

Second Sunday of Easter: Ezekiel 37:1–14

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Communion is more than a ritual. Those who believe that his word is added to the wine and the bread, and then you will receive something called the remission of all your sins. If you don't believe it, I wouldn't take it because it says you're drinking damnation.

John 10:7-11 (KJV) Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. [8] All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. [9] I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. [10] The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. [11] I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

The Lord gave his body and blood for us, the sheep of His pasture. We receive the broken body of Jesus and the resurrected body of Jesus.

It's still true, nothing but the blood of Jesus can wash my sins away. Don't forget that theologies were bought with blood.

How many of you want to be killed today? I hope I don't fail. The thing that killed your mother needs to be killed. What killed her? What took her away? Why was she under a burden her whole life? We don't war with flesh and blood. If you're a Christian and you're not at war, check your pulse and see if you're alive. Warfare is not an individual thing, or knowledge about war. It is a corporate thing. If any man is sufficient in himself, why waste your time going to church? The devil comes to kill; kill your children, kill you and me, today. I want to talk about how to win through losing.

I want to talk to you today about school, and other things. We're going to have a meeting tomorrow night at 7, if you have children in school. Even if you've had your child graduate, you might want to come because they still need to be equipped. It's amazing how they escape

from school and not much is required of them, and then they get out into the business world and wonder why they're not equipped. You might want to browse through the Hebrew Papers sometime.

The Lord will oftentimes give us a word through unbelievers. He also has ministering spirits. We're talking about realms today, different realms.

Walter Bergmann –The Creative Word

Every community that wants to last beyond a single generation must concern itself with education.

Now, education is a big word. Some people call indoctrination, cultural indoctrination, education. But if you're a Christian, you're aware how history can be distorted, and you are aware that if you're interpreting history through anything but Jesus Christ, it will be slanted and fit into what you believe. Real history is about Jesus Christ. It depends on what your concept of Jesus Christ; whether big or small. He became 100% man, like us, and emptied himself of all godly attributes. That is our good news. Through Him and through His death we receive eternal life.

If we're going to build generationally...and if you're not, I don't know what you're doing here. There is no righteousness being in this church - none. Like Jesus said to the disciples who were left. There were 5000 coming for bread and fish. I was one of them, weren't you? There were only 12 left out of the 5000. Imagine the church growth program he had. He blew it in one sentence. Some thing this church is a place to get a job or money. This is what they've come for. Only the weak, the base, the despised are called to be here. I'm talking about a real war your family is in. If you're not in a flow, a mutual conversation, what do you have to give them? Your anger? There are people who have been here 20 years and haven't gotten angry, or if they did, it was at the wrong thing. He is a man of war. Of course, if you believe in Jesus, then God has taken all of His wrath out on Jesus. What does it mean to believe on Jesus? It might mean to believe his Word. If you're going to follow me, you'll have to pick up your cross daily.

Every community that wants to last beyond a single generation must concern itself with education. Education has to do with the maintenance of a community through the generations.

There is a definition of Christian education, and maybe more so, Hebrew education. Read Luke 24 if you don't think Jesus was in the OT. Look, and see Him, and see the Gospel. The fulfillment comes later.

Education has to do with the maintenance of a community through the generations. This maintenance must assure enough continuity of vision, value, and perception so that the community sustains its self-identity.

Who are you? God has dealt with that question and you never have to ask it again if you have faith, and your children won't grow up in a world where outer appearances are more important than their hearts; making a show, looking good. I don't think they need to look ugly, but some of the things people get into... The virtuous woman is virtuous not because of the outward, but because of the adornments of her heart.

At the same time, such maintenance must assure enough freedom and novelty so that the community can survive in and be pertinent to new circumstances. Thus, education must attend both to processes of continuity and discontinuity in order to avoid fossilizing into irrelevance on the one hand, and relativizing into disappearance on the other hand.

Breaking it down a little: There are some things that are absolutely non-negotiable according to the Bible, but you don't take him out and stone him today.

