on his inner mission.

"None of these things move me" (Acts 20:24).

Determination means your identity is anchored in Christ, making you immune to the "winds" of threat.

Acts 20:24 Perspective



Unmovable Courage

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy..."





Finish with Joy

Determination isn't just about finishing; it's about the spirit in which we cross the line.

The Running Mindset

Hebrews 12:1 (KJV)

"...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

-  **Shed the Weight:** Removing distractions that slow progress.
-  **Run with Patience:** Enduring constancy over the long distance.



The High Prize



1





Supreme Goal

2 Timothy 4:7

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

*Paul's determination lasted until his last breath.
He didn't just start; he finished.*

Conclusion: Summary of Grit

-  **Focused Gaze:** Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.
-  **Forgetting Past:** Letting go of both failures and old trophies.
-  **Reaching Forth:** Active, muscular engagement with God's calling.
-  **Steady Peace:** A determined heart is a settled heart.



Self-Evaluation Questions

1. What "weight" am I currently carrying?

Identify a distraction that isn't necessarily a sin but slows your spiritual momentum.

2. Is my "Press" consistent or conditional?

Do you only run when circumstances are favorable, or do you press in the dungeon?

3. Am I looking back or reaching forth?

Are past failures or old spiritual achievements stopping you from reaching the "next" mark?

Questions?

"Let us not be weary in well doing..." (Galatians
6:9)



Image Sources



https://png.pngtree.com/png-clipart/20190925/original/pngtree-glowing-cross-with-open-bible-png-image_4983526.jpg

Source: [pngtree.com](https://png.pngtree.com)



https://img.freepik.com/premium-vector/praying-hands-with-radiant-light_1092975-795.jpg?semt=ais_rp_progressive&w=740&q=80

Source: www.freepik.com



https://png.pngtree.com/png-clipart/20250716/original/pngtree-ancient-scroll-with-quill-pen-and-inkwell-illustration-png-image_21317763.png

Source: [pngtree.com](https://png.pngtree.com)



https://i.etsystatic.com/48495642/r/il/d0a91f/5875067658/il_570xN.5875067658_nclj.jpg

Source: www.etsy.com



<https://media.gettyimages.com/id/75488949/fr/vectoriel/top-of-mans-head-visible-behind-prison-cell-window-as-his-hands-grip-metal-bars-front-view.jpg?s=612x612&w=gi&k=20&c=6jcIGGY0cFYaF83oSgTWJolL3wcXwGZSzd8YUUYpkm9E=>

Source: www.gettyimages.fr



https://media.istockphoto.com/id/1398103733/vector/christian-cross-icon-in-shield-shape-abstract-religious-symbol-vector-illustration.jpg?s=170667a&w=is&k=20&c=aom7uH1hhHXngQ9a_Zog1XHhu2y8XvrxDpP9-iWSERE=

Source: www.istockphoto.com

Image Sources



https://i.etsystatic.com/47260738/r/il/5e30b2/7197071139/il_fullxfull.7197071139_634n.jpg

Source: www.etsy.com



https://png.pngtree.com/png-vector/20240614/ourlarge/pngtree-golden-crown-with-religious-cross-png-image_12727031.png

Source: pngtree.com



https://png.pngtree.com/png-clipart/20241114/original/pngtree-white-dove-with-olive-branch-clipart-illustration-peace-hope-symbol-religion-png-image_17039062.png

Source: pngtree.com