

Luke

THE GOSPEL FOR THE LOST, THE LAST AND THE LEAST

Title: The Widow of Nain – From Grief to Relief

Text: Luke 7:11-17

INTRODUCTION:

How Does God Respond to Those Who Are Suffering? What is God's disposition toward us when life is hard, tragedy strikes, trials surround us, and suffering abounds?

Luke 7:11-17 – Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. 12 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. 13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." 14 Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." 15 And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. 16 Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" 17 And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.

The Big Idea: Jesus Sees Our Suffering

I. The Reality of Our Suffering

- Five Common Counterfeit Responses to Suffering. *The World Says*: 1) Suppress It 2) Escape It 3) Avoid It 4) Make It Your Identity 5) Blame Someone
- Three Common "Churchy" Responses to Suffering. *Some Christians Say* 1) Cliché It 2) Explain It 3) Move on from It
- A Biblical Response to Suffering Begins with Validating Our Experiences of Suffering

II. Jesus' Response to Suffering

- We Think God Is Distant ----- Jesus Moved Closer (He went to Nain)
- We Think God Is Indifferent ----- Jesus Is Moved with Compassion
- We Think God Is Silent ----- Jesus Breaks the Silence and Speaks

III. God's Solution for Suffering = Jesus, Our Suffering Savior.

Final Applications:

- 1) Jesus sees you in your suffering.
- 2) If Jesus reveals the heart of God... then Jesus also reveals the posture His people should have.
- 3) Respond to suffering with empathy, not an explanation.
- 4) The world offers "momentary relief." Jesus alone offers "transformative hope."



Life Group Questions:

- 1) Remember to open your life group with a time to “preach” to each other (a.k.a. proclaim how God has been at work in/through you this past week).
- 2) How did Jesus surprise you in tonight’s passage? What stood out to you most from the story of Jesus and the widow of Nain? Why?
- 3) The sermon identified several ways people commonly respond to suffering: suppress it, escape it, avoid it, make it their identity, or blame someone. Which of those responses do you think is most common in our culture? What are some ways that you see people around you embody this type of posture?
- 4) When you’re hurting, what is your natural tendency? Do you tend to talk about it, hide it, distract yourself from it, try to fix it, or something else?
- 5) Which of these statements is most difficult for you to genuinely believe when you’re suffering? Why?
 - Jesus sees me.
 - Jesus is near me.
 - Jesus cares about my suffering.
 - Jesus is doing something even when I can’t see it.
 - Jesus will ultimately defeat suffering.
- 6) One of the major points of the sermon is that “Jesus Sees Us in Our Suffering.”
 - Why is that truth significant when you’re going through something painful (even if your circumstances don’t immediately change)?
 - The sermon contrasted the feeling that “God is distant” with the truth that Jesus “moved closer.” Have you ever experienced a season when God felt distant? Looking back, did anything help you recognize His presence?
- 7) The sermon argued that true compassion leads to action... that pity without action doesn’t fully capture the heart of Jesus. Who in your life right now is suffering whom you know about but haven’t really moved toward?
 - Andrew encouraged us to pray, “Lord, break our hearts for what breaks Yours.” What is one kind of suffering or brokenness around you that God might be calling you to care about more deeply?

