

The Compassionate Saviour

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[0 : 00] Now we're going to turn to Luke's Gospel, Luke chapter 7, as we've been continuing through Luke's Gospel. And we want to resume at chapter 7, verse 11 to verse 17.

And this is the word of God. Soon afterwards, remember Jesus has been healing. He's been healing in the town of Capernaum.

He's healed a centurion's servant, a centurion's slave. And we're told soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain. And his disciples and a great crowd went with him.

As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out. The only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a considerable crowd from the town was with her.

And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her. And sent to her, do not weep. Then he came up and touched the bier. And the bearer stood still.

[1 : 07] And he said, young man, I say to you, arise. And the dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all.

And they glorified God, saying, a great prophet has arisen among us. And God has visited his people. And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding countries.

And may God add his blessing for that reading from his holy word. As we see in the title of our sermon this evening, as has been seen as we've read, the compassionate saviour Jesus in his utter compassion for the lost.

Two points to follow for this evening. First of all, as we see there, no chance meeting. This was not a meeting of coincidence when Jesus was in that little town of Nain.

And then, as we read, one compassionate Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ and his compassion. And then finally, from no chance meeting to one compassionate Lord, much awe, much awe towards Jesus.

[2 : 25] Much fear towards the Lord and what he revealed of his power, his power over death to give life. Compassionate saviour.

You know, every recorded detail of Jesus' life, everything that you read in the Gospels, everything that you read in God's Word about Jesus, everything, every line, every word, every passage, everything is important.

Everything speaks of the life-changing power, the life-changing love, the life-changing grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Because what we read in God's Word about Jesus, of Jesus, everything tells us about who Jesus is in his love, in his grace, in his mercy, and who he is.

And everything pointing to the reason why Jesus came from heaven to earth. Why he came to live his life on this earth. Why he came to give his life for sinners such as ourselves.

And even as we read here and other parts as well of the healing miracles of Jesus, these healing miracles, well, they're recorded for a purpose.

[3 : 44] Because they're recorded to tell us something wonderful about the life-changing power of Jesus. Because Jesus is Lord of life.

And as we'll see here, Jesus who restores life from death. And that physical miracle, the physical miracle of restoring life from death, truly pointing us to see the great transforming power of Jesus.

That power that gives true life, eternal life to you and to me who deserve nothing of that life. And it's that great truth that the Apostle Paul wrote of when he wrote of God's action in love.

As Paul wrote to the Ephesians, Ephesians 2 verse 5. When we were dead in our trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ.

And it's that truth of life in Jesus. Life in the Lord Jesus. Life for those who were dead in sin and who are dead in sin.

[4 : 54] Well, it's that life-changing truth that we see here recorded for us in the miracle of the healing of the widow's son. And that healing, I pray that you'll see, you'll see that that healing is a sign.

A sign that points to the life, the life-giving grace of Jesus. Jesus, Jesus who alone can bring a sinner from death to life.

Life in Jesus, life from Jesus. Now, already in Luke's gospel, even as we've been seeing a few weeks ago, Luke's already in his gospel shown us that power.

As we mentioned a moment ago, the previous healing of Jesus was to a centurion's servant. That servant who lay very, very ill.

And by the word of Jesus, even the word that Jesus spoke from a distance, even physically apart from that servant, Jesus brought life to that sick man and brought it by his word.

[6 : 04] And so from the healing of a man who was at the point of death, well, as we've seen here, Luke moves swiftly on to another man. And this time, the healing of a man who had succumbed to death.

And that healing miracle, revealing the life-giving power that only Jesus can give. And so this is an account that points you to, well, to our Lord and Savior.

And it points us to Jesus and his compassion for the lost. We see here Jesus and his compassion showing his victory over death.

We're seeing here Jesus revealing who he claimed to be. To be the one who gives life. The one who promises life. The one who gives life.

And so that all who are his have that assurance of eternal life. Because he's rescued you from death and given to you that life that never ends.

[7 : 09] And so we want to look more closely then at this passage that really encourages all who are in him. Encourages you to know you have a Savior who loves you.

