

(Luke) 21 - Centurion & Widow of Nain

by Ed Miller

The Sermon on the Plain teaches that the Christian life is automatic and that running after the Lord brings forth fruit.

Duration: 51:42

Scripture: Luke 4:38-39, Luke 5:1-26, Luke 7

Topics: "Divine Healing", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the powerful transformation that takes place in the story of Jesus raising a dead man to life. The scene is described as a parade of sadness turning into a parade of glory. The preacher emphasizes the hope that Jesus not only restored the woman's son, but also gave her back her future. The sermon highlights the importance of entering into the story and visualizing the emotions and amazement of the characters. The preacher also mentions three spiritual truths illustrated by this miracle, with the first being transformation.

Transcript

I know you already know so well, but it's good to be reminded of this basic principle. In your study of the Word of God, whether we come corporately as we're doing here, or whether you're in your closet and in your own private study, there's one principle of Bible study that's absolutely indispensable, and that is total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit. Other principles are helpful.

It's helpful to know the original languages. It's helpful to have commentaries and atlases and concordances. But when you're all done, you better come before the Lord as a little baby and just say, Lord, you teach me.

Open my heart, show me Christ. And then the Bible will live. So with that in mind, I'll invite you to join me, please.

We'll commit our time unto the Lord. Our Father, we thank you again this morning for the priceless privilege you've given us to gather in this room so many weeks to open your Word and trust your Holy Spirit to focus us upon the Lord Jesus. We thank you for every part of the Bible in a special way today for the gospel of Luke.

Guide our meditations and our thoughts and direct our hearts to a full Savior. We ask you, Lord, to enable us to be detached from all of the cares that would press us and take our attention, and that by your grace we might see the Lord Jesus in a fresh and in a reviving way. You've promised to refresh your inheritance when it's parched.

So rain fresh water upon us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. I'll ask you to turn, please, to Luke chapter 6, which is where we are.

We're in the process of discussing the Galilean ministry of the Lord. If you've missed any of the lessons, I'm not going to spend a lot of time reviewing because we've come too far. And you want the tapes.

You know, Lillian, we're taping it every week, and Lillian makes copies, and you're welcome to have those, and there's no cost for those. We're in the section, chapters 4-14 all the way through chapter 19. But we're just doing the first half.

We're in chapter 4-14 to 9-50, and we've titled that, Jesus, the Friend of All Mankind. It's in this section that Jesus is a doer. He's a speaker also.

He's a teacher, but primarily he's doing. And this is the section with many of his redemptive miracles. And he shows his compassion, especially toward those who are oppressed and needy and poor.

Last week I showed you how the miracle of the healing of the man with the withered hand and the choosing of the twelve apostles prepared us for this glorious Sermon on the Plain, which we'll look at a little bit today. I think we're all familiar with that wonderful sermon called the Sermon on the Mount. I think everybody's familiar with that.

Look please at Luke chapter 6, right after the choosing of the twelve, beginning at verse 17. And he descended with them and stood on a level place. And there was a great multitude of his disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases.

Those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. And the multitude were trying to touch him, for power was coming from him and healing upon them all. And turning his gaze on his disciples, he began to say, and then we have this great sermon.

Now notice in verse 17 that he's now standing on a plain. He's come down from the mountain, and he's standing on a plain. And in verse 20, he's going to address his disciples.

This is a little different than the Sermon on the Mount. In the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Matthew 5-7, he's standing on a mountain. He's not on the plain.

And he addresses according to chapter 7, 28, the great multitude. And here he's primarily addressing his disciples. So when you read the Sermon on the Mount and you read the Sermon on the Plain, you're going to notice that he used the same set of notes.

He used the same folder. Much of what he said in the Sermon on the Plain is exactly what he said in the Sermon on the Mount. However, the Sermon on the Mount is a lot longer.

You'll notice that when you read in the Gospel of Matthew. Sermon on the Mount covers 107 verses. Luke's account here, Sermon on the Plain, is only 29 verses.

But it's pretty much a digest of the Sermon on the Mount. In fact, you'll notice that the Sermon on the Mount is also a digest. Because Luke picks up other things in other places.

For example, in the Sermon on the Mount, you have what we call the Lord's Prayer. Some people call it the Disciples' Prayer. Well, Luke doesn't forget that.

He'll pick that up when we come to Chapter 11. And we'll discuss that. So there's an awful lot.

