Spiritual Flexibility

Daniel 3:8-30

Philippians 3:7-21

Philippians 4:11-13

"You may bend me, but you will never break me."
-Roman Soldier Motto

We must bend (flexible) to survive, to grow and to minister as Christians:

- In regard to situations, we must survive
- In regard to pressures, we must adjust
- In regard to differences, we must adapt

But also, we must bend but never break:

- Survive without selling out
- Adjust without shattering our spiritual call
- Adapt to differences without compromise

For steel to endure stress it must be tempered.
Heating and cooling will temper the steal of a knife blade so that it will not snap when used.
Believers must be tempered by God in life so that they are <u>strong enough to get the job done</u> yet <u>flexible enough not to snap</u> every time a situation changes, pressure is applied or differences are faced.

Flexibility is a very important quality of a believer since it is one of the foundation stones of success in phase two of the Christian life.

PHASE ONE	PHASE TWO	PHASE THREE
Occurs at point of salvation	Occurs during believer's life	Occurs at Resurrection
Salvation of Spirit	Salvation of Soul (mind)	Salvation of Body
Achieved by Faith in Christ	Achieved by renewing mind	Achieved by the Lord

<u>Daniel 3:8-30</u> – Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego -

"**If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up**." – Daniel 3:17-18

5135 [e]	861 [e]	4481 [e]	7804 [e]	3202 [e]	6399 [e]	586 [e]	1768 [e]	426 [e]	383 [e]	2006 [e]	
nū·rā	'at·tūn	min-	lə·šê·zā·ḇū·ṯa·nā;	yā·ḵil	pā·lə·ḥîn,	'ă·naḥ·nā	dî-	'ĕ·lā·ha·nā	'î·ṯay,	hên	
נוּרָא	אַתּוּן	מִן־	לְשֵׁיזָבוּתָנָא	יָכֵל	פָּלְחִין	אֲנַחְנָא	דִּי־	אֱלָהֲנָא	אִיתַי	הֵן	17
of fire	the furnace	from	to deliver us	is able	serve	we	whom	our God	exists	If	
N-csd	N-msc	Prep	Prep-l ¦ V-Hifil-Inf ¦ 1cp	V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	V-Qal-Prtcpl-mp	Pro-1cp	Pro-r	N-msc ¦ 1cp	Adv	Conj	

7804 [e]	4430 [e]	3028 [e]	4481 [e]	3345 [e]
yə·šê·ziḇ.	mal·kā	yə·ḏāḵ	ū·min-	yā·qiḏ·tā
יְשֵׁיזֵב:	מַלְכָּא	יְדָךְ	וּמִן־	יָקְדְתָּא
He will deliver [us]	O king	your hand	and from	burning
V-Hifil-Imperf-3ms	N-msd	N-fsc ¦ 2ms	Conj-w ¦ Prep	V-Qal-Prtcpl-fsd

383 [e]	3809 [e]	426 [e]	1768 [e]	4430 [e]		1934 [e]		3046 [e]	3809 [e]	2006 [e]
'î·ṯa·nā	lā-		dî	mal·kā;	lāḵ	le·hĕ·wê-		yə·ḏî·a'	lā,	wə·hên
אִיתַיְנָא	לָא־	לֵאלָהָיִךְ	דִּי	מַלְכָּא	לָךְ	לֶהֱוֵא־		יְדִיעַ	לָא	וְהֵן 18
we are	not	to your gods	that	O king	to you	let it be		known	not	But if
Adv ¦ 1cp	Adv-NegPrt	Prep-l ¦ N-mpc ¦ 2ms	Pro-r	N-msd	Prep-l ¦ 2ms	V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	V-Qal-QalPassPrtcpl-ms		Adv-NegPrt	Conj

5457 [e]	3809 [e]	6966 [e]	1768 [e]	1722 [e]	6755 [e]	6399 [e]
nis·guḏ.	lā	hă·qê·mə·tā	dî	da·hă·ḇā	ū·lə·ṣe·lem	pā·lə·ḥîn,
נִסְגֻּד:ס	לָא	הֲקִימְתָּ	דִּי	דַּהֲבָא	וּלְצֶלֶם	פָּלְחִין
will we give homage	Not	you have set up	that	of gold	and to the image	serving
V-Qal-Imperf-1cp	Adv-NegPrt	V-Hifil-Perf-2ms	Pro-r	N-msd	Conj-w, Prep-l ¦ N-msc	V-Qal-Prtcpl-mp

