

Our Only Hope: 'Jesus, Say the Word'

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 April 2024

Preacher: Bill Story

[0 : 00] Thank you so much. I enjoyed getting to know a little bit more of our history with the Bells. And as I had a limited understanding from our own history book, I knew that the Bells started with Little Log Church. I didn't know how and how it unfolded and became much more than Little Log Church.

It became a community thing, and we're so grateful that we could still be connected with that and enjoy that beautiful music. Did you turn to the last hymn in the hymnal and read the words along with that song, For the Beauty of the Earth?

We give the Lord praise. That was a beautiful rendition as well. Thank you. Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 7.

The Gospel of Luke, Chapter 7, is where we focus today as we dig in. At the end of Chapter 6 of Luke and Jesus' sermon, Jesus talked about two builders and one builder who built on a foundation, which was the rock, and that builder's life sustained the storms of life because he dug, and then he dug deeper, and then he laid a foundation on the rock, which is the word of Jesus himself.

[1 : 33] And so we seek to do that today. We're going to dig. We're not going to dig where, you know, we do one verse. We're going to go 17, but we still want to dig into these two wonderful stories, two stunning miracles.

If you heard these stories for the first time, they would take you back. Okay? Our problem is many of us have heard these stories many times, and we're kind of used to it.

So pretend a little bit that it's the first time you're hearing this. It should stun us. Okay? So if you're able, please stand as I read from Luke, Chapter 7.

We're going to look at the first 17 verses. Verse 1. After he had finished all his sayings, in the hearing of the people, he, speaking of Jesus, entered Capernaum.

Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come, and heal his servant.

[2 : 57] And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue.

And Jesus went with them. And when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Therefore, I did not presume to come to you myself, but say the word, and let my servant be healed. For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me, and I say to one, go, and he goes, and to another, come, and he comes, and to my servant, do this, and he does it.

When the Lord, excuse me, when Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.

And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well. Soon afterward, he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him.

[4 : 39] And 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 he said to her, do not weep. Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers 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. 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 country. So reads the word.

[6 : 08] Let us pray. Father, guide us this day that we might see what you want us to see. May the stunning power of Jesus strike us in our mind, in our heart.

And today, Father, pray for those who are hearing and yet can't hear. I pray that you would say the word today that awakens them.

This we ask in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. Do you remember the song, Jesus Take the Wheel?

Anybody heard that? I mean, it was number one for quite a while, about 19 years ago. Jesus, take the wheel.

Take it from my hands. I can't do it on my own. Give me one more chance. Save me from this road I'm on.

[7 : 27] Jesus, take the wheel. Now, Carrie Indlewood does it a lot better. You know. When that song came out in 2005, I was in between churches.

I had left my church in Illinois broken, discouraged, depressed. And I was a bus driver.

I had nothing wrong with that. I loved being a bus driver. One of the best jobs I've ever had. I get to be with kids and hang around, drive this big thing, and nobody, you know, nobody's cutting you off. I really enjoyed that.

But it wasn't, after being in the ministry for so many years, it wasn't, you know, it was going to be a temporary thing. And I didn't know what God was doing.

I didn't know where I was going. I didn't know if I would pastor again. I was feeling hopeless and lost.

[8 : 44] And I was cleaning out the bus one day. Yeah, you get to do that, clean up after kids. And I had the radio on, and this song came on.

Now, the story behind the song wasn't mine.

It's about a woman with a baby driving, and, you know, they lost track, and she called out to Jesus, right, take the wheel, you know. But obviously, the metaphor of the song is bigger than that, right?

Take the wheel of my life, save me from the road I'm on. Those words resonated. The words of despair, the words of hopelessness, you know, I can't do it.

They're also words of surrender. You take the wheel. I can't do it. And as I read this story, especially the first story about the centurion, what does he say to Jesus?

[10 : 06] I'm not worthy for you to come to my house. I'm not worthy that I should come myself to you. Just say the word. Jesus, take the wheel.

Jesus, but even stronger, Jesus, just say the word. If you just say the word, everything will be good. You don't even have to come.

Just say the word. It's like a prayer that we would pray to Jesus today. Just say the word. All Jesus has to do is speak the word. Just like he did in creation.

Let there be light. There was light. Let the water separate from above and below.

And they separated. Let the earth appear. And it appeared. Let the dry land appear. And it appeared. Let there be creatures. And fully. He spoke things into existence.

[11 : 11] And here we have two stories where Jesus speaks. That's all he does is he speaks. And there's complete restoration. There's a man at the brink of death who's rescued.

