

**5/17/18**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

Ezekiel was a prophet during some dark times for God's Old Testament Israel. They had been worshiping false gods. Now they were living in exile far from home. Jerusalem's temple lay in ruins. It appeared that all was lost, including the promise of the coming Savior. The people were like a pile of dry bones. They had no life, no future.

*The hand of the LORD was upon 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. 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. He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "O Sovereign LORD, you alone know." Ezekiel 37:1-3*

Without God's blessing, there is no meaning to our life either. On our own, we're the same as they were: guilty, helpless, and hopeless. In our sinful nature, each of us is like a pile of dry bones.

But even though they had given up on the LORD, he had not given up on them. The LORD said to Ezekiel, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the *word of the LORD!* This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.'" We don't have to wonder which *word of the LORD* Ezekiel used. It's the same word of the LORD that our dry bones long to hear every day, namely, that we have a flesh and blood Savior, a substitute, Jesus Christ. Unwrap those swaddling clothes and you'll find a baby. When they crucified him, he bled. When he rose, his disciples could touch the nail prints in his hands. God's Son,

Jesus, has taken the hopelessness and death of all our sin on himself, so that we might have life with God now and forever.

Whenever we hear about our Savior and what he means for us, the LORD is at work in us. He provides hopeless sinners hope. He gives condemned sinners a bright future. He rattles our bones together and breathes into us the breath of life.

***Prayer:*** *Dear Jesus, in whatever way my hope is dried up, be my resurrection from the dead. Amen.*

*(WELS E-Devotion, adapted)*

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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