The Christian life requires flexibility because:

A. God's purpose for us is to be conformed into his image

1. Romans 8:29 - "**For those God foreknew he also predestined to <u>be conformed</u> to the likeness of his Son**."
   i. συμμορφους - CONFORMED - conformed, having the same form with something. It refers to
   ii. an inward conformity and not simply an external superficial change.
   iii. "Conformed" denotes inward not merely outward and superficial
   iv. "Conformed" refers to a spiritual change that manifests as an outward change.
   v. "Conformed" is adjective - accusative plural masculine συμμορφους - summorphos /soom-mor-fos'/ jointly formed, i.e. (figuratively) similar -- <u>conformed to, fashioned like unto</u>.
2. Romans 12:2 - "**<u>Do not conform</u> any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**."
   i. "Transformed" is μεταμορφουσθαι verb - present passive middle or passive deponent *metamorphoo* /met-am-or-fo'-o/ to transform (literally or figuratively, metamorphose) -- <u>change, transfigure, transform</u>.
3. <u>SOUL</u> (phase two) - <u>2 Corinthians 3:18</u> –
   "we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, **<u>are being transformed</u> into the same image <u>from one degree of glory to another</u>.** For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."
4. <u>BODY</u> (phase three) - <u>Philippians 3:12-21</u> -
   "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. 16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained.17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But **our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ**, 21 **who <u>will transform our lowly body to be like</u>**

his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

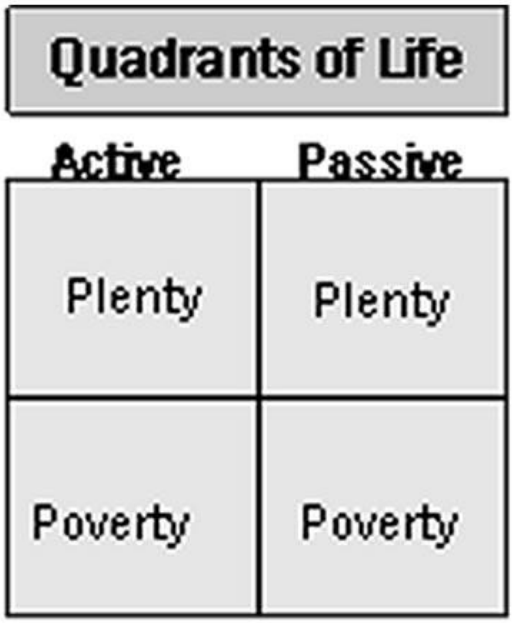
B. In order to serve in the **capacity** he calls us to and with the **power** he provides we must change from our **own ways** and from using our **own strength**.

C. Inflexible people will not change into Christ's image and they will not serve where God wants them to or in the way (power) God wants. These inflexible people are often defined in scripture as:
    1. Proud
    2. Arrogant
    3. Selfish
    4. Hard as Iron
    5. Paul as a Pharisee – confidence in the flesh
    6. Moses as an Egyptian – confidence in position and power
    7. Saul as King of Israel – confidence in self

D. Flexible People:
    1. John the Baptist
        i. John 3:22-30
        ii. Luke 7:18-30
    2. Moses after 40 years in the wilderness
    3. Paul after being trained by the Lord
        i. Trouble
            1. 2 Corinthians 11:21-29 – trials of life
            2. Acts 9-28
                a. Damascus Road
                b. Blinded
                c. Fled Damascus
                d. Threatened in Jerusalem
                e. Sickness in Galatia
                f. Prison in Philippi
                g. Tent maker in Corinth
                h. Working in Thessalonica, Ephesus
        ii. Ease
            1. Titus 3:12-14 – winter in Nicopolis
            2. Acts 19:9-12 – two years taught daily in Hall of Tyrannus, all Asia heard
            3. Acts 28:16, 30 – two years (60-62 AD) allowed to stay in own rented apartment, at own expense, welcomed all who came while guarded by two Roman soldiers.
        iii. Paul Learned this - Philippians 4:11-13
            1. The point of these verses is:
                a. I have learned to be flexible, so. . .
                b. I can now do everything Christ asks me to do

