

DEAD IN SINS



Ephesians 2.4 “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”

- What does it mean to be alive?
 - It's one of those questions that seems easy to answer, but when you try it's not.
- There's plenty of things which have the quality we would call alive.
- And things we'd say are not.
- But no scientist on earth can tell you what the fundamental difference is on a molecular level.
- And they certainly can't make something that is not alive- come to life.
- Living things
 - They move
 - They grow
 - Some even breathe
 - A worm is alive
 - Is animal life different from plant life?
 - Plants don't breathe
 - Animals don't use language
 - People have the power of reason and, creativity, consciousness (self awareness)
 - We ask questions like “What am I, why am I here?”
 - Some even say “We're born into the grave!”

- There seems to be different types of life in people - two types
 - Some people seem alive in ways others don't
- They have an awareness others don't
 - Sensibilities and abilities others don't
 - We could call it spiritual life.
- They have life in the sense they have spiritual awareness
 - They can pray in a real way
 - They can sense the conviction of sin
 - They can understand the spiritual lessons in the Bible- they recognise its truth
 - They have the power of faith to believe
 - They breathe in the Word, they exhale in prayer.
 - They exercise their faith in service to God - they walk in His ways.
 - They have inner strength like spiritual muscles.
- Once they didn't, they were dead in their sinful ways.
 - No desire for, or understanding of, God.
 - They didn't believe in, or live for, much.
 - But now they're changed
 - All of a sudden it seems they've been brought to life!
 - Now they live for Christ, and will fight the good fight for Him.
- And, of course, they have been brought to life.
 - It's an inner awakening (or as the Bible calls it "quickening")
 - All we can see are the outward effects, but it's still very noticeable.
- This is what the verse in our reading is all about.- **Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us**
- "But Sir surely everyone is alive"
 - Yes, like a plant or an animal, they even have more- a reasoning mind, emotions and a will to make choices- way beyond the instinct of animals.
 - We're clearly made differently
- But there's something crucial missing
 - There's something wrong with us.
- Before you're brought to life by God, you can't feel this spiritual life, even though we're designed for it...but you may sense that there's something missing.
 - You may also feel some moral discomfort
- You see we're made of more than

- MIND, AFFECTIONS and WILL
- THERE IS A SPIRIT
and a CONSCIENCE
- **The conscience** can be abused and ignored by us, but it still reacts to our behaviour.
- **The Spirit**, on the other hand, has fallen into a coma because we have fallen from a right relationship with God.
 - The Spirit is the part that relates to God
 - And it is **this** that is **as good as dead** before we are saved by Him.
 - That's why we can't save ourselves.
- How can I get this across to you?
 - I can explain this theologically,
 - but a picture speaks a thousand words
- So let's look at how the Bible pictures it

Explain Ezekiel's vision

- The Lord shows His prophet a vision
 - Its a valley
 - Hot, dry dusty (but there's worse..a terrible sight!)
 - Its full of human bones!
 - Many of them, they'd been dead for a long time, very dry. Amongst the animal waste.
 - He is asked to go around and look at them all.
- Look at the human race.
 - Many just exist to indulge in their sins,
 - no inner spiritual life. DEAD
 - Very many don't know God spiritually.
 - The Jews of old were like this, that's why Ezekiel is shown this as a picture.

Ezekiel 37

"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, there were very many in the open valley(no shelter); and, lo, they were very dry.

- Then God asks Ezekiel - "what do you think. Can these old dry bones live?"
 - Ezekiel replies "God, You know"

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.

It seems impossible

- Then God says something strange

- "preach to these bones".
- Say - "Hear the Bible, I will put the breath of life in you- give you muscles, and skin, you'll start breathing, hearing and feeling things."

Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: 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.

- So Ezekiel does what he is told because he is God's obedient servant.
- As he does it, he hears something.
 - A noise of rattling, shaking, moving
 - The bones were coming together as they should be, each to the correct bone.

