



### 3rd Sunday of Luke

This Gospel passage finds Jesus entering the town of Nain. Just as he arrives, he comes across a funeral procession for a young man who has left behind his widowed mother. Moved with compassion by the whole scene, Jesus walks over, touches the bier, and the young man rises from the dead. In this, the people see a great prophet like Elijah or Elisha, who also raised the sons of widows. But, Jesus isn't acting on his own authority. Like the centurion in the preceding verses, Jesus is under the authority of his Father, and all he has to do is trust in that command given to him by God. This is the very command we saw last week: have grace on others as God has had grace on us.

**Scripture:** Luke 7:11-16

**Bottom Line:** It's trust in God's grace—and that alone—that gives life.

### Discussion Questions

1. One theme in today's passage is being under authority and trusting in the word that was given to you from above. Jesus trusted in God's command just as the centurion (Luke 7:8) trusted. And thus, trust led to life (for the centurion's servant and the widow's son). How have you failed to trust in God's word? What obstacles prevent you from fully trusting? How can you learn to overcome them?
2. The widow is a perfect example of how one can't depend on the things of this life. Without a husband or a son, she was reduced to begging. What material things are you overdependent on? How would you survive without them? At what times in your life do you turn to God, like the widow at the death of her son?
3. Jesus extends grace to the widow just as God extends grace to us as sinners. How does this prompt you to live a grace filled life? What can you do to "pay it forward" to others who also need God's love?

### Moving Forward

The name of the city, Nain, means, "beauty." But what's more revealing is its Hebrew root, which means, "pasture," "meadow," or "an abode of a shepherd." The shepherd, unlike the farmer or city dweller, was dependent on God for all the things of life: food, water, and shelter for himself and his flock. In contrast, the farmer and city dweller live a constructed, artificial life apart from God. They trusted in themselves to produce food and to build walls for protection. Here, the widow demonstrates the dependence of the shepherd. She has nothing left—no husband or son to provide for her. In the ancient world, she could do nothing but depend upon the mercy of others. Yet, we see how Jesus has grace on her and it reminds us: we too should live as the widow and the shepherd trusting in God's grace—that very word that gives life. And, when we see someone in need, we should remember to extend that very same grace to them that was given to us.

### Changing Your Mind

"Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has risen among us!' and 'God has looked favorably on his people!'" (Luke 7:16)