I don't think even the Sermon on the Mount contains all the things he said that day. And we'll pick them up all along the way. The message that he gives here in the Sermon on the Plain contains great eternal reality.

What he does, really, is present the ideal human life. The ideal Christian life. Life on the highest plane.

Life as God intended life to be. Through the years, everyone has recognized, through this particular sermon, the highest ethical teaching that's known to man. It's right here in this marvelous sermon.

It has a high moral tone. Deeply, deeply spiritual. This sermon is a description of true righteousness over against the shallow, superficial, external righteousness that the Pharisees were living.

Obviously, in a sermon like this, even in its abbreviated form, as Luke gives it, we could spend a lot of time on every truth. There's so much included in here. But I think we've missed the big thing.

So what I'd like to do is sort of stand back and look at the whole sermon, not by talking about each principle. That would take us too long. And we're doing a survey of the Gospel of Luke.

Rather, to home in on the heart of the sermon on the plane or the sermon on the mount. In other words, as I give you some of the principles of the sermon on the mount, I'll try not to sermonize. And I have to chew my tongue to a stump not to do that because some of these particular verses are so precious.

And it has such teaching in it. The first observation, I want you to notice the terminal points, please. That is, how does it begin and how does it end? And you'll notice that the sermon on the mount and the sermon on the plane both begin and end the same way.

They begin with the Beatitudes. And it ends with a call to the Lordship of Christ. And it ends with that great illustration of building your house on the sand or building your house on the rock.

And the one that hears the word of God and keeps it is the one who builds his house upon a rock. As far as the theme of the particular sermon, both the sermon on the mount and the sermon on the plane have the same theme. It's a description of the children of the king.

In other words, all through it you're going to see kingdom verses. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who are poor in spirit.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Now, what's a kingdom? A kingdom is a sphere of rule. What's the kingdom of God? It's the sphere over which God rules.

What's the kingdom of heaven? It's the sphere over which heaven rules. To the degree, God rules my life. To that degree, I'm a child of the kingdom.

And the whole idea is the more he rules, the more my life will look like the person described in the sermon on the mount. When you get into some of these things, the description of the person who's ruled by the king, and you see that he's loving his enemies, and turning the other cheek, and cursing those that bless him, and going the second mile, and all that kind of thing, God is describing the subjects of the king. In other words, if I'm really ruled by the Lord, if he has the undisputed lordship in my life, what will my life increasingly look like? And the answer is, it'll look like the person that's described in the sermon on the mount.

What's true for me is true for you as well. I told you last week that God described this life as a life impossible to live, apart from the mighty power of God. That's why just before he told the sermon on the mount, he told the story of the man whose right hand was withered.

See, that's important, that fits in. Because what he's saying is, stretch forth your withered hand. It's impossible to stretch forth a withered hand.

Apart from the power of God, I can't stretch forth a withered hand unless God enables me to do what he commands me to do. And that's why every command of God is also a promise of God. He's never told us to do anything where he's not promised the enablement.

And so when he says, turn the other cheek, what he's really saying is, stretch forth your withered hand. And when he says, love your enemy, what he's really saying is, stretch forth your withered hand. And all through the sermon on the mount, that's the backdrop, the impossibility apart from God.

Now let me show you the central principle of the sermon on the plain. Now glance at chapter 6, verse 20. And turning his gaze on his disciples, he began to say, Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you and ostracize you and cast insults at you and spurn your name as evil for the sake of the Son of Man.

Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way, their fathers used to treat the prophet. But woe to you that are rich, for you're receiving your comfort in full.

Woe to you that are well fed now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you when all men shall speak well of you, for the same way their fathers used to treat the false prophets.

In verse 20, 21, 22, he says, Even though it says blessed are you, when the average person reads it, he doesn't read it, blessed are you. In his mind, he thinks, blessed shall he be if. He reads it as if it's a condition.

The way to be blessed is, and then these are the conditions. And if you meet those conditions, then you'll be happy. No, happiness is not the goal, and he's not saying, blessed shall you be if.

He's saying, blessed are those. He's describing the Christian. He's not giving conditions for blessed men.

He's talking about what you are. Now, I want you to see the contrast, because beginning in verse 27, there's a list of rules, a list of do's, and a list of don'ts. Verse 27, love your enemy.

Do good to those who hate you. Verse 28, bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you.

29, turn the other cheek. Give them your shirt. 35, love your enemy.

