



Resilience or Endurance?

Resilience is seen as a desirable, if not essential, quality in much leadership literature. It came to prominence as organisations and churches navigated the Covid pandemic. In this discussion, mature resilience is seen both as the ability to 'bounce back' from disappointments or setbacks, and the learning to predict and navigate future obstacles with less personal and corporate distress.

But I wonder, is resilience a Christian virtue? That is, is it something that the Scriptures (in light of the gospel) asks of us? This is a question I have been pondering as the demand for resilience in Christian leaders grows stronger.

A quick search of the ESV and NIV databases on Bible Gateway reveals zero uses of the word 'resilience'.

But what about the concept? The closest we come, I think, is the word 'endurance' (or 'perseverance' depending on your Bible translation). Biblical endurance is quite different from the idea of resilience.

Broadly speaking, then, resilience assumes that hardships will come, prepares for them, and works through them. All good, but there is no 'long view'. Resilience offers us the ability to navigate the boat through storms but

doesn't ask where did the boat come from or where is it headed? In essence, resilience is a value (something of relative importance), while endurance is a virtue (something that is always to be sought).

When we turn to the Bible, we find that endurance stands between faith and hope (Romans 5:1-5; Hebrews 11:1-12:3). In the Old Testament, the psalmist 'waits upon' God, knowing his prayer will be heard and his rescue will happen: 'Lord, I wait for you; you will answer, Lord my God.' (Psalm 38:15; see also Psalms 5:3; 27:14; 40:1; 119:166; 130:5-6, and Romans 8:19, 23, 25). Believers are urged and enabled by the Spirit to look upwards in prayer and forwards in hope (see how both feature in the catalogue of Old Testament faith in Hebrews 11).

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul sharpens the basis and focus of endurance in Romans 5:1-5:

¹Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces

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Rob Smith speaking at the 'Ministry in a Gender Confused World' Lecture held in May



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Ministry in a Gender Confused World


Resilience or Endurance?

Continued from cover page

character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. (ESV)

Our position before God as forgiven sinners and beloved children, says Paul, is appropriated by trusting Christ for salvation as he comes to us in the gospel. With our new standing before God - in Christ by faith - comes peace with him and unfettered access to all that Christ is and does for us. And so, we rejoice in anticipation of the glory that awaits us on the day of Christ.

But our rejoicing is not only a future experience; it is also brought into the present through the experience of suffering as a Christian. Such suffering, says Paul, 'produces' endurance as we look to God with the same faith by which we have obtained our salvation. Endurance is a gift from God—but it does not come on its own! For the purpose of enduring trials is to produce 'character.' This is a Pauline word and refers to the status of someone who is proven, who glories in God not just because they got through something but because they know God is preparing them for the Day of Glory. And this naturally takes us to our final hope.

As Christians and Christian leaders, we are in the long game. Survival hacks and wellbeing practices that we download from podcasts or pick up at conferences can be useful, but they can't be depended upon for endurance. Endurance is born of faith that daily looks to God's riches in Christ and to the hope of glory in the midst of setbacks and trials, knowing that these things are the means by which God is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory. 

In the Name of the One who 'died . . . and is alive forevermore,' Jesus Christ.

Don West


Principal

On a fine day in May, many ministers across WA gathered to learn about and consider how we might respond to a significant topic in society today. Rob and Claire Smith delivered three helpful talks regarding the transgender movement in Australia today. They set before us a threefold challenge: to understand the issues surrounding the transgender movement, to consider how Scripture responds to these issues, and finally, to develop a faithful and wise response to them as God's people. No small task!

It was an informative and fact-filled morning, as we learnt much of the terminology and definitions associated with the transgender movement. Just as I was beginning to feel overwhelmed by it all, Rob and Claire reminded us of what Scripture says to these issues, and how the gospel offers hope to those experiencing gender dysphoria. It was hugely encouraging to see how the gospel allows for present lament in this life, yet future hope for the life to come in the new creation.

We were reminded of our responsibilities to pray, to influence our society as God offers us opportunities,

and to love those who are affected by transgender issues. As a church, we should also be ready to love, listen and embrace those who struggle with gender dysphoria. In humility, we are to speak the truth in love. We are to view transgender ideology in the light of God's Word, whilst we comfort those who struggle because of it.

