



LESSON 1 EZEKIEL AND THE DRY BONES

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Has Good News for His People

SCRIPTURE: Ezekiel 37

GOD'S BIG STORY: God shows Ezekiel a vision reassuring the prophet that God still had good news for His people—He would bring them back to Him and put His own Spirit of life in them.

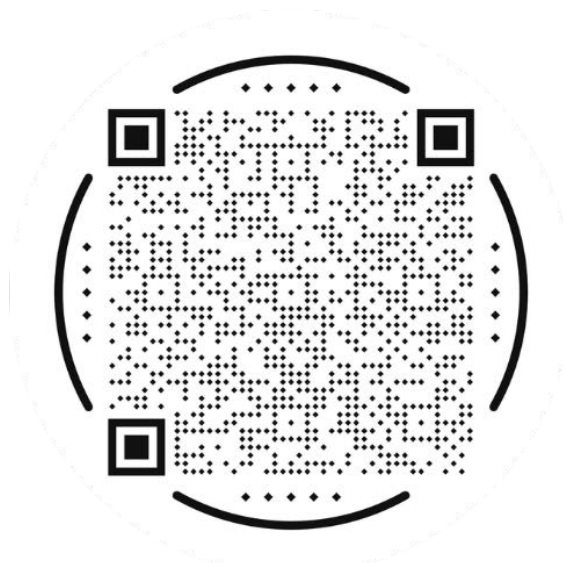
WORD OF WONDER: Jesus forgives our sins, saves us, and gives us new life. —from Titus 3:5

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Play Stations:
 - Mountains and Valleys
 - Dry Bones Sensory Play
 - Ezekiel and the Dry Bones Coloring Sheet
- Curiosity Activity: Make It Move
- Word of Wonder
- God's Big Story/Snack
- Circle Time: Special Delivery
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Full Body Worship
- Game: Share the Good News



Risen Preschool Spotify playlist



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Has Good News for His People

SCRIPTURE: Ezekiel 37

WORD OF WONDER: From Titus 3:5

One of the great things about social media is witnessing others' good news. Marriage proposals, pregnancy announcements, and gender reveals are so fun to watch. The joy in these moments is palpable through the screen, sometimes for people we don't even know personally!

Good news energizes and reminds us that there is still good happening in our broken world.

Take a moment to read Ezekiel 37:1–14. In this passage, the prophet Ezekiel embodies the power of the Lord. Before God spoke to him, Ezekiel knew the power of the Lord was upon him, even though he was in a faraway, unknown place surrounded by dry, silent bones. When you walk in unfamiliar territory, God still has good news for you. He walks alongside you up every hill and mountain and through every valley. You never walk alone.

Through you, He also brings good news of hope restored to others. God has good news for His people through His people. Your testimony of God's good news can help others navigate their personal valleys.

- Have you ever experienced good news amid a personal trial?
- Where have you seen hope restored because of God's good news?
- Who needs to hear of God's good news in your life?

With God's power, Ezekiel spoke life into the dry bones. But guess what? The same power lives inside you. You can speak life into situations that seem helpless. You can celebrate the good news of hope restored.

—Kathie Phillips

Senior Director of Next Gen Ministry
Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Ezekiel was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah. Because God's people were in danger of judgment, Ezekiel was called to do unusual things like eating a scroll and lying on his side for over a year to get the people's attention.

WHAT?

Ezekiel had many visions related to God's judgment and restoration. Ezekiel prophesied about God's restoration after the exile. He proclaims that God would send His Spirit to make a way for Israel to actually follow God's commands (Ezekiel 36:24–32).

WHERE?

Ezekiel received the vision about the dry bones when he and the Israelites were exiled to Babylon. This prophecy came during the 70-year exile when the Israelites felt like all hope was gone. But through Ezekiel's vision, God shares an image of new life!

WHEN?

Babylon chipped away at the nation of Judah over a few years, but the final defeat of Jerusalem and exile to Babylon came in 586 BC. King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Solomon's temple along with the city. The people were in exile for 70 years.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

The vision in Ezekiel 37 shares God's plan to restore Israel but also points toward the death and bodily resurrection of Jesus. His victory will bring new life to those who trust in Him, and His Spirit brings His followers life and joy!