36, show mercy, even as your Father in heaven shows mercy. 37, do not judge. Now, this sermon's full of that.

Do this, do that. An impossible thing. Now, I call attention to the Beatitudes over against the list of rules, because the Beatitudes call attention to what you are.

The rules call attention to what you do. Blessed are those. Now, do this.

You can't do until you are. I can't do until I am. What I do comes from what I am.

And the whole point of the Sermon on the Mount is that God's going to change us, and He's going to make us into something, and the fruit of that something will be as it's described here. Did you notice in John chapter 10, Jesus' great description of why a thief steals? A thief steals because, can you finish the verse? Because he's a thief. And then something, a thief steals because he's a thief.

We do what we do because of who we are. And God is far more interested in making us what He wants us to be than will automatically do what we ought to do. He always calls attention to what we are.

And of course, that underneath is relationship with God. In verse 36, He calls attention to this. Be merciful as your Father in Heaven is merciful.

And notice in verse 40, A pupil is not above his teacher. Everyone, after he has been fully trained, will become like his teacher. You see, in the Sermon on the Mount, the standard is God Himself.

Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect. In other words, we're becoming like God. And He's concerned that we're conformed to Christ.

Merciful as He's merciful. Perfect as He's perfect. A teacher, I mean a student, becomes like his teacher.

And as we become more and more like the Lord, then we're going to look like this. Look at chapter 6, 43 please, how He brings this sermon to an end. There's no good tree which produces bad fruit.

On the other hand, the bad tree which produces good fruit. Each tree is known by its fruit. Men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush.

The good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, brings forth what is good. The evil man, out of the evil treasure, brings forth what is evil. His mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.

A tree is known by its fruit. And the secret of this sermon on the plain is fruit. A tree is known by its fruit.

What I am determines what I do. Behavior is always a byproduct of character. And God is concerned.

He's not going to give us a bunch of rules and say, now Christians do this, don't do that, do the other thing. No, He's concerned with the tree. He makes the tree.

And then the tree will bring forth this kind of fruit. If I'm not loving my brothers, I ought to love my brother. Think I should work on loving my brother? No way.

If you don't see the fruit, you don't have to work on the fruit. You better run back to the Lord and say, Lord, you've got to work on the tree. I need to be the kind of tree that brings forth the kind of fruit that you desire.

Now, I don't know if you've ever done this, but let me encourage a little devotional exercise for you. Did you ever go out to an orchard early in the morning? It's got to be pretty early. The dew's still on the ground.

And you've got to be real quiet. Sneak up to some fruit tree. It doesn't really matter if it's an apple tree or a pear tree or a peach tree.

Some people don't believe me. Sneak up to some fruit tree and be real quiet. It takes about 20 minutes.

And then when they know, the trees know you're not there, when they think you're not there, then they'll start. And you can hear them begin to moan and to groan and to agonize. And then you'll start to hear popping in the orchard.

And every now and then you hear a pop. And a fruit will pop out. If you're careful, you'll see it.

And you'll hear these trees agonizing and groaning and moaning. You say, that's a silly thing. That's not going to happen.

I've seen an orchard of Christians doing that. Agonizing to bring forth fruit. Laboring labor.

They read something like this, love your brother or turn the other cheek. And they say, my heart is full of vindictiveness and animosity and imprecation. And I want to get even.

I'm trying so hard to be a Christian. I'm trying so hard to bear fruit. I'm trying so hard to do the things that please God.

And they work and they pray and they fast and they agonize to bring forth fruit. Friends in Christ, that is not the Christian life. The Christian life is automatic.

The tree brings forth its fruit in its season. The tree doesn't agonize to bring forth fruit. It drinks in the sunshine.

Drinks in the rain. Takes in the nutrients from the soil. Colossians says, Christ is our soil.

We're rooted in Him and built up in Him. If you have to agonize or if I have to agonize to love an unlovely person. If you have to agonize to forgive someone, no matter what damage they've done to you, how they've hurt you.

If you have to agonize over that, then we need to run back to the Lordship of Christ. To the degree He's Lord of my life. To that degree these fruit will come in my life.

And that's the glory of this precious sermon on the plain. Jesus said, my commandments are not burdensome. My yoke is easy.

My burden is light. For many, many thousands of Christians, the Christian life is not an easy thing. It's such a burden and they work so hard.

They constantly rise and fall. And they make a big struggle of it. Because they haven't learned the great principle of relationship with God.