As I reflect on Ministry Matters, I am hugely grateful to God for servants like Rob and Claire. Not only are they well-informed on the topic, but they have lived experience ministering to many who struggle with gender dysphoria, and for their loved ones. I appreciated their wisdom, their ability to complement one another in teaching, and their compassion for those who struggle with these issues. They have reminded me that whilst there is no simple solution to this (and so many issues in our world), we have a God who sees and cares, and who longs to call them back into right relationship with him, through the sacrifice of his perfect Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 

Debbie Mayne

MDiv (2021)



Don West introducing Rob Smith at the beginning of the day

Managing Team Ministry Well

Ministry teams are clearly a great help in making disciples, growing churches, and promoting Christ. They can, however, become the enemy of these good purposes unless carefully nurtured. Ministry teams made up of paid staff can unintentionally sideline laypeople, running the risks of ministerial elitism and lay passivity. Team and congregational fellowship can be so good that dependence on 'team God' is minimalised, or so bad as to sap the energy of leadership, making ministry a burden or crippled by friction.



Rt Rev Dr Peter Brain

Can the joys of vocational team or solo pastoring flourish as God's good gift to churches? These are some thoughts that may be helpful.

Since expectations are always vital, we do well to remember that churches are made up of forgiven sinners – redeemed and fully justified by faith – yet works in progress all our days. Though saved personally, we are called to be public disciples and congregationally outposts of heaven. Both bring us joy in fellowship with God and fellow believers. Belonging to God [Rom 14:8] is relatively easy, since God is always faithful and clear in his grace and our responsibilities, whereas belonging to each other [Rom 12:5] is far more challenging, since we are not always consistent or clear in our expectations of church. Seeking God's grace to be graceful in congregational life transforms us all.

True for the person in the pew, as well as for pastors, mercifully, there are proven ways, consistent with Scripture, that encourage pastors and people to joyfully sustain ministry of pastoral and congregational teams, 'till death do us part'. Some suggestions that have in

common looking upward to God are offered.


Firstly, gratitude to God and prayer for each other. Remembering that we are what we are in Christ, adopted sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father through the Holy Spirit's heart-opening ministry, we cannot but be thankful to God for his work in us, our pastors, and our congregational partners. They may annoy us, let us down and be tiresome but they belong to God and we, out of reverence for Christ, are called to submit to each other in mutual service, quick forgiveness, truthfulness, and kindness. How else was Paul able to love the dysfunctional Corinthian church and

fellow believers in Philippi who questioned his motives in preaching the gospel? Nothing transforms our attitude to fellow staff, church members and pastors more than hearty thankfulness for them and God's grace in them.

Secondly, the pastor needs to spend time alone with God each day, not as a pastor but as a child with their Father. This devotional, prayerful, reading of Scripture, distinct from vocational preparation, will simultaneously keep us from professionalism, from expecting too much from fellowship by expecting too little from God, from 'running on empty' and relying on the praise of others for happiness instead of relationship with God.

Thirdly, by remembering the big picture of our Lord's glorious return [Ephesians 5:27], where all Christ-honouring ministry will be brought to its glorious consummation. This expectation enables us to focus on the mundane, yet essential facets of ministry which show Christ's love flowing into us, to each other and then to the world he

died for. This will ensure hard work [1 Cor 15:10] and the assurance that this will have not been in vain [15:58].

Pastors who remember they stand between the worlds of God and brothers and sisters living in this world as citizens of heaven find strength to run the race until the end by looking upward and forward. Doing so will keep us from pride in success, despair in the difficult, dependent enough to rest well, fresh enough to work hard, compassionate enough to be Christlike, and humble enough to gladly minister to all who come across our path. 

Rt Rev Dr Peter Brain

(Retired)

Postscript: Peter has written a book for pastors and church members called 'Going The Distance'. It is now out of print but available as an eBook from Matthias Media for \$9.99.

TRINITY LECTURE

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Strong teams make enduring in ministry easier

I recently caught up with Katherine (Kat) Ollis, one of our alumni, to hear how she is going in women's ministry.

Tell us how you came to be working in the ministry team you're in, and what you love about it.

I studied an MDiv at Trinity, really just for personal growth, but about halfway through I began considering ministry. Since graduating, I've been working as Women's Ministry Trainer – Bull Creek (WPCBC) for almost seven years.

At WPCBC we arrange our staff team across four areas – engage, evangelise, establish, equip. It's great to have a team to spread the load and enable people to use their gifts and abilities. I love having different people I can ask questions of, meet every week and raise questions, identify people we're concerned about, as well as people we could be encouraging into ministry.

