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Revival and Restoration!

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-4

Revival means a sovereign work of God that brings spiritual life back to believers who have grown cold, indifferent, or spiritually dormant. It is meant for the church and individual saints who already possess spiritual life but have fallen into complacency, worldliness, or spiritual slumber. Therefore, we must experience a deep awareness of personal and corporate sin, leading to sincere confessing and turning back to God. Renewal of their first love. A re-ignition of deep passion for Jesus Christ, prayer, and obedience to the Bible. True revival often spills over into bold witness, transformed communities, and a high number of new conversions.

Restoration means returning something broken, lost, or ruined by sin back to its original design, right alignment, and purpose with God—often resulting in a state greater or more complete than before. It's also tied directly to the person and work of Jesus Christ, who reconciles humanity to God, breaks the power of spiritual death, and heals broken lives. Moreover, as an ongoing spiritual transformation now, culminating in the final renewal of all things—a "new heavens and new earth" where pain and death are eliminated.

The vision of the valley of dry bones dramatically illustrates the promise of chapter 36—new life and a nation restored, both physically and spiritually dead condition and to revive the hopeless state of the people who felt they had perished.

Your church or you may feel like a heap of dried-up bones, spiritually dead with no hope of vitality. But just as God promised to restore His nation, He can restore any church, or any individual person, no matter how dry or dead they may be. **Rather than give up, pray for renewal, for God can restore it to life**. The hope and prayer of every church should be that God will put His Spirit into it (Ezekiel 37:14). God is at work calling His people back to Himself, bringing new life into dead churches.

God shows Ezekiel a valley full of scattered, completely dried-out human bones, representing the nation of Israel in Babylonian exile who felt their national identity and hope were dead. Humanly speaking, dry bones cannot live. Instead of doubting or giving a rigid "**no**," Ezekiel defers to God's sovereign power, acknowledging that only God knows what is possible. God does not explain the mechanics of how He will fix the situation; instead, He commands Ezekiel to act in faith and preach directly to the dead bones. **Revival and restoration do not start with human effort or logic, but through the active, spoken Word of God**. Precursor to life and spirit. The verses set the stage of God reassembling the skeletons, covering them in flesh, and ultimately breathing His Spirit into them to make them a living army.

Do you ever feel stagnant in your faith, as if you are just going through the motions? Has sin driven a wedge between you and God, making Him seem distant? David felt this way. He had sinned with Bath-sheba and had just been confronted by Nathan the prophet. In his prayer to God he cried, "*Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation*" (Psalm 51:12). **God wants us to be close to Him and to experience His full and complete life**. But sin that remains unconfessed makes such intimacy impossible. Confess your sin to God. You may still have to face some earthly consequences as David did, but God will give back the joy of your relationship with Him.

Ezekiel's vision of a valley of dry bones still speaks to us today because we can relate Israel's situation and their resulting emotions. **Hopelessness**. **Despair**. **Shattered dreams**. **Despondency**. They overwhelm us. Ezekiel proclaimed God's Word to a nation enslaved in dead, dry, religious traditions. The Holy Spirit still restores the dead to life and brings hope to broken spirits. The promise Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost still applies to us today.

Do not be discouraged when God's work seems unfinished. God does not always instantly restore the dry bones in our lives. He requires us to proceed in obedience, watching His plan play out one step of faith at a time. We cannot quit. **We must keep praying**. We must continue speaking the promises of God. **We must position ourselves in a place where we can hear God's Word proclaimed, because His Word restores**. **The miracle is underway!**