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 1 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Has Good News for His People

SCRIPTURE: Ezekiel 37

WORD OF WONDER: From Titus 3:5

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: plastic bin, play dough or sand, white pipe cleaners (at least 10), white construction paper (at least 10 sheets), coloring utensils, play dough or sand toys (optional), small ball (optional)

RESOURCES: [Ezekiel and the Dry Bones Coloring Sheet](#) (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

"Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?"

Leader Tip: When you greet kids with enthusiasm, you become the rarest of adults in those kids' lives: a grown-up who sees and listens to them. So let kids know you're delighted they've arrived.

Play Station: Mountains and Valleys

Set-up: Place play dough or sand inside a bin.

Play: Let the kids use the dough or sand to make two hills. Encourage them to run their hands down and then up the hills. Tell them that a valley is the place between two hills.

Leader Tip: Include a few small play dough or sand toys in the bin. To make it more fun and emphasize the hills, include a small ball for the kids to roll down the hill.

Play Station: Dry Bones Sensory Play

Set-up: Set out white pipe cleaners and sheets of white construction paper.

Play: Let the kids use the white pipe cleaners and white construction paper to make a pretend pile of bones. They can bend and twist the items, connect them to one another, and connect them into various formations and shapes.

Play Station: Ezekiel and the Dry Bones Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw some good news they have heard.

Curiosity Activity: Make It Move

SUPPLIES: pair of gloves, toy car, noisemaker (such as a party blower or toy kazoo), balloon, tissues

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any latex allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity!

Gather a pair of gloves, a toy car, a noisemaker, and a balloon, and place them on a table where everyone can see them.

"I have a few things here that just won't move by themselves. Can you help me figure out how to make them move?" Hold up the objects one at a time, ask the kids what needs to happen for each one to move, and let the kids help you move them. For the noisemaker, point out that though you can't see sound, you are creating sound that moves. For the balloon, blow it up without tying the end, and then let it go to make it fly. Ensure kids do not place the balloon in their mouths or touch a balloon that has been in someone else's mouth. Let a few kids take a turn blowing a tissue to try and make it move. Be silly and continue as long as kids are engaged.

The balloon and tissues couldn't move on their own, but when we used our breath to blow them, they moved. We're going to hear a story from the Bible about a time when God's breath came into something and made it move. God did this to share some really good news with His people!"

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, white balloons (4, plus 1–2 extras), permanent marker (prep only)

Ahead of time, inflate the balloons and write a word or phrase of the verse on each balloon:

- Jesus
- Forgives our sins
- Saves us
- And gives us new life.

"In our story today, we're going to learn that God has good news for His people. The good news is that Jesus, who died on the cross and came back to life, can forgive us, save us, and make us new when we trust in Him as our Savior! That is the best, most exciting news ever!"

Review the verse with the kids and hold up each balloon with the words on it as you say the verse.

WORD OF WONDER

Jesus forgives our sins, saves us, and gives us new life.

- from Titus 3:5

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **JESUS**—Point up.
- **FORGIVES OUR SINS**,—Palms together (praying hands motion).
- **SAVES US**,—Arms out to your sides (make a cross).
- **AND GIVES US**—Hold your hands in front of you as if receiving something.
- **NEW LIFE**.—Bring your arms up and out to your sides.
- **FROM TITUS 3:5**—Hold your hands open, as if holding a book.

While you are passing out snack, gather kids to discuss these questions:

- What does forgiveness mean?
- What good news do you think God has for you today? How does it make you feel?

God's Big Story / Snack

SUPPLIES: Bible

While kids are seated and eating snack, read the Bible story. Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of Ezekiel in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible and what do I see? (Hands together then opening palms up, like opening a book.)

God's big story, waiting for me! (Point to yourself.)

Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Ezekiel in the Bible.

Read Ezekiel 37:1–10 from an NIV Bible.

"In our story, God gave a vision to Ezekiel with a message for God's people. In the vision, God breathed life into the dry bones to help His people know He could breathe new life into them and bring them back into a relationship with Him! God wants us to know that good news too. We're going to pretend the balloons are like the dry bones. I have breathed into these balloons with my breath, and we're going to bring them to life by bopping them around the room as we say the verse aloud. Each balloon has a part of the verse. I'm going to say the words on the balloon and bop it up, and you'll take turns bopping it around as you repeat the words."