What has been challenging working in a team?


Comparing myself to other people and seeing everything good that they're doing and thinking 'I'm so bad at this - I must be letting the team down!'. 'Imposter syndrome' is real for so many of us in ministry, particularly women. I think comparison, leading to envy and pride, is the hardest thing about working in a team.

Considering longevity in ministry, could you tell us what sustains you in your work?

Obviously, prayer and reading the Bible; we can never move on from the gospel. Also, longevity is helped by thanking God for the skills and gifts he's given other people and knowing that I don't need all

the answers. People don't have to think that I'm great, and I need to remember that I'm not enough and don't have to be, because God is. Finally, it helps to look back and praise God for how he has grown and used me. I think, particularly for women, we're really good at downplaying our successes.

How do you think congregation members can support those in ministry to enable longevity.

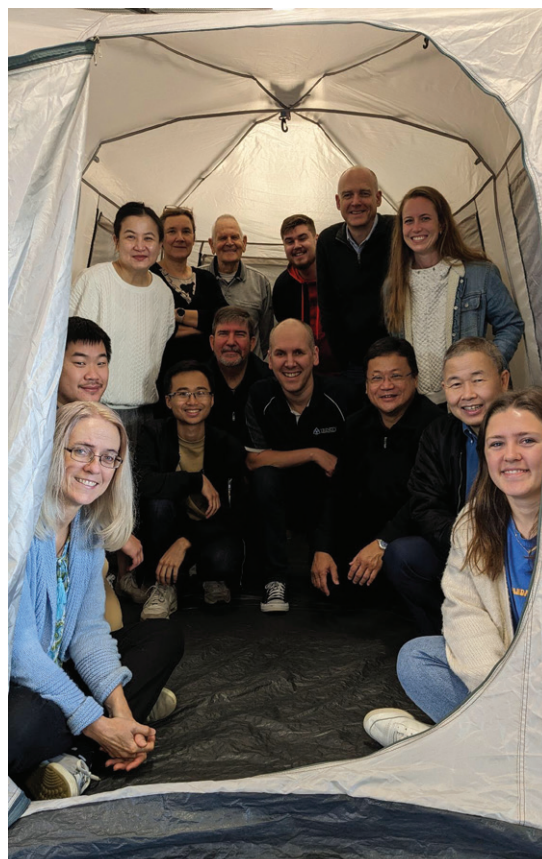
Pray for us, for sure. Also have realistic expectations. People think that we know everything, but we really don't! I went to Trinity and learnt that I'm only just scratching the surface, so it's helpful if people remember that we're not super Christians. 

Katherine Ollis

MDiv (2016)

Interviewed by Catherine Austin

WPCBC Team



Chaplaincy

I met up with Jono Prosser, a Trinity graduate, and his wife Jocelyn to talk about longevity in chaplaincy in which he has served for just under 9 years. Jono currently works as the YouthCARE chaplain at an agricultural residential school in Harvey, where 125 students in years 10-12 live onsite. The college is a working farm, where students work in a dairy, cattle and sheep studs, orchards, and a vineyard.

What keeps you going?

The main thing that keeps me going is the desire to minister to those God has put me in contact with at the college. Growing up on a farm in Wagin I know what these kids are experiencing. Life is particularly challenging for these young people as they live away from home. So, I want to build relationships and trust and share their ups and downs with them. I can't actually explicitly preach the gospel, so it's the way that I live my life that opens doors to gospel conversations.

As a chaplain I never know what the day will hold. I have helped people in a range of terrible situations which have included abuse, thoughts of suicide, or tragic sudden loss. And then there's days where God provides opportunities. Like one day I was on the way to school and I saw an ambulance out the front of one of my student's homes. So, I stopped and went in, wanting to make sure they were alright. I was able to be there for this family. And it's in these places when people ask me about my faith. One time a person asked me 'how do you get through?' and I said 'because of my faith. Because I can pray and know that God is in control of this situation, and I let him work through it'. For we see that the answer for their problems is found in Jesus. The fact is that God loves me and loves these people, and he wants them to know this love. And this is what keeps me coming back.

in God's Strength

So how do you get through really tough days?

First, I have really relied on a supportive layered network. This starts with my wife, Jocelyn and my two daughters who are 100 percent supportive of my ministry. When I come home after a hard day and feel totally overwhelmed, I go to Jocelyn who helps me process. And then if needed, I would go to both my area manager and my supervisor who are trained in debriefing. Sometimes I would also reach out to my TTC friends to talk about issues that I face. And when I have a really difficult day, I would take a break for a day. This enables me to just stop and spend a day with God, bringing him the situation, and knowing that he's in control, and he has a purpose.



