

Calling To The Breath of God

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the need for a spiritual awakening and restoration, drawing parallels from Ezekiel 37 in the Old Testament. It highlights the despair and hopelessness many face, but encourages calling out to the Holy Spirit for empowerment and transformation. Just as God brought life to dry bones, there is a promise of revival and empowerment for those who feel spiritually dry and hopeless, leading to a victorious end-time army raised up by God.

Duration: 30:28

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1, Ezekiel 36:22, Acts 2:1, Joel 2:28, Romans 8:11

Topics: "Spiritual Awakening", "Empowerment through the Holy Spirit"

Description

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Transcript

I want to take a moment tonight to personally thank Pastor Tim Delina from Times Square Church for considering our request to change the worldwide prayer meeting from Tuesday night to Wednesday evening, same time, 7 p.m. Eastern time on Wednesday evening. And would you let your friends know, those that are online too as well, that this is going to be a permanent change for us. And Wednesday night, we're going to be here from 7 to approximately 8, 30 p.m. Eastern time.

So let your friends know. And again, thank you, Pastor Tim from Times Square Church. It works a whole lot better for us out here in Grantville and for the Bible School to make this change.

And I do believe that Times Square Church has something very, very special planned for you also now for Tuesday night as well, considering there's a vacancy there now. And I'll let Pastor Tim announce that to you in the very, very near future. So we're talking about people this evening that are online or maybe attending in the sanctuary tonight who are dealing with a situation that looks to be hopeless.

You see the promises of God, and maybe for years and years you've been trying to stir up your faith to believe the promises of God, yet you don't seem to see the change. You're now living in a desperate time

in your life, and you're saying, God, what is my hope for the future? And what is the remedy for what I'm feeling? I feel like my hope is gone. I feel like my life is spiritually dry.

I just don't see a way forward. And some people are just tired of trying to believe, tired of standing up and trying to make a way forward for yourself, only to fall on your face one more time. I want to speak to you from the book of Ezekiel chapter 37 tonight.

Ezekiel chapter 37 in the Old Testament, calling to the breath of God. So Lord, let me be the first tonight to call out to you, O precious Holy Spirit of God, I ask you for an empowerment that you alone are able to give those who call out to you, that you would take the words that you have written down in the text of scripture, and those words that you put upon my heart, and God, you would make it much more than it is. You would multiply it and meet the need in every heart that's gathered here tonight.

In every heart that's listening online, God, I'm willing to fight through whatever hell I have to fight through for the sake of those that are listening, those that you want to reach, those that are the part of this end time army that you're going to raise up in the earth. Oh God Almighty, God Almighty, come to us Lord and enable us to stand, enable us to breathe, enable us to move. As Paul the Apostle once said, in him we live and we move and we have our being.

Let that be our story, let that be our testimony in this last hour that we're now living in, and we ask it in Jesus' name, amen. Now Ezekiel chapter 36, in the beginning of the chapter, we see a synopsis in a sense of the sins of Israel, how God's own people had brought in the name of God as it is of that time into shame. They had dealt casually and falsely with the word of God and with the mandate that God had given their lives to be on the earth.

And verse 18 he says, for example, therefore I poured out my fury on them for the blood that they'd shed on the land and their idols with which they had defiled it. And verse 19, so I scattered them among the nations, they were dispersed throughout the countries. I judged them according to their ways and their deeds.

Verse 20 he says, when they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned my holy name. When they said of them, that's the people of God of that time, that these are the people of the Lord, and yet they have gone out of his land. In verse 21 he says, but I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.

So you just see this litany of God saying, you defiled my name, you walked unrighteously, and because of it, you were overpowered and you were scattered among the nations. And it was even an embarrassment when the people of foreign lands looked at you and said, these are the people of God, though they're not in the place they should be. These are apparently the people of God.

And the Lord now comes to an end of this and says, but I had concern for my own holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations, whether they went. And if you have time, you go to Ezekiel chapter 36, beginning at verse 22, and right through to the end of the chapter. And he starts saying, I'm going to do something for my name's sake.

And he says, I don't do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name's sake, which you profaned among the nations where you went. He says, I will sanctify my great name, and the nations shall know that I am the Lord when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. In other words, I'm going to do

something in you and for you that is going to lift my name again to reputation in the earth.

