

Jesus' Gift To A Weeping Mother

Luke 7:11-17 (text v. 15)

All parents have high hopes for their children:

A mother, who was a doctor, was driving her five-year-old daughter to school. She left her stethoscope sitting on the car seat. Her little girl picked it up and began to play with it.

“Wonderful,” she thought. “My daughter wants to be a doctor too!” Then the child spoke into the stethoscope: “Hello. Welcome to McDonald’s. May I take your order please?”

On February 15, 1947, Glenn Chambers was about to board an airplane in Miami to serve God as a missionary in Ecuador.

Before boarding the plane he wanted to send a quick note to his mother, but he didn’t have any stationary. He noticed a piece of paper on the terminal floor and picked it up.

It was an advertisement, with the word “Why?” in bold print. He wrote the note to his mother in the empty space around the word “Why?” and mailed it from the airport.

That night his airplane crashed into the 14,000 foot Colombian peak El Tablazo.

A few days later his grieving mother received the note he mailed. She opened the envelope and the first thing she saw was the word “Why?”

Our text is about another mother, a widow, with one question racing though her mind - “Why?” [How many widow-mothers are here today?]

➡ **We see THREE MEETINGS in these verses...**

The meeting of two CROWDS (vs. 11-12).

- The widow’s crowd leaving the city headed to the graveyard—represented sorrow and death.
- Jesus’ crowd heading into the city—represented Joy and life.
 - ➡ Spiritually each of us is in one of these two crowds. If you are following Christ, you are going to the heavenly city. If you are un-

saved, you are heading for the grave and an eternity in hell (John 3:36; Eph. 2:1-3).

The meeting of two “ONLY SONS.”

- The “only son” of a mother. We don’t know much about the dead son being carried to the graveyard. How did he die? Was it an accidental... a fatal disease? We don’t know. It doesn’t matter—He was dead. What we do know—He died young. Death is no respecter of persons.
- The only begotten Son of God.
 - “In heaven Jesus had no mother; on earth He had no father.”

The meeting of two ENEMIES.

- Death—“*The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death*” (1 Cor. 15:26).
- Life—Jesus is the enemy of death. D. L. Moody said, “Jesus spoiled every funeral He went to.” Jesus came to give life (John 1:4; 10:10). He who has Christ, has life (1 John 5:12).

In Kipling’s *The Jungle Book*, Mogli, the man cub asks the animals what’s the most feared thing in the jungle. He was told that when two animals meet on a narrow path one must step aside and let the other pass. The animal that steps aside for no one is the most feared. One said it was an elephant. Another said it was a lion. Finally, the wise old owl said, “The most feared thing in the jungle is death. It steps aside for no one.”

Death steps aside for no one... except Jesus! No one ever died, or remained dead, in the presence of Jesus when He was alive. When death faced Jesus, death had to step aside. Even when it looked like death had defeated Jesus at Calvary, three days later, death had to step aside, when Jesus walked out of the tomb.

In our text, we see Jesus’ gift to a weeping mother. Notice four things:

I. **Christ IDENTIFIES with the weeping mother** (vs. 11-12).

- Jesus came from Capernaum (v. 1). To intercept this funeral procession in Nain, He had to walk approximately 20 miles—About one day’s journey. He arrived at the hour of this mother’s crisis.

A. Jesus identifies with our SITUATIONS.

1. Jesus could have gone any number of villages. But, He came to Nain. This is the only time Nain is mentioned in the Bible. There was a weeping mother in Nain He identified with.
2. During Bible times, when a person died, they were usually buried the same day. Jesus must of started His 20 mile walk to Nain even before the boy had died. Before the hour of this mother's crisis, Jesus identified with her situation in Nain.
3. Whatever your circumstances are, Jesus already knows before the hurt entered your heart (Heb. 4:15).

B. Jesus identifies with our SORROWS.

1. As the "*Man of sorrows*," Jesus is drawn to sorrowing hearts. This mother already buried her husband (v. 12). Now her sorrow is doubled with the death of her "only son" (v. 12). Her future looked grim and her hope of support was gone. Jesus identified with her sorrow, and came where she was.
➔Where Jesus is, there is HOPE.
2. An act of mercy and grace. Jesus was not summoned to come to Nain. This mother did not plead with Him to come. As Romans 10:20 says, "*I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.*"

II. Christ's INSTRUCTION to a weeping mother (v. 13).

- A. His instruction is PERSONAL. The Lord Jesus did not speak to everyone in the crowd. Notice it does not say, "When the Lord saw the boy's body," but "*when the Lord saw HER, he had compassion on HER, and said unto HER...*"
- B. His instruction is PURPOSEFUL.
1. Humanly speaking, it didn't make sense. It's normal to cry.
 2. Jesus was saying He was going to take away the reason for her weeping. One day, Jesus is going to wipe away all tears, for there will be no more reason to cry. Until then, it's OK to cry. Even "*Jesus wept.*"

III. Christ's INTERVENTION for a weeping mother (vs. 14-15).

A. There was a RESURRECTION. Jesus speaks to the dead!

- When Jesus says, "Arise" to the dead, death has to move out of the way. The funeral was cancelled! One slightly used coffin listed for sale on Craig's List.

