

Text: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Theme: A Living Spirit

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Old Testament Lesson of Ezekiel Chapter thirty-seven verses one through fourteen.

Good Morning Boys and Girls, how are you doing today? Good? Awesome! How important is your body? It is very important! Without your body, you would not be alive. Without your muscles you would not be able to move. Without your bones, you would be a slimy lump, unable to hold yourself up. In our text for today, we hear about bones. Did you know that half of your bones are found in your hands and feet. Babies have almost three hundred (300) bones whereas adults only have around two hundred and six (206)? Yep. God takes Ezekiel to a place filled with skeletons. The Lord asks Ezekiel if these bones can live? Can they? What do you think? How does what happens to these bones show what happens to us in Holy Baptism? Ponder these questions, as we hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

- a. We same as dead bones, due to sinful nature, cut off from God.

A valley full of dry bones. Not only bones, but bones that have been bleached dry and white from the Sun. Not even an ounce of moisture to be found upon them, much less flesh and blood. Can they live? Ezekiel's reply is simply, "Lord, You know." The bones cannot live on their own. They have no power to raise

themselves up. Their living entirely depends upon the Lord's mercy and grace, by His almighty power to act.

The same is true of us. By ourselves, we have no power within us to save ourselves. In fact, quite the opposite. Because of our many, great, and grievous sins, we are cut off from God, the source of our life and salvation. We sin in thought, in word, and in deed. We lie, cheat, steal, think lustful thoughts of other men and women, back talk and disrespect those in authority over us. We misuse our bodies for our own gain, wants, and desires, not caring about what happens to it. After all it's just a lump of flesh or tissue, we can do whatever we want with it right? Sometimes we feel the same as the people of Israel during the exile, we cry out that we have no hope, we are completely and totally cut off from God and despair even of life itself.

- b. God comes to us in JC and HS, Word and Sacrament, Makes us alive again in HB!

The only way that we can be raised to life is the same way that the bones were raised to life. The Word of God, proclaimed by Ezekiel, gives to the bones flesh and blood as he hears a rattling, bones join to it's bone, and flesh covers them. Yet still, they do not live. They do not live until he prophesizes to the breath which comes from the four winds. The breath enters them and those who were slain live again, standing on their feet as a great army. The only way they live is through the power of God and Him giving breath to them.

The same is true of us. The only way that we can live is God Himself coming to us and making us alive again. God does this by sending His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus lived a perfect life in our place, perfectly fulfilling the Law of God for us. In going to the cross, He

takes upon Himself our sins, fully satisfying the wrath of God on our behalf. Rising again from the dead, He conquers sin, death and the power of the devil. Having ascended to the right hand of the Father, Jesus sends the promised Comforter, the Holy Spirit to us. How does He do this? The Holy Spirit comes to us whenever the Word of God is proclaimed. He attaches Himself to the visible elements of water, bread, and wine in the Sacraments and creates and sustains faith in us. Particularly in Holy Baptism, we come dead in our sins and trespasses, can do nothing for ourselves, much like dry, dead, bleached bones. Through the Water and the Word, the Holy Spirit is breathed into us, and we live again. We live, no longer dead in our sins and trespasses, but alive as the People of God, having been connected to what Jesus has done for us upon the cross by His death and resurrection from the dead.

Having been made alive by God, we do the good things that He has given us to do. We proclaim that our bodies do indeed matter. They are not just a lump of flesh or tissue. We cannot do whatever we want with them. Rather, we have been created for a purpose. We use our bones, our bodies, in love of God towards the service of our neighbor. We raise funds for the pregnancy center in order to tell others that their bodies are special and loved, even while still in the womb. We serve in our homes, putting away the dirty trash, dealing with dirty diapers, or putting away the clean dishes without being asked. We make sure that our neighbor has what he needs for this body and life, that he is not starving or thirsty, that he has clothes, heating, and water, that he is safe and well cared for. By doing all of this, and much more, we show the love that God has for them and the importance of their bodies, and ours, having been created, redeemed, and sanctified by God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

May God continue to pour out His Spirit and kindle the fire within us, that we may do the good works He has given us to do, until we are with Him in the new creation forever and ever.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.