

Faith Comment published in the Petersfield Post

7 September 2011: David Storey, All Saints, Steep

What would Jesus have done?

I am finding myself getting angry not only with politicians but with myself. Why am I not doing more to create a loving society rather than allowing the vindictive parts of society to spew out its vitriol on the rest of us.

After the leadership of Ken Clark as Home Secretary suggesting that prison was not the best treatment of offenders, I had hopes of better things from the government. But it is too easy to be hard on rioters. And too easy to be soft on bankers.

What would Jesus have done? I like the story of Jesus and the woman caught in the act of adultery. Jesus said "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." One by one from the oldest they left whilst Jesus wrote in the sand. Then Jesus said, "Go your way and sin no more."

We do not know if Jesus said more. But we can know that what he had said about forgiveness he meant, and that those that experienced him knew that they could change their lives.

Can we as a society have compassion for those who rioted, stole and committed arson so that they change their lives and help create an England of which we can be proud?

Can we commit ourselves to providing the probation officers and youth services that will break the circle of deprivation? Can our government provide the training and employment that will heal the alienation of too many? Let us pray so, and do whatever is needed to make it so.