Becoming like the Lord. Going after Him and then these things come automatically. It's a great blessing to see some of these things begin to take place in your life.

The more we know the Lord, the more they're going to be true in our lives. Don't answer, just think. Are you poor? Now don't forget when he talks about being poor and rich, he's talking spiritually.

He's not talking about physical things at all. He's talking about poor in spirit. If I come before God in spiritual poverty, knowing that I have nothing in this world, hungering, not after food, Matthew fills it in, after righteousness.

If I come with these beatitudes, if I see these things in my life, then I don't have to worry about the fruit. You'll be amazed as you look back on your life. Go after Christ.

Do it for 50 years, 70 years. If I'm wrong, then try something else. But try that for 50, 60, 70 years.

Just go after Christ and you'll look back over your shoulder and you'll see how you actually do look like this. And you'll be rejoicing in the Lord and you'll be a forgiving person and a merciful person. You won't be judging others or seeing the beams in their eyes because of the moat that's in your... and so on.

This wonderful description, this ideal Christian. Don't run after these rules. Run after the Lord and these things will come as fruit in your life.

Well, obviously, as I said, I even got to sermonizing there for a minute. There's a lot you could say about this wonderful sermon. Let's leave it there and I'm going to ask you to turn to chapter 7, please.

There are four wonderful stories in chapter 7. The first 10 verses, the centurion's slave is healed. And then in verses 11 to 17, the raising of the son of the widow of Nain. And then verses 18 to 35, the doubts expressed by John the baptizer.

And then finally, the chapter ends with this wonderful story in 36 to 50, the woman who, at the house of Simon the Pharisee, wiped the feet of our Lord Jesus with her tears. And so on. Obviously, this morning we'll not be able to get into all of that.

But let's look at a couple of the redemptive miracles. We've looked so far at five redemptive miracles. The ones about the demons I've left out.

The reason is because in another connection I want to pull all of them together. And we'll look at that whole thing called demon possession. So, we looked at the fever, Peter's mother-in-law with the fever, the miraculous catch of fish, the man who was full of leprosy, the paralyzed man they let down through the roof at Capernaum, and then last time we looked at the man with the withered hand.

We come now to the sixth redemptive miracle. And once again, we'll try to get under the skin to see the spiritual principle. Follow along in verse 1 of chapter 7. When he had completed all his discourse in the hearing of the people, he went to Capernaum.

And a certain centurion slave who was regarded by him was sick and about to die. And when he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking him to come save the life of his slave. And when they had come to Jesus, they earnestly entreated him, saying, He's worthy for you to come and grant this to him, for he loves our nation, and it was he who built our synagogue.

Now Jesus started on his way with them, and when he was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends saying to him, Lord, do not trouble yourself further. I'm not worthy for you to come under my roof. For this reason, I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you.

But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to this one, go.

And he goes. To another, come. And he comes.

To my slave, do this. And he does it. Now when Jesus heard this, he marveled at him, and turned and said to the multitude that was following him, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith.

And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health. Let me make a couple of comments about the miracle before we look at the spiritual side. First of all, don't confuse this miracle with the healing of the ruler's son.

In John chapter 4, some have tried to make that the same story. They're two different miracles. If you read Matthew's account of this particular miracle, you get the idea that the centurion came by himself.

Luke, it says that he sent others to represent him. The reality is, Matthew picks up the story at the tail end. The centurion sent people to get Jesus.

Jesus came, and when they got to his front lawn, the centurion came out. That's where Matthew picks it up. And so it's not a different story, and there's no confusion there.

Now we don't know what this centurion slave had for a disease. Evidently, Matthew calls it some kind of a palsy, some kind of a paralysis. We learn from Luke that it was terminal, that he was ready to die.

Matthew also says he was grievously tormented by this thing. So whatever the palsy was, it caused great pain, and evidently his life was threatened by it. From what we read, this Roman official was really something special, unusual for a Roman official.

Although he was Roman, although he was Gentile, we read in verse 5, he loves our nation and built up the synagogue. He wasn't a Jew. He was a Roman official and had a high regard for his slave.

Notice chapter 7, verse 2. Who was highly regarded by him. A Weiss translation says, highly prized. You wouldn't expect a Roman official to love his slave that much.

Some of the things we read about the Roman officials were the opposite of that. The average centurion, I think, was pretty rough on his slaves and his soldiers. This, like the other redemptive miracles, contains a great spiritual reality.

