

THE UNDENIABLE LAWS OF LIFE – The Law of Resilience

One of the most important discoveries you can make in life is the absolute necessity to be resilient. But what is resilience? *It is the ability to withstand or accept the stresses and strains of life without being permanently effected or injured, or, it is the ability to recover quickly from setbacks and maintain high spirits and a positive attitude.* It is getting tough when the going gets tough!

We see this Law detailed in **Ephesians 6:12, 13** ***“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”***

The Greek word for **“wrestle”** implies *“a swaying motion, as when resisting an opposing force.”* Therefore, the fundamental characteristic of resilience is flexibility (and we’ll be dealing with this subject later on). But notice, the battle in the spirit is primarily one of resistance and resilience. You must resist the devil [**James 4:7**] in order for him to flee from you, but if you aren’t resilient you won’t be able to *“stand your ground in the day of evil, and having done all, to continue to stand.”*

These two inspiring verses are centred around resilience, and they are suggesting that you develop the ability and strength to withstand the stresses and strains brought about by the battle that rages in the spirit. What’s more, you should take up the whole armour of God so that you don’t get injured or permanently affected. And in addition to this, you must have the guts to stand your ground and not give in, and be able to recover quickly from setbacks - keeping your spirits high.

The Greek word for withstand [*anthistemi*] is an interesting one and worth a look at. It is where we get the English word *antihistamine* - putting a block on histamine. Likewise, to “withstand” is to put a complete block on any opposing forces. Having the determination to resist, and the courage to be resilient, is how you effectively put a *complete block* on anything that is coming against you - whether spiritual, mental or material. Resilience is an effective barricade against any negative force. There is substantial power in both resistance and resilience.

I mentioned earlier that the main characteristic of resilience is flexibility. Hence, the Law of Flexibility is a sub-law of the Law of Resilience. Let us now examine this law.

When you set a clear goal or objective for yourself and make a plan, you usually have a fairly good idea of what it is you will have to do to get whatever it is you want to achieve. However, there are many things that can change, each of which may require changes to your initial plan. The most optimistic and creative people are those who are open, flexible, in the face of the inevitable and continual changes they are required to make as they move toward their goals.

Therefore, **success is best achieved when you are clear about your goal but flexible about the process of getting there.** In God, this principle is even more significant because God is always helping us to make the proper adjustments in life. He is at the helm steering us toward our destiny.

The religious mind struggles with openness and flexibility, it is steeped in tradition and blinkered toward change of any kind. Religious people are rigid and never pliable. This contributes to their downfall. They won’t go with the flow, and therefore, they can never be led by anything other than their own assumptions. Opinionated people are unable to operate in the Law of Flexibility.

A Biblical example of someone who was flexible and willing to go with the flow is Gideon. During God's selection process, whereby He thinned down the 32,000 fighting men to a mere 300 [Judges 7:1-8], Gideon had to remain flexible. God wanted the odds to suite Himself and not Israel [verse 2].

This must have been a real challenge for Gideon. Imagine what he must have been thinking when God said, ***“The people are still too many; bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. Then it will be, that of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ the same shall go with you; and whomever I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ the same shall not go”*** [Judges 7:4].... ***“Then the Lord said to Gideon, ‘By the three hundred who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Medianites into your hand. Let all the other people go, every man to his place.’”*** I'm sure Gideon had made his own plans, but he was flexible enough to let God be God!

The apostle Paul was also a very flexible man. He made statements such as... ***“I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some”*** [1 Corinthians 9:22]. Paul was not rigid about the way or means by which he could reach people. He was open minded and free from draconian scruples or peer pressure. Notice also how Paul kept his options open in order to achieve his goal.

You are only as free in life as the number of well-developed options you have available to you.

Restrict your options and you restrict your freedom. Your freedom and happiness are largely determined by the number of viable alternatives you have at your disposal. Life isn't an exact science, therefore, when your first choice isn't working, you must be flexible enough to move on to another well-developed option. The more thoroughly developed your options and alternatives, the more freedom you have. When matters aren't as you expected, simply switch to something else.

Don't frustrate yourself by keeping to the same plan when it is obviously not working. If you are experiencing continued resistance and frustration, it's probably an indication that you are doing the wrong thing. Whenever you feel that you are trying too hard and getting too few results, be prepared to stand back and re-examine matters.

Firstly, make sure the goal that you are pursuing is still the goal that you truly *desire*. Seriously consider the possibility that your strategy may be the wrong one for the situation you are presently in. Be fully prepared to reconsider and change your approach. Especially, get your ego out of the way and become more concerned with what is right than who is right. When ever your plans don't seem to be bearing fruit, instead of pushing even harder, stop, re-evaluate the situation and change your approach.

The Lord Jesus said that He would cut off every branch that does not bear fruit and throw it into the fire [John 15:6]. Maybe you should be doing the same with those things in your life that are not bearing fruit. Consider the possibility that you could be wrong in your present course of action, and the decisions you made. Then, where necessary, cut off the dead wood and revise your plans until they enable you to move forward smoothly, without anxiety or frustration.

Remember, **crisis is often a change trying to take place**. So make room for change in the midst of every crisis. When you experience a crisis or roadblock of any kind, stand back for a moment and ask your self, ***“What change is trying to take place here? What is the message contained in this crisis?”***

You may be having a crisis in your work, in your personal relationships, with your health, or with your ministry. In almost every case, a crisis is a clear indication that something is definitely wrong and that

pursuing the same course of action will only make it worse. So stop blaming the devil for your crisis. Rather, seek to discover, and then to understand, what positive change is trying to take place in your life right now. God's word promises that you will get the answers [Luke 11:9]. But you must ask, seek and then wait until you have full knowledge. Never be presumptuous. Never assume that you have all the answers. And always remain open-minded.

Incorrect assumptions lie at the foot of every failure. Almost every failure you experience will be because of an incorrect assumption that you made, and accepted. When things aren't going well it is very wise to question your assumptions. What are your assumptions? What are the assumptions you are clearly aware of? What if your most cherished assumptions were wrong? What changes would you have to make immediately?

Whenever you achieve your goals it is probably because the assumptions you were operating on turned out to be consistent with the reality of the situation. Whenever you experience setbacks and failure, it usually means that there is something wrong with your basic premises, your assumptions. Any inconsistency when it comes to discerning the reality of the situation will cause you hardship, and may bring about disaster. Remember the Reality Principle: *always operate in the reality of every situation, and not on what you would like it to be or how you assume it to be.*

Your willingness to test your assumptions against reality, combined with the willingness to accept the possibility that you may be wrong, is the attitude that will ultimately lead you to great achievement. God's word tells us to *test all things* [1 Thessalonians 5:21], and to *test the spirits* [1 John 4:1]. Therefore, how much more should you be testing your personal assumptions? How much more should you be seeking discernment and wisdom from in high? But this is not possible if you are rigid and set in your ways.

Flexibility is probably the single most important quality you can develop in order to succeed in a fast-changing modern society. It is the mark of a superior mind - a superior attitude.

This is how you can apply this law immediately:

[1] Identify your most cherished assumptions in the most important areas of your personal life. What if you were wrong? What would you do differently from what you are doing today? And, what are your options?

[2] Identify the areas of your life where there has been no fruit. Where you have been anxious and frustrated. Then, accept that there's probably something wrong and make up your mind to re-evaluate things. Where necessary implement change immediately and stay tuned to the reality of the situation.