And Jesus isn't even present. And there's the widow's only son who is already dead. Imagine today Jesus interrupting a funeral.

I mean, how do you do a funeral when Jesus is there, right? Just a minute. Anyway, let's look at these. So we have two miracles here.

And both of them are overcoming hopelessness by a spoken word. And Luke tells us in the beginning of chapter 7, it is right after he finished all his sayings.

This sermon that we had been looking at in chapter 6. Right after he finished speaking those words, he comes into Capernaum. So apparently, wherever he was preaching the sermon on the plain, it must have just been outside of Capernaum.

[12 : 23] So it wasn't on a mountain like Matthew. It wasn't up on a mountain. This is on a plain.

This is after he came down from the mountain and the crowd gathered. So he goes right into Capernaum. So we have two miracles.

And they're contrasting. In the first miracle story, we have a man. In the second one, we have a woman. The first story, we have a Gentile centurion, a Roman soldier. And in the second one, we have a Jewish widow. The first one is a wealthy man. He builds synagogues. He's a centurion. He has money. In the second one, we have a poor widow. First one is powerful. He has influence. He can send people. He can do things. He has influence. The second one is a powerless woman. The first one has friends. He's got friends that he can send. The second one is now all, all alone. [13:28] All alone. First one has a servant who's dying. The second story has an only son who's already dead.

One requests through others. And the second one, she doesn't even ask. She doesn't even ask. So why are these stories here? Remember, as Zach reminded us, he read the opening verses of this gospel. Luke wrote to give us certainty so that we might have certainty about the things that we believe.

So why did he record these two miracle stories? How do they give us certainty? How do they show us what Jesus is all about? How do they show us that he really is the one?

He really is the son of God. How do we see that? I think we see it pretty clearly in this story.

Because what ties these two stories together is that one, they're both hopeless, but secondly, both, the man dying and the man who's already dead, are restored by a spoken word.

[14:49] What links these two is that spoken word, the power of Jesus speaking a word. How powerful his words are.

We've seen it before. We saw it in the paralytic that was lowered through the roof, remember, and he first said, you're forgiven and everybody's upset. How can he do that?

And then he says, to prove to you that the son of man has authority to forgive sins, I say to the man who's paralyzed, get up. He gets up. He just speaks.

So the power of his word. And so, though there's two miracles, there's really one message. The message is about the power of Jesus' spoken word to heal, to change our lives, to rescue us from despair, to bring us back from hopelessness.

Yeah. So let's look at these two stories. The two signs. Remember in the gospel, miracles are also called signs.

[15:55] The gospel of John, he never calls them miracles. He calls them signs because they signify something. They're pointing to something. They're pointing to something beyond themselves.

Right? So what Jesus does in a physical, limited way by raising this man or by healing this man points beyond that that he has power to heal and raise in a much bigger dimension like forgiveness of sins, like eternal life.

Right? And that's what John is, that's what the gospel of John's all about. Right? And so, here we have two signs. One is the sign of a dying man that's brought back, that's restored to full health by a spoken word.

and then we have a dead son who's raised to life again by a spoken word. One is driven by faith.

The first story is driven by faith because Jesus sees such faith that he's moved to do this. And the other one is simply driven by compassion.

[17:04] The woman doesn't ask. Jesus just sees her and feels and then speaks. So he meets us in many different ways.

So let's look at the first one. In the sign of the dying man, Jesus is moved by faith. And moved by faith, Jesus speaks wholeness or completeness to a dying man.

He gives him full restoration. So we see in verse 9 that, verse 9, when Jesus heard these things, he heard what the centurion was saying, he marveled at him.

Now Jesus doesn't marvel at a lot of people. He's not surprised by a lot of things. But this man takes him back. This man amazes Jesus.

I mean, Jesus is usually the amazer. This time, the amazement happens to him. He's like, whoa. Even in all of Israel, I haven't seen this kind of faith.

[18:16] This is incredible. And it's a Gentile. And it's a Roman. So, which makes me then go back to the story.

Let's look at the story. What makes that faith so startling? What makes that faith so stand out so extraordinarily? Well, first we see in verse 2, we see the situation that the centurion had a servant who was sick.

Not just sick like he's not feeling well, but he's so sick that he's about to die. And this is a servant that is highly valued by the centurion, which tells us the centurion is a little different than most centurions.

He has a slave called servant here, but he's a slave. He owns this man, but this man is valuable to him. And as we read the rest of the story, we see it's not just that he has a price value, but that he cares deeply about this man.