I will take you out of all nations. I will gather you out of all countries. I will bring you into your own land.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean, and I will cleanse you from your filthiness and all your idols. He says in verse 26, I'll give you a new heart, I'll put a new spirit within you. I'll take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

I will remove from you this obstinacy towards me, or this unbelief, in a sense, like in the graveyard of Lazarus that has rolled a stone in front of your future. This unbelief in your heart that says, this is just the way it's going to be. This is going to dictate my future.

This is as far as I'm able to go. And he says, no, I'll take that heart away from you, and I will give you a heart that is soft, it's malleable, I'm able to speak to you, and you're able to get out of the grave as Lazarus once did, and you'll start walking towards me. He says, I'll put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you'll keep my judgments and do them.

You will dwell in the land I gave to your fathers, and you will be my people, and I will be your God. I will deliver you from all your uncleanness. I'll call for the grain and multiply it and bring no famine upon you.

I'll multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields. You will never again bear reproach of famine among the nations. Then, he says, you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations.

Not for your sake I do this, says the Lord. Let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.

On the day that I cleanse you from your iniquities, I will enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. The desert land shall be tilled instead of lying empty in the sight of all who pass by. Then they shall say, this is the people outside of the kingdom of God.

This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the wasted and ruined and desolate cities are now fortified and inhabited. Then the nations which are left here all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted that which was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it.

Thus says the Lord God. I will also let the house of Israel inquire of me to do this for them. I will increase them with men like a flock.

In other words, they will begin to pray. When I have touched them, when I have lifted them, their focus now will no longer be on themselves, but on others. And they will start to say, O God, bring increase into the house of God.

Bring increase into the family of God. Like a flock offered is the holy sacrifice, like the flock of Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men, and they shall know that I am the Lord. An incredible promise.

The latter half of Ezekiel 36 is the promise of God to His people Israel. It's the promise. You dealt falsely in your relationship with me, and because of it, you were scattered.

Because of it, you lost your strength. You lost your produce. You lost your reputation.

You lost everything I wanted to give you, and you were scattered among the nations and became a reproach, not just to yourself, but also to my name, because they said these are the people of God. But I'm now going to bring you home. I'm going to do something in you that will cause the heathen nations around you to marvel.

They will know that only God could have done this. They will say, the Lord has built the ruined places. They will know that it is my hand and my hand alone.

So this is the promise. And like I read these prayer requests tonight, a lot of people have seen these promises in the Word of God, and they've hoped for a long time for these promises, and they read it and say, God, is it possible this could be mine? You see, because Ezekiel 37 now deals with the reality of their condition. 36 is a promise, 22 to the end, 37, we're now dealing with the reality of where the people actually are.

Then, he says, the hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the spirit and set me down in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones. And he caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley, and indeed, they were very dry. When I read these prayer requests, we have 419,959 prayer requests that have come in over the last several years from 211 countries and dependencies.

And when I read these prayer requests, they're predominantly from the family of God. I mean, there's a small percentage that would be from people outside the kingdom of God. We've had requests from Muslims, for example, or people incarcerated who are not believers asking for a reason for the hope that we have.

But by and large, I would say of the 419,000, probably 400,000 plus are the family of God. And when you read the prayer requests, you see the despair, the brokenness, the hopelessness. They are at altars somewhere.

Many of them go to church, but there's no growth, there's no victory. And week by week and day by day, the despair seems to be increasing. The hopelessness is getting to the point where this one person says, I don't even want to care anymore.

I don't want to get my, what she's saying or he's saying is, I don't want to get my hopes up one more time. I've believed the promises of God in the past, but I've been disappointed so many times that I just don't want to bring myself to try to believe again. And so God takes the prophet Ezekiel, he takes him into this place where the people actually are.

I think a lot similar to our day today. As I read these prayer requests and you look at it quite often, I feel my heart breaking. I said, God, these are your people all over the world and over 211 countries that are writing in.

And you look at the condition, the alcohol addiction, the addictions to pornography, the broken marriages, the wayward children, the despair, the despondency. And it must be similar to Ezekiel's day when the Lord took him, first gives him the promise, speaks to him the promise, then takes him into the reality of where the people really are. He said, he caused me to pass by and there were very many and they were indeed, they were very dry.

