

Joshua – coming home

Joshua 22 : 1 - 8

Word:Key points from Sunday's sermon



We have been looking at their journey from the promise given by God to Abraham to give a land to dwell in. He is bringing them home to Settle them as His people and to shine for him. Here at the end of the story we see Joshua send three eastern tribes home to settle and live in peace on the eastern side of the Jordan. (Joshua 1:12-15) Their story had begun with the other 10 tribes and with them they had experienced the process of receiving the promise of God. To do this they followed what has become the rituals of marriage in Israel which begins with 1. **Consecration** - I am spoken for, as they crossed the Jordan and worked through their failings at Ai. 2. **Covenant** I agree to be loved and to obey: after Ai was defeated and now finishes with 3. **Going Home** with Joshua's blessing. Three themes that stand out with the eastern tribes example:

Loyalty; Bravery ; Obedience

Loyalty : These tribes 1. Already had their own land 2. Were Settled with their wives kids family life well established. Joshua had asked them to leave this all behind and fight what could have been termed as another's battle. Their loyalty is to the community and to God. They showed that Loyalty means : to be faithful to be true as a lover; to be firm in allegiance; to be personally devoted to. This loyalty is not easily found in our society which is 1. Individualistic you do what I want I do what you want .2. Disposable if I don't like something or someone then I'll just choose something or some one else. The challenge is to us in the church is to go ahead on behalf of others to prepare the way for others. That will involve taking RISKS and so exercising bravery .

Bravery : Faith is RISK Jesus used images of the Christian life : it is the narrow path not the wide; The small gate not the large; The cross not the crown RISK will be all around us if we are exercising our faith and We will need to have courage to step out on behalf of others. That might mean for some a **change of vocation**, But for most it **will mean stepping out into risky areas in to the public arena of everyday life where faith is tested**. Looking for ways to stand up and stand out for Christ.

Obedience: One of the recurrent themes in Joshua Ch 1: 16,17 and Chapter 22:1-3. What Impressed Joshua was their obedience to God and to His commandments At the beginning the word came to Joshua and was then transmitted to leaders and then to the people. It takes time for all to hear the word of God clearly; **those who hear quickly can get impatient** but important to wait for all to hear so we all know where we are going. **These tribes were quick to hear and to respond**. This is not a blind obedience of Joshua but a trusting obedience. Obedience is crucial if we are to be a distinctive people What makes us distinctive may well be what we do to help settle others in the land e.g. William Wilberforce. May be in a community you will find that others are doing good too, so it is what you have to say in certain situations that makes you distinctive; how you use your money ; how you operate at work; the ethics of the job you do, the decisions you have to make. The Christian community needs to be urged to Loving God with all your heart and neighbours as your self as they settle in the land and live as **A holy and distinctive people**.

At Home Joshua blessed them and as sent them home their mission was complete all mission come to an end. The state that God wants us to be into is a state of rest, to be at home. even in exile the children of Israel were instructed to dwell in the land. to live their to make it their home. Christ was in exile from heaven as he came to us and **now he dwells with us in our hearts**.



Witness:Questions to discuss. Over the last 6 weeks :

1. What impact has the focus on consecration had upon you (read Psalm 51 and I John 1)
- 2 .What have been the obstacles and blessings of renewing your promises to God ?
- 3 What are the treasures/joys of being part of the Community St Pauls to be now, how can we show loyalty bravery nad obedience ?
- 4.What Is God asking us to obey him in now ?(Take time to listen and hear in terms of pictures and words etc).
- 5.How can you as a small community prepare now to be re-consecrated at first fruits Sunday for whatever lies in store for us as a community