

## FROM DEATH TO DELIGHT

**Text: Luke 7:11-17**

**Key Word:** Delight

**Key Thought:** Death Is Not the End of Life When Our Lord is Near

During times of distress and despair, Jesus is near. When we think He's left us, He has not. Luke chapter 7 has four very interesting stories that link together to prove that Jesus loves to lift us out of times of despair. I've never met anyone like Jesus who is so wonderful to me.

When I am down He picks me up. When I am frustrated, He comes by my side and offers me a helping hand. When I don't know where to go, He leads. When I can't understand, He teaches me. When I have a need, He supplies.

The Centurion had a servant that he highly valued. His only hope was Jesus. He was desperate to have the healing hand of Jesus reach out and touch his servant. The widow was picture of total helplessness. Jesus came to her without her even calling to Him. John the Baptist had lost all hope because he was separated from the presence of Jesus. The woman who anointed Jesus needed someone to remove the burden of sin from her life.

**Lets focus for a few moments on the woman who lost her son. This woman walked through at least three stages of change.**

**I. Death (Luke 7:11,12)**

**II. Despair (Luke 7:13)**

**III. Delight (Luke 7:14-17)**

### **I. Death (Luke 7:11,12)**

The Bible tells us that Jesus went to the town of Nain. Some believe its actual name was "*Naim*" which means "*pleasant*." This is the only time this town is mentioned in Scripture. It was located a few miles south of Nazareth at the edge of little Hermon or what was known the slope of the hill of Moreh. It was surrounded by a picturesque view of mountains (NW - Mount Carmel; NE Mount Tabor and the snowy heights of Mount Hermon; S was Mount Gilboa). It was an unfortified city nestled in the foot of the mountainous terrain - a secure environment (she didn't need help until the loss of her only son).

It only took one event on a single day and she felt devastated. Death became a reality once more, but this time she expected to die before her son. Parents should never have to bury one of their children. A mother was especially placed into a life of poverty and often rejected because the religious leaders of the day believed and taught that some hidden sin was being judged.

## I. Death (Luke 7:11,12) (Contd.)

It was in this lovely location that a tragedy took place. Our lives often cross this same path. Just when everything seems to be going so well, the rug is often pulled out from under us. Things we never expect to happen take place. We feel devastated. It seems like there is nowhere to turn for comfort. We feel empty and perhaps angry, depressed, lonely, withdrawn, and self-destructive. This unnamed widow lost her only son. According to one study on death it was found that the intensity of the grief is determined by the intensity of love we've had for the one who died.

“When death separates us from someone we love  
there is a time when we think no one has suffered as  
we have.”

Billy Graham  
*“Facing Death and the Life After”*  
p. 164

We try to comfort those who have lost a loved one by saying things like, *“God will fill the void.”*

“Instead, we found that the void is really never  
filled, but God does make the void bearable.”

Dr. C. Everett Koop and Elizabeth Koop  
*“Sometimes Mountains Move”*  
p. 40, 73

All this widow could see where the mountains surrounding her. The woman was also surrounded by a crowd of mourners. It was in Jewish custom that attendance to a funeral was considered as an act of love. The mourners would cry all the louder if a child had died.

“When we encounter death, we face an irreversible,  
unalterable situation that we are powerless to  
change. Even though *“death has been swallowed up  
in victory,”* the loss of a loved one can be  
devastating and grief can be overwhelming.”

Gary R. Collins  
*“Christian Counseling”*  
p. 345

The Bible tells us the family of Jacob along with the Egyptians mourned over the death of Jacob for 70 days (Genesis 50:3 ). Job's comforters sure didn't find the right words to speak.

*“He is torn from the security of his tent and  
marched off to the king of terrors.”*

*Job 18:14*

## II. Despair (Luke 7:13)

*“When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, ‘Don’t cry.’”*

*Luke 7:13*

Can you picture the scene that was before Jesus? As He approached the town with a crowd following Him, He is met with another crowd wailing and mourning over this untimely death. I don’t think it is a co-incidence that Luke used the name “**Lord**” to refer to Jesus at this time. The Lord of life and death had made His way into this depressed situation. The Bible says “*his heart went out to her.*” Many versions say that He had “*compassion towards her.*” His heart was moved by her grief.

She had been dealt a double blow in life. Prior to this death she had also lost her husband. Now her only means of support had slipped away. She would become an outcast of society. The common belief was that it was a sign of God’s extra judgement to lose both a husband and a son. I’m sure these thoughts were plaguing her mind.

