



Thriving in the Season of Drought

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Erratic World

- Escalating demands
- Never-ending challenges
- Unexpected turn of events
- Low satisfaction with achievements



Weariness

- Extreme exhaustion caused by prolonged effort, stress, or hardship
- Heavy sense of being deeply drained of energy and motivation



Weariness

- Physical exhaustion - deep body fatigue and low level of physical energy, resulting from hard labor or insufficient sleep;
- Mental satiation and emotional disconnection - a state of psychological burnout after processing difficult, repetitive, long-lasting problems; a loss of enthusiasm, motivation and resilience; pervasive feeling of “giving up”;
- Existential, “world-weariness” - profound exhaustion that arises when one realizes the meaninglessness of personal investment compared to the fundamentally flawed nature of the world; pervasive feeling of “What’s the point?”
- Spiritual weariness - heavy, soul-tired exhaustion that comes from prolonged trials, spiritual battles, or doing the right thing without seeing immediate results.

How can Christians
find strength to persevere,
replenish their fortitude,
overcome adversities and
truly thrive in the face of
prolonged adversity?



Resilience

- FLEXIBILITY - the amount of pressure and change a system can tolerate without collapsing (Ride & Brethenton, 2011)
- ADAPTABILITY - the extent to which a system is capable to become better suited to its environment, by means of self-reorganization
- LEARNING - the change in behavior, by acquiring knowledge and new skills (Tugade & Frederickson, 2004)



Develop Qualities



- ❧ Endurance & Perseverance (The Engine of Commitment)
- ❧ Flexibility & Resourcefulness (Strategy in Action)
- ❧ Adaptability & Self-Restructuring (Deep Transformation)

Biblical Perspective

- Faithful without significant Results—> GOD's Perfect Timing (Gal. 6:9)
- Alienation, Displacement, Homesickness—> DIVINE Power Source (Isa. 40: 29-31)
- Perfect Performance and Self-Reliance —> JESUS's Mentorship, Grace and REST for the Soul (Matt. 11: 28-30)

COPING STRATEGIES IN PAUL

HERMENEUTICAL COPING KEYS

(2 Corinthians 4:7-5:10, 6:3-10, 11: 21b-12:10)



Paradoxical identity

Weak, vulnerable, fragile vs. A vessel of God's glory and power

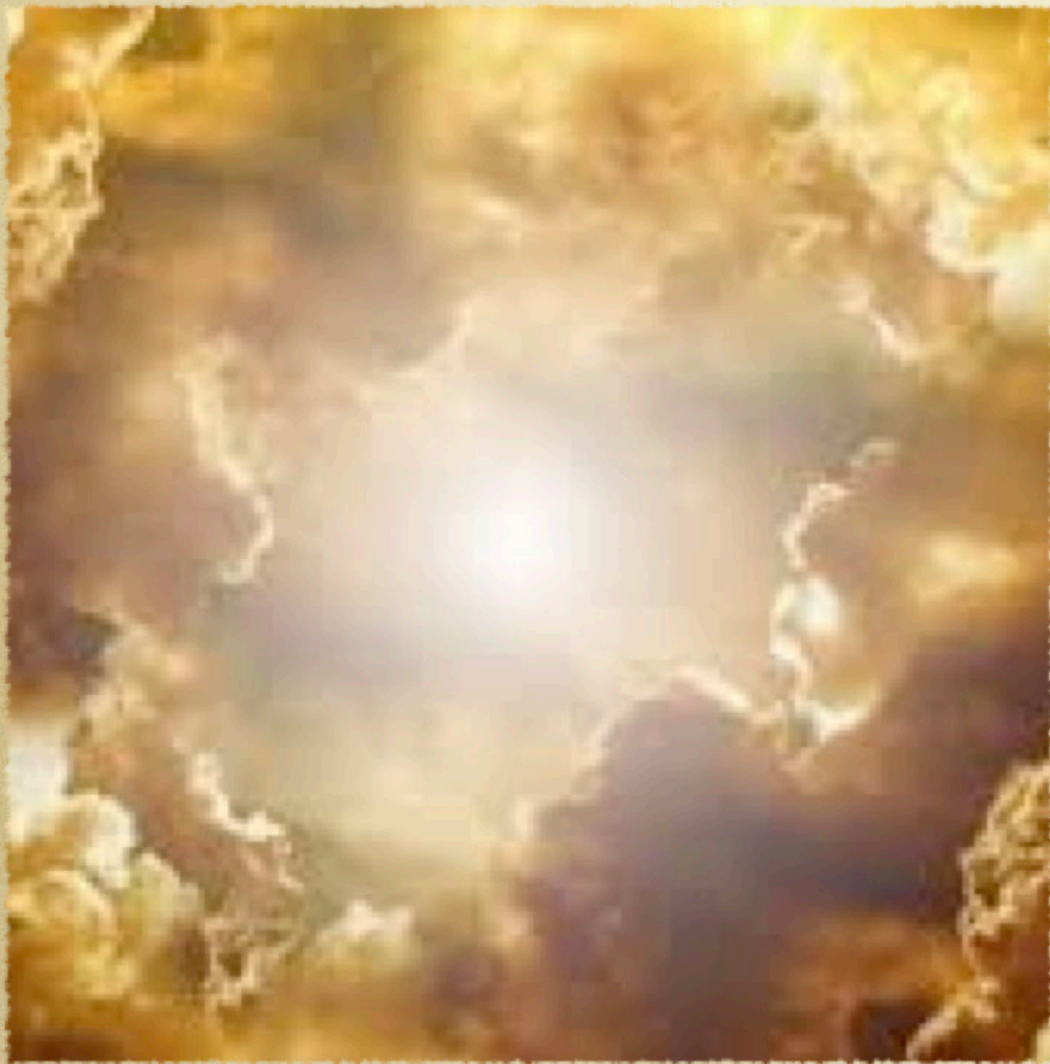
Exteriorly decaying vs. Interiorly being renewed