The Bible records three occasions where Jesus raises someone from the dead: (1) Jairus' daughter; (2) The widow of Nain's son; (3) Lazarus. In each case, the person is in a different stage of death: (1) Jairus' daughter had just died and was still laying on her deathbed. (2) The dead widow's son, was in his coffin on his way to the grave. (3) Lazarus was already decomposing in the grave for four days. This illustrates that in the rapture, it doesn't matter how long a Christian has been dead—He is coming up from the grave.

- Jesus raised the dead by His Word!
 - One word from Jesus breaks up the funeral "ARISE."
 - Jesus spoke to the corpse of Jairus' daughter—"Maid, arise!" (Luke 8:54).
 - Jesus spoke to Lazarus in the grave, "Lazarus come forth."
 - The Word of God is alive (Phil. 2:16; Heb. 4:12)—It quickens! John 6:63—"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."
 - John 5:28, 29—"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth..."
1. A picture of salvation—Salvation is a spiritual resurrection of a soul that is dead in trespasses and sin (Eph. 2:1).
 2. Application: The length of time a person has been unsaved (dead in sin), usually corresponds to the time it takes for them to recover from a life of sin. For example: Like Jairus' daughter—When a young child gets saved, they don't have many sinful habits to deal with. On the other hand, if a young man in his teens gets saved (like the widow's son), he may

have more sinful baggage in his life to overcome. If a person has been dead in sins a long time (Lazarus), they will need some help getting free of the old grave clothes of sin.

B. There was a RESTORATION (v. 15).

1. The young man's **faculties** were restored to him. The boy gave two evidences of life: He sat up and he spoke. It must have been quite a scene! We are not told what he said. What do you think he said?

Books have been written recording the statements of people who have been resuscitated, and what they saw. [Books- "*Beyond Death's Door*." Movies- "*Heaven is for Real*".] Makes for interesting speculation (and \$\$\$ at the box-office), but the Bible never reports what anyone saw after they died (Lazarus, Paul, etc.).

2. His **family-life** was restored. Jesus' gift to this heart-broken mother was HE GAVE HER SON BACK TO HER! Jesus "*delivered him to his mother*." REUNION! Do you have a child gone astray? If Jesus can restore a dead child—He can also restore a living child who has wandered into the "far country."

➡ The whole scene reminds us of what will happen when the Lord returns, and we are reunited with our loved ones who have gone to glory (1 Thes. 4:13-18).

IV. Christ's INFLUENCE through a weeping mother (7:16-17).

A. The AWARENESS of divine influenced (v. 16).

1. Fear. Who wouldn't startled seeing a dead man sit up, speak, and come out of his coffin!
2. Glorifying God. The people came to the conclusion that "*God hath visited his people*." Yes he has! Jesus has power over death and the grave. No wonder the crowd glorified God. We should be too.

B. The AREA Of Divine Influence (v. 17). Through this hurting mother's sorrows, the popularity of the Lord Jesus was grew.

A teacher was teaching her students about magnetism. She brought a few magnets to class, placed them on the table, and illustrated how they worked. The next day she gave a quiz about her demonstration with magnets. One question read, "My name starts with the letter 'M.' I have six letters and I pick up things. What am I?" She wanted the word "Magnet." But, most of the children wrote the word, "Mother."

This mother in Nain became a magnet. The Lord used this mother's hurt and pain to manifest His magnetic power and attract others to Himself. In her weakness, His strength was made perfect. In her brokenness, His glory was revealed.

➡ May the Lord use our situations as a magnet to draw others to Christ!

SUMMATION: An encounter with death has a way of reordering our priorities.

"Gen. William Nelson, a Union general in the Civil War, was involved in a brawl and was mortally shot in the chest. As men ran up the stairs to help him, what did the general ask for? Did he say, "Call a doctor?" No. He cried out, "Send for a clergyman..."

Nelson had no interest in religion or preachers before before this. What changed? Everything around him was virtually unchanged—except his priorities. With only minutes before he would enter eternity, the only thing that mattered to him was preparing to meet God. Thirty minutes later he was dead. [*Christian Times*, Oct. 3, 1994, p. 26.]

A visit from death will cause us to reexamine our priorities. Perhaps when someone close to you has died suddenly, it caused you to consider your own mortality. You may have been able to "shake it off" without giving it a second thought. But the truth is, when you come to death's door, the only thing that will matter is: Are you ready to meet God.

Which crowd are you in? The crowd heading for a grave or the crowd following Jesus to heaven?