

# Travelling with Resilience

St Andrews and Dunblane Jan 2013

## Seeking a resilient church.

'Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed ... but much more now in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for God is at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Do all things without moaning or arguing.' Phil 2.1-2

### Therefore, my beloved ...

#### Obeying

Holding steady the compass point of the soul ...

Deepening of the 'yes'

Metanoia

#### Absence

Something is missing.

#### Divine pleasure

Language of delight. cf echoes of the original Creation – that's *good!*

**'In fear and trembling, for God is at work in you'** – being acted upon

#### 'Work out your salvation ...

'Working it out' means being responsible. No one else can do this.

#### **[and] do it without moaning or arguing'**

Clearest sign of our maturity and taking responsibility is when we can tell our story without blaming anyone else for it!

## Ministry health and safety notes

- \* Being a Christian is quite hard enough without being paid or licensed to do it.
- \* Christian ministry rarely happens in ideal circumstances. There is no 'somewhere else' where I could *really* do it *properly*.
- \* Because the task is impossible and endless, ministry is prone to high levels of self criticism and guilt.
- \* We, and our ministry, are not problems to be solved.

Resilience (like celebration) it is a work of graced subversion – subverting the scripts we are given.

Insisting of living for a different outcome.

**Therefore** - where does this find you?

## **On the pursuit of an answer called 'leader'?**

Context: social, political, religious, economic - confusing, uncertain, anxious and very challenging times.

What is the idea of 'leader' a response to?

Who decided 'leader' was the answer?

Who agreed this is what we most need?

## **Wisdom, ministry and leadership**

### **Is 'leadership' biblical?**

'Leader' and 'leadership' as we define and approach it today does not exist in the bible. They have no word for it. 'Is leadership Biblical?' *Key Questions about Christian faith – OT answers*. Baker 2012). Bible is very ambivalent about 'leadership'.

Note: 'Leader' is mentioned only 6 times in the (KJV) Bible. 'Servant' is mentioned over 900 times. Beware of role models

The Biblical art of sustainable and transformative leadership is part of *Wisdom*.

**Telling the story** – the way of the wisdom seeking

1&2 Samuel: a new way of doing theology - post heroic, non epic story telling.

A way of resilience?

### **'Give us a king to rule over us.'**

*'The elders of Israel assembled and came to Samuel saying, "you are old .... set us a king to rule over us, like all the nations."' 1Sam 8.1-9*

- a people in profound upheaval and transition
- a fragmented, tribal society
- fixed on 'leadership' as a way of securing their future.
- struggling with the place of God, theology and faith. Functional atheism
- shaped by an uneven partnership between women and men.

## **On *not* solving the problem**

Problem/solution and polarity management

'For every complex problem there is a simple solution. And it is wrong' Anon

'Questions that do not have an answer need to be asked very slowly'. Ann Michaels

Source: B Johnson *Polarity Management – identifying and managing unsolvable problems* HRD Press

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