He's going to reach out because of this man. So then we see in verse 3, the centurion heard about Jesus. Okay. So the first thing we learn about faith is faith hears. Faith hears.

[19 : 34] And remember Jesus' parable about hearing. Those who hear Jesus' word, there's two kinds of hearers, right? Those that hear the words of Jesus and do them, they're building on the foundation. Those who hear Jesus' words and then just move on and don't do them, just ignore them, dismiss them, builds on the ground and the storm comes and wipes them out, right?

So which builder are you? The centurion's showing himself to be a hearer and a doer. He applies that word. He does something. He hears. And whatever he heard about Jesus, we don't know what he heard, but he heard about Jesus.

Obviously, he heard that Jesus heals. But as we kind of walk through this story with the centurion, he seemed to put a lot more things together than just that Jesus is a healer.

Because he goes beyond that. Okay? So he hears. And whatever he hears causes him to send these elders. He's got elders of the Jew who lobby for him.

Verse 4, they go and they plead with Jesus, right? Do this. He's worthy. He's a good man. He's a good man. Yeah, he's a Roman. Yeah, the Romans are our oppressors.

[20 : 45] Yes, we are slaves under the Romans. But this guy, he's a good one. He actually loves our nation. He loves the Jews. He doesn't beat us up.

He doesn't. He's kind. He even built us a synagogue. Now, when we go to Israel next year, where's Mary? When we go to Israel, we can go in. It's not the original synagogue.

Walk in the synagogue. It's the third century synagogue. So it's a couple away. But it's all in the same place and we get the idea of the size. It's a good size for a little Capernaum.

It's a good size synagogue. So they lobby for him.

He's a good man. He's caring and generous. But then we see something else happens in verse six. So Jesus starts to go with them. You know, Jesus is, he's good with that. Okay, I'm coming.

[21 : 44] And then we're told, Luke tells us when he's not far from the house, the centurion had second thoughts. He sends another delegation, his time friends.

It's like he sent the first ones. Urgency, you know, go get them, bring them here. And then as they're gone, while they're gone, he's thinking, wait a minute, wait a minute, this is Jesus we're talking about.

I haven't met him yet, but I've heard something. I've heard something that gives me pause that I've asked him to come to my house and I'm not worthy for him to come under my roof.

I mean, I'm not even worthy to go myself to him. That's why I sent these Jewish officers. So he says in verse six, right, the centurion sent friends saying to him, Lord, do not trouble yourself for I am not worthy.

They just said back in verse four, he is worthy. He's saying, no, I'm not. No, I'm not.

[22 : 51] I'm not worthy for you, Jesus, to come under my roof because you're not just anybody. And so we see the second thing about faith.

Faith not only hears faith hears, but faith then is humble. Faith has a humility to it, a beggarly sense to it, a brokenness to it.

I don't deserve for you to come. I do not. This is a man who you would think would be entitled. He's got the position, he's got power, he's got influence, he's got money, he's got everything, he's got, I mean, in a small little town, he runs the place, no doubt.

He's the man, the centurion. Centurion is over a hundred men, right? He has ten guys under him who are called decourians, dec meaning ten.

men, they were over ten men, he's over a hundred men, and then there's a man over him called Achiliarch, who's over a thousand. So that's the, that's the admiral, that's the general.

[24 : 09] So he's, he's like the colonel, right? And then he's got captains under him, so he's like the colonel, and colonels get a lot done. And he's that kind of guy.

And you'd think he'd be entitled. He's used to getting his way, and here's a guy that's different. In spite of his position and his influence and his power, he doesn't use any of that.

I mean, he starts to use it, and then he pulls back as he thinks again, like, wait a minute, wait a minute, this is Jesus. I'm not just asking anybody to come. Come. Something he's heard about Jesus gives him a humility before him.

So, at that point, okay, what does he do? Does he give up? So he's sent for Jesus, Jesus is starting to come, and then he realizes I'm not worthy to have Jesus come, I'm not worthy to be in Jesus' presence, so should I just give up?

If he can't come, what do I do? This guy knows something about Jesus. This guy has heard something that has made him connect some more dots about who Jesus is.

[25 : 26] He's not just a miracle healer that comes and does some kind of muju thing. I don't know what a muju is. You know, does something, performs, and blows a whistle, and they're healed.

I don't know where the whistle came from. I know nothing about these things. What does he say at the end of verse 7? Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof.

Therefore, I did not presume, I did not think myself worthy, deserving to come to you myself, but say the word. But say the word. Jesus has done a lot of healing by this point.

He's never heard this. People come to him. People want to touch him. People want him to touch them because power, Luke's already described, power comes out, right?