Philippians 4:11-13

A. "I have learned" - Aorist active = completion of the process
B. "to be content"
    i. "content" means being self-sufficient, having enough
    ii. This word indicates independence of external circumstances and often means the state of one who supports himself without aid from others
    iii. It indicates an inward sufficiency as opposed to:
        1. Someone who lacks something on the outside
        2. Someone who lusts or desires something on the outside
C. "whatever the circumstances"
D. "I know"
    i. "what it is to be in need"
        1. Present passive
        2. Means:
            a. To be brought low
            b. Dealing with physical and not moral or spiritual
            c. Refers to needs of daily life
E. "I know"
    i. "what it is to have plenty"
        1. Overflow or abound
        2. Present active middle
F. "**I have learned**"
    i. "learned" is the word for "initiated"
        1. to be initiated
        2. to be instructed into the mystery religions
    ii. Perfect passive indicative
    iii. Completed action with a continuing state or with continuing results
G. "in any and every situation whether"
    i. "well fed"
        1. <u>Passive</u> middle
        2. Means "to fodder"
        3. Used to refer to fattening an animal in a stall by feeding it until full
    ii. "hungry"
        1. Passive <u>active</u>
    iii. "living in plenty"
        1. Present <u>active</u>
        2. To be superabounding
    iv. "or in want"
        1. Present <u>passive</u>
        2. To come up short, to fall behind, to lack, to suffer need



God's goodness will never take us to one quadrant and keep us there. Life is about changing us.

	3756 [e]	3754 [e]	2596 [e]	5304 [e]	3004 [e]	1473 [e]	1063 [e]	3129 [e]	1722 [e]	3739 [e]	1510 [e]	842 [e]	1510 [e]
	ouch	hoti	kath'	hysterēsin	legō	egō	gar	emathon	en	hois	eimi	autarkēs	einai
11	οὐχ	ὅτι	καθ'	ὑστέρησιν	λέγω	; ἐγὼ	γὰρ	ἔμαθον	ἐν	οἷς	εἰμι	, αὐτάρκης	εἶναι .
	Not	that	as to	destitution	I speak	I	indeed	have learned	in	whatever [circumstances]	I am	content	to be
	Adv	Conj	Prep	N-AFS	V-PIA-1S	PPro-N1S	Conj	V-AIA-1S	Prep	RelPro-DNP	V-PIA-1S	Adj-NMS	V-PNA

	1492 [e]	2532 [e]	5013 [e]	1492 [e]	2532 [e]	4052 [e]	1722 [e]	3956 [e]	2532 [e]	1722 [e]	3956 [e]	3453 [e]
	oida	kai	tapeinousthai	oida	kai	perisseuein	en	panti	kai	en	pasin	memyēmai
12	οἶδα	καὶ	ταπεινοῦσθαι ,	οἶδα	καὶ	περισσεύειν .	ἐν	παντὶ ,	καὶ	ἐν	πᾶσιν ,	μεμύημαι
	I know	also	[how] to be brought low	I know	also	[how] to abound	In	everything	and	in	all things	I have learned the secret
	V-RIA-1S	Conj	V-PNM/P	V-RIA-1S	Conj	V-PNA	Prep	Adj-DNS	Conj	Prep	Adj-DNP	V-RIM/P-1S

2532 [e]	5526 [e]	2532 [e]	3983 [e]	2532 [e]	4052 [e]	2532 [e]	5302 [e]
kai	chortazesthai	kai	peinan	kai	perisseuein	kai	hystereisthai
καὶ	χορτάζεσθαι ,	καὶ	πεινᾶν ,	καὶ	περισσεύειν ,	καὶ	ὑστερεῖσθαι .
alse	to be full	and	to hunger	also	to abound	and	to be deficient
Conj	V-PNM/P	Conj	V-PNA	Conj	V-PNA	Conj	V-PNM/P

	3956 [e]	2480 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	1743 [e]	1473 [e]
	panta	ischyō	en	tō	endynamounti	me
13	πάντα	ἰσχύω ,	ἐν	τῷ	ἐνδυναμοῦντί	με .
	All things	I am strong for	in	the [One]	strengthening	me
	Adj-ANP	V-PIA-1S	Prep	Art-DMS	V-PPA-DMS	PPro-A1S