

☞ Reviving the Dry Bones

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Last week: God is not done with us yet

Sometimes we feel like we are in the valley of dry bones, lifeless and without hope. Whether it is because of disobedience, division or simply discouragement, the valley of dry bones is all too real for some. But God is not done with us yet. He delights in doing the impossible, so we need to look to God and trust him. So, what do you do when you're in the valley of dry bones?

1. ☞ See the Truth

v. 1-2 The Valley of Dry Bones

You may have been in a valley; you've lost your heavenly perspective; you're living at less than God's best; you're feeling down. You may be broken and disjointed; you've been trying to go at it all alone; you feel separated from everyone else. You may feel dead and dried up; it's been so long since you've experienced the presence and power of God that you're not sure you even can anymore.

Cf. v. 11... our hope is gone; we are cut off...

☞ Revelation 3:1-3

I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. **2 Wake up!** Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. **3 Remember**, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent.

Wake up and see the truth of your condition. Acknowledge where you really are with God. Last week I talked about how we should avoid denial but admit the difficulty. If you are feeling dried up spiritually, acknowledge it to the Lord.

☞ Wake up... **Revive** – return to consciousness and life. Get active again.

Strengthen... **Reinforce** – what little remains of God's work in you must be strengthened.

Remember – call to mind those things that God has spoken in the past.

Obey... **Relinquish** – give up your control and surrender to God. Obey!

Repent – change your way of thinking!

See the Truth! God sees it and calls it as it is. Do the same. See the truth.

2. ☞ Hear the Truth

v. 3-4 The Conversation

“Can these bones live?” Do you really want renewal? Do you really want change? Do you really want revival? Do you really want new life and more of God’s presence?

“Only God knows” – we must lean on God’s mercy; only he can bring renewal. Yes, there are things we must do, but ultimately, it all comes from God.

“Hear the word of the Lord” – **listen to what God is saying**. He is bringing renewal to those who will listen. In the OT it was “Hear, oh Israel.” In the NT it was “He who has ears, let him hear...”

☞ “Hear the word of the Lord” – **replace the enemy’s lies with the truth of God’s word**. What is God saying? What has he already said in the Bible? Listen and obey!

Ephesians 5:26

Washing with water through the word...

☞ **Read the word. Rinse away the lies. Receive the truth...**

v. 12

This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

v. 5-6 The Vision

☞ **God’s Promise:**

New breath (Spirit) – **rebirth and renewal**. That’s God’s vision for us. This was a prophetic word for us just a few years ago at Regional Conference, when the minister prayed specifically for us and loudly said, “Birth, birth, birth.” God doesn’t want any of us to stay in the valley of dry bones. He promises to revive us if we will hear the word of the Lord.

☞ New life – **rebuilding and resurrection**.

Romans 6:4

just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

God’s vision for us is the same of that as Christ Jesus. He wants to raise us up and rebuild us. He doesn’t want us to stay in the valley. He wants renewal for us even more than we want it for ourselves. Hear the word of the Lord!

☞ **God's Plan:**

Add to the bones...

"Tendons" – tendons and ligaments hold the skeleton and muscles together. This speaks of the **reuniting** and continued unity of **believers**. He's putting us back together. Work on your relationships with other believers. God's wants us fully united.

"Flesh" – this is all the muscles and organs that give the body its living functions. This speaks of the various gifts and talents that God has placed in believers. We need each ☞ **part reaching its potential**. He's raising us up to reach his calling. Tune into the Spirit's leading and develop the gifts he has put within you. I've heard several people talk about feeling a prompting from the Lord to use a spiritual gift, but then hold back out of uncertainty. I say, let's begin to step out and reach the potential God has for us.

"Skin" – the covering that protects all these parts. This speaks of God's anointing; he ☞ covers us with his spirit and protects us with his love and truth. **He is our refuge**. He will cover us. He will raise us up and then remain with us to keep us. He does the heavy lifting; he does all the work. Hear the word of the Lord!

Ezekiel 36:25-27

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; *I will* cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. **26** *I will* give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; *I will* remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. **27** And *I will* put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Hear the Truth! God has promised and is planning to renew and rebuild.

3. ☞ Speak the Truth

We need to agree and align ourselves with the truth of God's word and then begin to speak it in faith.

v. 7-10 The Response

Ezekiel prophesied as commanded – he obeyed and simply said what God said. He ☞ **recited what he heard from God**.

Partner with the Holy Spirit in believing by faith what the Bible says. Replace lies with truth and repeat what God says. Here are a few examples to start with. As a Christian, who does the Bible say I am?

☞ **I am a son of God...**

- John 1:12... I am God's child.
 - John 15:15... I am a friend of Jesus Christ.
 - Romans 5:1... I have been justified.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:17... I am united with the Lord, and I am one with Him in spirit.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20... I have been bought with a price and I belong to God.
 - 1 Corinthians 12:27... I am a member of Christ's body.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21... I am righteous.
 - Ephesians 1:3-8... I have been chosen by God and adopted as His child.
 - Colossians 1:13-14... I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.
 - Colossians 2:9-10... I am complete in Christ.
 - Hebrews 4:14-16... I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ.
- I am God's son.

☞ I am safe...

- Romans 8:1... I am free from condemnation.
 - Romans 8:28... I am assured that God works for my good in all circumstances.
 - Romans 8:31-39... I cannot be separated from the love of God.
 - Colossians 3:1-4... I am hidden with Christ in God.
 - Philippians 1:6... I am confident that God will complete the work He started in me.
 - 2 Timothy 1:7... I don't have a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind.
 - 1 John 5:18... I am born of God and the evil one cannot harm me.
- I am safe.

☞ I am significant...

- John 15:5... I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life.
 - John 15:16... I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
 - 1 Corinthians 3:16... I am God's temple.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17-21... I am a minister of reconciliation for God.
 - Ephesians 2:6... I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm.
 - Ephesians 2:10... I am God's workmanship.
 - Ephesians 3:12... I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
 - Philippians 3:20... I am a citizen of heaven.
 - Philippians 4:13... I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.
- I am significant.

There are plenty more that tell us how we ought to think, speak and behave which are contrary to popular worldly ideals. We need to hold to the truth of God's word and speak the truth! And God has spoken his personal promises to OBC as well...

More than once we've received prophetic words about continued growth; revival and greater things yet to come. So, hear the word of the Lord! And, Speak the Truth! We will grow. We will experience revival. We will see and do greater things!

☞ **When we See the Truth** of our condition, **Hear the Truth** of God's promise, and **Speak the Truth**, agreeing with God, **then God's word is fulfilled; there is revival and new life.**

v. 7 there was a rattling sound as the bones came together.

v. 8 tendons, flesh and skin covered the bones.

v. 10 breath entered them; they came to life; they stood up on their feet – a vast army.

Church, I want to hear a rattling sound; I want to hear a wind beginning to blow. I want God to bring renewal; to bring new life. He can make us into a powerful army for his kingdom. See the Truth! Hear the Truth! Speak the Truth! Be revived by the power of the Holy Spirit!

Perhaps you've been in the valley; feeling dried up and dead. Perhaps you've had trouble believing God's word and promises to you. Pray! *"Lord, help me to See the Truth as you see it; help me to Hear the Truth as you speak to me; help me to step out in faith and Speak the Truth that you are giving me."*