

2. Raising our Resilience Level

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Hebrews chpt. 12 tells us that all believers are running a race that is set before us. This race is the “Christian Life” – it begins the moment we surrender our life to Jesus Christ, & it ends the moment we arrive in heaven.

- Many people have not yet started their race (still spiritually lost)
- Some people had started, but are no longer in the race today (backslidden)
- Others had started, but they never got to run the full race – they went to heaven pre-maturely (sickness or accident)

We are currently taking a holistic view of fitness, endurance and resilience, and learn, or be reminded of, how to raise our level in those areas.

Proverbs 18:14 (AMP) *The strong spirit of a man sustains him in **bodily pain or trouble**, but a weak and broken spirit who can raise up or bear?*

- The strong spirit of a person is able to sustain, undergird or carry them when their body is sick
- But a broken or wounded spirit can't carry much at all
- This Scripture tells us that we are a three-part being, namely:
 - Spirit - we are a spirit
 - Soul – we have a soul (mind, emotions, feelings etc.)
 - Body – we live in a body
- To run our race successfully, we must ensure that all 3 parts of us are:
 - fit
 - able to endure
 - have sufficient resilience to handle the challenges & knocks of life

1. Getting weekly refreshing in our spirit

1 Corinthians 16:13–18 (NCV) *Be alert. **Continue strong in the faith. Have courage, and be strong.** 14 Do everything in love. 15 You know that the family of Stephanas were the first believers in Southern Greece and that they have given themselves to the service of God's people. I ask you, brothers and sisters, 16 to follow the leading of people like these and anyone else who works and serves with them. 17 I am happy that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus have come. You are not here, but they have filled your place. 18*

They have refreshed my spirit and yours. You should recognize the value of people like these.

- Apostle Paul speaks about a Christian family from Greece who had devoted themselves to ministering to God's people
- They visited Paul who was in present-day Turkey at the time
- Paul said that when they came to him, they refreshed his spirit

- Each time we come together as a church for worship, prayer, the ministry of God's Word & fellowship, our spirit is refreshed
- God has intended that we come together weekly
 - In the OT, they came together weekly on the Sabbath (Saturday)
 - In the NT, we come together weekly:
 - on Sundays for Celebration
 - on a weekday for life group meetings
- Christians who miss even one of these weekly refreshings are already compromised & weakened in their spirit

Hebrews 10:24–25 (NCV) *Let us think about each other and help each other to show love and do good deeds. 25 **You should not stay away from the church meetings, as some are doing, but you should meet together and encourage each other. Do this even more as you see the day coming.***

The ungodly, unscientific lockdowns that we have experienced for the last 2 years have wreaked havoc on the church in New Zealand. This is especially so in the Auckland church, where they had a continuous Level 4 lockdown lasting 120 day.

- Many churches have permanently shut doors, never to open again
- Many church leaders have left the ministry, unable to cope with the extra stresses and difficulties that were brought on by these lockdowns
- Many Christians have backslidden and are no longer in the race today

2. Being refreshed in our soul

Psalms 42:5 (NASB) *Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.*

- The psalmist is speaking out of his own spirit to encourage his own soul
- He is instructing his soul to look up and hope in God who is eternal
- Most people's worries are about temporary issues

Proverbs 12:25 (NKJV) *Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad.*

- Constant anxieties and worries can lead to depression
- Depression is a sickness of the soul
- People who struggle with depression can learn to speak “good words” to themselves, just like the psalmist did in Psalm 42

Proverbs 13:12 (NKJV) *Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.*

- Due to draconian Covid restrictions & senseless mandates, many people’s hopes have been deferred or lost completely
- Many people have lost their job & income (some also lost their house)
- The mandates have divided the nation, torn up families & churches
- Mental illness & depression have drastically increased in our population
- NZ and other nations around the world are struggling because of the effects of these ungodly and unscientific measures
- (ie. Restricting people’s access to the outdoors caused vitamin D deficiency [Vit. D is the “happy vitamin” - a lack of it causes “unhappiness”])
- Constant mask wearing is very unhealthy
- The needle has caused many deaths and multiple injuries
- A UK study suggests that the risk of death in children increases by 5100% if subjected to the needle
- Etc.

Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV) *You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.*

- Keep your mind “stayed” on God and put your trust in Him
- Be informed - don’t believe the lies of the mainstream media

Psalm 94:19–23 (LB) *Lord, when doubts fill my mind, when my heart is in turmoil, quiet me and give me renewed hope and cheer. 20 Will you permit a corrupt government to rule under your protection—a government permitting wrong to defeat right? 21 Do you approve of those who condemn the innocent to death? No! The Lord my God is my fortress—the mighty Rock where I can hide. 23 God has made the sins of evil men to boomerang upon them! He will destroy them by their own plans. Jehovah our God will cut them off.*