

The Unexpected and Ongoing Call of the Comeback – July 28 & 29, 2018
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Ezekiel 37:1-14

- Set the scene of this text (1-2). Put yourself in Ezekiel's shoes – what must it feel like for “the hand of the Lord” to be on you and for the Spirit to bring you someplace? What did the Lord ask Ezekiel (3)? What do you think of Ezekiel's response?
- What prophecy was Ezekiel called to proclaim to the bones (4-6)? Nothing should ever change or become new for dry bones, but our God of comebacks says otherwise! Respond to the Lord.
- What happened as Ezekiel prophesied (7-8)? Why do you think he was obedient to the command to prophesy in such an unusual situation? How do you think he felt to see the prophecy immediately come to pass? What happened next (9-10)?
- What do these bones actually represent (11)? What better word does God have for his people, who feel entirely spent (11-14)? Meditate on the Lord's promise in verse 14: I will put my Spirit in you and you will live. Tell God what this means to you.

Day Two: Matthew 9:35-38

- What was Jesus up to (35)? Consider the three-pronged approach of his ministry: teaching, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing. Surely, this drew in people of every disposition. What is it about Jesus that draws *you* in?
- What was Jesus' response to the crowds (36)? Why (36)? Why do you think the people following Jesus around were “harassed and helpless”? Today, what sort of people are in this condition? In what ways do you feel this is *your* condition? Quiet your thoughts, open your hands and receive Jesus' compassion now. Pray all who are “harassed and helpless” would know his compassion.
- After considering the state of those in the crowds, what did Jesus say to his disciples (37-38)? What exactly is the harvest, and who are the workers? Consider Jesus' words in light of the last part of Vineyard Columbus' mission statement: we...”partner with Christ to heal the world.” What work will you do in the harvest of healing?

Day Three: Mark 2:18-22

- What were John's disciples and the Pharisees doing (18)? What did this prompt some people to ask Jesus (18)? When enforcing rules takes precedence, what might one fail to see or receive?
- According to Jesus, why aren't his disciples fasting (19-20)? What do you think of how he likens himself to a bridegroom? What does he mean by being “taken from” his followers? Do you agree with Jesus' logic on appropriate times to fast? Why or why not?
- What imagery does Jesus then use to further convey the idea that in him, new ground is being broken (21-22)? What old garments and old wineskins remain in your life? What “new wine” does Jesus want to pour into you? To receive this new wine without ruining it or losing it, what needs to be different about your life? Ask God to begin working this change in your heart.

Day Four: Mark 4:1-20

- What is the setting of this text (1)? Put yourself in the crowd on the water's edge. How many people are there? What's the weather like? How far out onto the lake is Jesus? What else do you notice?

- Summarize the parable Jesus told, being sure to describe the four different types of soil (2-8). What do you think it means to have “ears to hear” the spiritual truth in Jesus’ parables? When asked about parables, what did Jesus say (11-13)? Instead of shouting it from the rooftops, why do you think he desired for the truth to leak out in this mysterious fashion?
- What is the meaning of the parable of the sower (14-20)? Consider those who hear the word – the truth of God found in Jesus – but then fall away because of hardship or distraction. Do you know such a person? Does it describe you? Pray for transformed hearts, ones that are like the good soil in verse 20.

Day Five: Romans 5:1-11

- How do we have peace with God and access to him (1-2)? What do believers boast in (2)? Besides hope, in what other ways do we experience God’s glory – his very best for us (3-4)? How does it make you feel that suffering could be God’s best for us? If you’re still waiting for it to produce perseverance, character and hope in your life, ask the Lord to speak a special word to you today.
- As audacious as it seems to put our hope in Jesus, why does it never put us to shame (5)? When did Christ die for us (6)? In this context, what do you think it means to be powerless? How does Jesus’ act of sacrificial love stand out from all other such acts (7-8)? You never have to clean yourself up for Jesus; he authors every renewal in your life. What change is he offering you today?
- Trace the connections between the justification, salvation and reconciliation we receive in Christ (9-11). To be reconciled to God is the ultimate comeback for humanity. Respond to the Lord.