Who's given you life. Life that none of us deserve. But given life. Life from death. Even life in all its fullness. So let's look first of all then at the passage as we read there just a moment ago.

Where we read initially of, well, no chance meeting. Now we're not told whether it was immediately the day after the centurion was healed. The centurion's servant was healed.

But there's no doubt that certainly Jesus was on a mission. That Jesus was on the move. And he was on the move with great intention. We're told that he reaches this little village called Nain.

And we know from geography. We know from history. That that little village was about 25 miles south of Capernaum.

[8 : 13] Capernaum. Where Jesus healed that centurion's servant. So in other words, in these days, 25 miles was a day's journey. So it's from Capernaum.

Where the centurion's servant was healed. Then another day. And then he comes to Nain. This little village. And we're told too that he's accompanied.

Accompanied by his disciples. Annas was the case with Jesus and his travels. Accompanied by a great crowd. People who follow Jesus from place to place.

But it's the word that we find in the passage in verse 12. Sometimes we miss this word out. And it's wrong to do so. A little word that we can so often just pass over.

But a word that's so important in all the context that you find this word. And that word's behold. As he drew near to the gate of the town. Behold. A man who died was being carried out.

[9 : 18] And Luke's telling us here. He'll say, listen, stop. Pay attention. There's something important to realize. Something of great importance that is about to be revealed here.

In the ministry of Jesus. See, Jesus hasn't come to this village by accident. He's not in that little village by some chance.

He's in the very place. At the very time. When he's going to reveal something of his power. He's in that very moment. When a funeral cortege for a young man is passing by him.

And Jesus is in that right place at the right time to reveal his power. To reveal his compassion. Whether it's in first century Palestine.

Or 21st century Scotland. Or wherever else on this globe. There are no coincidences. No accidents. No chance.

[10:18] Chance encounters with God. There's nothing coincidental about the way that God works in the lives of his people. There's no such thing as a chance meeting.

When we think of the way that God works in the lives of his people. That's what our shorter catechism reminds us of. Listen to the words. The decrees of God are his eternal purposes. According to the counsel of his will. Whereby for his own glory. He has foreordained. Whatsoever comes to pass. He is foreordained.

In other words. God has appointed. Events before any events have taken place. In other words. Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

But nothing happens. Without the foreknowledge of God. That meeting that. Led to your conversion. That wasn't by chance. That wasn't by accident.

[11:17] Or. The time when. The time. The last time as it were. The time when you. Well consider. The last place you wanted to be. Was in a place of worship. The last. The last place on earth.

That you would rather have been. And yet. In God's providence. It was through that means. That you heard the. The gospel of the Lord Jesus. And the Holy Spirit.

Quickened your heart. And you came to a saving knowledge. Of. Of the Lord your Savior. Maybe even the very. Fact that you're here this evening. Here.

Even in this place of worship. This isn't coincidental. This isn't something. That's happening by chance. God has a plan. For each one of you. And.

Even. Hearing the words. That we've even read. And are considering this evening. This is no. Accident. Of circumstances. Because God has planned.

[12:12] From all eternity. Your life. My life. And so it's to him. That. That you give. And must give. The glory. And the praise. For his working out.

All things. For your good. And for the glory. Of his name. And so with Jesus. Being at that village. At that particular time. At that moment. In that place.

Well. His being there. Would reveal. Jesus. As one compassionate Lord. As we read there. And read there. From verse 13. To 15. And as we.

Read that passage. Maybe of your Bibles. Before you again. As you're. Rereading these words. You see. The. The scene. That greets Jesus. It's a scene.

That's. A scene of tragedy. It's a tragic scene. A large crowd. Is formed. It's a. It's a funeral procession. For this young man. He's. Was the only son.

[13:09] Of a widow. Of course. These are. Days long. Before any kind of. Social security. Any kind of state support. Government support. And of course.

The circumstances. Are such. That this widow. This woman. It would be a widow. And this woman. As a widow. Should be destitute. Her husband's died.

Her only son has died. And so. There's no longer. A breadwinner. In the family. She'd have to depend. On charity. From. From friends. And neighbors. And it's quite obvious.

As we see this scene. At the start. That. Her life is broken. Unable. To. Mend. For her. Being.