It's people who got to get near him. You got to get near him to get that power. And here's a man that's put something together in what he's heard about Jesus to know you don't even need to come. Just say the word.

[26 : 30] Technically, he said, say a word. Say a word. Doesn't he need that? Just a word. And let him be healed.

So here's faith that's confident. So what is faith? Faith hears, then faith is humble, and then faith is confident. There's a level of faith that just says, say the word.

That's all I need. That's all I need Jesus to do. Do you know that? Have you felt that? Just say the word. He already knows our thoughts, right?

He already knows our prayers. We don't have to have some long, articulate thing to explain, oh, well, Lord, you need to understand that. He knows. Say the word. Why did he think Jesus would do this?

Why did he think Jesus could do this? What did he believe about Jesus? What is this faith? Just say the word.

[27 : 42] I mean, nobody's done that before. Where did he get this idea? That Jesus could simply say a word. That Jesus actually had that kind of power that did not need to be present.

He's still a distance off. That whatever's causing his servant to be sick, that Jesus could just speak a word from a distance away and the man will be restored.

Where did he get that concept? Well, he explains it in verse 8, right? No, where am I? Where did he explain it?

Verse 8, yeah. How come I, oh, there it is. Okay, I just can't find things in my Bible. So, verse 8, he explains, for I to him a man under authority, right? I say to this one, go, and he goes.

I say to this one, come, and he comes. Right? I say to this one, do this and do that. So, he understands authority. So, like I said, he's a centurion. He's under Achillearch. He's under the admiral or the commander, the general.

[28 : 57] Now he's under, now he's got other guys under him. So, he's kind of middle management, middle military. So, he gets authority in the sense that if I say something, it's done.

He had never experienced anyone defy his authority. He says something, it gets done. And he, too, honors the authority over him.

If his superior tells him to do something, he will do it. That's just a military code. You do it. And Rome was very efficient. So, he understands that.

But there's something he heard about Jesus that leads him to connect not only that he has power to heal, but he has a certain kind of authority. He has a level of authority.

He has connected dots to know, okay, Jesus is a healer. Jesus does this and this and this and this. Wait a minute. Jesus does that. What did he do? He did that. Wait, he forgave sins and then he proved it by doing, what?

[30 : 05] He did that? Is that what he heard? I don't know what he heard. Maybe he heard that one and he's going, whoa, he can heal it. He can forgive sins with a word. But he's connected those dots.

So, in other words, faith hears about Jesus and then it acts on that hearing. Real faith will not just hear something and, oh yeah, I believe that, but it will be moved beyond, oh yeah, I believe that too. I'm going to react to that. And then it is humbled in the sense that, oh, could I ask God for something like that? And then it's confident.

By the way, you might feel humble before God. I meet a lot of people that feel humble before God. It's like, I'm not worthy. We get that, right? I'm not worthy.

And that might cause us to say, I'm not worthy, therefore, I shouldn't even ask. Well, that didn't stop this man. Get that out of the story too.

[31 : 10] Yeah, he does not feel worthy to have Jesus in his presence. Right? He doesn't deserve that. But it doesn't stop him from asking. Say the word. Still, please, say the word.

Okay, don't miss that. So, then we have Jesus in verse 9. Jesus is just in awe of this man, this kind of faith.

And then Luke doesn't tell us what happened, except in verse 10 he says, and when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well. He didn't tell us what word Jesus spoke.

I want to know those kind of things. What did Jesus say? Did he say something? Did he say, oh, be well. Did he, what, did he just, how did he, Luke doesn't tell us.

He says, oh, by the way, they found him well. In other words, to Luke, that wasn't the big part of the story. The big part of the story was the faith of this man. That's what the focus became.

[32 : 14] Faith moves Jesus to speak a word of healing. So, where does this kind of faith come from?

And how does hearing give one understanding? Well, we know what Paul says in Romans, right? Faith comes from hearing. What kind of hearing? Hearing through the word of Christ or the word from Christ.

Remember, Romans said, he's talking about preaching and preaching and unless they're sent, they don't get the word and how will they believe? They won't believe, right, unless they have the word and then he concludes, faith comes from hearing.

Faith comes from hearing this. It's miraculous. Faith comes from a word spoken by Christ. He might speak it through me. He might speak it through others.

He might speak it through your parents, your friends. He might just speak it to your ears. But faith comes from hearing a word from Christ. It might be in a song.

[33 : 25] Because he's not limited to how he can speak. So, what can faith bring us? How does it help us in our despair, hopelessness, and trials?