Jocelyn and Jono Prosser

How does working in teams encourage you?

While I work as an individual, an important part of my layered support is working in teams. First, I work in a cluster with 3 other chaplains, where I serve as a peer mentor. In this role I catch up with them for a coffee, see how they're going, and try and give them spiritual encouragement through a small devotion. Second, I am part of a larger Southwest chaplaincy region.

As a region we catch-up once a term over breakfast and share. Finally, YouthCARE meets twice a year as a state. It's at this time that we have a range of different speakers address both spiritual aspects and addressing the social challenges of chaplaincy. So, being part of layered teams, helps me keep going, because I know that there are others who are facing the same issues as me, and because of this I can find support and understanding from others.

Jonathan (Jono) Prosser

*BTh (2006)
Interviewed by Mike Webb*

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Student Profile


Our Purpose: Preparing people for effective Christian service

It is only with your partnership in financial support and prayer that we can prepare men and women like these for Word ministry

I am a member of Claremont Baptist Church where I am worshipping with my husband, Reuben. I grew up in a Christian family and I primarily came to know Jesus through the faithful witness of my parents.

I chose Trinity upon recommendation from peers and older Christian mentors; this having been validated by the clear and faithful teaching I have received in class. I don't have a clear-cut plan of what I'll do after I graduate but Lord willing, I would like to work in ministry vocationally someday.

Please partner with Trinity in whatever capacity you can! I have already benefited from the teaching and community at Trinity and am so thankful for people who support Trinity making that possible.

Pray that as I learn more at Trinity it won't simply become an academic exercise but that I would grow in my convictions and character as I spend time studying God's word. 

Helena Jeyaraj

MDiv Student



Serving Jesus Together

There are many wonderful blessings serving in a local church as well as not a few challenges. One of the great blessings I have found is the privilege of working as a team. For me at Albany Baptist this means working in a paid pastoral team of 9 people, and then in a volunteer eldership of 6. These teams may seem small to some and large to others, but really the size of the team is way less significant than the health of the team. I don't know anyone who wouldn't rather work alongside one or two in harmony, than a big team in conflict.

One of the great things about a healthy team is that its members tend to stick together rather than break apart. By God's grace the team at Albany Baptist has stuck together and loves to work together, serving Jesus alongside one another. Only one team member has left in the past 7 years and that was for family reasons.

To help me work out why our team have stuck together over the years, I asked my team what they like about it. 'Why are you still here and why do you enjoy this team?' I asked. Here is a selection of reasons they shared that may be helpful to you as you think about teams. If you think of others, I'd be glad to hear them to add them to the list.

- Primarily one of the reasons we are so committed to the team is because we are all committed to the mission God has for us - both in Albany Baptist and the surrounding region. God has called us to serve his church and preach his gospel.
- Secondly God tells us the way we should treat one another in love and service, putting others before ourselves. Keeping my eyes off me, and on Jesus and others, keeps us on track.
- Also, we spend considerable time together formally in staff meetings, informally around the photocopier and share ministry and life with each other.
- We have a shared vision for what we want God to do in our church and community.
- We have a shared ministry approach with God's Word at the centre, pointing to Jesus.
- We pray together and for one another.
- We read the Bible together.
- We carry one another's burdens and celebrate one another's wins.
- We make sure that marriages and family remain our first ministry and have the opportunity to thrive.

Members of the Albany Baptist Church Team (L to R) Corinne Cameron, Lois Keyser, John Sojka, Phil Beeck, Jono Wesley, Emma Prosser.



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Harmoniously

- We are free to have different ideas or viewpoints and we deal with conflict quickly when it does arise.
- The team is a safe place for feedback and encouragement as we all seek to grow and do our best.
- There is no micromanagement on our team but rather people know their roles, are trusted with their roles, and encouraged to have a go with the backing of others.
- We all realise that together we make better decisions and have greater wisdom than what any of us do alone.
- The staff enjoy the support of a united eldership who prays for them and with them.
- We encourage each person on the team to have a supervisor or mentor to help them deal with their own stuff and not let things of the heart become unchecked.
- We do road trips together to conferences for training and each person is encouraged to read, do courses, and grow.
- We back each other up publicly and have each other's backs.

