

Dead or Alive?

- I've got an Easter present for everyone!!
 - something a little different!
- *Give out beans!!*

- Has everyone got one?
- **What is it?**
 - what kind of bean? (**Broad**)
 - anyone know the variety? (**Giant Exhibition Longpod!!**)
 - **is it dead or alive?**

- Some ways looks dead:
 - like a stone, except too light...
- How might you discover whether it is alive or dead?
 - chop it open? that would kill it!
 - *as far as I know the only simple way is to bury it in the ground!!*
 - almost as if you threw it away; and once buried hard to find again!

- Jesus spoke of himself being like a seed
 - he said something we know to be true: **if a seed is kept clean and dry in a packet, it will stay just as it is;**
 - the only way in which this bean seed can do what it is designed for - **which is to produce a broad bean plant with many bean pods** - is for it to die in the ground
 - only in its death and burial does it multiply
- That's why Jesus had to die and be buried.

Easter Events

- **(image) Jesus on Cross**
- On Good Friday we thought of Jesus dying for us on the cross
 - in dying, he was making sure he could do what he came to do... **to give his life for other people so that they might have the life of God in them**
- Jesus said, **"I am the resurrection and the life"**
 - Easter Day was the great test;
 - if he stayed dead, then all he said was a **great cheat!**
 - if he stayed dead, then he did not have the life of God in him
 - if he stayed dead, then we cannot receive the life of God from him
- **(image) Women and angels at tomb**
- Heard in reading how Mary went to the tomb early the morning, and saw stone rolled back
 - without seeing more she ran back to the disciples to say that Jesus' body must have been taken elsewhere
 - Peter and John ran to the tomb, found it as Mary said, no body, **but grave-clothes neat...**
 - John begins to realise that, somehow, **Jesus is alive!**
- **(image) Mary and Jesus**
- Disciples leave garden, Mary stays on, upset...
 - speaks to angels, speaks to **"gardener"**
 - who is really Jesus - speaks her name, **"Mary!"** - instant recognition!!

So What?

- Why is all of this so important?
- **First**, shows that what Jesus said was true; he was who he said he was!
 - he really did have the life of God within him;
 - by dying and being submerged in our sin and yet raised to life it showed that he was the Son of God!
- **Second**, his dying/rising is also a picture of our spiritual life.
- Look again at bean:
 - in some ways we look quite dead; we don't have much sign of spiritual life in us
 - Jesus offers us his life, but we have to take risks to receive it;
 - we too have to die and be buried, putting Jesus first in our lives, so that **he** is the person in charge;
 - accept Jesus as **Lord**, giving him control over the rest of our lives
- Maybe you still need to take that final step?

So, quite a lot to learn from a bean:

- a bean with the gift of life within it!
- I hope thinking about beans has helped you **appreciate why the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most important event in the whole of human history;**
- I hope also that each of us may be **ready in some way to die that we might receive more of the life of God within us...**
- You can do several things with your bean:
 - throw it away;
 - give it back to me;
 - take it home and keep it safe;
 - or **plant it and see what happens...**
- You can do exactly the same with Jesus Christ:
 - **what will you do with your bean?**
 - **what will you do with Jesus this Easter?**

