

But God

Week 4 – Valley of Dry Bones Ezekiel 37

Reopening the Church:

My heart:

There is a right heart posture a Christian must take as they look at the hardship of the world. We must be neither overawed nor indifferent. To be overawed we become helpless, an immobilized victim to the evil that seems to greatly overpower us. To be indifferent to it all is to miss the compassionate love of God. The same love that took Christ to the cross. God, in Christ, is stronger than any power this world can produce, yet the cross displays how serious he takes what is infinitely inferior in might. He is neither bound by fear or indifference towards evil.

Prayer:

Father help us to have incredible God-sized confidence and still possess God-sized compassion. I want us to avoid being overwhelmed by fear or indifference. We want to walk in your ways.

Our heart:

We want to empower those who are able and protect those who are vulnerable. We understand there are people at significant risk for various reasons. To those in the high-risk category your introduction back into densely populated social activities should be carefully considered with advice from your doctor and/or trusted advisors.

Our plan:

Beginning this week:

We are beginning by encouraging community groups and discipleship groups to meet as they feel able.

Watch the service as a group and we will have discussion questions to follow.

We encourage your group to follow a service plan like this:

1. Worship together.
2. Discuss together.
3. Pray together.
4. Eat together.

Since seating will be limited in each of these services, we will allow families to sign up online for a service time. At this point there will be no Children's ministry and we advise coming only if you feel safe and only if you are able to self-maintain social distance recommendations. We will closely watch the progress of this disease as we approach this date and make adjustments as necessary.

But God:

Review:

God loves to show off His love.

We are in a series called “But God.” History is full of moments where it looked like all was lost and the love of God stepped in.

I believe this is still true today. I believe it is true for you and true for me.

Over the last few weeks we have covered:

1. How do we wait well? Week one.
2. The power and importance of your private life. Week two.
3. What if God doesn’t work? Week three.

I would encourage you to go look them up at

<https://www.encountertrinity.com/messages/#but-god>

4. This week we ask the question: What if you have already lost?
 - a. Maybe you already have a death?
 - i. Finances
 - ii. Relationship
 - iii. Job
 - iv. Death of a loved one
 - v. Death of a dream
 - b. What do you do when a death has already come?

It’s 5 years after the Babylonian conquest of Israel. He was one of the young men that was taken from his home. He was about 25 when he was taken as a spoil of war. He is sitting by a water channel near the refugee camp. Ezekiel is called to be a prophet explaining the why behind all of their hardships and death that these people have faced. Eventually Jerusalem will totally fall.

What do you do when there is so much loss?

Ezekiel has this vision. It’s a valley of dry bones. There is nothing but death, long desolate and full of bones.

Jealousy, materialism, hatred, lust and every other sin have come to their natural conclusion in the valley of dry bones, death.

How will God keep His promises to a dead people?

Only God, only love.

It’s all about resurrection.

Ezekiel 37:1-11

1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. 2 And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. 3 And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." 4 Then he said to me, "Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. 5 Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. 6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD."

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. 8 And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them. 9 Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

11 Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel."

- There is so much death in the greater story. The death of loved ones, the death of influence, freedom and even hope. Ezekiel sees the real state of God's chosen people. Sin has completely destroyed them. There is only one way out at this point. Resurrection.
- There is one more important death. God promised that these people would be blessed and represent Him. Did God lie? Have they fallen so far there is no hope?
 - What about you? Have you fallen so far all you can see is hopeless death, dry bones?
 - In a relationship.
 - Financially.
 - Physically.
 - Work.
 - Death of a dream.
- God doesn't just work; He chooses to work *through* Ezekiel. Your greatest spiritual moments are not the sum of your knowledge or religious piety, they are merely the result of a humble heart before God.

What does this mean for us?

- Know these truths.
 - God loves to work through His people to do great things.
 - There is never a "too late" for God.

- There is never a “too dead” for God.
- Weigh your heart.
 - Is it humble before God?

Where is Jesus in this?

- Jesus is the culmination of this moment. He is resurrection, the conquering of death itself. He is the perfect example of trust and faithfulness.

Questions:

1. What does a humble heart before God look like?
2. Where do I need God to work a resurrection miracle?