

PARISHES OF
ST PIUS X, ALDERLEY EDGE, ST BENEDICT'S, HANDFORTH
AND
SACRED HEART & ST TERESA'S WILMSLOW
WEEKLY REFLECTION

Sunday 4th January 2026 2nd Sunday of Christmas
Resilience

Resilience is the quality of being able to adapt to stressful life changes and “bouncing back” from hardship. Resilience is a response to tragedy, crisis, or other life-altering changes that allows us to move on despite the loss. Showing resilience doesn't mean a person is unaffected or uncaring about the life change. Resilience is the human heart's ability to suffer greatly and grow from it. We have seen examples of national resilience, such as our nation's ability to recover from the Blitz. We observe personal resilience every day in people who suffer disabilities, deaths of loved ones, and other losses. When people refuse to give up on themselves and the world, even after misfortune, they are being resilient.

Resilience is the biblical norm for Christians. The Bible contains many examples of encouragement to press on, overcome hardship and temptation, and persevere in the face of trials. It also gives us numerous examples of people who suffered greatly but continued to follow God's plan for their lives.

Paul showed great resilience after his life-altering encounter with Jesus when he was transformed from religious Pharisee to radical Christian. Many were not happy with his message; he was beaten, stoned, criticised, jailed, and nearly killed many times. One incident especially shows Paul's exceptional resilience. In Lystra in Asia Minor, he was stoned, dragged out of town, and left for dead, but, when his enemies left, Paul simply got up and went back into the city. His missionary endeavours continued unabated. Godly resilience enables us to be undeterred from our mission, regardless of the opposition.

In the Old Testament, Job demonstrated great resilience, and God honoured him for it. After losing everything, Job was in great agony of soul and body, yet he refused to curse the Lord or give up. Later, when the suffering intensified, Job's wife counselled him to “curse God and die!” but Job would not even consider such a thing. Despite his suffering, Job knew that God was in control, and that knowledge helped him maintain resilience instead of giving in to defeat.

The believer in Jesus Christ and God's power is naturally resilient. "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:8–9). Christians keep bouncing back. The key to resiliency is faith in the Lord:

"The Lord makes firm the steps
of the one who delights in him;
though he may stumble, he will not fall,
for the Lord upholds him with his hand" (Psalm 37:23–24).

The 2020s have presented many major issues in terms of health, politics, culture, economics, and societal challenges which have required resilience to survive. Having faith is both a great comfort in difficult times and provides a bridge to happier times.

Bernard Kellett