Romans 5, 1. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That's huge right there. That's a couple of weak sermons by itself. Justified, declared not guilty, declared righteous by faith.

and we have peace with God. We're at peace with God. And then he goes on and says, through him we also have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.

So, not only faith gets us in, but faith moves us on. Like we sang amazing grace. It's grace that saved me, and it's also grace that teaches me.

[34 : 29] It's grace that takes me through the trials. It's grace that will ultimately lead me to the glory of the glorious day. Right? I love how hymns do that. There's a progression, right?

Faith does it too. So, we're saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. It's always that, but faith is key.

So, through him we've also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand. This whole relationship with the Lord Jesus is through, by faith, through grace.

And we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, now here's the part where Paul gets kind of controversial. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings. Not everybody agrees with that.

Not everybody understands that. A lot of people want to cross that out of the Bible. I like the glory part, I like the hope part, I don't like the suffering part, but Paul says no, that's all part of it. That's all part of it.

[35 : 31] Our Lord suffered, we suffer. He walked a hard road, we walked the same hard road. The disciple is not above his master. We rejoice in our sufferings knowing that suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character and character produces hope.

And that hope, that hope is not like worldly hope, that hope is the hope that never disappoints. It's a hope that's an incredible hope because it's God's love poured, the Holy Spirit poured out into our hearts and that makes hope able to do other things.

How does faith help us to overcome our sin? Overcome trials and despair, how do we overcome our sin? You don't know me, you don't know me, I can't stop. Paul calls faith a shield, we have a shield of faith.

How does faith our shield? Galatians 2.20, you all know this verse. I have been crucified with Christ. And it's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

And the life that I now live in the flesh, how do I live it? I live by faith in the Son of Man.

[36 : 50] It's a relationship. It's a dependence. It's a surrender. Jesus, take the wheel. Jesus, speak the word.

I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me. So I rely, I live by faith by relying on his power, drawing from his enablement.

That's how I seek to live by faith. How does faith give us courage and hope in present distress? 2 Corinthians 5, so we are always of good courage and we know that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord.

I'd rather be away from the body and with the Lord, right? But for now, he's got me here in this body, this body which is a tent, this body in which I groan in. He talks about earlier in that chapter, he says, while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord.

Why? For we walk by faith, not by sight. So while I walk in this body, while he has me here, and I endure sufferings and I endure distress, I endure loss and sorrow and pain, I endure things I don't understand, I walk by faith.

[38 : 11] Because what I'm looking at doesn't make any sense to me. Well, it makes sense to me, but I don't like it. It makes me grumpy. It's like waking up two days ago with this bad cold thing.

It makes me grumpy. So I apologized already to Mary Leanne this morning. She set me straight, so that was good. And if a cold makes you grumpy, what about, you know, heart and you, right?

We trust his promises. Faith is trusting promises, things I don't see. He will never leave me or forsake me, even though I feel despair, even though I feel depressed, even though I feel empty, and it doesn't feel like he's present, I trust, no, he's here.

He's here. And he will bring good out of all this. He will bring good out of all this. It may not be good for me, but he'll bring good.

That's all that matters. So how's your faith? Can I meddle a little bit? Because it's been meddling with me all week, so I'm just going to give a little bit to you.

[39 : 26] How are you doing? How's your faith? Hmm. Do you believe that Jesus just saying a word can change your life?

Maybe it just changes your own mind. Maybe it just changes your perspective, your motivation, your perseverance. So do you believe that?

But then the next step is, you know, faith not just hears and believes something, but it does something. So do you ask? Do you ask him to say the word? Ask him to say the word.

Whatever the word is, say the word. that makes my perspective right or awakens that dear person in my life over there awakens them to true life.

So moved by faith, Jesus speaks wholeness into a dying man. The next story we see, again, Jesus speaks a word to overcome incredible sorrow. So in the story in verses 11 to 17, the story of a dead son, Jesus is moved by compassion.

[40 : 44] And moved by compassion, Jesus speaks life to a dead son. He speaks resurrection. He speaks into a life what was not, what it had no longer been there.

So in this story, I want you to notice three things about Jesus. First, Jesus sees, and then Jesus feels, and then Jesus speaks.

So verse 13 tells us that Jesus saw her and when the Lord saw her. What did he see? Go back to verse 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 was with her. So he sees her. What does he see? He sees this funeral procession coming out, carrying a dead son. He knows enough to know this is the son of a woman right there who's weeping. We know she's weeping because he tells her to stop weeping. And this man happened to be the only son, not only of a mother, but of a widow, which means that she's already buried her husband. [41 : 56] And now she's burying not just her son, but her only son. Remind you of anybody?