Let's try to home in on that particular spiritual truth. Now one way to get to the heart of the spiritual side of this miracle is to contrast what the elders said with what the centurion himself said. Did you notice in verse 3? The centurion sent the Jewish elders and they said, He's worthy.

He is worthy. Do the miracle because he deserves it. Do the miracle because he's worthy.

He loved the Jews. He built us a synagogue. At the end of verse 4, he is worthy for you to grant unto him.

In other words, he earned it. He deserves it. He's a good man.

He financed the synagogue. Do it. I have to smile when I read what these elders say because they don't have a clue about what motivated the Lord Jesus.

And it certainly wasn't, do it, he deserves it. Do it. He's worthy.

Jesus doesn't say a word. He just starts walking toward the house. He didn't say anything.

He just began to move. And when they arrived, the man comes out. Now listen to what the centurion said.

Verse 6. Lord, do not trouble yourself further. I am not worthy for you to come under my roof. For this reason, I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you.

He says, I'm not worthy. I'm not worthy to have you in my house. And I'm not worthy to even stand in your presence.

Now here's an amazing thing. One says, help him, he's worthy. The other one says, help me, I'm not worthy.

Notice verse 9. When Jesus heard this, he marveled. Don't read that la, la, la. When you see Jesus marveling, don't forget who he was.

It takes a lot to make Jesus marvel. Jesus marveled only two times in the Bible do we see Jesus marveling. Once, he marveled at Jewish unbelief.

And once, he marveled at Gentile faith. That's the only time Jesus ever marveled. Now, I call attention to what he's marveling at.

Jesus is not marveling because this man was worthy. See, the elders say, he's worthy. He's a good man.

He helps us. He loves the nation. Built a synagogue.

That would contradict grace. He's not marveling because of that. Neither is Jesus marveling because he claimed to be unworthy.

He's not marveling at his humility. This man said, I'm not worthy to have you under my roof. I'm not worthy to stand in your presence.

That's not what made Jesus marvel. What's Jesus marveling at? It's not his worthiness or his unworthiness. According to the record, he's marveling at his faith.

He's marveling at his faith. Two weeks ago, we saw some friends bringing their friend through the roof on a pallet, on a bed, before Jesus. Why didn't the centurion bring his slave before Jesus? Here's an amazing thing.

By faith, they brought their friend to Jesus. By faith, he's not bringing his friend to Jesus. It's still by faith.

And now look at his faith. See, this man understands authority. This man is a ruler.

And he knew the power of his own word. He knew he could say to a servant, go. And he'd go.

He could say to another, stay. And he'd stay. He could say to another, do this.

And he'd do it. And he understood authority. And he looked into the eyes of Jesus and he said, I understand authority.

I'm a man under authority and I'm a man that has authority. I know what it is to take orders. I know what it is to give orders.

And Jesus, I know you can speak the word. I know the power of my word. And I know the power of your word.

You can say to the disease, like I say to my slave. I tell my slave, go. And he'd go.

You can say to the disease, go. And it has to obey you. And when Jesus heard that thing, that he had such a view of Christ and the power of his word, the Bible says that the Lord Jesus marveled at that.

I call attention to that because I think that is the spiritual message. That when we acknowledge the power, the authority of the Lord and the power of his word, the Lord Jesus marveled. He doesn't marvel when we come and we've done this and that and we're so worthy.

He doesn't marvel at that. He doesn't marvel when we're humble and say, oh, poor me. I'm nothing.

I'm nobody. I can't do it. That doesn't impress Jesus either.

The thing that impresses him is the simplicity of faith. And when we just come and say, Lord, I believe it. You said it.

You have the word. You have the power. And that's what impresses the Lord Jesus.

Before we wrap this up, let me ask you to turn, please. I want to just get this miracle before you. As you know from our schedule, I'll be away for a couple of weeks in a row.

So I wanted to get the miracle, this next one, the redemptive miracle in because actually there's a section division here. That will make more sense next time. So let's look at verse 11 to 17.

It came about soon afterward he went to a city called Nain. His disciples were going along with him, accompanied by a large multitude. As he approached the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother.

And she was a widow. A sizable crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, he felt compassion for her and said to her, do not weep.

And he came up and he touched the coffin. And the bearers came to a halt and he said, young man, I say unto you, arise. And the dead man sat up and began to speak.

