

Church Year Story 31

*Catechism and Memory Verse
from the Congregation at Prayer for the Week*

BIBLE STORY: THE RAISING OF THE WIDOW OF NAIN'S SON

Luke 7:11-17

Central Thoughts

- Death separates us from God and from one another.
- Jesus has compassion upon us for how sin and death have brought us loneliness and grief.
- Jesus has “touched our uncleanness” taking all our sin and death upon Himself.
- Jesus’ Word gives life to the dead and restores our fellowship with God and one another because it is anchored to Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Discussion Questions

Where was the city of Nain located?

In southern Galilee

What was happening as Jesus and His disciples approached the gate of the city?

A dead man was being carried out of the city in a funeral procession

How is the dead man identified?

He was the only son of his mother; and she was a widow

What would now make the woman’s life even more difficult?

She had no support since both her husband and her only son were now dead.

What Old Testament narratives are parallel to this story?

Elijah raised the widow of Zarephath’s son (1 Kings 17:17-24). Elisha raising of a woman’s son (2 Kings 4:32-37).

Why are Old Testament parallels to Jesus’ ministry important?

They reinforce that He is the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures and the prophet who surpasses the ministry of all the prophets.

Who witnessed what Jesus did?

The widow, the disciples, and the large crowd of funeral mourners

What was Jesus’ reaction to this woman who had lost both her husband and her only son in death?

He had compassion on her

What does compassion mean?

It means that His heart broke open in love for her in which He desired to carry her sorrows and bring her comfort by restoring her son’s life.

What does Jesus say to the grieving mother?

“Do not weep!”

What does Jesus’ word mean?

It means that He has come to rescue us from death and restore our lives in fellowship with God and one another.

What did Jesus do?

He touched the open coffin, and those who carried the dead man stood still.

What did this action signify?

It teaches us that the Son of God came into the world to take our sin and death upon Himself, making Himself “unclean” as the sin-bearer.

What had sin done to us?

Sin separated us from God and one another. It made us unclean and is the cause of death.

What did Jesus say to the dead man?

“Young man, I say to you, arise.”

What happened as a result of Jesus' Word?

The young man arose from the dead, sat up, and began to speak. Jesus then presented the young man to his mother.

What do Jesus' words and actions teach us?

His Word has the power to forgive sins, conquer death, and restore life with God and one another. He not only raised this young man to life, but He also gave him back to his mother, delivering his mother from the loneliness and separation caused by death.

What was the reaction of all who witnessed Jesus' miracle?

They worshiped Him in holy fear, glorified God, and confessed that "A great prophet has risen among us"; and "God has visited His people."

What do these two sayings mean?

Jesus is truly the prophet greater than Moses, Elijah, Elisha and all the prophets because He is the Lord and His Word gives life by rescuing us from sin and death. They also recognized in Jesus' ministry that God Himself was visiting His people with salvation.

What was the result of Jesus' ministry to the widow of Nain and her son?

The report of what He had done was spread throughout Judea (to the south) and all the surrounding regions.

Meditation on the Bible Story

What grief and sorrow sin and death had brought to this woman! Those she had loved most and who were the closest to her had died. She was a widow and now her only son had died. She had no one to care for her and she was alone. She longed to give and receive love with her loved ones, but now she was separated from them by death. This is what makes grief so painful. Sin brings about death and separation from God and one another. Compassion is a word that describes the nature of God's love for us in Christ. He doesn't merely love us like one who pities another for the suffering that has come into their lives; He loves us by desiring to take the cause of our suffering upon Himself. Jesus' compassion for this widow and mother caused Him to touch the coffin of her dead son. He came to arrest death in its tracks. He came to take the uncleanness of sin and death upon Himself. He came to die as the sin-bearer to reconcile and restore our lives with God and one another. He not only raised the young man from the dead by His life-giving Word, but He gave him back to His mother. He restored communion from which sin and death had separated them. Every Christian looks forward to the resurrection of the body on the last day where we will forever be with the Lord Jesus and to the blessed reunion with those departed brothers and sisters in Christ who have died in the faith. "Alleluia! Christ is risen!" is the confident confession that Jesus has conquered death and that we shall forever live together in Christ.

Prayer on the Bible Story

Blessed Lord, comfort us with the sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the dead on the last day. As You raised the widow's son and gave him back to his mother, teach us to believe that we shall enjoy an eternal reunion with our brothers and sisters in Christ who have died in the faith; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



The Raising of the Widow of Nain's Son
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