

“Restoring the Years” with the Sankofa Unit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8ysLPsJmiw>

“I Speak Life” with Donald Lawrence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SIegmoEou4>

“He Has His Hands On You” with Marvin Sapp

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1axutpgg8Vg>

“Spirit of the Living God” with the Vertical Band Church

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogGOIGswStA>

“Come Alive (Dry Bones)” with Lauren Daigle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jLj8QMkNsI>

“Come to Jesus” with William McDowell and Tina Campbell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsG77xxpdWc>

“I Shall Live and Not Die” with Darlene McCoy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLbsO9J3vF8>

“Healing” with Richard Smallwood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WonHUyxeMfl>

“Holy Thou Art God” with Richard Smallwood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqAlahgbCx4>

“Be Open” with Richard Smallwood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hm9L2-5OaTk>

“Sow In Tears” with Richard Smallwood

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pH_II6OeFKE

“It is Well/ Come Ye Disconsolate”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20xawED6YT4>

“Hold On, Don’t Let Go” with Richard Smallwood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmPhHNQGjK4>

Prophecy! Yes, Prophecy Restoration! ***Ezekiel 36-37***

Prophecy! Yes, Prophecy! Prophecy to those who have been forsaken that they shall live and know who God is.

As Ezekiel witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of Israelites to Babylon, God told Ezekiel to prophecy new goodness to his people. Ezekiel thus prophesied, “[Y]e, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown,”
Ezekiel 36:9-10.

Ezekiel spoke God’s Word: “26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. 28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 29 I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. 30 And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen,”
Ezekiel 36:26-30.

Prophecy! Prophecy restoration to the people who have been casualties of the crises of this 20th and 21st centuries.

This week's Bible study finds answers to why we should prophecy based on Ezekiel's time in the Valley of Dry Bones. Why should we prophecy restoration when we can just work hard for changes that will help people? Why should we prophecy restoration when we can just wait for God to move while praying for them and wishing them the best? Why should we prophecy restoration to the people around us and put our words on the line?

I thank God for the people who have prophesied things for my life that will still come to pass. They encourage me to work harder when I would have given up. They give me a hope that God yet sees me and is working on my behalf. They encourage me that God is going to turn many things around for my good.

But I have to admit that once these people stuck their necks out and prophesied specific things for my future, they did go onto my "slightly crazy" list. I did look more closely at everything in their lives to see if what God said through them was really for me.

This Bible Study asks us to become one of those prophets and prophetesses who hear God's Word for others and prophesies restoration for them. Ezekiel 37 leads us through some of the reasons why God leads us to prophecy to others who need God's Word for them.

Some of the people we meet are in forsaken places and God has led us to them. Ezekiel said, *"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones. And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, they were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry,"* Ezekiel 37:1-2.

God leads us to places to see people and the valley experiences of their lives in ways that few people have ever

seen before. The bones of this valley were very dry because they had been forsaken for a long, long time. God leads us to suffering people who have been left alone without any hope of redemption. They need to hear us prophesy restoration.

We also need to prophesy restoration because our voice brings the fresh breath of God that people need. We are sometimes called to breath new life when we are surrounded by death. When Ezekiel prophesied to the dry bones, Ezekiel saw them come together. But there was no breath in them. *“[T]he sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them,” Ezekiel 37:8.*

Sometimes when people do not have the breath in themselves to express what they need and want from and with God, God calls us to prophesy restoration so that the Holy Spirit can move in their lives. God said to Ezekiel, *“[P]rophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live,” Ezekiel 37:9.*

God may need us to prophesy salvation to people who don't know that they need to be saved. God may need us to ask God for salvation for people who are paralyzed from asking for salvation themselves. God may need us to prophesy a new spirit for people who have been downtrodden into forgetting if they ever lived. God may need us to pray and prophesy restoration who cannot even hear what their own hearts are saying about their own lives and about God.

And finally, God may need us to prophesy restoration to people who are blessed but need help. The valley of dry bones *“lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army,” Ezekiel 37:10.* But they said, *‘Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.’ Ezekiel 37:11.*

God answered Ezekiel and said, *“Therefore, prophesy!”* to these people with no hope. *“12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.*

13 And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves.

14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord,” Ezekiel 37:12-14.

There are lots of people around us who look great but have lost hope. We might be one of them. But I dare us. Prophecy restoration and see if we don't get wind of God's Goodness ourselves. Prophecy restoration and see if God doesn't bring our long-forsaken issues to the surface so that we can give them to God to resolve them. Prophecy restoration and see if God doesn't give us a Godfidence that will exceedingly overcome all despairing news. Prophecy restoration and see if God does not give us a new spirit. May we prophesy, yes, prophesy the restoration of God's love!

God is some kind of wonderful!

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