

## Thought for the Week

One off those television series that caught the imagination of many recently was Line of Duty. It's a series about an anti-corruption unit in the police – AC-12 – led by Ted Hastings – a lovable Irish character full of amusing phrases, and his two side-kicks – Kate Fleming and Steve Arnott. There were six series, with many edge of the seat moments in each one, as they investigated corrupt police officers, with the last series ending a couple of weeks ago.

Now I'm not giving much away when I say that many were disappointed with the way the last series ended. It was built up as something which would explain everything, with the great villain – the fourth man or H being revealed. But when it happened, many were asking – could it really be this one? It's true that many questions were answered, but we were left with others which did not quite add up. Ted insisted that there was institutional corruption within the police, with someone high up directing the OCGs – the Organised Criminal Gangs. But the series ended with those in authority denying that there was institutional corruption, and the Chief constable giving the top jobs to his friends, Hastings forced into retirement, and AC-12 being wound down. We were left with the question – is the problem sorted or is it being denied?

I know the uncertainty means that there might be a possibility of another series. But there is also a deeper message. The world isn't as it should be. We all want a better world, but wherever we find ourselves, with other men and women, there seems to be imperfection, conflict, disappointment as people let us down, and we let others down. There seems to be institutional corruption within the human race. So what can we do? We can deny it, like the chief constable in Line of Duty. We can try to stamp it out like Ted Hastings – who found that he himself was flawed. Or there is another way. When people thought that the world's problem could be sorted by keeping to the rules, Jesus taught that the problem lay in a deeper source. *For out of the heart come evil thoughts- murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.* (Matthew 15:19-20) The problem lies in our own hearts.

But this doesn't mean that change is impossible. The Bible tells us that God Himself can work in us – The Message translation puts it like this: *I'll pour pure water over you and scrub you clean. I'll give you a new heart, put a new spirit in you. I'll remove the stone heart from your body and replace it with a heart that's God-willed, not self-willed. I'll put my Spirit in you and make it possible for you to do what I tell you and live by my commands.*

Are you frustrated by the mess in the world? Are you frustrated by the mess in your own heart? Let the God who came to the world in Jesus Christ do his anti-corruption work, beginning in you, and in me.

Dafydd Job – Welsh Evangelical Chaplain and Pastor of Capel y Ffynnon