

Raised to new life – honestly

Joshua 9:1-15 & Acts 4:10

In preparation for this week it would be helpful to read Josh 9-10:15 + Acts 4:1-12

Introduction

What struck you most & spoke to you most powerfully this Easter?

Read Acts 4:1-12

- Is there anything in particular in this passage that strikes you? Peter's focus is on the resurrection (as other sermons in Acts). Can you think why? How true do you think the church generally is to this?
- What does it mean to be *united with Him in His resurrection (Rom 6:5)*? How does the resurrection affect our day to day lives? What difference should it make?

In order to think about one specific area of impact we will return to Joshua.

Read Josh 9:1-15 [In the printed study booklet this is the 2nd half of study 7]

- This is a story of deception & its consequences but also of remarkable trustworthiness. Have you had any experiences of surprising honesty?
- How did the Gibeonites try to deceive the Israelites & do conmen use the same principles to trick people today? To what extent do you agree that our society is dishonest if at all? Discuss why you hold your opinions. How far do we accept 'that's how it is' & feel you have to join in 'in order to survive'.
- How true do you think it is that lying has some sort of fear at its root as with the Gibeonites? Explain. Why does a Christian have no need to fear & therefore no need to be dishonest? Cp *Josh 10:14; Mt 7:31—34; Rom8:31-32*
- How did the Israelites try to check the genuineness of the delegation? Are there any helpful practices that can be used today?
- Why then do you think the Israelites got conned? What can we learn from this? Cp *Jms 1:5; Rom12:1-2*
- What were the consequences of dishonesty & what are they today (include long term effects)? *9:21; 10:1-8*
- Joshua & the leaders of Israel led them to keep the covenant even though they had a good excuse not to. It was not a popular decision so why did they do so & do you think they were right? Cf *v18-20* What sort of solemn agreements do we enter into that are challenging to keep?

Prayer

Pray that Jesus 'the Way, the Truth & the Life' will enable us to be honest, truthful & trustworthy.

Pray about any specific things that we are finding difficult to keep.

Continue to pray about our mission, in particular the concrete plans that are being formed.