

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

## Mistakes

**"The man who makes no mistakes does not actually make anything."**

*Edward John Phelps*, from a speech in The Mansion House, 1889.

Winston Churchill said on one occasion: "All great men make mistakes." He should have added that making mistakes is not confined to "great men", because mere mortals are also inclined to make mistakes too.

I decided to make sure that, however long this lockdown lasted, I would have enough to do to stop me being bored. So, I bought some jigsaws on-line. And, sure enough, when they arrived, they more than adequately served their purpose. I found a particularly interesting one on *EBay*, a picture from *The Magic Roundabout*, a children's TV show I loved when I was young. It only cost a few pounds, including postage. A good buy, I reckoned. The jigsaw arrived in the post a few days ago. But what I expected to be a 1000 piece jigsaw turned out to be a children's puzzle with only *48 pieces*. "Aged 4+" it said on the box, and boy, did I feel very childish when I realised my mistake?

We all make mistakes – the great men Churchill was referring to, and mere mortals who buy jigsaws from *EBay*. We're all human and prone to getting things wrong. In Romans 7:19 St Paul puts it this way:

*I do not do the good I want to do,  
but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing.*

Buying the wrong jigsaw isn't evil, and I'm only a few pounds down on the deal. But I promise you this – I *won't* keep on doing it. I'll forgive myself, laugh at myself, and even encourage you to laugh at me too. But I'll learn. I'll do better. I'll try never to make the same mistake again.

Oh, and while I'm writing, would anyone like a *Magic Roundabout* jigsaw; free to a good home; 48 pieces; suitable for a child aged 4+, preferably one who doesn't make mistakes?

### A prayer for today

*Forgiving God ... yes, you can laugh at me too because of the mistakes I make.  
But I know you'll also forgive me, and encourage me not to make the same mistakes  
over and over again. Amen.*

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon

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