Back in the Old Testament, remind you of anybody? Remember Naomi? Don't call me Naomi. I'm not happy. Call me bitter. Call me Mara. Call me bitter.

Remember Naomi? I love Naomi. She's just honest. God did this to me. We don't know if this widow's going through the same stuff, but she's certainly going through the grief and the loss and the lonely and all.

She probably doesn't even know yet. She's so wrapped up in sorrow. Doesn't even know how, what's ahead. She probably can't even go there yet. So Jesus sees her and then we're told in verse 13, he sees her and he had compassion on her.

He had compassion, he feels. Compassion is about feeling. Compassion doesn't come from up here in our head. It comes, or as the Hebrew would say, it wouldn't come from the heart because that's the thinking and the intentions, it would come from the gut.

[43 : 14] It comes from the gut, the splint thing, it's the, he's being moved from within. He sees this woman, he's moved.

He feels deeply. He doesn't just understand that in an intellectual level, he's in that, he's involved in an emotional level now. He feels.

He sees that. Maybe he's weeping as he tells her not to weep. I don't know. He wepted with Mary, didn't he? When Mary was weeping, another buried, right, Lazarus, and Mary weeps and Jesus weeps.

Even though he knew what he was going to do. He can't help it, he feels. He's a feeler. So he tells her, stop weeping, how nice.

Now if it wasn't Jesus and if we didn't know what he's going to do, it'd be kind of rude, wouldn't it? Walk up to a widow in a procession and tell her, hey, stop crying. Kind of doubt he said it like that, don't you?

[44 : 26] Because he's already feeling. How did he say it? I have no idea how you say that when you're full of compassion. stop weeping. But he had to say it in a tender way because the very next thing he does is then he goes and he stops the procession by touching the buyer.

Now some translations have coffin. It wasn't a coffin. Jewish funerals were not in coffins. They were on a plank, a big plank, and the man would, the dead person would be wrapped up in a shroud. Like Jesus was, right? Laid in a tomb, not in a coffin. You put on a something to carry him out to put him into a tomb. This is how we know it's a Jewish funeral.

There's all these people attending it and he's on a buyer. Right? So the body's right there. You can see it. I mean it's wrapped up in a shroud but you can see the body. We're not hiding. They didn't hide death back then.

So Jesus touches, which for a Jew would make him what? Unclean. Unclean.

[45 : 36] Now he can't go to temple. Oh, Jesus is unclean again. He touches lepers. He touches dead people and he just doesn't have good etiquette.

That's Jesus. So he touches and then he does something quite incredible.

So he sees, he feels, now he speaks and note how he speaks. He speaks directly to the corpse.

Now any one of us that we would feel quite absurd doing that, wouldn't we?

Yeah, you go into a funeral home, the coffin's open, you go and speak. Hey, Jim. Now I did do it once actually, not to try to raise it, but a friend of mine, I did say something.

It's kind of stupid, but hey, see you later. That's all power I got.

[46 : 43] Right? So, but Jesus is different. So he speaks to the corpse. He speaks to the corpse. It had to look ridiculous. What would everybody think?

He's talking to the corpse. Something wrong with this guy? This is Nain. This is a town called Nain. It's about 20 miles away from Capernaum.

It's down even past Nazareth. It's kind of down in the little hilly section, a little tiny little village. Luke is kind in calling it a city. It's really just a little village of a few hundred people.

There's still a village there today, a couple hundred people, but they're very much there. Kind of like Nazareth. Well, I guess they rebuilt up Nazareth. When I went there 20 years ago, there was nothing in Nazareth.

Young man, I say to you, and then he says the word, arise. Young man, I say to you, well, is he hearing that?

[47 : 52] Apparently. But then he says, arise. Arise. I know how he said it, maybe he just whispered it, because he's only speaking to the man.

Arise. Get up. And he sits up. And he's all bent, and it's kind of like Lazarus walking out, right? He's all bandaged up, but he speaks. He begins to speak. Mama! We know he's a young man. He died way too young. I say to you, young man, I say to you, right? And then we have these precious words by Luke that says, verse 16, the dead men sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.

It was about her. It wasn't about him, it was about her. He felt compassion for her. And he did what, the first resurrection miracle that is recorded by Luke.

[49 : 08] There were others, we know Lazarus was later on, we know of another one that Luke's going to tell us a little bit later. But this one alone is recorded by Luke. He did it for her.

