

May 20, 2018 Ezekiel 37:1-14: The Holy Spirit Conscripts a Vast Army, Rev. George Ferch
Fellow-Redeemed,

- In a room beneath the football stadium at the University of Tennessee, there are boxes and boxes of dry bones.
- Can these bones live? That was the very question the Holy Spirit asked the prophet Ezekiel.
- **The Holy Spirit Conscripts A Vast Army.** He would conscript an army from spiritual corpses. He would conscript an army by the power of God's Word.
- Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones was not a vision of the physical resurrection of all the dead on Judgment Day.
- Ezekiel's vision was of the conversion of many among God's chosen nation.
- The Spirit conscripts a vast army of believers.
- This conscription continues today as the Word of the Lord calls sinners to repentance and faith by the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- When we take the Word of the Lord out, only the Lord knows if that person will believe it or not.
- The new life that fills the dead hearts of spiritual corpses is Christ's life.
- The Holy Spirit accomplishes that new life in us.
- Because of my sins, I am by nature lifeless, listless and hopeless.
- With the good news of full forgiveness in Christ Jesus, the Spirit calls us to live.
- The Holy Spirit brought into the church about 3,000 souls on Pentecost. Like Ezekiel before him and God's faithful spokesmen after him, Peter prophesied the Word of the Lord.
- There is no human word that can bring to life those boxes of dry bones down in Knoxville. Someday God will restore them at the resurrection of the dead.
- In the meantime, a greater resurrection daily takes place. By the Word of the Lord, the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian Church. To those who are cut to the heart by their sins, God's Word is life giving, "The promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call." Amen. <SDG>