The Old Testament mirrors a community that intended to last over the generations. Therefore the Old Testament had to be concerned with education. To be sure, this concern is not very often explicit in the text. But it is clearly a persistent and pervasive concern nonetheless, as the community struggled with continuity and discontinuity.

For Example: Women used to wear hats, or coverings. The covering is your mind, and that is symbolized in that liturgy. If you ask women why they wear it, they would say because their mother, their grandmother wore one. They miss the spiritual application. Why do women need to cover their heads? Because of the angels, the ministering spirits, the evil angels. Her husband should be covering her. But if he's not covered himself. The church is a canopy - a covering - a sacred canopy - and it has not been stolen from us, although it has been from the culture.

It is not a neutral literary process or simply a translation to get from one period to another; it is, instead, engaging in the text in subtle ways as the living Word of God which can give

vitality to the community. This hermeneutical enterprise permits the text to continue to have vitality, authority and relevance for new generations in new circumstances. This suggests, then, that the hermeneutical enterprise is something church educators can no longer regard as outside their responsibility.

Authority is the issue in your life, and in the life of everything happening in the world. What is covering, what is mediating your speech and your thoughts, and everything around you? Are your children grounded in the text?

God said, "Let there be," and there was. God prophesied worlds into existence and he destroys worlds, personal and national, even religious worlds, even Jewish or Christian worlds. He sends kings, like Nebuchadnezzar, to destroy what he is through with, but always with a redemptive purpose. God is a redemptive God. Read Jeremiah.

For if we can understand afresh how the Bible is the living Word of God. We may even come to see education in the church and outside the church not as a professional, rational enterprise, but as a calling that is urgent both for survival of the community and for the faithfulness of the community. Teaching is about the community, not about you.

Well, what about my children? Take your son up the mountain and kill him. "Well, this was spoken to Abraham, not me." I'm not surprised at

For if we can understand afresh how the Bible is the living Word of God. We may even come to see education in the church and outside the church not as a professional, rational enterprise, but as a calling that is urgent both for survival of the community and for the faithfulness of the community. This, then, marks our starting point: the process of canon is a main clue to education, a process which partakes of stability and flexibility, continuity and discontinuity.

The gospel is not rigid, but there is a stability in it.

By attending to this confessional act, we may avoid the hazards of rigid fossilization which hold to a frozen, unresponsive canon, and to a deep relativizing which gives up everything for a moment of relevance. The canonical process is not done by outsiders or by calculation or by professional educators. It is a confessional, theological act done only by those for whom everything is at stake.

It follows that the educational process, faithfully carried out, can be performed only by those who submit to the canonical process. Everything is at stake for them in the educational

process because that process is intimately linked to the canonical process, where everything is likewise at stake.

If everything is not at stake, you have somewhere else to go other than the community.

There is a mutual conversation which is a means of grace. If you're fighting in your own strength, you may wonder why you get beat up, or why your children turn out that way.

Starting with the 5 books of Moses, which are attributed to Moses? It doesn't matter. The Word of God is what matters.

This canonical process is not done by outsiders. It follows that the educational process, faithfully carried out, can be performed only by those who submit to the canonical process. Everything is at stake for them in the educational process because that process is intimately linked to the canonical process, where everything is likewise at stake.

That includes your children.

If you're not standing up as the light of the world, you're

It follows that the educational process, faithfully carried out, can be performed only by those who submit to the canonical process. Everything is at stake for them in the educational process because that process is intimately linked to the canonical process, where everything is likewise at stake. There is not a learner in the church, young or old, who is not in fact engaged in the process of canon. My concern is to address the intentional educational task of the church.

My concern is to address the intentional educational task of the church. But I would also insist that every formal and informal act in preaching, in liturgy, and in pastoral care (even counseling) is a canonical enterprise of probing the normative, of casting off old pieces of canon that are no longer vital, and of embracing new aspects of canon which addresses us inescapably.

Canon has to do with life. And in the end there can be no noncanonical life or ministry which can have any sense, meaning, joy, or certainly, staying power.