I like the way that's worded, the dead man sat up. And Jesus gave him back to his mother. And fear gripped them all and they began glorifying God saying, a great prophet has arisen among us and God has visited his people.

And this report concerning him went all over Judea and in all the surrounding district. This is the only time Nain is mentioned in the New Testament. In other words, Jesus came here on purpose.

And for this particular miracle. Before we look at the record, let me suggest to you that this boy was already a believer before Jesus raised him up. I take that as a deduction from the balance of scripture.

In other words, I believe all of the resurrection, everybody who was ever raised up, old or New Testament, were already believers before they died. Whether it was Lazarus or Jairus' daughter or Dorcas or that dear fellow Eutychus who fell from the, he was listening to Paul's preach and fell out the window. Remember that? In the book of Acts and Paul raised him up and said, you're going to hear the end of my sermon.

They were all believers and for this reason. Because God has declared in the Bible, there would be no second chance for salvation after death. Once a person dies, there's no second chance.

And if they weren't already believers, that would be a contradiction. He'd be raising up someone and then giving them a second chance. And that couldn't be.

So, they were already believers. This is one of those miracles that sort of creates a visual image in your mind. I hope as you read the scripture that you try to get into it and visualize and put yourself in their place and in their shoes and so on.

Who can't picture this scene? Who can't feel the amazement and the ecstasy of joy in that mother as she was revived when she received her son back again? How suddenly were all those tears dried up and replaced with joyful astonishment. A funeral procession, a funeral dirt was turned into a birthday party. You've got to enter into this thing.

I think there are at least three spiritual truths illustrated by this particular miracle. The first can be summarized in the word transformation. Let me illustrate that for you.

I think any artist who reads this automatically gets a scene in their mind. There were two processions that day. Try to picture this.

The first procession was coming into the city of Nain. You know, the Lord Jesus was healing everybody and He was teaching and the crowd was gathering and the crowd was building. And so you had a parade of people who are entering the glory of the Lord and seeing great things.

And they're all excited and singing choruses and praising God. And they're moving in one direction. And as this parade, this mass, this army of believers is moving in one direction, coming in the exact opposite direction, there's another parade coming out of the city.

And this is not so triumphant. Coming out of the city is this sad pomp of the funeral procession. The woeful widow weeping and her neighbors and her friends and her family weeping.

And they're on their way to a funeral. And so the first triumphant parade meets the sad, doleful parade and they meet head on. Two parades.

Two different directions. One is life and one is death. One is happy and one is sad.

One is going in one direction and the other is going in the other direction. And our Lord Jesus walks up to the widow and says, Weep not. Don't weep.

Now if He were not the friend of all mankind, you would say that's a cruel thing to say. She's about to bury her son and to tell this woman not to weep. If we didn't know what He was going to do.

But then Jesus walks up to the coffin and in verse 14, He says, Young man, I say unto you, arise. You talk about busting up a funeral. You talk about breaking up a sad time.

The power in the words that follow, verse 15, The dead man sat up and began to speak. This is so magnificent. Such a scene.

I call it transformation because of the way the parade was turned around. Here comes one victorious. Onward, Christian soldiers marching as to war.

And we meet the world sad and doleful. And then when our parade hits their parade, Death is turned to life and their parade turns around and joins our parade. And on we go.

It's just such a marvelous scene here where the sadness is turned into glory. So the first principle is transformation. There is certainly a turnaround here.

And then the second is hope. Hope. Not only for impossible things, but hope for the future.

See, Jesus not only gave her back her son, But He gave her back her future. Do you realize the power in that word of Jesus? The centurion said, I know the power of my word. I say go and he goes.

I say stay and he stays. I say do this and he does it. And Jesus has power in His word.

I don't think the centurion had a clue when he said, I know the power of His word. That this was going to take place ten minutes later. You talk about power in a word.

This isn't power healing a disease. This is the power to raise the dead. Jesus didn't stretch Himself over the corpse like Elijah and Elisha had done.

Jesus didn't kneel down beside the corpse and pray like Peter did at the corpse of Dorcas. He just said the powerful word, Young man, I say to you, arise. No finite power could say to a dead man, Arise.

Not without presumption. And certainly not with success. Finite power can't do that.

Only infinite power can do that. And that's what gives it hope. Because He spoke with infinite power.

Now, He illustrates death. When He does miracles over death, Death is man's most unsolvable problem. Nobody can solve the problem of death.