The moisture is almost gone. And then the self view of these bones in chapter 37 verse 11, he said, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. And they say, indeed, our bones are dry.

Our hope is lost and we ourselves are cut off. And if you're not careful with despondency, that's where it leads to this very thing. We are dry.

I can't seem to muster even a love for God. I'm finding it hard to muster a love for God. My hope for the future is so dim and distant that it's beyond, seems to be beyond my reach now.

And if you don't let God reveal to you his mercy, that you can get to the point of saying, I'm cut off. You can get to the point of thinking that your salvation is not real, that somehow you believe to falsehood and God has not redeemed you and he does not call you his own. And the bones were saying, what future could we possibly have? And God says, therefore, prophesy and say to them, verse 12, thus says the Lord God, behold, all my people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves and bring you into the land of Israel.

I'm going to break every place of death off of your life. I'm going to take you out of every hopeless place where you thought it's not possible you could ever have hope or see or have a future or live again. I'm going to do this for you prophesied to them.

In other words, speak to them about things yet to come. Tell them what I am about to do in their lives. You will know that I am the Lord.

Verse 13, when I have opened your graves, all my people and brought you up from your graves, I will put my spirit in you and you shall live and I will place you in your own land. I mean that place that I have destined for you from the time you were conceived in your mother's womb. There was a divine plan, God says in my heart for you, and I'm going to take you out from the place where you are.

I'm going to remove all the boundaries and bring you into that place that belongs to you in Christ. There's an inheritance that is yours. There's a victory that is yours.

There's a power that is yours. There's a purpose that is yours. There's something of God that he wants to show through your life that will be a display to the reality that he is God.

He is the one who moved upon the face of the earth when it was dark and void and without form. He is the one who spoke and the spirit moved and he said, let there be light and there was light. And God began to speak and the spirit began to move and the earth had nothing in it to resist the voice of God or the spirit of God.

And when you and I get to the place where we're no longer resisting the voice of God or the power of his Holy Spirit, suddenly boundaries come into our lives. Suddenly new life is created. Suddenly fields begin to blossom.

Suddenly light replaces the darkness and God comes and through it God is glorified. I will bring you, he said, into your own land and you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it. You shall know that it has not been your human effort, not by might, not by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord.

I spoke it and the Lord said, you will know that I have performed it. Hallelujah. Verses three to 10, he said, son of man, can these bones live? So I answered, oh Lord God, you know.

Again he said to me, prophesy to these bones and say to them, oh dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones, surely I will cause breath to enter into you and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you and you shall live.

Then you shall know that I am the Lord. In 2003, the Lord took us as a church to Jamaica, inner city Kingston, a well guarded, dark secret of the island of Jamaica that there was an area in the inner city of Kingston of 100,000 people, 100% unemployed. The whole area controlled by six different drug lords and six different factions.

It was a place of violence, a place of killing, a place of murder. In order to try and bring about some stability into this area, the government went in and they plowed down a 30 acre rectangular area right in the center of these six communities and they called it no man's land. No man was allowed to go onto that land because if you tried to cross it, you generally be shot by somebody from the other side and in 30 years, the 30 years prior to us going there, there had been over 800 murders on that piece of ground, 800 recorded.

They said there were more murders than that, but there were 800 recorded shootings and violent deaths with one side trying to cross over to the other. Everything always about drug control. The area was so violent that when the government wouldn't even dare shut the electricity off, nobody would pay their bill.

They wouldn't shut the electricity off and I was told stories of employees of the electric company going in to try to shut off the power and they would be killed. When the towers came down in 2001, the Jamaican government sent in the military and tried to conquer the area and in a bloody conflict, the military lost and the drug lords and their cohorts and their armed cohorts in the area, they won. It was to this area that the Lord sent us in 2003.

People thought we were mad literally going into this area. We hired a mercenary soldier to go in because we had to go to the home of each drug lord and get permission to go into the area because if you didn't and you went into that area, the odds of them killing you were quite high. And so this mercenary soldier who was feared and he was there serving the government on various initiatives and he told me personally, he said, you guys are nuts.

