



When I was younger, I had more convictions. But before you conclude that growing older has weakened my commitment, you should also know that I am now better informed. Rather than increasing the number of convictions, augmented knowledge has deepened my convictions while simultaneously shortening the list!

Truly successful leadership throughout history has been built on a resolute commitment with a singular focus. President Abraham Lincoln is remembered for keeping the states united. The United States are still one nation. Bill Gates started a software company that is the icon of success. Microsoft still makes software, not computers.

On 29 October, 1941 when there was no reason for optimism, P.M. Winston Churchill said, “Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never, never--in nothing, great or small, large or petty--never give in, except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force. Never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.” His commitment led to the allied victory in the Second World War.

Joshua, one of the great leaders of the Old Testament, needed courage and perseverance to achieve his destiny. As Moses’ deputy and protégé for 40 years, Joshua had learned from his mentor’s unsurpassed leadership over an obstinate people during the Exodus. As an author of the minority report advising Moses to proceed into Canaan, Joshua learned to maintain his commitment despite the 40 year wait. He had to wait until he was 85 to receive his promotion to the highest position. He was successful in his first major campaign, but suffered a humiliating failure on his second one. Nevertheless, Joshua persevered, confident that he had been appointed by God Himself to reach His objective and lead His people into the Promised Land.

Merrill Unger summarized Joshua’s life: “By the faithful serving of his youth he was taught to command as a man; as a citizen he was patriotic in the highest degree; as a warrior, fearless and blameless; as a judge, calm and impartial. He was quite equal to every emergency under which he was to act--valiant without temerity, active without precipitation. No care, no advantage, no duty, is neglected by him. He ever looked up for and obeyed divine direction with the simplicity of a child, and wielded the great power given him with calmness, unostentation, and without swerving, to the accomplishment of a high, unselfish purposes. He earned, by manly vigor, a quiet, honored old age, and retained his faith and loyalty, exclaiming, in almost his dying breath, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!””

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1. *What are some challenges you have faced in making or keeping a commitment?*
  2. Read Joshua 1:1-9. *In what ways did God’s appointment of Joshua help him to overcome his challenges and maintain his commitment? What resources did God provide?*
  3. Read Joshua 1:16-18. *How did the people respond to Joshua?*
  4. *In what ways might a leader respond to such unwavering loyalty?*  
Read Joshua 4:19-24. *How did Joshua respond?*
  5. Read Joshua 24:14-27. *Joshua reiterated his commitment at the end of his life. How did the people respond at that time? After the death of Joshua? (See Judges 2; 17:6)*

*“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.”*

(Proverbs 16:3)