

SERMON SERIES *from* NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
ANDY ANDREWS

The
TRAVELER'S GIFT



Seven DECISIONS THAT DETERMINE
PERSONAL SUCCESS

by JAN *and* RICK LOY

SERMON



THE ACTIVE DECISION:

“I AM A PERSON OF ACTION”

“My future is immediate. I will grasp it in both hands and carry it with running feet. When I am faced with the choice of doing nothing or doing something, I will always choose to act!”

ADAPTED FROM *The TRAVELER’S GIFT*, by ANDY ANDREWS



THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH; SELECTED PASSAGES

·COURAGEOUS ACTION AND PRAYER ARE TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN; BOTH ARE ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS.

·Nehemiah prayed for God’s favor in asking for the King’s permission – 1:11; 2:4

1. Earnest prayer is proof of genuine engagement.
2. Honest prayer must be willing to be the instrument of God in action.

“Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work.” —Oswald Chambers

“Since the days of Pentecost, has the whole church ever put aside every other work and waited upon Him for ten days, that the Spirit’s power might be manifested? We give too much attention to method and machinery and resources, and too little to the source of power.”

—Hudson Taylor

·Nehemiah acted by approaching the King in the face of great personal risk – 2:2-5

1. Apart from his role as cupbearer, he had no standing nor privilege with the King.
2. His faithfulness in his word and his consistent life message were tools in the hand of God to provide the King’s favor.

“Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy.” —Dale Carnegie

“Whatever you can do or dream, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now.” —Goethe

Nehemiah was prepared for the moment with a specific request, framed by a specific plan of action – 2:5-8

1. A mindset fixed for action is organized, engaged, observant, and strategic.
2. A clear plan for action frequently evokes a positive response from others, while a mere wish, hope, or “good idea” typically dies a rapid death.

“Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now!”
—Alan Lakein

“The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when it comes.”
—Benjamin Disraeli

Actions that bring immense benefit will face strong, insidious opposition; Nehemiah wisely expected and prepared for it – 2:10; 4:7-8

· Begin moving intentionally and strategically, and with speed – 2:12–20

“There is a difference between interest and commitment. When you’re interested in doing something, you do it only when it’s convenient. When you’re committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results.” —Ken Blanchard

· Choose carefully when and with whom you share your plan and vision – 2:12–20

“Do not reveal what you have thought upon doing, but by wise council keep it secret being determined to carry it into execution.” —Chanakya

Resolve that opposition or risk will have no bearing on your course – 2:19-20; 4:1-23

“Continuous effort! Not strength or intelligence is the key to unlocking your potential.”
—Winston Churchill

· Rehearse and repeat the vision regularly to yourself and your people – 4:14

1. Reinforce a compelling picture of a better future – 4:14
2. Define and model the values and commitments that will guide the journey for those engaged in the work.
 - a) Faithfulness to the vision in both action and in heart – 4:21-23
 - b) Compassion and help for the needs of those who work – 5:9-11
 - c) Humility and service, not opportunism and profit – 5:14-19

“Vision is the art of seeing the invisible.”
—Jonathan Swift

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”
—Warren Bennis

· Practice the critical disciplines that will fuel you through fatigue, frustration, and the ill intentions of others.

· Praying continuously and at specific moments of challenge – 5:19; 6:9, 14

“Prayer breaks all bars, dissolves all chains, opens all prisons, and widens all straits by which God’s saints have been held.” —E. M. Bounds

· Appropriate rest, nutrition, and quiet reflection

“You’ve got to be in top physical condition; fatigue makes cowards of us all.” —Vince Lombardi

· Time for personal and corporate worship

“It is in the process of being worshipped that God communicates His presence to men.”
—C.S. Lewis

· The counsel and wisdom of trusted associates

“Wise kings generally have wise counselors and he must be a wise man himself who is capable of distinguishing one.” —Diogenes

· **Conclusion:** Recognizing that the life of a believer is stewardship before God and that laziness and slothfulness are sin, our duty and privilege is to ask, seek, knock, work, pray, strive, engage, and act with purpose and courage for the Kingdom of God and His purposes each day.