And then we see this response in verse 16, fear, kind of a combined response. Fear sees them, they're seized by fear, I mean fear does that, right? Fear holds you in.

They're seized by fear, and they glorified God. So it's, they weren't just locked up in fear, but they also glorified God saying a great prophet has arisen. So they don't see him as the Christ yet, they don't see him as the son of God.

These are just, Luke's just telling it how it happened. What happened was these people saw he's a great prophet. Because what he did reminds them of Elijah and Elisha.

It's the very thing that Elijah and Elisha, Elijah raised up the only son of a widow. Remember that story? Now it wasn't as simple and easy for Elijah.

[50 : 13] Elijah had to carry the boy up into his room, and then remember, he's pleading with God, and he's putting, he's covering the body three different times, right? Please Lord, please Lord, raise the, and then the son raises and he gives her back to the son.

So the big parts of the story are almost identical. It's just like Isaiah, I mean Elijah, except that all Jesus had to do was say a word. He didn't have to do any gyrations in that.

Poor Elijah, I mean just Elijah, he's already staying with this widow and then she dies, her son dies because of Elijah. Poor Elijah, he's like, please Lord, make it right, she hates me.

Well she did. Not so with Jesus. Jesus. So outside of Elijah and Elisha no one had heard of resurrection.

Okay? Nobody brought a life back. And so Jesus does it, so he's not just a prophet but he's like Elijah.

[51 : 20] I mean on that level. Transfiguration, who's standing with Jesus, right? Moses and Elijah. Big, we're talking upper echelon, right?

The Kiliarchs, that century. Yeah, okay. And then the report goes out. They also say God has visited.

So obviously they see that this Jesus is connected to God. God's working through this man as a prophet. And then the report spreads. So how do we relate this story?

What does this story mean to us? It's a great story, isn't it? It just tells us about Jesus' compassion. It tells us about the power of his word.

Can that relate to us? Can that power affect us? Does this come, I mean, does he still do miracles today? I see some heads shaking you.

[52 : 20] Absolutely. Absolutely. God is not dead. Amen. Should we get a revival going here? Right, brother? So here, every true Christian has experienced this power.

Okay, let me show you from Ephesians chapter 2. Paul says to every believer in Ephesus, he says, you were dead. dead. You were dead.

You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you want to live. So you weren't physically dead, but you were dead, wrapped in your trespasses and sins.

You were walking in it, you were following the course of the world, just doing what the world does, you were following the prince of the power of the air. who's the prince of the power of the air? Who's that? Satan, yeah.

Satan and his forces. You were following that. You didn't know that, but you were. The spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived.

[53 : 28] Paul's not saying just you. We were all there. We all lived in the passions of our flesh, living, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind. We're by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

We were there. We're just one of mankind. We're all doing what we do. We're all doing what's natural to us. That's just what we're born with. There's nothing else we can do.

Now, because we're in the image of God, we can do good things. We can be kind. We can be compassionate. We can reach out. We can do things. There are a lot of unbelievers who are very, very kind and good people.

It's because they're in the image of God. It's still there. But they're still not doing it for the glory of God. They might be doing it for good reasons, but it's not for the glory of God.

I guarantee you that. Because they don't believe in him. Or they've redefined him somehow. not this God.

[54 : 40] Because if they're doing it for this God, they'd be on their knees before him. That'd be the difference. But God, so that's how we were. But God, Paul goes on, we were dead, we're dead, we're dead.

But God, just like Jesus with this widow, the widow didn't do anything. Jesus acted. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us sinners, even when we were dead, so we didn't do anything, even when we're dead in our trespasses, he made us alive.

So, dear brothers and sisters, if you're a true, genuine Christian, you've experienced this power. You've been made a lot, you've been changed.

It's not something you decided. It's not something you raised your hand, walked an aisle, threw a stick in the fire. Those are all good things, but that doesn't change you.

What changed you is God made you alive. And maybe it made you throw that stick in the fire, whatever, whatever. But it didn't work for me for about a hundred tries. I kept trying.

[55 : 53] I know that stuff don't work. It's well intended. And God was working. God was convicting. I needed to do something, but I couldn't make myself new.

I had power. When we were dead in our trespasses, he made us alive, not just alive, but to get alive together with Christ.

By grace, you have been saved and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. We didn't make these up.

God made these up. We're saved by grace alone. Grace, grace, grace, grace, grace. So he did it. We received it through faith.

[56 : 59] It's all based in Christ. It's not in Christ that isn't anything. And this is not, anything goes on, he says, this is not your own doing.

