



Power and Posture

Luke 7:11-17

The Widow (and the dead son) at Nain

“Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. 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 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.”

Luke 7:11-17 ESV

Two contrasting crowds in this scenario -

The crowd coming in with Jesus - upbeat and they include his disciples and the curious.

The crowd coming out with the widow and her dead son – mourning. The culture of the day included “extravagance” in the funeral processional. Some commentators mention “professional mourners” who would assist in the processional and then hang around roughly for a week to mourn and “comfort” the grieving. The family would grieve for a year.

Interestingly enough, with no husband (being a widow) and no son (the primary caretaker of the widow) she is basically, culturally dead. She has experienced great loss and the potential to inherit and earn. She spends her last money on the funeral and the grieving party and would have no real positive outlook on how to sustain herself moving forward.

In Exodus 22:22-23 treatment of widows and orphans is covered under the law is explained. In a justice system, provisions are made. James

It is mentioned again in Deuteronomy 10:18 – God loves the sojourner and the widows and orphans.

Also, in James 1:27 we are reminded that - *Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

The Posture of loss -

- For the mourning (we usually feel sad, empty, weighted, angry, and want to self-soothe) we can mourn many things - we don't need to rush people through mourning (Jewish culture meant the mother needed to mourn for 12 months) honor, reflect on the memories of the one lost.
- For the comforting – express sympathy (sorry for your loss) and if applicable, empathy - I feel what you're going through – There is a caution for us not to out mourn the one who is mourning.

The posture of Jesus in loss -

- Compassion - v. 13 (sympathy here) – many times throughout the New Testament we see that Jesus has compassion. Also in John 11:35 - Jesus shows empathy as he weeps and raises Lazarus from the dead. He had love for Mary and Martha (Lazarus was their brother.)

- Authority- Jesus says to the widow. “Don’t weep.” - he shows authority over the law because he touches the bier – touching anything that was dead required a ritual cleansing for the Jews (no mention of the faith of the widow or the son)

The Power of Jesus

- Over mourning - Jesus is the power that can calm us in our greatest mourning.
- Over the law - Jesus is the power that fulfills and satisfies all the law.
- Over death - Jesus is the power that conquers death and gives us everlasting life in Him - an everlasting hope for a future.

What is your posture after a miracle?

- Momentary gratitude – “Hey, thanks and then soon forget and just move on as normal.”
- Disbelief – “This can be real. I just can’t make sense of this and there has to a logical explanation.”
- Mis-assigning credit – “That was pretty cool what I did there.”
- Yeah, but . . . (it could have been more miraculous) – “It was pretty good but it could have been great if . . .”

Some things to apply –

In your mourning, make God all of your comfort. (Don’t run to counterfeit comfort)

In your miracle, give God all of the glory. (Don’t point to yourself, but to the beauty of God and His faithfulness.)

The only lasting comfort can only come through Christ Himself. After we have exhausted every other means of comfort, God will continue to the only One who can provide the peace that passes all understanding.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 4:7

Be people who see miracles and expect them for His glory. Share the miracles for the benefit of others and for His glory.

Take time to share prayer requests and pray together.