As she would consider. Broken. Broken. For forever. Certainly. The sign of eternity. Jesus knows differently. And Jesus was going to transform.

[14:02] This woman's life. This is. Going to transform. That. That young man's life. And he'll impact the crowd. As well. By his actions. By his miracle. He'll do this.

All. In compassionate love. He'll do. What he's going to do. Yes. To bring good to others. And to bring glory. To. Well. To his name. Let's read again.

That passage. Just to emphasize that. To emphasize the compassion. Of Jesus. And when the Lord saw her. Again. Listen to every word. The Lord saw her. He had compassion on her.

And said to her. Do not weep. Then he came up. And touched the beer. And the bearer stood still. And he said. Young man. I say to you. Arise. And the dead man sat up.

And began to speak. And Jesus gave him. To his mother. Every word that was read there. Every line. Every verse.

[15:02] It speaks to the saviour. It speaks of the saviour. And his great compassion. Because we're being given the privilege here. By inspiration of God.

We're being given the privilege to see the intensity of Jesus' heart. To see his intense love towards this woman. And towards her son. And the way it's written.

It tells us that on seeing what he saw. Immediately he responded. Immediately he responded with words of compassion. And surely as we've read these words.

Then. Surely there's been emotion in our hearts. As we read again. And Jesus. And seeing this woman. That he had compassion on her. And telling her not to weep. He's reaching to the very core of her heart. Of course she was weeping. Of course she was in deep grief.

[16:01] But Jesus. Jesus by his word of compassion. Jesus would. Wipe away her tears. And Jesus would. Turn her mourning into joy.

You see. Jesus was reaching out to this woman. In a way that only Jesus can. We have to say that he was moved by our tears.

On another occasion. Jesus was moved by the. By the death of his friend Lazarus. Here's. Jesus here. He's moved. He's moved with pity. And he's going to act.

To alleviate her suffering. And he's going to do it by a miracle. By the miracle of giving life. To that. That dead young man. He's going to raise that widow's son to life.

He's going to show that he's sovereign. He's going to reveal his sovereign grace. His saving grace. And he's going to do it. In the most dramatic of ways. He's going to show that he has authority.

[16:59] Authority over life. Authority over death. And it will be seen. As we said. In the most dramatic of ways. Look at the details. He stops the funeral cortege.

And he touches the frame. In which the dead man's body. Has lain. And then he addresses the dead man. With words. Words of power.

And words that only Jesus could have given. Because it's that word. That brings life from death. And as Jesus speaks to that young man.

We're told that the young man rises. He rises from that frame. And the young man speaks. He speaks to indicate. That his organs are functioning again. And in an act of compassion.

A wonderful act. Jesus takes that young man to his mother. And there's that grand reunion. And we really do have to pause.

[17:57] And reflect on what we've been reading here. And remember that. What we're reading here is. Is of the saviour. Whose mercies never fail. The same saviour.

Who enters your sorrows. And your pains. The same saviour. Who won't permit you to endure. More than you're able to endure. When there's compassion.

He'll deliver you. And you have that sure promise. That yes. In the glory of heaven. In heaven there'll be no more tears. Instead there'll be that.

Endless grand reunions. Because there'll be no more death. No more tears. No more pain. No more grief. But only the perfection of joy.

In the presence of the saviour. Who gives life. And who gives it in all its fullness. You who know him. Who love him. That's your hope.

[18:56] You've got that promise of the totality of eternal life. In the presence of Christ. In the glory of heaven. So Jesus even now is telling you. Don't weep.

Don't continue to weep. As we're told elsewhere in scripture. Weeping does for a night endure. But joy comes in the morning. Of course there's so much that we do weep over.

There's so much that we see even in our own hearts. The sin that lurks in our own hearts. And we weep over these sins. As we weep over the sins of loved ones.

And those who who even brashly. And we might even say arrogantly. Refuse to turn from from ways that are contrary to God's word.

And there's grief in our hearts when we see that. And in family members. And friends. And loved ones. Take hope. Take hope. The same Lord Jesus who brought life to that dead man.

[20:02] The same Lord Jesus is the same savior. Who can bring life to a person who's still dead in sin. So don't lose hope. Never lose hope.