Yeah, I got it, Paul. Yeah, I didn't do anything. It's a gift. It's like Jesus giving the son to the widow. It's a gift. She didn't ask.

She didn't do anything. He just had compassion and he made this man's son alive and gave him back to his mother. What a gracious, kind thing.

for we are, it's a gift of God, not a result of works that no one may boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, he's created us to do good works, which God prepared before him that we should walk in them.

He's always ahead of us, isn't he? He's always ahead of us. He's already prepared, he's already created, he's always done all this stuff so that we might walk in them.

[58 : 07] So again, let me ask a question, have you experienced new life from Jesus? Have you experienced this change that did not come from any of your doing?

You may have been crying out, absolutely, you may have been crying out, you may have been like this centurion, I'm not worthy, I'm not worthy, I'm not worthy, because that's part of faith. But at

some point, God moved.

He changed you. I know in my life, it was years after I was convicted and I came forward, years. Those of you who know, I walked the aisle so many times.

I even went to Billy Graham crusade. Billy's got power, bless his heart. I don't mean that in a southern way, by the way. He was a wonderful man.

but I did what he said and that didn't change me a lick. Convicted me some more, but it didn't change me. I couldn't do it.

[59 : 17] I wish I was one of those people when they prayed they were changed. I wish. It would have saved me a lot of years of grief, but he had other designs for me.

Do you believe Jesus has compassion on you?

You may be going through something really, really rough right now. Rougher than anything you've been through before. Do you believe he sees it? Do you believe that he feels for it?

maybe you're just empty, maybe you're done. Does he see that?

Does he feel that? Remember, we're told that Jesus, because he took on flesh, he experienced what we experience. He, as God, experienced something God never knew personally before.

[60 : 22] He knew temptation. God's not tempted, but when Jesus emptied himself and came and took on flesh, he felt every temptation. We can see it in the Garden of Gethsemane.

We can see him just struggling with it. He wanted to walk away from the cross by all means. It's clear as a bell. I say that because I want you to understand he gets it.

He's been there, so he feels for whatever you're experiencing. He feels that. He's moved by it. Ask him to say the word. Don't just sit there.

Don't just sit there and think, oh, see, I'm not worthy. I'm not worthy. I do that. I'm talking to me, too. But ask, even though you're not worthy, ask.

Seek the word. What is the word? The word might be giving me new life. take away my shame. It might be take away certain passions.

[61 : 35] It might be give me faith. I don't know what the word is. He knows. You may not even be able to articulate it, but Romans 8 says we could just kind of mumble and grumble.

He gets it. He doesn't need words, but He can speak the word. He loves sinners. He's so rich in mercy and grace.

He loves sinners. That is beyond what we understand, but He loves sinners. It's why He came. It's why He endured what He endured. It's why He laid down His life to set us free from our guilt and our shame and to change us into people who are new creations, who start doing and wanting to do things we never wanted to do before, to do things for His glory, even though it causes us great cost and pain, because He's worthy.

He seeks sinners. Is He seeking you today? today? It doesn't matter who you are, where you've been, what your journey is.

Is He seeking you today? Have you stepped off the path? Have you not even gotten on the path? Is He seeking you today? Because He sees you, and He feels, and He wants to give you real life.

[63 : 11] let us pray. Father, we thank You for this display of Jesus.

Thank You that as Luke writes to us, he writes to us so that we might see something and become more certain, have more assurance that this gospel that we've been taught, these stories about Jesus that we've heard, this message that He gives, is the truth.

And so we thank You for these glimpses today into Jesus as someone who's moved by faith, and someone who's moved by compassion.

Give us courage, Lord, humility, but courage. to approach You, because You've made a way for us to do that through our Lord Jesus.

I pray that in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Well, thank you, Pastor, for the sermon.

[64 : 37] A lot to think about. I'd like you all to rise and to sing with us as we start the closure of our service.

Please lift your voices. No one understands like Jesus. Him 417. No one understands like Jesus. He's a friend beyond compare. Meet Him at the throne of mercy. He is waiting for you there.

No one understands like Jesus. Jesus. When the days are dark and grim, no one is so near, so dear as Jesus.

Jesus cast your every care on Him. No one understands like Jesus.

[65 : 43] Jesus. Every woe He seems and fears. Tenderly He whispers comfort and a broken heart He heals.

No one understands like Jesus. When the days are dark and grim, no one is so near, so dear as Jesus.

Cast your every care on Him. No one understands like Jesus. When the foes of life of sin, you should never be discouraged.

Jesus cares and will not fail. No one understands like Jesus. When the days are dark