From my experience working as a physio and as I have talked to others, I think that one key to enjoying your work is to enjoy the people you work with. Get to know them, bless them, laugh and cry with them, and enjoy the gift of friendship rather than just the challenge of working with team members.

None of the things I have listed are the silver bullet but rather things that, by God's grace, our team has enjoyed and hopefully will continue to enjoy as we serve Christ together. 

Phil Beeck

BMin (2003)

Trinity in Town a Blessing to Geraldton Churches



Trinity in Town Geraldton with Don West opening up the Psalms

Almost 40 people enjoyed Trinity in Town in Geraldton recently and explored the riches of God's Word when Principal Don West presented a course on the Psalms.

The Anglican Church of North West Australia invited Trinity Theological College to run one unit of the Certificate in Christian Studies as an intensive day course for regional believers to be strengthened in their faith.

Dean of the Anglican Cathedral, Lachlan Edwards, who hosted the event, said the positive feedback showed it had been significant and important for the local church.

'The aim was to help build Christians up in Christ and to equip them with knowledge that leads to maturity. I was encouraged by the excellent turnout which reflected people's eagerness to be trained and their respect for Don and for Trinity Theological College,' he said.

Geraldton maintenance worker Jon Edwards enrolled because he had struggled to understand the Psalms and had wanted to grow a desire to dig into this unique book.

'I'm a person who would often think 'I'd give up a lot of highs to eliminate the lows' and wanted to achieve more of a flat line of existence. But it was very


helpful to understand that it is quite the opposite in the Psalms,' he said.

'I discovered that the highs call for a response of praise to God, and the laments draw us to call on the Lord and put our trust in him. Both emotions are incredibly important for our relationship with God and for the development that he is working in us.

'To see King David make himself so vulnerable but show that his heart so desired the will of God, was great motivation in responding to life's challenges and victories.

'The day helped me personally connect better with the Psalms and grow in biblical understanding.'

Responding to the enthusiasm of the participants, Rev Paul Spackman at St George's Bluff Point Anglican Church offered a follow up tutorial to help students prepare the assignment. Ten people spent an hour discussing the content, meaning and application of Psalm 107, as well as reviewing other reference material.

Participants came from a range of Geraldton churches and there was strong demand for more TTC units to be made available in Geraldton. So, watch this space! 

Eugenie Harris

Working together to lay a solid Foundation


So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow...for we are co-workers in God's service...by the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation...no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ [and] their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. 1 Cor 7-9)

If you've come this far and it's still unclear, then let me clarify that this edition of Trinity News has focused on teamwork and longevity in ministry. These two values are not only reflected in the ministry of our students and alumni but are integral for our work here at Trinity too.

I recently enjoyed chatting with people who've been 'co-workers in God's service' here at Trinity for more than 25 years, serving variously in prayer, financial partnership, and voluntary roles – some that might seem quite menial, like organising for these newsletters to be mailed out. They are not focused on whether they 'plant' or 'water'; they are focused on helping Trinity lay a good foundation, 'which

is Jesus Christ', for those going into ministry. And their service is done with the long game in mind, knowing kingdom work can be slow work, yet confident that 'their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light'.

Trinity is able to persevere in ministry because we have faithful teammates in 'God's service'.

If you would like to join the team, or deepen your involvement through financial partnership, prayer, volunteering, or being equipped to serve in ministry, don't hesitate to get in touch. 

Catherine Austin

Relationships Manager

Prayer & Praise

Give thanks for:

- Our faithful supporters; for those who pray, volunteer and give regularly to ensure that the work of equipping men and women for gospel ministry continues.
- The enthusiasm of our students.
- Trinity graduates faithfully ministering locally, Australia-wide, and internationally.

Pray for:

- Open Week 9-13 October; that many who are considering training for ministry or allied vocations will attend.
- For many enrolments for the 2024 academic year.
- God to grant our students understanding as they dig deeply into, and meditate upon, his Word and that their love and devotion to him will continually increase.
- Many to register for the Trinity Lecture in September and that they will be greatly encouraged in their Christian walk.



TRINITY OPEN WEEK 9-13 OCT

INFO NIGHT: 9 OCT 5:45PM
OPEN DAY: 10 OCT 12:15-2:00PM
OPEN LECTURES 10-13 OCT

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2023 DATES

18 Sep	Trinity Lecture
9-13 Oct	Open Week
9 Oct	Info Night
11 Nov	Quarterly Prayer Breakfast