Don't diminish the power of Jesus to save. Because this even this very miracle of healing that we've seen here. Surely should bring encouragement to to you.

Even like the widow who maybe who's who at this moment. Even is weeping. She was weeping when she met with Jesus. Jesus turned that weeping into joy.

And surely then the miracle of this healing of this young man is presented here to give. Well to give you hope now. Yes even now if you're weeping for a loved one.

Someone whom you're seeing in spiritually anyway. Who's lifeless apart from Christ. But look to Jesus. Because remember this.

[21 : 01] You were once dead in your trespasses and sins. Until Jesus saved you. Until the Holy Spirit quickened your heart. And you were given that faith to trust in the Lord Jesus.

And you who are in Christ. Remember you're now alive in Christ. You who are once dead in your trespasses and sins. Because there's nothing impossible with God. With God all things are possible.

And as far as this young man was concerned. He was raised to life. Yes. Now of course later he would again taste death. Taste physical death. He had an allotted time on this earth.

But certainly from what we can see in the passage here. We're seeing and we can certainly detect the grace of the Lord Jesus. It was his grace. His saving grace that raised that young man to life. And Jesus giving that man and that man's mother hope of eternal life. And so it's for you and for me. All of us.

[22 : 07] Even through this passage to have our hope renewed. To be encouraged. To know that Jesus saves and continues to save. He's not stopped giving life to those who are dead in sin.

And he won't stop until he returns. And if that's the case then. Neither must any of us. Neither must you stop pleading. Pleading with the Lord for the life of a loved one.

It's the hope of salvation in the Lord Jesus. Well it's a hope that the world knows nothing of. A few days ago I was reading an extract from a book.

It was written by a man who became very well known. In the dark days of the pandemic. It's a man who inspired many by a certain element of fortitude.

But that man, sad to say, tragically, had no hope of salvation. No hope of eternal life. What he wrote was this.

[23 : 13] He hoped that there'd be a heaven. And he said these words that really we have to say are tragic. He hoped there'd be a heaven. Could he be reunited with his old father and his dogs?

The most that he could believe in was hope. A sort of self-generated hope to maintain some self-generated faith.

Jesus gives you hope. Hope in himself. And he asks you, don't trust in yourself for your salvation. He's saying, trust in me. See, that dead man couldn't raise himself.

He couldn't raise himself from death. Only by the power of Jesus could that man be raised. That young man couldn't give himself salvation.

It's only Jesus. And you have no hope of salvation. You've got no hope even in your own merits. But your only hope isn't what Jesus has done for you and giving of himself for you by his death on the cross.

[24 : 17] But then, what if there's anyone even now or maybe later on listening into this service? And you think, I'm just beyond saving. I'm beyond the life-changing power of Jesus.

What if any of you are, you know, thinking that, well, I'm just too bad. Too far beyond saving by Jesus. You think there's some, maybe some particular sin in your life and you feel, well, I just can't be forgiven because of that sin.

And how could Jesus, holy Jesus, how could he possibly want to save someone like me? Don't think like that. That's a wrong way of thinking.

Because that way of thinking denies the all-surpassing, all-glorious love of Jesus. That love, that love that is directed towards sinners.

Because every single person has sinned. Of course, apart from the Lord Jesus, every single person has sinned against heaven and against earth. And we've all, we've all deserved God's punishment for sin.

[25 : 27] No one is righteous. Not one. And if Jesus could raise a dead person to life, well, that act points to the raising to life of those who are dead in sin.

Every believer, every believer, everyone who's been saved at one time has been and was dead in trespasses and sins. And because that's the case, the same Savior can raise you to newness of life in him.

So come to him as you are. Yes, confess your sins before him. And trust. And trust. Trust in him for your salvation. Jesus promises not to turn anyone away who comes to him in faith.

He will show his power. He'll show his power in saving you and rescuing you and delivering you from death to life. And when he does that, yes, you will have that fear, that holy fear of the Savior and you'll glorify him.

And you'll be in awe of him because he will be the one, and it's the one, who delivers from death to life. What about the response of the crowds here when they saw the miracle of the raising of that young man from death to life?

