

- *First in a series on Judges; Family Service; cf notes from Barry Webb from 1st Proc Trust Conference*

### 1. Ask God what to do - good!

- Get people up and **don't** give them instructions!
  - "come and help me?"
  - "well, are you going to help me?..."
- Hopefully get them frustrated enough that they ask me what to do!
  - and that was what I wanted their help with!!
  - asking me what to do!
- Without directions, without instructions, the job won't get done
  - when you get homework at school, does your teacher tell you what to do?
  - and if you don't understand quite exactly what it is, what do you do?  
**ask!**
- God has asked us to help him!
  - to be his people, his representatives, his workers here on earth
  - wow!
  - but if we don't keep asking him what to do, we'll not manage it quite as he'd hoped and intended!
- General instructions are in the Bible
- Specific instructions can come in answer to prayer
  - and often the two together...
  - ...reading the Bible having asked God to show me what to do!

### 2. Ask for help from one another - good!

- Going to need some more help
  - this time I'll actually tell you what you need to do!
  - maybe just one person at first - not very strong!!
  - **could you move the communion table back a couple of yards?**
  - hard? how might it be easier?
  - with help - where could you get help?
  - ask someone!!
- **Much easier if we do it together...**
  - same applies to our service as Christians
  - its easier if we do it together!
  - its why God gave us the gift of church, of each other
- We are often too proud to ask!
  - we like to do things ourselves
  - we are embarrassed to ask for help

- These things are just two of the good legacies Joshua left behind

### 3. Consequence - God's blessing - good!

- There was a legacy of blessing, of good practise, of trust in God, left behind by Joshua:
  - and so, we read...
  - *The Lord was with the men of Judah* (v. 19)
  - as they walked in step with what God directed, they saw his blessing
- Do a "Simon says" with immediate prizes for success?
- In particular blessing of the springs:
  - desert, need water (Negev is desert)
  - Othniel's wife Acsah, Caleb's daughter, asks for **and is given** springs
  - these people have wandered through the desert, dry, dusty, barren for years
  - here they are in the process of conquering the land - and finding reliable springs would be a God-send, a life-bringer!
  - here is a sign of God's hand with them - they can water their animals, grow their crops, for there is water here
- What blessing!

### Introduction to Judges

- We'll have a fuller introduction to the whole book of Judges in a couple of week's time
  - but, for now, sufficient to say it bridges the gap between the entry into the land and the emergence of the kingship
  - Samuel, who heard God's voice in the night as a boy and later anointed both Saul and David as king, was the last of the judges of Israel
- What will God's people make of the legacy they've been left?
  - will they choose to follow boldly, as Joshua did?
  - and see cities conquered, barriers and opposition falling as Jericho fell before Joshua?
  - or will they go their own way?
- **Same question, same challenge remains still for us:**
  - it is the perennial question...
  - **will we follow God?**
  - will we trust him, honour him, obey him, flee to him...?