We may begin our consideration with Jer. 18:18, a verse often cited as a way of entry into the canon. The verse poses serious difficulties. It is attached to the complaint of vv. 19-23, but it does not seem to be an integral part of the complaint. Rather, it is a quote set in the mount of

Jeremiah's opponents. Its function appears to be an attack upon the authority of the prophet. The verse is nicely framed in an inclusion:

At the beginning: Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah...

At the end: Come, let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not heed any of his words.

Jeremiah 18:18 (KJV) Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

Open your eyes. You'll see that your enemies are greater than your individual wisdom of abilities. Open your eyes again and you might see chariots of fire.

The tongue of the wicked kills Christ and that is why Scripture says they crucify to themselves Christ afresh, out of their tongue.

It is not clear who Jeremiah's opponents are (not to the natural mind, not to the unmediated mind, the mind who has not had the hermeneutic, and the right interpretation for the moment), or what the plot is. But what is important for us is that inside the summons to conspiracy is a summary of Israelite authoritative knowledge:

If you're living under an old interpretation, you might as well have a bun on your head, and get rid of those skirts today. That was necessary in another time, another culture, but we want to get to the Word.

Surely (ki) the Torah shall not perish from the priest,

Nor counsel from the wise,

Nor word from the prophet.

Perhaps the conspirators convinced themselves that they could proceed against Jeremiah because the knowledge structures and the authority structures were sure and reliable. Therefore, this particularly troublesome man was dispensable.

Jezebel today is the one who hates the prophets, true prophets. She has 400 false prophets to bid her cause. Elijah stands alone.

2 Chron. 18:5-7 (KJV) Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they

said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand. [6] But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him? [7] And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

All flesh is grass and is today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven. When you're led of the Word of God, Jesus Christ, our Savior, you are forever, in Him.

The minute you confront a lie with the truth, it is amazing what will pop up. "You're not listening to me. You always interrupt me."

How many of you know what I'm talking about?

It may give us some pause about education in a community of faith that the modes of knowledge and the authoritative offices are here bracketed by a summons to eliminate them. The structure of the passage suggests how precarious instruction is in Israel, perhaps because of how subversive it is perceived when faithfully done.

But what interests us is the middle part of the verse, which identifies three sources of knowledge and three authoritative offices. If the verse stems from the seventh century, as seems plausible, we suggest that these three modes are not late developments which can be arranged chronologically. This old assumption can no longer be sustained, especially about wisdom. Rather, the threefold pattern here points to parallel and persistent modes of knowledge and education which must have been operative from of old in Israel. If we therefore want to understand education in its fullness, we must take all three into account:

The Torah of the priest,

The counsel of the wise,

The word of the prophet.

Law has more to do than tell you what to do and what not to do. It has to do with instruction. The instruction of God in scripture converts my soul, particularly when it is in your mouth. My soul is off somewhere and all of a sudden the Word of The Lord comes forth and shows me.

The word of the prophet is essential in Israel.

Let's talk about normal children for a change: How many of you would like normal, really normal, godly normal children? If you want them, you can have them.

Acts 2:14-18 (KJV) But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: [15] For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. [16] But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; [17] And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: [18] And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Now Peter takes the Old Testament and brings it into the new, makes it relative to this new situation.

And your sons and your daughters will be fearful, worried, and silent? No, that's not what he says.

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions. What visions are your young men seeing? Without a prophetic vision they will perish; thinking about girls' frames all the time, or worse, because they have no vision. It won't take them long to start fantasizing, or they'll be angry. We've got angry children in 3rd grade.

What was it you wanted here, bread, fish, some money, a job, a place to dump your children off? "Well, don't be talking that way. That's the truth and I don't like it. You'd better shut up or we'll kill you with our tongues."

Let me read to you what happens to these fathers, some promises:

Matthew 24:9 (KJV) Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

They took Jesus by subtlety and killed him.

Mark 9:31 (KJV) For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

Your life is to be very active if you've got neighbors. No one else exists to you? That would be your problem. You don't have to strive in the flesh.