[26 : 48] Well, what did we read there in the final section of this passage? We saw there was much awe from Jesus, much awe in relation to what Jesus did.

In that locality where there was no chance meeting of Jesus with this situation, showing that he was truly one compassionate Lord.

We see there was much awe towards Jesus. We're told that fear seized them all. Glorifying God, saying, a great prophet has arisen among us, and God has visited his people.

And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding countryside. One man, one divine man, Jesus.

Jesus stood amongst these two great crowds or two large crowds of people. The one crowd, remember, that was following him. The other crowd, there had seemed anyway to follow a funeral cortege.

[27 : 49] That cortege turns from mourning to a response of awe, of fear. Fear at this visitor from Capernaum.

We're told that they're seized with fear. Now, whether that fear turned to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus, we're not told. And whether in their glorifying God, that indicated a life transforming power in their hearts, again, we're not told.

But what we are told, certainly at the very least, is that these people recognized that Jesus was a great prophet. That they could see that Jesus was falling on from a prophet such as Elijah.

Elijah, who'd raised a boy to life and given that boy back to his mother. And others were crying out that what they'd seen was, well, was evidence that God was visiting his people again.

Now, whatever else we take from these words, what they said was certainly correct. Jesus was and is a great prophet. We know of Jesus as prophet, priest, and king, and as a prophet.

[29 : 04] Well, again, back to a shorter catechism of Jesus as prophet. He's prophet to reveal to us by his word and spirit the will of God for our salvation.

See, prophets proclaim the will of God before the people. And by Jesus' word, by his power, he was revealing the will of God for people to be saved.

And yes, as the people said, God truly had visited his people, visited his people in power and saving power. And certainly, at the very least, that these people in the crowd were true on these matters.

What about your response to Jesus? Do you see Jesus as that great prophet who's made known to you the way of salvation? Who's made known to you the will of God for your salvation?

And in recognizing Jesus as that great prophet, do you put your faith and trust in him? Do you truly believe that Jesus has come from heaven to earth, the divine son of God, that he came from heaven to earth?

[30 : 17] That he visited this earth to reveal the will of God for your salvation? He came to do his father's will. He came to make it possible for sinners to be saved through his life-giving of himself and the cross.

What about you? The people there in Nain, they told of Jesus. They told of what they'd seen with their eyes of the Lord and his healing miracle.

What about you? Do you tell others of Jesus? They spread the news of Jesus in their immediate vicinity and beyond. What about you telling others of the wonder of salvation in and through the Lord Jesus Christ?

You have a voice to speak of that life-changing power of the Lord Jesus. You can do it through your voice. You can do it through words. You can do it through various media that we've been given to use.

Tell others. Tell others of the Lord who's brought you from death to life. Let's just, you know, as we close this part of our service, just dwell in this great miracle of healing that we read there in Luke's gospel.

[31 : 38] You know, this morning, most of you were in the service as we learned of one of the names of God, the Lord who heals.

Well, this evening we've read of the healing power of God in Christ. And that healing power has never lost its power. It's never lost its power to heal, to restore and to change lives.

Remember where that power comes from. That power to raise lives from death to life. That power comes from the Lord Jesus, the compassionate Savior.

His heart, even now, is reaching out to you. That heart that reached out to that young man there in that little village of Nain. You turn to him and see Jesus in all his love for you.

See Jesus in his giving of himself for you by his grace. And as you journey towards your heavenly home, remember that he's with you on that journey.

[32 : 47] In his compassion, in his love. He who has loved you all eternity. Give him the glory. Give him the praise.

The one who truly is the compassionate Savior. Amen. Let us pray. Lord, we give you thanks for your word. Your word that assures us.

That all who come to you by faith know life-giving power in and through the Lord Jesus. Lord, teach us, we pray. Teach us to look more in the Savior, in his love, in his compassion, in his saving grace. And Lord, help us, ourselves, to be truly compassionate towards others. To show forth the compassion of Christ. To show that love.

To show that truly we follow the Lord Jesus. Be with us all then as we continue in worship before you now. We pray these things in and through the name of Jesus.

[33 : 51] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.