



Jesus the Revolutionary

Revolutionaries seek to make things different. Jesus of Nazareth was a revolutionary. He sought to make people think and act in a way that was not the same as before. At the time he was not successful. He was executed before he could create much change. But history tells us it did not result in failure. His revolutionary ideas have spread worldwide and are still honoured 2000 years later. His teaching has often been compromised by those who professed to follow him but the kernel of his teaching is still evident.

Consider the legacy of others who sought a revolutionary change to society: none can claim this level of success. Look where you like - Karl Marx, Che Guevara, Hitler, to name three in recent history (and many are glad they did not succeed) – or the many others with determination for major change.

How did Jesus succeed where others have not? Jesus did not use force, but persuasion. He did not use the institutions of government, but used example. He did not seek power, but sought submission to ideas of a better world. He did not incite enforcers or bullies to demand acceptance of his ideas, but carefully taught a small group who could promote his ideas. A big contrast with most revolutionaries.

It is almost Easter. Whether you believe the Easter story as told by Christians or not, the truth underlying Easter is that change is achieved by persuasion and example, not by force and coercion; that leaders may be removed, but fundamental good survives. Because of the first Easter, a relatively minor event in Jerusalem two millennia ago, Britain and much of the world accept a code of values that can be traced back to that humble carpenter's son, Jesus of Nazareth. Some revolution!