



DIOCESE OF ABERDEEN & ORKNEY

FROM ASHES TO FIRE: A JOURNEY FROM LENT TO PENTECOST

Saturday 15th March 2025

Personal Point of View

On Saturdays during the Ashes to Fire: A Journey from Lent to Pentecost we will hear a personal point of view related to the week's theme and the liturgical season.

These reflections may or may not be anonymous but are from voices in and familiar with the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney.

This week's theme is Trust and Obedience in God.



The hymn 'Trust and Obey' contains the chorus '*Trust and obey, For there's no other way, To be happy in Jesus, But to trust and obey.*' These are words by John Henry Sammis, set to music by Daniel Brink Towner.

These words are easy to sing but harder to put into practice in life. Trusting and obeying God involves discernment and being able to step into the unknown in trusting God. Jesus, God the Son trusted and obeyed God the Father through all of his earthly tenure. We see Jesus' trusting and obeying in this last Sunday's Gospel - in the previous section in Jesus' being baptised. Then we see Jesus obeying God's word in the scriptures whilst responding and repelling the temptations of the Diabolic One whilst in the desert.

Obedying God might be in word, deed or heart and attitude. However, where do we go to know what obeying God might look like - what are the parts of obeying God?

For me, as shown by Jesus in the desert, scriptures can show us how to obey God. Sometimes scripture is explicit and it is easy to see how to obey God, for example the Ten Commandments and the call to obey God by not murdering others. However, at other times scripture offers a guide to help us navigate obeying God in ethical conundrums. For example we are called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, strength and soul, and each of us need to discern what obeying God in following this command might be as we walk through life.

Discernment in what obeying and trusting God might look like can involve prayer - time spent with God. This is modelled many times through scripture with people praying asking for guidance, or taking time away on retreat (often up mountains) to discern the next steps in deed and thought. For me this can be retreat (silent or otherwise).



There are examples of individuals trusting and obeying God in scripture. Think of Zechariah and Elizabeth living faithfully and waiting for a child that eventually happens. Or Deborah - trusting and obeying God in Judges, life was not easy but she obeyed God and trusted when asked to be a leader of her people. Discerning that obeying and trusting God might be like can involve trusted spiritual guides - Spiritual Directors, Soul Friends and Mentors.

Trusting and Obeying God can involve deciding between different options, seeking what might be right, weighing up choices whilst seeking to follow Jesus each day. Following God and choosing to follow Jesus does not mean that life is easy, that obeying and trusting God is easy and everything falls into place. However, we are given guides to help us trust and obey - scripture, prayer, a community of faith and the help of God, the Holy Spirit - the one who sustains and sanctifies us.