Jesus can solve the problem of death. He solves man's most unsolvable problem, So we will know that every lesser problem is included in the greater. If He can solve the most unsolvable problem, Don't answer it, just let it.

Can He solve your problem that you have right now? He does it with infinite power. Now, if it's infinite, that means it's unlimited. If infinite power raised one man, It can raise two.

If it raised two, it can raise five. If it raised five, it can raise ten. If it's infinite power, If it can raise ten, it can raise ten thousand.

Ten thousand, ten million. You see, this is the foretaste of the resurrection. And that's exactly what He's going to do.

In John 5, He said, The day is coming when those who are in the graves Will hear the voice of the Son of Man, And those that hear shall live. And He's going to speak. The Bible calls it like the sound of a trumpet.

In the last day, the dead will rise in Christ. All of that is anticipated right here. So not only does He solve man's most unsolvable problem, But He also gives hope through this, For the day that's coming down the road.

Not only transformation, not only hope, But let's wrap it up with this. This story also teaches the grace of God. So far in our redemptive miracles, Our eyes have been turned to faith.

Peter, by faith, brings his mother-in-law to Christ. The leper, by faith, comes himself. The friends bring their paralyzed friend to the Lord Jesus.

The centurion comes for his slave, sends elders. We've been looking at faith, And we ended up, Jesus marvels at faith. But in this miracle, there's no faith.

There's no faith. There's a funeral procession. Nobody prayed.

Nobody fasted. Nobody asked the Lord for anything. No one sued Heaven for some benefit.

But in verse 13, When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion on her. Sometimes, God does things without faith. He does things just because He's compassionate.

Just because He sees things, And He enters in, And He feels their infirmity. This miracle was a miracle of grace, And mercy, And compassion. Sometimes I look in my own life, And I say, Oh my, if it depends on faith, I'm a dead man.

My faith struggles, And my faith is so weak, And I don't know what to do, And I'm having such doubts, And such turmoil. What's my fault? See, the important thing about faith is not faith. The important thing about faith Is the object of your faith.

What are you trusting? For years, I had faith in my faith. I didn't have faith in the Lord. I thought the big thing was faith.

And if I had a lot of faith, If I had strong faith, If I had more faith, Then I'd be rich toward God. No, I didn't have faith. Faith is nothing.

It's the Lord that's everything. And you know what's an amazing thing? Wouldn't you say, What a miracle God did for that kid. I mean, he gave him life.

He was dead. Now he's alive. What a miracle God did for that man.

No, God didn't do that miracle for that man. He did that miracle for his mother. When he saw her, He had compassion on her.

And when he said, Son, I say arise, He gave her to his mother. Do you realize some of the greatest things God's ever done in your life? He hasn't done for you. He's done for your mother.

He's done for your friend. He's done for your father. He's done for your neighbor.

We get this idea because something like rhetoric, Wow, look what God did for me. Probably not. Probably not.

It's preemptive. It's probably for somebody else. Praise God that he does it, Even when I don't believe.

Just because he's good. Just because he's compassionate. Just because he loves.

And when God does some wonderful thing for you, You bless the Lord. But then I wonder, If it's really for you. I think we don't have a clue.

God might do something, Bring you through something today, And you won't know for 20 years down the road, Why God brought that into your life. It's not for you. It's for somebody else.

He's always working redemptively. Certainly he does it for you. But he's always working for your mother as well.

And for other people. So this is a glorious thing that God continually does. And he has this compassion.

So these two redemptive miracles, One showing that Jesus is not impressed, With your worthiness or unworthiness. But he will be moved by your faith. And the second one showing, If you don't have faith, He'll still have compassion.

Because he's a good God. We have a wonderful, a wonderful Savior. Well we'll close it here.

And I would covet so your prayers, As we go to these Bible conferences. I have two in a row. And they're two different men's conferences.

And the Lord has been so faithful to visit with us. And to minister to us. So if you pray, I would really appreciate it.

Comments or questions? Well let's pray. Our Father, we do thank you. That we're just not studying some history.

But a very present Savior. A present help. Lord you're unchanging.

And just as really. As you turn that sad parade around. You're able to turn things around in our life.

Just as really as you minister. And gave life for death. You're able to do that.

And just as surely as your powerful word. Could heal that centurion slave. You can speak the word.

And bring healing in our life. And so we thank you for these things. And ask you to work them in our lives.

And especially make us good trees. That we might bring forth. We claim this in the matchless name of our Savior.

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