



# Morningside Church

## Sermon Discussion Guide

**Title:** Our Only Hope

**Date:** December 1, 2024

**Scripture Text:** Ezekiel 37:1-14

### **Notes:**

It's hard to believe, but Christmas is almost here. This is the time of year when we get so busy with shopping, events, and decorating. It is also the beginning of Advent. The word advent means "to come" and is the time to celebrate Jesus' first coming as a baby and to anticipate His second coming as the conquering King. Each Sunday in the month of December we'll focus on a different element of the Advent. This Sunday we focus on Hope. Hope for the Christian is not the idea of wishful thinking, i.e. "I hope my team wins", but of an assurance we have because of our relationship with Christ. Without Christ there is no hope. Regardless of our circumstances, Christ is always there, and we have hope in Him.

#### **I. Assess the Situation ([Ezekiel 37:1-3](#))**

The situation in Ezekiel is because of Israel's disobedience to God, He used the Babylonians to judge them. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, and many were exiled to Babylon. It was seen as a hopeless time. Ezekiel was among those exiled. God used him to remind the Israelites why they were in this situation. But He also used him to deliver a message of hope. In these verses Ezekiel finds himself in a valley of dry bones. Because of their condition, they had been that way for a very long time. God asked Ezekiel if the bones could live. Ezekiel knew that it would take God for them to be restored.

- Israel's sin stemmed from them accepting the culture's priorities over God's. They accepted the customs and pagan practices to the point that they were no different than the culture.
  - How would you say the church has done something similar?
  - What are examples where the church looks more like the culture than the people of God?
  - How would you describe God's plan for the church?
  - How well would you say you fit into God's plan for the church?
  - Are there areas you look more like the culture and less like Christ (actions, thoughts, attitude)?

#### **II. Obey the Commission ([Ezekiel 37:4-8](#))**

Ezekiel knew that for the bones to be restored, it would require an act of God. But God in His grace, allowed Ezekiel to be His instrument by which He would restore the dry bones. It was by Ezekiel's preaching and praying God's word that the bones were restored. This would not be accomplished by Ezekiel alone, but by the power of the word of God.



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### Notes:

- How was Ezekiel's obedience to the word of God used in God's plan?
- Why is it important for God's people to live in obedience to God's word?
- Why is it a blessing for God to include His people in His work?
- How can being part of God's work build a believer's faith and hope?
- How has God uniquely equipped you to be involved in His work?
- How can you get more involved in God's work?

### III. **Experience a Mighty Move of God (Ezekiel 37:11-14)**

God explains the restoring of the dry bones to life as Israel being restored to their land. As impossible as it seemed, God was faithful, and they were indeed restored. Similarly, God is just as faithful today. As we live a life of obedience to Him and His word, we can experience a mighty move from Him. When God moves, it is unmistakable that He is moving, and it is something only He can do. In the midst, He includes His people in the work.

- Have you experienced a mighty move of God?
- How did it impact your hope in Him?
- How can living obediently to Him prepare you to be part of His work?
- How can being reminded of the mighty movements of God, whether in His word or personally, remind you how He can revive whatever dry bones you have in your life?
- Complete this statement: If God can revive a nation, He can revive my \_\_\_\_\_.

There was to be a house of Israel after all. The nation seemed to be dead and buried, but God would revive and restore it. This is a promise which may apply to a church when she gets into a very low spiritual state, and it looks as if she could never do any more good: "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves." And to you, dear friends, who are very heavy of heart, full of despair, and who seem as if you were as good as dead and buried, God speaks in this promise. Therefore believe his Word as though it had been directed to you personally. Great deliverances and almighty quickenings reveal God to us, and make us know how gloriously great Jehovah is. When the Jews get back to Canaan again, -as they will do, -they will then not only know that Jehovah is God, but also that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah. May the Lord hasten that blessed consummation in his own time!

Charles Spurgeon