

# Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of May 20, 2018

“Can These Bones Live” Pastor Hall 8:15, 9:30 Pastor Hook 10:55

## Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15-20 min)

- Is there anything that came up this past week in regard to the witness or application points from the previous meeting that you would like to share? (A Mother’s Request, John 2:1-12)
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

- How would you describe who the Holy Spirit is or what the Holy Spirit does?

## Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the sermon scripture below, Ezekiel 37:1-14. As you go through the discussion questions, it is ok to skip questions in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup> He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. <sup>3</sup> He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I said, “Sovereign LORD, you alone know.” <sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!’ <sup>5</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath<sup>[a]</sup> enter you, and you will come to life. <sup>6</sup> I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.” <sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. <sup>8</sup> I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

<sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” <sup>10</sup> So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army. <sup>11</sup> Then he said to me: “Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.’” <sup>12</sup> Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: 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. <sup>13</sup> Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. <sup>14</sup> I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.’”

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- Ezekiel was born and raised in Jerusalem with a comfortable life as a young man, but at age 26 experienced the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem, destruction of the temple, and exile into a foreign land. In the middle of such a low point in his life, what do you interpret to be the message God is giving to Ezekiel through this vision?
- How is Ezekiel's faith shown through his response in verse 3?
- The Hebrew word for "Spirit" is ruach, which also means wind or breath. How do you see the Holy Spirit present and active in today's passage from Ezekiel? [hint: the new banners in the sanctuary today!]

### **Another Related Scripture (10 min)**

- Would a volunteer please read aloud John 16:12-15.
- What does the relationship between the Son and the Holy Spirit seem to be like in this passage?
- Why do you believe that after the resurrection of Christ, the teaching function of the Holy Spirit would be emphasized?
- Would a volunteer please read aloud Acts 2:1-4.
- Pentecost has been called "the birthday of the church" and is a celebration of the Holy Spirit coming to the early Church in Acts chapter 2. Is the activity of the Holy Spirit in Ezekiel's vision consistent with what we know about the Holy Spirit here in the New Testament? How so?
- We understand the incarnation to be God's only Son taking on flesh and entering into our world as a human, in Jesus Christ. How do these verses from Acts describe an in-the-flesh incarnation of a different sort (which is also predicted in verse 14 of Ezekiel 37)?
- How do you see the predicted teaching activity of the Holy Spirit in the John passage fulfilled here in the Acts passage?
- What is being taught in the verses that follow and who is being glorified (Acts 2:22-33)?
- Why is it important that the work of the Spirit glorify the work of the Son?

### **Personalizing and Applying The Message (15 min)**

- What were points of encouragement or challenge for you personally in the sermon?
- How have you experienced hope or new life in the Holy Spirit before?
- The people of Santa Fe may feel like they are in a valley of death right now. How might God be calling His people to be a life-giving presence with the community there?
- Our baptismal vows involve rejecting and resisting the evil powers of this world. How might the church confront elements of evil at work in the world today such as racism, poverty, hatred, and depression with the power of the Holy Spirit?
- As a society, we have been unsuccessful in reversing the trend of school shootings and many fear for the safety of our children today and in generations to come. In the area of school safety, how can the church help to see "[God's] kingdom come and will be done on earth as it is in heaven?"

### **Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)**

- This week, in what ways can we help hurting people find hope in the life giving power of the Holy Spirit?
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer.