

## **“The Messenger” for the MSWSBA**

A Message From Your DOM: Living Hope Amongst The Spiritually Dead (Part 1)

One of the conversations that I am continuously finding myself engaged in with people is in concern with all of the lost people around us, how our society is becoming increasingly dead spiritually, and how this effects the church. Is there a hope for revival? This causes me to consider Ezekiel 37:1-14. In this threefold prophecy of the return of Israel from exile, the new life given to Christians, and the resurrection at the return of Christ we see God revealing where to find hope in the midst of spiritual death. **In verses 1-3, we see that in order to see life occur in the midst of death, God’s people need to be communing with the Lord.** What did communing with God do here? It makes us sensitive to His power and the Holy Spirit. *“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.”* With the hand of the Lord upon Ezekiel, he became aware of his call to action amongst a society of death. He was also sensitive to the presence of the Holy Spirit, as he knew that it was the Spirit who was leading him. One of the great promises that we have as Christians is the promise that God will always be with us (Matthew 28:20). In light of this, it is fine to ask for God to be with us, but we do already know that we have this through the Holy Spirit, so what we should really be asking is that the Holy Spirit will make us more sensitive to His presence. When we are sensitive to the presence of the Holy Spirit, then we are ready to hear the voice of God. **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.”* With Ezekiel aware of his call to action and sensitive to the presence of the Holy Spirit, what did the Holy Spirit do? He led him through the valley to observe the dry bones. Communing with God reveals depravity. The Holy Spirit showed Ezekiel how bad the situation really was. These bones were not just dead, but they had extended beyond the point of decay and become very dry. The situation seemed hopeless. Being aware of the presence of God will cause us to understand depravity because we understand more and more of how holy He is which leads us to a more realistic understanding of how terrible and prevalent sin is in and around us. We see depravity in the world and also in ourselves. Many times, this can lead us into despair if we do not view depravity through the lens of the gospel. Rather than despairing and feeling as if it is a lost cause, if we are looking to God we see more and more of how incredible His grace truly is, causing us to appreciate that grace more. Through this, God gets glory as we are increasingly blown away by His mercy.

**We also see that being in the presence of God causes us to be more aware of our inadequacy, so that we learn to humble ourselves and trust in Him.** **3** *“And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord God, you know.”* After experiencing the presence of God and witnessing the severe depravity around him, Ezekiel is then given a humbling word from God. *“Son of man, can these bones live?”* Just consider the depth of that question. Oh son of man, in all the vast medicine that you have come up with, have you found a way to make the dead, not just the dead but those whose bodies are beyond decay come to life? If all of your favorite politicians got elected to office and the greatest political scenario that man has ever devised were to come about, could the dead be made alive? In your most wise and deepest philosophies can you possibly come up with or even imagine a way that it would be possible for these who are so far beyond death to come back to life? Ezekiel has no reasonable choice but to humble himself, hand the situation over to God, and reply, *“Oh Lord, you know.”*

