

Scripture Reading:

Luke 7:11 “Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. 12 And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. 13 When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." 14 Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." 15 So he who was dead sat up and began to speak.

And He presented him to his mother. 16 Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people." 17 And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region. 18 Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things.”

Life Meets Death at Nain

Before we can rightly understand this confrontation between life and death, we must first take a moment to reflect on where we have come so far in Luke's orderly account written for his friend Theophilus: Luke wrote his Gospel and the book of Acts to give Theophilus, and anyone who honestly reads his accounts, a CERTAINTY of about what happened and what it means.

The story is told from the first chapter of Luke to the final verses of Acts of how Jesus has come, established His Church and that now His Kingdom changes EVERYTHING

- Our sins are forgiven
- We are now Christ's Bride the Church
- The New Heavens & Earth have come and Christ's Kingdom will fill the whole earth!

That is what John and Jesus were proclaiming when they said that the "Kingdom of God is near"

We then studied chapter four as a focused outline with the central point being the authority of Jesus!

Last week we came to the account of the Centurion who had GREAT faith because he understood that Jesus needed only to say the word to heal his dying servant

As we were commissioned last week, we were reminded of the question:

- How much authority does Jesus have?
- Jesus has ALL authority in heaven and on earth

That is in many ways is what this morning's account is going to confirm...

We must NOT overlook the very first detail given: “The day after...”

- **Last week we studied the accounts of the faithful Centurion comparing what Matthew and Luke had to say, complete with a chart as your homework.**
- **A good example of how we must study the Scripture**
- **This morning we need to use our minds eye to understand what the Spirit has to teach us here:
To see the full picture!**
- **A good example of how we must meditate on the Scripture!**
- **We must remember that there are no surprises in God’s story of redemption, no accidents or mere coincidences.**

The meeting of life and death here at Nain was foreordained to happen and the Holy Spirit included the account in the Gospel of Luke to demonstrate the real authority and power of Jesus.

- **In short, He gives us a powerful image of how the coming of Jesus has changed everything!**

Let us let’s now carefully consider the text, taking in all of what happened that day at Nain...

These few verses are packed with details... IMPORTANT details!

Jesus enters a city: Nain

- **Nain a small village that we know almost nothing about that is never again mentioned in the New Testament**

Jesus is followed by His disciples and a large crowd

They are approaching the city gate. At the gate of the city, they meet a crowd that is coming out of that same city at the same time.

- **A funeral procession, not just sad, but the saddest we can imagine**

A mother has lost her son... her only son – A mother who is a widow

- **Here we see the FULL result of the fall...Death “in the day you eat there of you shall surely die”**
- **Death that will find us all – the final enemy to be defeated!**

This widow, representing all of humankind, is hopeless and has no power to change her circumstances

Jesus comes from the other direction and brings hope:

Life meets death at Nain

This is the story of the Gospel, the Good News

The sheep & goats, two paths, light and darkness... all these images!

Luke then says: “When the Lord saw her...”

- **First time Luke refers to Jesus as “the Lord” which he will now do often.**

“He had compassion on her” Again, as we demonstrated at little Abigail’s baptism last week, “we love God because He first loved us.”

- **It is Jesus who has compassion and turns death into life**

Notice: Jesus gives two commands:

- **To the mother He says, “do not weep”**
- **To the son He says, “Young man, I say to you arise.”**

BOTH commands were humanly speaking impossible.

But Jesus never gives a command that He does not enable us to obey!

- **Jesus will now demonstrate that He has authority even over the final enemy: Death itself...**
- **Jesus speaks the word and the boy is able to obey as he “sat up and began to speak.”**
- **The boy rises and the mother’s weeping is turned to celebration!**

Here Jesus speaks to just this one young man... In the final day He will speak & ALL the dead shall rise!

Should also remind us of picture of the dry bones in Ezekiel 37...

[This can be your homework for this week, to go back and read this marvelous chapter where God can even speak life into a valley full of dry bones!]

And finally, we see that simple statement in verse 15: “And Jesus presented him to his mother.”

- **Jesus presents us with new life!**
- **It is appropriated with that great faith that Jesus saw in the Roman Centurion**

These truths are demonstrated each week as God renews His covenant with us during the divine worship service. We are called into His presence and reminded that without God’s compassion, we would be dead in our trespasses and sins and on the road to hell.

We are assured that our sins have been forgiven, separated from us as far as the east is from the west. Our death has become His life!

We are instructed from God’s Word, God accepts our gifts and prayers, and finally we will feast in the very presence of God. Death has been turned into life, just as that young man’s dead body sat up and began to speak!

We are commissioned and blessed... Sent out in a new direction knowing our new life in Christ!

So what does it mean for us today: What are the applications?

- **First and foremost it should remind us that we have NO problems that are too big for Jesus!**

The boy with new life was presented to a widow who lost her only son:

Linda and I have often marveled through the years watching people choose to continue suffering while Jesus is offering new life: Can you imagine this widow being upset because Jesus had messed up a perfectly good funeral... And yet that is often the reaction when real help is offered to some!

We see here that Jesus offers new life and when we consider how it applies in our lives we quickly run out of excuses

Yet, we often fear to hear, obey or present the Good News in its simplicity... We must be ready to hear and obey the simple commands of Scripture and to encourage others to do the same.

-We all have lost family members:

➤ **We need to bring them to Jesus!**

➤ **As Charles Spurgeon admonishes in his morning devotion on Mark 9:19:**

“When they are grown up they may wallow in sin and foam with enmity against God; then when our hearts are breaking we should remember the great Physician’s words, “Bring them unto me.” Never must we cease to pray until they cease to breath. No case is hopeless while Jesus lives!”

-Some may be struggling in their marriages: Jesus gives “impossible commands” like he did to the widow and son...

➤ **Husbands love you wives**

➤ **Wives win them without a word**

-God has blessed us with many covenant children and they will bring many blessings & trials: Jesus give more “impossible commands”

➤ **Children obey your parents**

➤ **We must train them up**

-We often have financial challenges, as individuals, in our church family and even as we discussed this week as a nation:

➤ **We must give God His tithe [another “impossible command!]**

➤ **We must have honest weights & measures**

-Men are drawn to pornography at epidemic levels today

➤ **Paul tells Timothy: “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”**

-There are many facing drug or alcohol addictions

➤ **Paul says: “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit”**

-And finally, as we saw with Elder Ryan Young in Maine who we have prayed for these past weeks: Life's struggles and problems may just bring us to the breaking point:

- We must seek first the Kingdom of God**
- The Lord's Day must be our priority**
- As a church this means being properly focused on doctrine, fellowship, the sacraments and prayer as Pastor Lusk admonished us from Acts 2:46**

If there are things in our lives that distract us from these priorities then we must leave them behind just as the widow and son left that funeral procession to enjoy new life!

Here is how the Apostle Paul admonished the Saints in Philippi:

3: 7 "But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. [BOTH religious and secular!] 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Life met death that day in the city of Nain...

It shows us that Jesus brings life to all corners of our lives...

- **Let us with this rejoicing mother and resurrected son leave our funeral procession behind, proclaiming to a watching world that “God has visited His people!”**

Jesus has come and it HAS changed everything...

- **Let us live as those who believe that it is so!**

Communion Meditation:

John 5: 21 “For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. 22 For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, 23 that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”