

THESE BONES CAN LIVE!

Ezekiel 37:1 The lord took hold of me, and I was carried away by the Spirit of the lord to a valley filled with bones.:2 He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out.:3 Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones become living people again?" "O Sovereign lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that." :4 Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, Dry bones, listen to the word of the lord!:5 This is what the Sovereign lord says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again!:6 I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the lord." :7 So I spoke this message, just as he told me. Suddenly as I spoke, there was a rattling noise all across the valley. The bones of each body came together and attached themselves as complete skeletons.:8 Then as I watched, muscles and flesh formed over the bones. Then skin formed to cover their bodies, but they still had no breath in them.:9 Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to the winds, son of man. Speak a prophetic message and say, This is what the Sovereign lord says: Come, O breath, from the four winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may live again." :10 So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army.

INTRODUCTION

MORE THAN 34 YEARS AGO THIS CHURCH BEGAN THE FIRST SUNDAY OF JULY IN 1990. THE OVERWHELMING CROWD OF TWENTY ONE LISTENED TO A 30 YEAR OLD PREACH A MESSAGE FROM THIS SAME TEXT. CAN THESE BONES LIVE WAS THE THEME AND QUESTION. TODAY, I STAND BEFORE YOU TO ANSWER MY QUESTION....TO ANSWER GOD'S QUESTION.....TO ANSWER EZEKIEL'S QUESTION.

THESE BONES CAN LIVE!

1. CAN YOUR BONES LIVE?

NOT JUST DEAD BUT DISGRACED!

ii. The people represented by these **bones** were not only dead; they were also DISGRACED. In the thinking of ancient Israel (and the ancient Near East), an unburied corpse with exposed remains was a shocking disgrace to the dead. These **bones** were obviously denied proper burial.

YOU HAVE A TESTIMONY THAT HE SET YOU FREE

PEOPLE BELIEVE IN JESUS BECAUSE YOU WERE DEAD AND DISGRACED. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY YOU BECOME A BELIEVER!

6 I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the lord.

YOU WERE COMMANDED NOT ASKED....TO LIVE!

Ezekiel 16:6 "But I came by and saw you there, helplessly kicking about in your own blood. As you lay there, I said, 'Live!'

THE NEW LIFE YOU RECEIVED IS DESIGNED TO BUIKD FAITH FOR THE FUTURE!

EXAMPLE: RODNEY MANLEY

2. CAN YOUR FAMILY BONES LIVE?

2 He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out.:3 Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones become living people again?" "O Sovereign lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that.":

DEAD BODIES BECAME DISJOINTED BONES

WHEN EVERYTHING IN THE VALLEY IS DISCONNECTED THERE IS NO HOPE FOR THOSE WHO WALK THROUGH IT. IT IS THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

A GROUP OF EUROPEAN AMERICANS TRIED TO TAKE A SHORT CUT TO THE GOLD MINES OF CALIFORNIA AND ENDED UP FACING DEATH IN A VALLEY. Using a map given to them by Mexican villagers at Rancho San Francisco, the '49ers were able to escape the valley. According to the story, as the survivors crested the mountain on the edge of the valley, someone looked back and bitterly proclaimed, "Goodbye, Death Valley." The name has stuck ever since.

DYSFUNCTION IS INEVITABLE WHEN PEOPLE TAKE SHORTCUTS

DELIVERANCE FOR THE FAMILY TAKES GENERATIONS....TIME

EXAMPLE: COREY AND DIAMOND

3. CAN YOUR COMMUNITY BONES LIVE?

10 So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army.

YOU STOOD UP AND YOUR FAMILY STOOD UP

YOUR FAMILY STOOD UP AND YOUR COMMUNITY STOOD UP

THE REVIVED COMMUNITY IS AN ARMY!

EXAMPLE: EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM IS A TESTIMONY THAT THE ARMY STOOD UP

DRUG ADDICTED.....STOOD UP

ALCOHOLICSTOOD UP

SUICIDAL.....STOOD UP

MURDERERSSTOOD UP

STRIPPERS.....STOOD UP

ADULTERERS.....STOOD UP