I'm just quoting him. You don't have no idea what you're dealing with. You're going to get yourselves killed.

You don't know the area that you've come into. And so we just endured his comments. We kept going forward.

I had a meeting with the about 50 to 60 pastors in the area, in the surrounding area. No pastors would dare even go into this area, but in the surrounding area, and I said, we're going to go in, we're going to be there for about four nights. The choir is going to sing.

I'm going to preach the word of God and the Lord's going to send a revival into this area. I don't know how it's going to happen, but he's spoken it to my heart. I see something ahead of us.

There's going to be a spiritual awakening in this area. And after we are done, after four nights, we're going to pack up and go home. And it's going to be your job to build churches in the area.

It's going to be your job to take care of the converts. It's going to be the local church's job to go in and God's going to break the spirit of poverty and violence in this area. I remember preaching the first night,

the people were so scared that nobody would come on.

There was a little gaggle of Christian people who had come out, mostly ladies, and they were so scared coming out that they would hardly dare. They just stood there. The people on the sidelines, on the 30 acre periphery were lined five, six, seven, eight rows deep.

They were too afraid to come onto that field because it was synonymous with murder and violence and killing. And so what happened was on the, I guess it was the second night. I was actually preaching from Ezekiel 37, and I was talking about what God can do and how God can break the spirit of violence and how God can give new life and what God is going to do in this area.

And at a certain point, I just saw the futility of my words. That's the only way I can describe it. I just saw the futility and I backed away from the pulpit and I just started to pray.

I started to call out to God, I said, Oh God, would you send your Holy Spirit? Would you have mercy on these people? They're all going to die in their sin. God, they live in poverty, they live in violence. They're too afraid to even come on the field.

Lord, there's nothing that's going to happen here if you don't send, God, if you don't send the Holy Spirit, nothing's going to happen here. God have mercy. And I started weeping and weeping and weeping for the people.

I felt the Holy Spirit come on me and the weeping of God became my weeping. And as I wept, I didn't even, I wasn't aware of it because I was weeping too hard, but as I was weeping, the weeping started to hit the front row of the people, then the second row of those on the field, then the third row, then it went to the sides, then it went to the back. A lady who was working a tent at the back said there was a thug standing there with a gun in his belt.

There was more guns than people on the field one night. And he started weeping and then with a Jamaican accent, he looked at her and he said, that man is crying for me, that man's crying for me. And he started to cry.

When I gave an altar call, people streamed out from everywhere. They streamed out from the darkness. It was amazing.

They came to that altar. And that night, I don't know how many people, hundreds and hundreds came to Christ. We had 2000 converts after four nights.

The spirit of violence was broken over the area. On that killing field, there's a church there now, there's a children's playground now. They play soccer on that field.

The point I'm trying to make is when God's about to do something, quite often he will draw some people who can hear him into his presence and declare to them what he's about to do. He declared it to Ezekiel in chapter 36, the turn of the 1900s. A young man called Evan Roberts, he was in Wales.

He was a minister in training. He was a children's church pastor, and he was in training for the larger pulpit ministry. And he was a man of prayer, and he began to hear something.

And when he began to hear it, he began to declare it. He said, folks, there's going to be a revival. God's going to pour out his Holy Spirit on Wales.

And what he does in Wales, he's going to send it throughout the world. There's going to be a worldwide spiritual awakening. And all of the people training him, and all the people in the church, they would come to hear him preach.

And they would come because they'd say, the poor young man, he had such potential, but he's lost his mind. He must be overworked. He must have had a mental breakdown.

You see, that's what unbelief does. Our hope is gone. Our bones are dry.

It was a very legalistic religion in Wales at this time, very heavy-handed, very much focused on the wrath of God against anything and everything. And everybody kind of walked on eggshells and kind of hunched over in church, just waiting to be beaten up one more Sunday. But Evan Roberts started stepping in the pulpit.

You want to know what his message was? God loves you. God loves you. God loves you with an unsurpassable love.

God loves you with a passionate love. God wants you to come home. God wants to forgive your sins.

God wants to empower you with his Holy Spirit. The people were rigid. They sat in their seats and they wouldn't move under the preaching of Evan Roberts.

