

Service and humility –where could they lead us?

“The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). Jesus said this in response to a mother with ambitions for her two sons James and John. She wanted them to have power and status. But Jesus challenges her misguided ambition and a little later he challenges the misguided ambitions of his disciples. There is a big lesson here I think because it seems to me that the quest for power and status is at the root of so many of the worlds’ problems.

According to Oxfam, the 42 richest people in the world today have as much wealth as the 3.2bn poorest and, of course, money equals power. The world’s largest and most powerful nations are constantly vying to increase what they have and what they control – just as they always have. A desperately sad (and potentially terrifying) aspect of all this is that we seem to be on the brink of another nuclear arms race – a reversal of all that had been agreed between world leaders only decades ago. What a dreadful way to spend billions upon billions of dollars in a world of such desperate need and where there is so much poverty.

Although we rightfully call Jesus the King of kings and Lord of lords he didn’t seek power or status. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians explains it like this “Jesus, being in very nature¹ God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!” (Philippians 2:6-8).

Jesus took the form of a servant in the most extraordinary way during the last supper – a meal he used to explain his rapidly approaching arrest and crucifixion and how in his giving of himself he would save the world from itself. At the end of the meal he took of his robes, wrapped himself in a towel and washed the feet of his disciples – an act that would have been expected of the lowliest of slaves. Do as I do said Jesus.

Humility and self-giving is Jesus’ example and message. It is an example and message that has the potential to save and transform our world.

James

Two Lent Courses for 2018

This year we will be running two Lent Courses. One will be led by Richard Bowett and Linda Ashby and will take place on Tuesday mornings from 10am at All Saints Church. The other course will be led by James Nash and Dan Tansey and this one will take place on Wednesday evenings from 7.00pm at South Wootton Junior School. Please contact us at the Rectory Office to find out more on 01553 673742 or rectoryoffice@churchinthewoottons.net