

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

IV

THE CERTAIN DECISION:

“I HAVE A DECIDED HEART”

“Columbus cleared his throat, coughing gently, then continued. ‘A committed heart does not wait for conditions to be exactly right. Why? Because conditions are never exactly right. Indecision limits the Almighty and His ability to perform miracles in your life. He has put the vision in you—proceed! To wait, to wonder, to doubt, to be indecisive is to disobey God.’”

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



Many people never fulfill their potential, pursue their dreams, or make important decisions because they do not possess a decided heart. They talk about their options, seek counsel from many sources, and yet never commit to action with a determined spirit, a made-up mind, and a heart that is “all in.” They often fear making the “wrong” decision, and the fear immobilizes them. However, while we cannot be assured of always making “right” decisions, we have the privilege and responsibility before God to make decisions, followed by our very best efforts to make them right!

The Book of Esther tells the intriguing, inspiring story of a young woman facing an exceedingly consequential decision. We may never face a decision of this magnitude, but we still have decisions to make each day of our lives. Esther models five key traits that culminate in her decision. From her, we can learn how to be men and women with “decided hearts.”

PERSPECTIVE: EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE IS PURPOSEFUL
IN GOD’S SOVEREIGN PLAN – ESTHER 1-3

- Esther was left without parents, yet her cousin Mordecai assumed responsibility for her.
- King Ahasuerus removes Queen Vashti from the throne, opening the way for a new queen.
- Esther becomes a candidate for the position, gains the favor of the royal staff in the process, and becomes queen.
- Mordecai has earned favor and trust with the king and key court officials because of his loyalty and character.

DELIBERATION: WHILE ENJOYING GOD'S FAVOR WE STAY ALERT TO
HIS LARGER PLAN AND OUR POSSIBLE ROLE IN IT
AND SOBERLY SEEK HIS DIRECTION
–ESTHER 4

- Esther is attentive to Mordecai's distress and seeks clarity.
- Esther learns the hard truth of Haman's brutality and the King's unwitting participation.
- Esther soberly assesses her options, considering all facets of the problem:
 1. She understands inaction is not an option; action must be taken.
 2. She understands that she controls her choices, not the consequences.
- Esther receives a word of crystal clarity from Mordecai and decides to act.

WISE COURAGE: ESTHER WISELY MEASURES HER COURAGEOUS STEPS
– ESTHER 5

- . Esther prepares a luxurious banquet to honor and serve the King and begins to expose Haman's motives.
- . Esther humbly asks to honor the King again on the following day, evoking even greater favor from him.
- . Esther's wise timing is God's doing; God speaks to the King the evening between banquets and sets in motion the deliverance of the Jews.

HUMILITY: ESTHER ALWAYS MAINTAINS THE SPIRIT OF A SERVANT,
RECOGNIZING THAT SHE IS IN GOD'S HANDS – ESTHER 7-8

- . Esther speaks respectfully, humbly, and without presumption to the king
– 7:3-4
- . Esther employs humble confidence to identify Haman as the guilty party – 7:6
- . Esther again humbles herself, assuming nothing – 8:3-4
- . Esther makes her heartfelt and final request – 8:5-6

CONCLUSION: It's been said that "nothing happens until someone makes a responsible decision and acts upon it." With Esther's life as a model, we can and must take responsibility for the life God has entrusted to us, as well as the power He has given us to make courageous decisions.

