

I. Introduction:

Resilience: Trait, Skill, Community

A resilient person or team is characterized by _____ whose practices include _____ with hope that _____.

II. Resilience: Struggling well with hopeful perseverance

III. Resilience Throughout the Storyline of Scripture

Genesis 1:26-28	God's people on a blessing mission
Psalms 55:22	Throw your burden onto the Lord God, our sustainer
Isaiah 56:7	God's salvation promises fulfilled "for all peoples"
John 15	"abide in me"
Romans 5:1-11	"standing in grace, rejoicing in hope"
2 Corinthians 1:5-14	"God of all comfort"; patient endurance; The compelling love of Christ
Phil 3:1-16	"I press on because Christ Jesus has made me his own."
James 1	perseverance toward maturity
1 Peter 1:5-7	"elect exiles: God's people on a redemptive blessing mission; God sustains
Revelation 22:7	"blessed are those who keep the words"

Biblical Case Studies: Job, Joseph, David, Ruth, Daniel, Mary, Jesus, Paul, Peter

Biblical themes to explore with resilience: hope, lament, suffering, exile, sojourning, fruitfulness, refuge, comfort

Reflective Discussion:

1. Describe your personal, family, and workplace resilience capacity? What contributes to and frustrates daily "abiding," "standing in grace," "rejoicing in hope," "pressing on," and "keeping the word" in Christ? What resources has God provided to you?

IV. Resilience in Christ: Wise practices (Abide, Imagine, Connect)

A. ABIDE

Cultivate an “abiding” life personally and communally in Christ.

B. IMAGINE

Hold constraints/deficits in tension with abundance/well-being. Flourishing service.

C. CONNECT

Stay connected with your family and friends and seek help if you or someone else needs it.

Reflective Discussion:

2. How would you describe your current capacity to abide, imagine, and connect? What have you been learning recently about how God is using these three practices to build your resilience in Christ? How is your own maturing process enabling you to serve others with God’s strength?

V. *Resilient Ministry*: 5 Themes

A. Background of The Lilly Endowment initiative: What are the ingredients of sustainable ministry?

B. *Resilient Ministry*: 5 Themes

1. Spiritual Formation - The ongoing process of maturing as a Christian both personally and interpersonally. The personal and interpersonal dynamically relate and are generally reflected in lifestyle disciplines and behaviors. Pastors need to:

- Find space in their lives for undivided worship (personal and corporate)
- Re-establish and maintain spiritual disciplines
- Cultivate accountable relationships for spiritual direction

2. Self Care - The ongoing development of a pastor as a whole person, including calling, relationships, physical condition and intellectual growth. Pastors need to:

- Understand their calling by learning to live in the tension of the “now” and considering the “what’s next?” Maintain full presence in context
- Develop safe and trustworthy relationships
- Attend to their own self-stewardship and development

3a. Emotional Intelligence - The ability to proactively manage your own emotions and appropriately respond to the emotions of others. Pastors need to:

- Identify, manage and appropriately express their feelings
- Develop relational skills with boundaries
- Learn how to handle conflict in healthy ways

3b. Cultural Intelligence - The ability to successfully adapt to new cultural settings. Pastors need to:

- Understand that culture can be geographical, generational, or socio-economic as well as ethnic
- Recognize that persons of a dominant culture assume their perspective is the norm

4. Marriage and Family - The commitment of maintaining spiritual and relational health with one’s spouse, children and extended family. Pastors need to:

- Understand the strategic role their spouse plays in their life and ministry
- Encourage one’s spouse to develop safe, trustworthy relationships
- Make the spiritual and emotional health of one’s spouse and family a priority
- Invest time and energy into one’s marriage and family

5. Leadership and Management - Describes two primary tasks of pastoral vocation. *Leadership* is about guiding adaptive and constructive change. *Management* provides order and consistency to organizations. Pastors need to:

- Understand and accept the role and responsibility of a leader/manager
- Trust and follow God in the midst of challenging expectations
- Be attentive to political realities of the ministry

VI. *Resilient Ministry*: Healthy and Unhealthy Practices Summary

	<u>Healthy Practices</u>	<u>Unhealthy Practices</u>
Spiritual Formation	Abide in Christ; Cultivate whole heartedness	Neglect own maturing process
Self Care	Participate in a peer group; Cultivate interests	Isolate yourself; Do not exercise
Emotional and Cultural Intelligence	Confront pain/frustration; Practice differentiation; Learn from others different from yourself	Stay busy/Avoid reflection Stick with your own kind
Family/Marriage Relationships	Prioritize but don't idolize marriage and family and other relationships	Surrender to the pressure of overwork Neglect relationships
Leadership / Management	Cultivate allies/confidants Welcome Christ's gifted body "Who flourishes when I steward my power?"	Be the hero; Trust no one to do what you can do better Do it yourself "Come to me. I am the center."

Reflection Discussion:

3. In light of the 5 themes, what practices are most healthy and unhealthy in your life, family, and workplace? How could you plan to maintain the healthy practices and address the unhealthy practices?