In desperation one night, he was speaking these things and then he just stopped and he bent over and said, oh God, bend us. God, bend us. God, bend us in your presence.

God, help us not to be so rigid in your presence. You want to pour out your love and yet we put all kinds of terms and conditions on you. It was that night the presence of God swept the church and a worldwide Pentecostal revival began which moved from Wales eventually to Azusa Street here in the United States and the rest is history.

The Pentecostal movement of the present and the past generations was born through a 25-year-old Sunday school teacher who heard from God and had the audacity to stand up as Ezekiel did and start speaking to the bones about what God was about to do. So I prophesied, he says, as I was commended and there was a noise and a sudden rattling and the bones came together, bone to bone. Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them and skin covered them but there was no breath in them.

You see, every Tuesday and soon to be Wednesday night, there are people online all over the world. You're listening to the words that I'm speaking. Now some of you have risen up.

Some are even at this Bible school today. Others, you're there and week after week, you're like the bones. You come to the meeting and you've kind of fallen apart around your altar.

That's what happened. They just disintegrated around their altars. You hear the promises of God and you more or less come back together, bone to bone, and you feel strong again suddenly, at least for the duration of the prayer meeting or maybe a short time after.

And some of you have even stood up on your feet and suddenly something of God came into your heart, a faith that you never had before, a confidence in yourself and in your future. And you stood up and you wanted to believe God but the problem is you had no breath. Now let me explain what that means to you.

He said to Ezekiel, after the bones stood up, after there was a rattling, after they came together, after faith was starting to come back into the heart, the Lord now says to him, prophesy to the breath. The breath is the ruach of God. In other words, just as happened to me in Jamaica, he says to Ezekiel, call out to the breath of God.

Call out to the breath of God. You spoke to the people, you spoke to the bones, now speak to God. You call out to the only one who can make us live again, the one who can supernaturally empower us, the one who can do in us the very same thing that happened on the day of Pentecost in the upper room.

Call out to the breath of God. The ruach means the creative word of God. This is the definition.

It means air put in motion by divine breath, remember? And God said, let there be light, and there was light. And God said, and God said, and God said. It's divine, miraculous power by which formerly unable things begin to move, hallelujah.

It's the power of God. And where we were dead, where we were buried, where we had lost heart, where we had no hope, where we had no strength, we suddenly, by the enablement of God's Holy Spirit, are given the ability to stand up and walk again, given the ability to sing a new song that people can see and begin to turn to God, given giftings that we know we don't have, abilities that were not there before, a mind that we didn't have, words that were not our own, a heart that is so much larger than anything we've ever known in our lifetime, courage that was not naturally part of our life up to this point is suddenly infused into us by the Ruach of God, which also is defined as the Holy Spirit. And scripture tells us, he said, prophesy to the breath, agree with God, call out to him, lift up your voice.

This is why we encourage people at home, in your connect groups, after this meeting ends tonight, call out to the Holy Spirit. Don't be ashamed. Don't be afraid.

God didn't send his son to die for you on a cross to go back to heaven to fold his arms and just see how you're going to do with the truth he left you. No, he came after Christ was ascended into heaven, he came into that upper room and he's been coming into human life ever since. God made us his abode on the earth.

He made us his physical human temple. He enables us. He carries us.

He changes us. He quickens us. He makes us into so much more than we could ever be in ourselves.

And he said to me, prophesy to the breath, son of man, and say to the breath, thus saith the Lord, come from four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived and stood upon their feet an exceeding great army. Now here's my conclusion.

God has spoken to me. I've known this for years, that in a time of fear and in a time of great crisis, and I believe that 2022 is going to be a very fearful year for this world in many regards. I don't fully understand how or why, I can guess or conjecture, but I'd rather not.

I just know in my heart, it's going to be a very, very fearful time. But in the midst of this time, there's going to be an end time army raised up, which you, sir, sitting on your couch tonight depressed are going to be part of. You ma'am, who don't see a way forward, you've lost heart and hope for your future.

You who are struggling to get away from addiction, you who have a horrid image of yourself, you're all going to be set free. And by the power of God's Holy Spirit, you're going to be raised up on your feet again. And you are going to be this end time victorious army that gives glory to God.

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