John 10:7-11 (KJV) Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. [8] All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. [9] I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. [10] The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. [11] I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Satan comes not but to steel and to kill. If you preach the Word of God they'll hate you and all hatred is murder. Whoever hates the Word of God is a murderer, even if it comes out of your mouth.

Let's see some of these normal children. Your sons and your daughters will speak a word of prophesy. They'll speak through the Spirit of God. They won't be silent. Your young men will see visions. Without that greater and magnificent vision, you think you can bring your vision to pass. When your vision is beyond your capabilities, you'll see. I have a vision that my children would live and be filled with the Holy Spirit not with things of this world; fears, worries, and cares, and worries about what men think of them.

You are free of all men, but then free to be the servant of all.

It doesn't say the older brother came into the party. You don't hear that too well until you're the older brother, and the reality strikes you that there is nothing good in your flesh, and that Adam is the older brother. What is the real issue?

Genesis 3:1 (KJV) Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

Who is God to be higher than you, or any authority in this world to be higher than you? Who are they, and who is the Word of God to tell you what to do? That was the issue - what was going to mediate, what was going to ride her beast, Adam. Was it going to be the Holy Spirit, Christ, or the anti-Christ? Were they going to be under the covering of God or be their own covering? Satan today has an army of fallen angels, messengers. Someone will pick up an offence, and start nurturing it. They look for other people who are against God's anointed, the

authority, you. They hate authority and have always hated authority and won't change. It can only be put to death, daily.

Ephes. 6:12 (KJV) For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

1 Cor. 11:10 (KJV) For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.

The angels bring tidings, messengers, by implication, a pastor.

A husband is a pastor, a father is a pastor, the angelus of his own home, and unless he lets other angels begin to prophesy. We've been given weapons mighty for the casting down of imaginations, vain imaginations, reasonings. Luther says the angels hang out in reason.

What is Satan: "I will rule. I will be as the most high. Who is anyone to tell me...?" The heart of Jesus is, "I don't rule. I serve."

People will do anything to rule, create a scenario where they can be right. They'll create it if they don't have it. They'll set you up and say that they did everything you told them, and it didn't work. They'll cry and get all emotional - use every trick on the book, and you should scorn it, and teach your children to scorn some things. "You're not nice, like Jesus." What did your being nice get you?

One minute manager meets the monkeys. We don't want any 2-minute managers calling up David. I can tell you when they start fighting they want to wear out the saints of God. It isn't even you. This is why I can speak so boldly, because I know it is not flesh and blood. Have you ever given yourself over to those offences? It's your opportunity to repent now.

We're talking about education too.

The torah claims basic authority and teaches with authority and certainty. We were slaves in Egypt.

This is where me and other brothers took our stand against this world and stood in the midst of Jordan, in the midst of death.

Jesse - why are you even here? The reason why I'm here doing what I'm doing? I saw my dad fighting, and realized that is what I wanted to do. If you're fighting in your own strength, I

can't have much sympathy if you get beat up. What was it you wanted, John Dillon said.

Your monkeys are your monkeys and you ought to bear your monkeys. Everybody ought to know. If they do, why don't they tell me? Because you've got a gun. Maybe this person is in your own household. I've run into people like that and I would have like to tell them something. Children need to know that they're part of something bigger than their own family, even.

Prophetic vision - sight mentally. If the old father isn't dreaming and has that to give to his children, what are they settling for - this cultural thing? The mother and fathers are part of the mystery, and children want to be in on the secret, become part of telling the story. If you don't fill their empty hearts with a vision the world will fill them. You may go along thinking things are great, but they aren't. We don't war against flesh and blood. Knowledge can be used wrongly to keep out the prophet, that troublesome man.

Matthew - The disciples, why did the teachers say Elijah has to come before Elijah. John the Baptist had to come;

Malachi 4:5-6 (KJV) Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: [6] And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

A day is a lifetime. The eleventh hour. The denary that God gave you, that you've never received. Someone got something you didn't and you were jealous and started judging the Lord of the vineyard and started murmuring against him. You are the denary, and your life is in Christ, and Christ is everything.