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. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

- Like a person starting to come alive spiritually.
 - Feeling, a sense of God,
 - a conviction of sin,
 - they start to listen to the preached Word of the Gospel - How Christ came to save sinners by a perfect life and atoning death. To repent and believe in Him.
 - Before we know God, everything is all out of place, not only out of joint, but fallen apart.
 - We're a dead pile of bones.
 - Spiritually dry, no living waters within you.
- When God speaks to us it's like we start to come to life.
- But we're not alive yet, just starting to see, feel and understand.
 - Maybe people like this start to think, ask questions, feel guilt. "You know it's a strange thing, no matter how low you sink, there's still a right and a wrong. And you always end up choosing. Go one way, just to live with yourself. Go the other, and you're still in your body moving around, but you're really dead, and you don't even know it!"
- So Ezekiel is asked to do something more, after the preaching.
 - Something so vital that without it no one would ever be saved back to life.
- He is asked to speak to the wind.

Then said he unto me, Prophesy 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 upon these slain, that they may live.

- What is this?
 - The wind is often a powerful symbol of the Holy Spirit of God.
 - That mysterious Third Divine Person.
 - He is the One who applies the Salvation that comes by the work of Christ upon Calvary to people's hearts.
 - It is He who breathes life into dead souls like ours and causes us to come to life spiritually.
- So Ezekiel does what he's told.
 - What is he doing?
 - He's praying of course.
 - And this is what has to happen for anyone to be saved.
 - Are there any here who are saved? you know it.
 - Do you also know that many were praying for you.
 - They didn't stop, for years.
 - Parents, Sunday school teachers, Bible class, College class, Prayer meetings - over and over- "Spirit come and save this young man, he's dead in trespasses and sins"
- Ezekiel says [So I prophesied as he commanded me,](#)
- What happened.?
 - What often happens.
 - God hears and answers the prayers of His people.

[and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."](#)

- The people came together in understanding and conviction.
 - Shaking bones, faint words, a prayer with dry lips. "Help me, save me!"
- But then God brings them to life
 - They revive, they can stand for Christ in 'death valley'. They're saved!
 - And we'll stand for Him in a dead world.
- An exceeding great army.
 - An army?
- Yes, there's a war on.
 - A spiritual war.
- You've become a Christian?
 - Praise God. There is nothing more important or glorious.
- But know this.

- You were lying dead before, in the filth of sin.
- But you're in a war now.
- You were a useless slave.
- Now you're a soldier.
- You're posted in a terrible day and age, in the last days.
- Satan left you alone before
- But now you'll feel the struggle against sin. You'll sense the danger.

- What are you going to do?
 - Sit down. Take your ease?

- No, you've been doing nothing for long enough.
 - Now we stand, now we fight!!

- Fight the false ideologies,
 - fight our own old nature,
 - fight temptation,
 - fight Satan.
 - Go out, save the lost.
 - Fight the good fight.

- They'll be hostilities
 - You'll feel the battle like never before
 - Before you were dead.
 - We are saved to serve, saved to fight

- You know it, because on your head is a **helmet of salvation**.
 - You had nothing before
 - But now you're equipped
- You have strong belief- **a shield of faith**
- You have **truth** wrapped around you **like a belt**, it's not loose, but strong and tight
- with **a sword strapped to it**- this is the **Word of God**.
- You now know where to walk, to take the **Gospel** to the world, **your feet have boots on**.
- You were full of shame before, but now you're proud to be called a Christian.
- You say it with your chest which is covered in the **Righteousness of Christ** Who was resurrected first for us. **A breastplate**.
- It wasn't earned, it was given freely to you by grace.....Why?
 - Because God loved you.

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”

- So to the Sinner-
 - Wake up and be saved -

- find the Well on this dusty road of life
- Let me ask you something...

“Do you hear the wind blowing?:)” in your soul?

- To the Saint-
 - Realise He's made a dead soul live!
 - stand up and go into battle like Joshua or David, knowing Christ has given you the victory.