

Ordinary and Humble Princes

Most everybody has a soft spot in his or her heart for fairy tales. There is just something about a fairy tale's reversal of expectations that intrigues us.

There is something delicious about finding out that the frog is really a handsome prince, that the ugly duckling is the one that grows into the most resplendent of all swans. We enjoy it when the moment of truth comes for the characters in a story as they discover that the scruffy-looking character they never quite trusted is actually a true king of the realm.



In the classic *The Wizard of Oz*, we get a double treat at the end of the story. First, the great and powerful Oz turns out to be nothing but the man behind the curtain, a puller of levers and switches who looks like a humbug of a charlatan. But then, almost before the dust of that reversal of expectation settles, we get jolted again; as it turns out, the humble man behind the curtain is a pretty good wizard after all.

Fairy tales are stories of transformation, and that's what happened to the simple people who were the disciples of Jesus. If you took the disciples and brought them all together into one room, you would never in your wildest imagination guess by looking at them that this weak-looking pack of ordinary folks could change the world. But they did. The disciples changed the world because it was to them that the secret of the universe was first revealed.

That's why Jesus called them in the first place. If you're going to save the world, you've got to start somewhere. And if in the end you're going to save the world through humility, gentleness, compassion and sacrifice, it makes sense to begin with a bunch of fellows who couldn't get more humble if they tried. The messengers fit the message.



In fact, over the course of His ministry, if Jesus had any significant troubles with His disciples, it was a struggle to keep them humble and ordinary-looking. Every time a couple of them started angling for power or arguing among themselves as to who was the greatest, Jesus slapped them back down to the street level of service. When Peter tried to wield a sword, Jesus told him to put it back in its sheath.

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The disciples needed to be common, ordinary and, above all, humble if they were going to do Jesus any good and so change the world. But as it turned out, each one of them was a frog who was really a prince!

That lesson should not be lost on us who are called to the ministry of Life Care and Century Park. If we are to be leaders, we must first be servants. That's what Jesus taught.

And service begins with humility.

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant (Matthew 20:27 KJV).

– Beecher Hunter