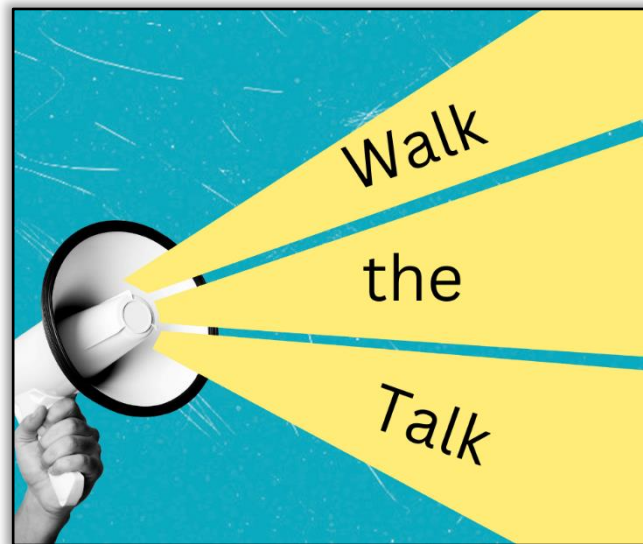


Reflection on Sunday 7 June 2026 by Forbes Mutch, Lay Leader of Worship

Readings: Genesis 12. 1-9 (God's call to Abram) & Luke 5. 1-11 (Jesus calls his first disciples)



Walk the Talk

In Genesis Chapter 12, God talks to Abraham – then called Abram – who hears the message loud and clear and acts on it with faithful obedience. I don't think it would happen quite like that in the world we live in today.

I was standing on the platform at Hertford North station some time ago and I had my mobile in one hand, a copy of The Metro in the other, posters advertising West End musicals all around me, the train message board above me and a young man standing next to me watching a TV drama on his phone with the volume turned up so loud that everyone could hear it (whatever happened to headphones?). So, when I had a God-given thought about whether I should leave the job I was doing at the time or I should stay, I was very distracted.

Every day we're surrounded by voices telling us where to go, what to buy, how to look, what to read, what to fear and what success should look like. There's all this information around us! Just the phones in our hand – let alone all the other stuff – constantly buzz with pop-ups, notifications, opinions and advice. The challenge isn't finding voices to listen to, it's deciding which voices are important and deserve our attention.

Abraham hears the voice of God with no distractions. Lucky him! It's a good job he wasn't standing on the platform at Hertford North station with a mobile phone in his hand when it happened... otherwise the entire development of world civilization would have been different. Suppose he had shuffled down the platform to get away from this latest voice in his life rather than giving God his full attention?

I've spoken before about the difficulty of hearing God's word in the modern world, with its disease of information overload. It can be difficult, but I do believe that, if the message is important, God will find a way of cutting through the noise and you will hear it.

The point about Abraham hearing God's word is only half the story. The other point is the faith of Abraham's response.

God says: *Go, go from your country, your people and your father's household to a land I will show you.* God doesn't hand Abraham a detailed five-year strategy. There's no map, no GPS location, no guarantee of an easy journey. Just a promise.

And what does Abraham do? He packs everything up and goes.

It's one of the simplest and most profound acts of faith in Scripture. God speaks. Abraham listens. Abraham obeys.

Now, let's be honest, if that was to happen to us, in our modern information-loaded environment, most of us would prefer a bit more detail. We'd like God to provide the destination, the route, the timetable, the state of the traffic on the road and maybe a risk assessment. We often say: *Lord, tell me what to do, show me where to go, but give me the whole plan, please, because only then will I decide whether or not to follow you.*

The trouble is, as Abraham finds, God usually works differently. He often gives us enough light for the next step, not the whole journey.

But Abraham is righteous because he trusts God. Even when the promise seems impossible. Even when he is old. Even when circumstances suggest that God's promise can never happen. His obedience flows from his trust.

It is exactly the same for the first disciples that we hear about in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. One minute, they're working as fishermen and the next God has persuaded them to give up their simple, stable lives and start tramping around Galilee because they have faith that they have met the Messiah.

Christian obedience is not about ticking religious boxes. It's not about trying to earn God's approval. Abraham isn't obeying God to get God to love him. He obeys because he believes God is trustworthy. He trusts God.

The same should be true for us when we listen to God.

When God says forgive, we should obey because we trust his wisdom. When God says love our neighbour, we should obey because we trust his heart. When God says don't be anxious, bring your concerns to me, we should obey because we trust his care.

Of course, obedience isn't always easy. As with the disciples, sometimes God calls us to leave familiar territory – not necessarily a country, but a comfort zone. He may ask us to start a difficult conversation, serve the community in a different way, develop a new friendship, let go of a grudge, change a habit or step into an opportunity that feels bigger than we feel that we can cope with.

In those moments, we are faced with the difficulty of choosing whether we've heard God's call correctly or wonder if it's been corrupted by the noise around us? Have I got God's message right? It's the same question Abraham faced: *Will I trust God's word more than my fears?*

Sometimes we fail to move the first time we hear God's message. We all hesitate. We all have moments when fear speaks louder than faith. But when God suggests that we make a move, believe me, his word will cut through the noise, and you WILL hear it.

I know that I'm always talking about my career but, as I moved down the platform at Hertford North that morning my phone rang. It was a recruitment company. Would I be interested in a job that they were convinced matched my skill set. Hmm, maybe. In the meantime, thank you, God, for cutting through the noise and making yourself heard.

When God does nudge you forward through Scripture, prayer, or a phone call, don't wait for every detail. Take the next step faithfully. Listen carefully. Trust deeply. Obey courageously.

After all, it is the same God who called Abraham who is speaking to us today, and he is still faithful to every promise he makes.

Amen.