

Hypocrites

Alan Stewart

Did Jesus know what he was doing when he recruited 12 such ordinary guys? They were largely uneducated. Some had illusions of grandeur. At least one was connected with the local terrorists. One had a very big mouth but bottled it when it mattered most and another of course betrayed their leader for cash. In the end he took his own life and the rest were either exiled or martyred.

Not exactly a dream team. Not exactly a success story. And yet this small band of ordinary men (and women) turned the world upside down.

Our world has always been obsessed with success, and yet 'success' wasn't a word in Jesus' vocabulary. Instead he believed in *growth*, because he understood that often it is through our mistakes and failures that we grow and learn the deepest lessons about life and ourselves. Contrary to popular belief Jesus wasn't a perfectionist. Instead he looked for potential. He believed in people even when they didn't believe in themselves.

I attended a conference a few months ago about church weddings and I was shocked by one piece of research. Many of the couples interviewed said that they were uneasy about calling the vicar because, not being church-goers themselves, they felt hypocritical about asking to get married in church.

What they fail to realise of course is that the church is full of hypocrites. In fact the church is *for* hypocrites.... and the damaged and the broken. And I'm guessing that's all of us.

Someone once wrote a book with a great title - 'Saving Jesus from the people who are right'. Jesus could never work with the people who felt they knew it all and had everything sorted. Always he chose to work with the people who know they were wrong, who knew they needed help, who knew they were hypocrites.

Jesus still calls ordinary men, women and children. His call is simple but not easy – to honestly bring ourselves and our smallness to him who can take the tiniest of seeds and grow the most extraordinary of people; a people who one day might just turn the world upside down again.



Have you ever wished you knew how to pray?

Did you know that meditation is an ancient Christian tradition?

Does God feel far away?
Would you like to come closer?
Do you sometimes wonder what God might be saying to you?

Lent is the ideal time to explore these questions

Interested?

Come along to our prayer and meditation workshop with

Ros Squires and Alan Stewart

Saturday 17 March 2.30 – 4 pm
The Parish Room, St Mary's Hertingfordbury
St Mary's Lane, Hertingfordbury

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