VII. *Resilient Ministry*: In Their Own Words

A. Theme 1: Spiritual Formation in their own words

- I realized how sloppy my personal worship had become. Now I take our worship bulletin and use it as an outline for my personal worship during the week. And I teach my congregation to do the same. (p. 56)
- I think one of my chief issues right now is learning how to worship and celebrate the love of my Father in the midst of the activity in the service. (p. 57)
- I replace (my spiritual growth) with the "spiritual" tasks of pastoral life. It is not unusual to find me substituting sermon preparation for personal worship and Bible study. "After all," I rationalize, "I will be meditating on the Bible." However, the sustained exchange of ministry duties for spiritual growth results in my becoming an inch deep. The outcome is a spiritually dry, worn-out pastor with very little left in the tank for others. (p. 33)

B. Theme 2: Self Care in their own words

- There have been several times in my life when I was asking, “Okay, what’s next? Am I the right person for this situation?” I have never found it profitable to go there unless I open that up to some other trusted people. I can’t get an answer on my own. (p. 65)
- We pastors idolize our work. The church is our idol. It’s what we do for a living. I reflect all the time on why the Israelites chose a cow to worship. Cows were their livelihood. So we idolize what we do for a living. (p. 76)
- We’re looking for safe situations where we can get honest feedback and then evaluate without feeling that our job or reputation is on the line. (p. 85)
- If you don’t treat your body well, you can have plenty of gospel inside you and have plenty to share with people. But how can you do it when you’re not physically fit? (p. 98)

C. Theme 3: Emotional and Cultural Intelligence in their own words

- It’s very humbling and mind-boggling to think that God put me in my particular family with all of its sinful patterns, conflicts, and breakdowns in relationships in order to shape and mold me into a useful servant for his church and kingdom. I normally don’t think of using all of these weaknesses as resources...I’d rather avoid them and think that I’m past that phase of my life. (pp. 122-123)
- When I am sitting down with someone, I find myself asking, “What do they think of me as a pastor?” Instead of listening to them and being emotionally engaged, I’m in my own little world. (p. 124)
- About ten years ago we recognized that the community in which we existed as a church was undergoing massive change. We asked, “Well, why are we here? What’s our purpose?” Out of that came a sense of what we believe we are called to be in this community. (p. 142)

D. Theme 4: Marriage and Family in their own words

- The reality for most of us in ministry is we’re tempted to rationalize the neglect of our marriage. I was at a board meeting where we were examining potential elders. One candidate was asked, “Are you willing to make sacrifices with your family for the sake of the church?” It was a weird moment because I asked myself, “What’s the right answer to that question?” (p. 178)
- (Some) pastors become workaholics, putting their families on the sidelines while pouring themselves into their work. But lately, I’ve seen the opposite: pastors who neglect their pastoral responsibilities by making rigid boundaries and unreasonable expectations. We are accountable to walk carefully between responsibility to the home and the church. (p. 179)
- The quality of my marriage and my parenting will probably never garner me public accolades and the esteem of my peers. I am tempted to let these things slip while I pursue public ministry opportunities. However, if I would do this, it won’t be long before my relationship with my spouse takes a back seat to sermon preparation and time spent with my kids becomes time spent in meetings. The best way I can help my church is be healthy myself and to help my spouse and children be healthy as well. (p. 197)

E. Theme 5: Leadership and Management in their own words

- I have sought to redefine “administration” as doing anything that helps people move closer to Jesus. It helps me to think of management as more than just a necessary evil but as a necessary component of discipling Christ’s church. (p. 200)
- Formal authority runs out quickly. Ultimately, all power devolves down to a level of relationship. And if I haven’t developed trust with people, I can only get so far. (p. 214)
- This is a really interesting challenge: being who we are, and understanding who we are, over against who we want to be, or who others want us to be. (p. 231)
- The demands are at an all-time high. ...A nice message, a perfect nursery, a perfect restroom, and interesting programs that everybody in the family loves. All this at the same time and under an hour long. We deal with some of the highest expectations and some of the lowest levels of commitment. (p. 232))
- How do we advance what is a responsible and healthy philosophy of ministry? And how do we adjust that according to generational and cultural issues, yet within a biblical and theological framework of our commitment? (p. 239)

VIII. Best Practice Themes Regarding Resilience in the Helping Professions.

A. Employ Collegial support – provide “connecting” programs and supervision among team members for maximum effectiveness.

B. Adopt a multi-faceted approach to personal/team development. Focus on personal factors, environmental factors, and learned behaviors like reflection and self-care.

C. Cultivate a positive work environment through modeling that promotes personal agency.

D. Pay special attention to young adults – more prone to PTSD, depression, anxiety, stress, and burnout. Cultivate programmatic and personal approaches to address their struggles.

E. Hold a salutogenic approach (emphasizing health and well-being) in tension with pathogenic approach (emphasizing affliction and burnout).

F. Hold constraints in “opposable” tension with abundance. Ask “What do already have?” in addition to “What do we need?”

(Structures, space, resources, funds, expertise, time, methods)

Reflection Discussion:

4. How would you summarize each of these themes in your own words? What can be gleaned about resilience from the helping profession research studies for Christian practice?