

Keep Holding On

Bible Story: Keep Holding On (Stephen) • Acts 6:1–7:60

Bottom Line: Keep going because God knows the end of the story.

Key Question: When were you scared but kept going?

Memory Verse: *Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up.* Galatians 6:9 (NirV)

Life App: Determination—Deciding it's worth it to finish what you started

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think Stephen was determined to keep going even though people were getting very angry with him? What helped Stephen to keep going?
- How does knowing who God is and that He is always with us help us to keep going even when we are scared?
- When was a time you were scared but kept going?

Verse to Take with You

What You Do:

- **Open** the Bible to Joshua 1:9 and read aloud.
- **Ask:**
 - What does this verse remind us to do?
 - It takes determination to not be afraid, especially when things are scary. It takes determination to remember Jesus came to give us hope, hope that we can be with God now and forever. What promise in Joshua 1:9 does God give to help us show determination even when we are scared or unsure?

Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Do:

- **Ask:**
 - Is there something coming up in the next week that might be a bit scary for you?
 - Maybe you have a test and you aren't sure you will do well on it.
 - Or maybe your friends are fighting and you don't know when it is going to stop.
 - Or maybe you have to help clean the garage this week and there are a lot of spiders in your garage.
- **Allow** time for kids to pick a sentence from Joshua 1:9 to use as a prayer this week, especially when they are scared and need to keep going.
- **Lead** your child in prayer.



Day 5

Have you ever been reading a book that was a little scary, so you skipped to the end just to make sure that everything would turn out okay?

We can't do that in real life, but we can do something even better.

We can trust God, who knows the end of the story, and who has promised He will work things out for our best in the end. Paul writes this in Romans 8:28: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him," (NIRV).

That doesn't mean things will always turn out what we want them to now, but it does mean that even when things aren't going well, we can trust that there's more going on than we can see or understand, and that God is going to carry us through no matter what.

Grab a sheet of paper and cut out a bookmark. Then write the words from Romans 8:28 on it and decorate it however you want. Whenever you're wishing you could skip ahead to the end of a situation remember that you're being held by the One who is writing the story, and that's even better.

Day 1

Go to Studio252.tv and watch this week's episode of The So & So Show. (Click on Fun2Watch! then The So & So Show.)

Even if you already saw it at church, feel free to check it out again!

SO & SO TOP 3

After watching, write one thing that . . .

1) YOU LIKED: _____

2) YOU LEARNED: _____

3) YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW: _____

Day 2

Read Acts 6:8-15; 7:51-60

After you read Acts 6:8-15 and Acts 7:51-60, go back and look at all the verses in between. It's a lot, but it's basically a summary of God's Story. Stephen believed so strongly in Jesus as God's plan for the world that he shared the whole story, knowing his life was at risk.

The first 50 verses of Acts 7 are determination in action. Stephen didn't back down. He may have been scared, but he kept going. And we see in verses 56 and 57 that before he even went to heaven, Stephen was blessed with a vision from God: Jesus, welcoming him into heaven:

"But he was full of the Holy Spirit. He looked up to heaven and saw God's glory. He saw Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'Look!' he said. 'I see heaven open. The Son of Man is standing at God's right hand,'" (NIRV).

Stephen didn't know the end of the story, but he trusted the God who did, and that very day, he was welcomed by his Savior to spend forever with God.

Day 3

All month long, you've prayed for determination for yourself. But you probably also know some other people who are struggling to keep going. Who do you know that is facing a hard journey—perhaps because of sickness, death, losing their job, or having to move? If you can't think of anyone, just ask an adult—they'll likely know of someone who you can pray for. Use the sample prayer below to ask God to help them to keep going even when they don't know the end of the story.

"Dear God, please be with _____ who is having a really hard time because of _____. I imagine they are scared because _____. It's so hard when we don't know how things will turn out. . . but we do believe that you know how things will turn out. You know the end of the story, and we can trust you no matter what. Please help _____ to remember that, and to keep going even when they're scared. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen."

Day 4

Who is the person you prayed for yesterday? Today you're going to encourage them to keep going. There are lots of ways you can do this.

- Make them a card. Consider including a Bible verse to encourage them, like Psalm 27:1.
- Send them a text or email and just let them know you're praying for them.

- Give them a call so they know you're thinking of them.
- Bake them some cookies or drop off some flowers at their house.

Pick a few of these things. Whenever someone is going through something scary, it means so much to know that other people are cheering you on. No matter how you choose to encourage your friend, be sure and continue to pray for them to keep going.





WEEK FOUR

STEPHEN • ACTS 6:1-7:60

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DO THIS:



Start conversation with your preteen by asking them these questions while in the car, "What is something that is tough to finish right now? What keeps you from finishing?"



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DETERMINED PARENTS

By Carey Nieuwhof

One of the reasons it's so critical to help our kids live a determined life is that almost nothing happens on the first try. Fast forward twenty years and imagine your son or daughter grown up. Their character (including their determination) will directly impact what happens at work, at home, and in their families.

My friend Gary Reniecke shared some statistics from the world of sales that tell quite a story about determination. Studies have shown that:

- 48% of sales people never follow up with a prospect.
- 25% of sales people make a 2nd contact and stop.
- 12% of sales people make three contacts and stop.
- Only 10% of sales people make more than four contacts.

Why does this matter? Well, consider this:

- 2% of sales are made on the 1st contact.
- 3% of sales are made on the 2nd contact.
- 5% of sales are made on the 3rd contact.
- 10% of sales are made on the 4th contact.
- 80% of sales are made on the 5th to 12th contact.

Whether our kids ever choose sales as a career is beside the point. The point is determination and persistence pays

off. And that shouldn't surprise us. Isn't it true that, even as adults, few of us learn the lessons we need to learn on the first go-round? Isn't it true most things don't happen without some level of determination? Mastering a skill, developing relationships, growing faith and character, achieving a dream . . .

Most great things take time. And without determination, we'll never see them realized. As a parent, you might need to become determined to teach values like determination. Rarely will a child pick up on what's important on first try, and even if they embrace it early, it's easy to get discouraged and follow a different course down the road. This isn't just true in instilling determination in your child—it's true of virtually everything that's important.

All of this to simply say this: Don't get discouraged if you didn't succeed this week, or this month. So next week, next month, and next year, chip away at determination and encourage your family to do the same. Down the road, the payoff stands to be significant.



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