Hold up each balloon and say the words to the verse (in order), and then bop the balloons and encourage the kids to repeat the words and say the verse. Watch the kids closely to ensure they do not put uninflated balloons in their mouths.

Circle Time: Special Delivery

SUPPLIES: mail delivery bag (or canvas bag, such as a reusable grocery bag), pen, paper (7 sheets), envelopes (7), mail carrier hat (optional)

RESOURCES: Circle Time Questions (1 per group)

Ahead of time, cut each question into separate slips of paper and place them in envelopes labeled 1–7, corresponding with the number of each question. Place them in order in a location that is easily visible to the kids. Gather the kids to sit in a circle.

"In our story today, we heard about a messenger of God named Ezekiel. He delivered a special message from God to the Israelites! Let's take turns delivering messages and talking more about God's good news."

Let the kids take turns pretending to be a mail carrier as they collect each envelope and deliver it to you to open. Read each question and allow the kids to respond. If you have more than seven kids, you can let the kids put the questions back in the envelopes and return them so other kids can retrieve the same questions. Let the kids take turns answering a question so every kid gets an opportunity to deliver and answer a question.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **What did Ezekiel see in the valley in his vision from God?** (a pile of dry bones)
2. **What did God ask Ezekiel to do?** (Share His message with the Israelites.)
3. **What happened to the bones when Ezekiel started talking and God breathed into them?**
(They were covered with muscles and skin and became humans; they came to life.)
4. **Have you ever received good news that made you excited?**
5. **How do you think the Israelites felt when they heard the good news from Ezekiel?**
6. **What do you think God's good news is for us?**
7. **How can you share God's good news about Jesus with other people?**

Some of you delivered the questions we discussed. And in today's story, God told Ezekiel to deliver a message of good news to give His people hope when they were separated from God. We can remember that God has good news for His people. This good news is that Jesus died and was raised from the dead so we can be forgiven from our sins and have a relationship with God!

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and thank God for sending Jesus to give us new life in Him.

Leader Tip: Point out that not all mistakes are sin. Sin means making decisions that go against God's perfect rules. Things like stubbing your toe or accidentally breaking a glass are mistakes, but they are not disobedience toward God.

Head to Large Group!

Responding in Worship: Full Body Worship

"In today's story, God's good message turned dry bones into living bodies. God has good news for His people, and that's us! We can use our whole body to thank and praise God for His good news that Jesus loves and saves us from our sins.

Touch your knees and kneel, if you can. Tell God that you honor and love Him. Listen for what He might say to you in response. Pause as kids talk to God and listen quietly. Take this time to pray as well.

Now touch your head. Ask God how you can praise and thank Him with your thoughts. Think about what you can thank God for. Pause as you and the kids pray quietly.

Touch your mouth. Think about what you can say to God right now. Say it either out loud or in a whisper. Pause as the kids talk to God.

Touch your feet. Where might God send you to share His love and His good news that Jesus brings new life? Pause for a few moments of silent prayer.

Touch your palms and raise your hands. What work might God have for you to do? Again, pause as kids pray.

Now place your hands over your heart. How can you show God that you love Him?" Pause as kids pray quietly.

Game: Share the Good News

SUPPLIES: empty paper towel rolls or sheets of rolled paper (at least 5), tape (optional)

Ahead of time, roll five sheets of paper into cylinders and tape them closed (or use empty paper towel rolls). You will need at least five.

We've been learning today that God has good news for His people! God told the good news to His people through a vision He gave to Ezekiel. Then Ezekiel shared the good news with the people. God wants to share His good news with us too! And we can share it with others! Let's play a game where we share God's good news messages with others. I'll whisper a good news message into someone's ear, and that person will use a paper towel roll or paper roll to share the good

news with someone else! Then that person will pass it on. We'll keep sharing the good news until everyone has heard it! Remember, God has good news for His people!

Give a few kids a rolled-up paper or paper towel roll. Choose one child to listen as you whisper the good news message, and encourage the kids to put the rolled-up paper or tube up to someone's ear and whisper the message to be passed on. Make sure kids don't yell through the tubes into each other's ears.

Use these good news messages:

- God has good news for His people.
- God forgives and gives new life.
- God brings hope through Jesus.
- Jesus makes us new and gives us life.