

March 26, 2023 / Lent, Week 5 - Overflow, week 5
John Winebrenner Sunday
Sermon: “Revive the Bones” (#438)

Me...

- John Winebrenner believed the church needed a revival.
- Believed everyone must have a heartfelt encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- He was an expressive evangelistic in nature when it came to his preaching!
- Denounced creeds, infant baptism, theaters, horse racing and slavery. (Read the paragraph from the Global Advocate)
- Fraternized with Methodist pastors and held prayer meetings late into the night, allowing people to pray and express with groans and “amens”.
- During the late 1820s, Winebrenner came to theological conclusions about the nature and government of the Church, the importance of the regenerating experience of the new birth and the ordinances (Believer’s Baptism by immersion, Lord’s Supper and Feet Washing).
- He reaffirmed the belief that the Bible was the “only authoritative rule of faith and practice.”
- Happy 226th Birthday Rev. John Winebrenner. “Sorry about the creed”
- Chance to Change

You...

- A word for YOU today?... Do YOUR bones need REVIVING?
- A word for US as the church?... Do OUR bones need REVIVAL?

- The “bones” are a metaphor for what? Our lives? Our behaviors? Our customs? Our traditions? Our culture?
- Revival... an evangelistic service or a series of services for the purpose of effecting a religious awakening.
- Another definitions... an awakening, in a church or community, of interest in and care for matters relating to personal religion.
- More personal yet... restoration to life, consciousness, vigor, strength, etc; restoration to use or acceptance.
- “Overflow”... Our lives “leak”. What is your life leaking?
- Are you leaking revival? You can only leak it if and when you are revived in your bones, in your body and in your spirit/soul!
- This sermon is given in the spirit of John Winebrenner... are you ready?

Pray

God’s Word to Us

Ezekiel... Read the opening paragraph to the book of Ezekiel from the Experiencing God Bible

Ezekiel 37:1-14 (NLT)... A Valley of Dry Bones

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.

11 Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones represent the people of Israel. They are saying, ‘We have become old, dry bones—all hope is gone. Our nation is finished.’

12 Therefore, prophesy to them and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

13 When this happens, O my people, you will know that I am the Lord.

14 I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the Lord has spoken!”

Excerpt From The Message Devotional Bible, Eugene H. Peterson

- “Ezekiel painted a picture of what God was going to do, a picture that none of the people could see because they were too busy feeling sorry for themselves. He told them what he saw, and then they began to respond to what God was doing instead of to what they were feeling. They began to live by the Word of God, by faith rather than sight.”
- “Ezekiel’s visions marked the transition between a time when Israel was spiritually as dry as a bone and a time of new life. In a few years, the people would be whole again, praising God, studying Scripture, walking by faith, loving their neighbors. It would be a marvelous and miraculous resurrection.”
- “The important word in this passage is breath: “I’m bringing the breath of life to you,” says God (verse 5). The words spirit and breath are the same in Hebrew. God breathes into us, and we breathe in his life. We aren’t in utopia; we aren’t free of pain; we aren’t without troubles. But we’re alive as we’ve never been before. We’re made well and whole. We inhale the life-giving breath of God and exhale faith and hope and love.”

NOW we go to a real life moment with Jesus where He “revives the bones” of Lazarus, his good friend...

John 11:1-45... The Raising of Lazarus (retell highlighting several verses)

- Vv. 3-6... So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, “Lord, your dear friend is very sick.” 4 But when Jesus heard about it he said, “Lazarus’s sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.” 5 So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, 6 he stayed where he was for the next two days.
- Vv. 11... 11 Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up.”
- Vv. 14... 14 So he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. 15 And for your sakes, I’m glad I wasn’t there, for now you will really believe. Come, let’s go see him.”
- Vv. 20-22... 20 When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. 21 Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if

only you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.”

- Martha was “distracted”; Mary sat at Jesus’ feet... Mary chose the better option.
- **Vv. 25, 26... 25 Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. 26 Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?”**
- Vv. 32, 35... When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.” “Then Jesus wept.”
- Vv. 43... Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!”
- Vv. 45-48... 45 Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. 46 But some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. 47 Then the leading priests and Pharisees called the high council together. “What are we going to do?” they asked each other. “This man certainly performs many miraculous signs. 48 If we allow him to go on like this, soon everyone will believe in him. Then the Roman army will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation.”

- **How does God bring revival?**
- **Through the proclamation of His Word and through obedience to His Word.**
 - Ez. 37:4-8... ‘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.’” 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,
 - Jn. 11:43... “Lazarus, come out!”
 - Jn. 11:25... “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die.”
- **Through the indwelling of His spirit/breath in His people; breathes new life/fresh wind into His people!**
 - Ez. 37:8b, 9... but they still had no breath in them. ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, O breath, from the four winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may live again.’”
 - Jn. 11:25... “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. **Everyone who lives in me** and believes in me will never ever die.”
 - **Genesis 2:7...** “Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.”
 - **Romans 8:10-11...** 10 And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

- **What is the evidence that revival is taking place?**
 - Change happens
 - New ideas and new dreams take shape
 - Movement and momentum happen at a chaotic, uncontrollable pace.
 - The presence of God is experienced; miracles take place.
 - New Life happens in people which changes them! Death becomes life!
 - **Romans 6:12-14...** 12 Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. 13 Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. 14 Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace.
 - **People are redeemed by the love of God. They are revived, renewed, restored and reinvigorated; reborn/remade into the likeness of Jesus.**

Also...

- Resistance happens! People and organizations try to stop it.
- People cling to the past as though their life depended on it.
- Rules are established; doctrines become more important than God's Word.
- People cast judgement; point fingers; make accusations.
- Absolutes and ultimatums are expressed.
- Skepticism, speculations and criticism rule the day.

Application...

(You / personal)

- Letters make up words; change one letter/add one letter and the whole word changes (meaning, etc.)
- Quit to quiet
- Hype to hope

- Chance to change
- Revise to revive

Revival happens (in you or in the church) when...

- 1. Jesus restores you with His love.**
- 2. Jesus revives you with His Spirit.**
- 3. Jesus remolds you to be His disciple on mission with Him.**

- If change is gonna happen, you have to take a chance on God's leading/ promptings. God's Word and His Spirit directing your every move to change!
- However, if you leave it up to chance, or to your own desires, will and comfort level, change is never gonna come.

(We / the church)

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Sticky Statement...

Are you gonna leave it up to chance or are you ready to make a change?

Are you going to persist in figuring it out on your own terms, or let Jesus revive your bones?

God's Word and His Spirit will bring revival to your soul...

Do you believe this?

Other Scripture passages for Sunday, March 26, 2023...

Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; John 11:1-45; Romans 8:6-11