A suffering servant vs. A transcendent, glorious being

Paul is drawing his personal value, significance, strength and power from God, in Whom he is anchored and in Whom he is more than a conqueror



Reorientation of Existential Focus



Present material reality -
temporary, preliminary and
preparatory

Future reality - eternal, stable;
completeness of existence in a
wholistic resurrection

Paul's focus on the eternal assigns
new meaning to his current
difficulties and propels him
towards future

Resignification of Death and Traumatic Events

A dandelion in the wind? ... or A seed sowed?



Suffering, pain, loss, death, despair ... or Life, hope, love, multiplication

Meaningfulness and Fruitfulness of Suffering

Connecting and Sharing

Nurture healthy and supportive relationships
Remember, communicate, give meaning, and
integrate



Gratitude and Prayer

Gratitude rooted in God's concrete
interventions in the midst of adversity
Perception of God's constant and active
presence



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- KNOW WHO YOU ARE
- CHECK your EXISTENTIAL FOCUS
- DISCOVER the MEANING of SUFFERING
- DEVELOP RESILIENCE
- CONNECT and SHARE
- PLUG into DIVINE POWER SOURCE
- WAIT for GOD's PERFECT TIMING
- BE THANKFUL and PRAY
- REST your SOUL in JESUS



7 Pillars of Resilience

Paul Ch. Donders, "Resilience: Live Healthier, Perform Better"

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE (coming to terms with the past, forgiving, reaching emotional stability)

REALISTIC OPTIMISM (seeing crisis as temporary set-backs, consciously focusing on opportunities, maintaining confidence that things will improve)

SOLUTION ORIENTATION (problem-solving skills, searching for viable solutions, quick transition from: "Why is this happening?" to "What steps can I take?"

LEVERAGING UNIQUE CAPABILITIES (identifying and intentionally deploying personal strengths to navigate adversity and prevent burnout)

SELF-DISCIPLINE (owning your decisions and actions, avoid victimization; healthy lifestyle-sleep and recovery, nutrition, movement, guarding personal boundaries)

NETWORKING (supportive relationships - nurturing a reliable ecosystem of family, friends, mentors and colleagues)

FUTURE ORIENTATION (setting clear long-term goals and proactively preparing for upcoming challenges)

Personal Resilience Self-Assessment

Inspired by the frameworks of Paul Ch. Donders

Instructions: Rate each statement on a scale from 1 to 5 based on how accurately it reflects your current reality.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Category 1: Emotional Stability & Processing

1. I am able to remain calm and level-headed during an unexpected crisis.

 2. I process past setbacks or negative experiences without letting them dictate my current mood. _____
 3. I can identify when my stress levels are rising and actively take steps to regulate my emotions. _____
- Category Total: _____ / 15

Category 2: Realistic Optimism

4. Even when facing difficult situations, I maintain a positive yet grounded outlook. _____

5. I view unexpected changes or challenges as opportunities to grow rather than threats. _____

6. I actively look for actionable paths forward instead of focusing entirely on what went wrong. _____

• Category Total: _____ / 15

Category 3: Solution & Goal Orientation

7. When a problem arises, I focus my energy on finding solutions rather than dwelling on the Issue. _____

8. I am able to adapt my plans and pivot flexibly when circumstances shift out of my control. _____

9. I have clear personal or professional goals that keep me motivated through tough times. _____

• Category Total: _____ / 15

Category 4: Relational Strength & Support

10. I have a reliable network of friends, family, or colleagues I can lean on during stressful times. _____

11. I am willing to ask for help from others when I feel overwhelmed. _____

12. I maintain healthy, reciprocal relationships that leave me feeling supported rather than drained. _____

- Category Total: _____ / 15

Scoring Guide

Add up your scores across all 4 categories to find your overall resilience range:

- 48 – 60 High Resilience: You have robust coping mechanisms and are highly adaptive under pressure. Focus on maintaining these habits and mentoring others.
- 36 – 47 Moderate Resilience: You handle everyday stressors well but may experience strain or burnout during prolonged crises. Consider identifying which specific category scored lowest to target for improvement.
- 12 – 35 Developing Resilience: Your current strategies may leave you feeling easily overwhelmed. Focus on building small, daily habits—particularly around expanding your support network or practicing emotional reframing.