Malachi 4:5-6 (KJV) Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: [6] And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Earth, means you. God speaks in code, in mystery. The hermeneutic you're hearing today, you judge it. Cursed - if my heart doesn't turn to God I'm living under a curse. "That sounds like law to me."

Where does John go to preach? Well, let me show you the rest of the story.

Poets - killers, he's got a gun. There are some things he likes to kill; not people.

Neutron Bombs - they wouldn't destroy property, they'd just zap everything. The Lord just zaps the things that would kill you or your family. He leaves you in tact, one of you. He even leaves the other one to hang around for a while. There's no point in blowing up a city because there are good things in there we can use. Let's just nuke the people.

Ezekiel 36:1-3 (KJV) Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord: [2] Thus saith the Lord God; Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession: [3] Therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people:

Would you even know that you have a desolate place in your heart, or does the world still have you locked in its grasp? If you don't have that sight vision, if your eyes haven't been opened, if the Word of God doesn't come into your heart and mediate your life, the world will. You'll be looking for something to fill the loneliness, the barrenness. Maybe now you see your folly, and I can preach Gospel to you.

Ezekiel 36:5-7 (KJV) Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey. [6] Prophesy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye have borne the shame of the heathen: [7] Therefore thus saith the Lord God; I have lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame.

When you believe in Jesus Christ as your savior, then you'll know that God's had has been raised against his Son, Jesus. This is not about then, it's about now. Preachers - you have 35 minutes every Sunday to raise them from the dead, but I'm afraid these days it takes a little longer; in all due respect.

They will burn like a prophet coming out of the desert, the backside of the desert. It's a little more than getting up on Sunday and going to church; it's going out to find the prophet. My daughter is vexed with a devil, and it's about me. Yes, absolutely. Make no mistake. If you allow that around you, you are helping the vexation process and are contributing to it. Can a

Christian be vexed, filled with fear and worry? When you come to the prophet, he has nothing good to say about you. No wonder you get mad.

Father's teach your children, not just talk at them. Talk with them like you're instructing them. They want to talk to you. Once that is established, everyone can rest. It's great if your children want to watch the football game today. Everything is going to get cleaned up around the house, and the garage will never look so good, and their mother is sitting down with a cup of tea and has nothing to do. We want perfection in that realm. "Well, you're putting a law on them." It is for their good. We want our children, when they get out in the world, to know not to do schlock work. This is part of the wisdom teachings - the book of Proverbs, and job, and Ecclesiastes. The basic, foundational thing is the Pentateuch, the first 5 volumes.

How could you read the book of Hebrews without an understanding of the sacramental system?

Tell the prodigals to take it and go. If you can find a better deal than here, go and get it. But, if what they're getting here is a raw deal, then they will find a better deal. Something has to fill the void.

Fathers, teach your children. Some children have very little sense of order in their lives - wisdom is missing. Parents are usually caught up in internal warfare.

1 Cor. 14:1 (KJV) Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

That you would prophesy. Normal children, our sons and daughters, prophesy. They are not silent in darkness or are not on the defensive anymore. They have been washed from all their sins, daily. They don't have to hide anymore. We're sinners here. Have you ever had the joy of agreeing with God that your heart, your flesh, is totally depraved? There is no one to be offended with if you've seen your offence. How long have you been nursing the thing? Deception is deceitful because people don't know they're deceived. They look for reasons to confirm their agenda, and watch for evil and are happy when they see it. When you ask them for forgiveness, they'll throw it up in your face. "That's the first time you've talked nice to me in the last 10 years." Why can't you talk kindly to some? Because they're serving up stale, rancid meat. They want to be god and anything above them they hate.

You don't want to participate; passage will be made for that man, because he knows they'd only drag down everyone else. Why don't you tell someone, in humor, "Passage will be made for you?"