During the time of the prophet Elijah (I Kings 17) a widow received a miracle of the jar of oil and flour during a time of great famine, just before she had prepared to die along with her only son. Elijah brought hope back into her life. Only a short time past and her son became very ill and stopped breathing. In her despair, the widow blamed the prophet for the untimely death. Elijah took the boy, laid him on his bed, stretched himself out upon the child three times, and the boy’s life returned.

Jesus knew the inevitable outcome for this widow if He didn’t help her. She would probably die an agonizing death in severe poverty without her husband or son. Her fears became overwhelming. The tears she cried were the only source of relief she could find. She had probably already experienced many other effects in the grieving process - shock, numbness, denial, emptiness, guilt, anger, forgetfulness, loneliness, and even collapsing.

“These symptoms of grief come in waves, and rarely are they all present at the same time.”

C. S. Lewis  
“A Grief Observed”  
p. 66,67

Luke, the physician, could have went into an elaborate detail of the grieving process, but the Holy Spirit, limited him to this one thought - **DON’T CRY!** These few words set the stage of anticipation among those gathered to witness the upcoming miracle.

## II. Despair (Luke 7:13)(Contd.)

When Corrie ten Boom was a girl, her first realization of death came after a visit to the home of a neighbor who had died. It impressed her that someday her parents would die. Corrie's father comforted her. "Corrie, when you and I go to Amsterdam, when do I give you your ticket?" he asked.

\*\*\* Corrie answered, "Why, just before we get on the train." \*\*\*

"Exactly," responded her father, "and our wise Father in heaven knows exactly when we're going to need things too. Don't run out ahead of Him, Corrie. When the time comes that some of us will have to die, you will look into your heart and find the strength you need - just in time."

Michael Green  
"Illustrations for Biblical Preaching"  
#302, p. 95

## III. Delight (Luke 7:14-17)

**Jesus is always on time.** When Jesus went up and touched the open coffin (bier), there must have been a gasp that came from the crowd. A bier is "a movable platform on which a coffin or corpse is placed before burial." According to the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 11:24 ff; Numbers 19:16) anyone who touched a dead body would be considered unclean until the evening. Samson became unclean according to the Law when he took the fresh jawbone of a donkey to destroy a thousand Philistines (Judges 15:15) and he also ate honey from the carcass of lion he had killed (Judges 14:8-9).

**God knows when the Laws of men need to bring broken in order to bring about life.**  
The crowd stopped as Jesus spoke to the young man who was being carried upon the open bier (coffin).

*"Young man, I say to you, get up!"*  
*15. The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother."*

*Luke 7:14,15*

### III. Delight (Luke 7:14-17)(Contd.)

In a moment of time Jesus changed a situation of death and despair into one of delight. When the presence of Jesus enters our midst, death and despair must vacate the premises. I can preach without having any effect, if we do not welcome the presence of Jesus. He died to bring us life and that kind of life ONLY comes from Him.

Are you in a situation that appears to be hopeless? Have you lost sight of the presence of Jesus? Can you only see death and destruction and despair surrounding your future? Have you considered inviting Jesus into your situation? Will you obey the Word He gives to you? If He says stop - will you? If He reaches out to touch you, will you let Him? Have you any other choice?

You may be the one that God will use to bring hope to many. Your step of faith may bring about much glory to God. People need to see that God is great, not just hear about it. He is a Mega-prophet.

*“They were filled with awe and praised God. ‘A great prophet has appeared among us,’ they said. ‘God has come to help his people.’  
17. This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country.”*

*Luke 7:16,17*

There may be a servant of the Lord in a prison simply because he has done the will of God. He may need an encouraging sign that God is who He said he was.

*“Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.”*

*Luke 7:22*

*“Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.”*

*Psalm 37:4*

C:\My Documents\WPWin(21)\Sermons.2024\Hope\Luke17\_11.17.wpd

Date: Aug 4/24

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: You Keep Hope Alive - G

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Gary R. Collins  
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*Job 18:14*

### II. Despair (Luke 7:13)

*Luke 7:13; I Kings 17*

“These symptoms of grief come in waves, and rarely are they all present at the same time.”

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### III. Delight (Luke 7:14-17)

*Leviticus 11:24 ff; Judges; Judges 14:8-9; Luke 7:14,15; Luke 7:16,17; Luke 7:22; Psalm 37:4*