Ezekiel 37:1-2 (KJV) 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, [2] And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

Where's the valley? Right here. Who has been dry? Those not in a mutual conversation, not being watered. Husbands love your wives, and how does God define it? Love, wash her, and cleanse her. Those who don't want to receive that baptism is a daily affair, they have their reward, and live in a dry place. They're off in their heads all the time, spinning and toiling in a perverted mind, and offended mind. It is God that is saying it. The love of God that lives in man.

Ezekiel 37:3 (KJV) And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

There's nothing too impossible for you. Nothing is too impossible for God, even your situation, even your un-renewed mind, your dried out mind, is not impossible to God.

Ezekiel 37:4 (KJV) Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

Aren't you tired of being dead yet, the deadness of the old mind, the imagination, worry, fear, judgment, all that? God is so beyond your desires, your fears. He can bring peace to your soul right now, in your hearing.

Ezekiel 37:4 (KJV) Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

Prophesy - this is something your sons and daughters do if they are normal Christians.

Ezekiel 37:5 (KJV) Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

Behold, you that are offended and have blown it again 7 x 70. Sheep sometimes do dumb things, like trying to eat dry grass and scrape their noses. The conclusion: You're still His

sheep that he's lent to me and I can't escape it. I don't want to escape it, but there are times I'd like to say some things.

Ezekiel 37:5-7 (KJV) Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: [6] And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. [7] So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

There was a noise, not silence, coming out of your mouth.

The bones came together - community. The bones got married, married to the Lord. That is the only unity that really ever happens; Adam said, "This is bone of my bones," and in Ephesians, Jesus said, "This is bone of my bones." All your husband has is yours now, and all you have, your sins, are his. Stop trying to keep them. Give them all to Jesus. I've been pretty bad. Stop it! You've been far worse than that.

Ezekiel 37:10-11 (KJV) So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

[11] Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

What's that compared to God? He seems to take pleasure in dried parts, people whose hope is lost, people who are cut off from one another. He loves them, he especially loves the despised. Prophecy to those in ultimate despair and tell them:

Ezekiel 37:12 (KJV) 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.

Graves - the tomb of your mind, your shrunken brain, your small vision, blaming someone else. It would be better to blame God. This is always better than blaming people. He allows things to happen and doesn't apologize for it. The unpreached God never has anything good to say about you. The peached God says to you, "Beloved."

Ezekiel 37:13-14 (KJV) 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.

Resurrection - daily - a daily message for me. We have a God who changes history. You want to know about history? Read the story of Joseph. You'll read about God's slant on history. In God's mercy he calls you his beloved. The fruit of prophesy is life.

A father prophesies. A father loves his children enough to tell them it's wonderful they want to watch the game, and I delight in saying yes to you, but first I'm going to train you to be responsible.

Acts 2:17-18 (KJV) And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: [18] And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

We are his vineyard, the sheep of his pasture. He is the good shepherd that lays his life down for the flock. He is the one who marries us. Look who he married? No one could boast. God has chosen the base, the weak, the despised, and the things on not many people's radar. If you are, you will be evil spoken of.

Psalm 73; the man who wasn't trouble was an evil man. Many are they that rise up against you, my brother and sister, and they will tell you there is no hope in God today, and they will conspire against you, but God is greater. There are chariots of fire, angels, spirits, and ministers of flaming fire. His Word is fire that burns up the chaff in our lives.

The gospel is this: When the sheep are walking through the valley of the shadow of death, he leads them to still waters, peace of heart, rest. He gives them faith. The hearing of the Word, an outside gift, is faith. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. He gives you that. And then he leads you to still waters and green pastures. Your rod and your staff is Christ, the bread of life. He leads you.

Thank you, Lord. He married you. He said, "All I have is yours. I want all your sins, can I please have them?" I will declare to you the forgiveness of your sins, every one of you, because God has commanded me to say to you in the name of Christ, I forgive your sins, not based on anything you've done, but purely because of the Gift of Christ - what he has done.

AMEN

SOURCE

Sermon Notes - Don O'Connor - 9/14/08

(The message through Jennifer's ears.)