

## **MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER**

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**Air date: April 20, 2008**

**Series theme: The Lord Provides**

**Text: Luke 7:11-15 (The Lord Cares)**

The text for this morning is recorded in Luke 7:11-15: **Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry." Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.**

“Who cares?” Have you ever heard those words before? Have you ever said those words before? If you have ever been on the giving or receiving end of that little phrase, you probably know how much it can hurt. “Who cares” is another way of saying “I don’t care.” I don’t care about what you have to say, and I don’t really care about you.

Most people (and I include myself in that group) are self-centered. We think and sometimes act like the world revolves around us. And as a result we don’t have much time for anybody else. If what you have to say affects me, I might listen. If you want to share something that could potentially benefit me, then I might even be willing to get involved. But if there is nothing in it for me, you might as well stop talking because I don’t care.

Imagine what it would have been like if Jesus had ever acted like that. Mary approaches her son at a wedding reception and asks him to do something because they have run out of wine (John 2), and he looks at her indifferently and says: “Who cares?” As water pours into the boat the disciples rouse Jesus from his sleep and plead with him to do something before they all drown (Matthew 8), and the Lord replies with a yawn: “Who cares?” A man covered with leprosy falls at Jesus’ feet and begs him to do something before the disease takes his life (Luke 5), and with a cold stare he looks the man in the eye and says: “Who cares?”

Who cares? Jesus does! That’s why he turned water into wine at Cana. That’s why he quieted the storm on the Sea of Galilee. That’s why he cured the dying man of his leprosy. And that is why he stopped a funeral procession in the little village of Nain.

Jesus’ miracles served many purposes. They demonstrated his divine power. They validated his divine claims. But the miracles of Jesus did something else, something important, something we don’t ever want to forget. By raising the widow’s son from the dead Jesus proved that...

## **THE LORD CARES!**

### **I. He knows what every person needs**

## **II. He has met every person's greatest need**

Nain was a small town located only a few miles from Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. Luke doesn't tell us why he was going there, but he does tell us who went along. Jesus' disciples were following him. They traveled with him wherever he went, but on this trip the Lord had attracted an ever larger following. Maybe the people had heard the report that Jesus had just healed the servant of a centurion (Luke 7:1-10). Maybe the crowds were following him hoping to see what he would next.

As Jesus led this procession toward the city gate he met another group of people leaving the city, but there were no smiling faces in this crowd because it was a funeral procession. The deceased was a young man, the only son of his mother. And to make matters worse she was a widow. She had no one left, no one to love, to no one to care for, no one to care for her.

How do you picture this woman? Is she dressed in all black? Is her head buried in her hands? Are her eyes swollen? Can you see the tears streaming down her cheeks? As difficult as it is to imagine how this poor woman looked, it is even harder to imagine how she felt.

But the Lord knew exactly how she felt. He could see her face. He could feel her pain. And **“when he saw her, his heart went out to her” (13a)**. Jesus heart went out to her. He was a human being. He had human feelings and emotions. And when he saw this widow's grief, his own heart was filled with sorrow.

But Jesus was also true God. He knows all things. And he knew exactly what this woman needed. She didn't need another mourner to follow her to the gravesite. She didn't need another person to offer the hollow comfort that “everything happens for a reason.” She needed Jesus. And she felt her Savior's calming presence as soon as she heard him utter those comforting words: **“Don't cry” (13b)**.

This wasn't an isolated incident. This wasn't luck. Jesus didn't just happen to say the right thing at the right time. He knows what every person needs. He knows what we need. We need the comfort of his Word. We need to hear his calming, soothing voice.

When you feel like you are all alone, you need to know that Jesus is with you. When you feel ashamed of your sin you need to know that Jesus has forgiven you. When your heart is so heavy that all you want to do is sob controllably, Jesus comes to you and says: “Don't cry.”

It was easy for Jesus to tell the grieving widow not to cry. Anyone (you or I) could have done that. It was a much greater thing for the Lord to do something about it, to do something that would give her a reason not to cry. But that is exactly what Jesus did. And what he did teaches us an important lesson. Not only does Jesus know what every person needs. He has also met every person's greatest need.

After Jesus spoke to the woman he approached her dead son and touched his coffin. And when he did the men who were carrying the corpse stopped. They didn't understand what Jesus was doing, and nothing could have prepared them for what Jesus did next.

The Lord addressed the lifeless body. He said: **“Young man, I say to you, get up” (14)!** And he did. He sat up. He even began to talk. It doesn't really matter what he said. The miracle was that he could say anything at all. The miracle was that he was alive. And to give the story a happy ending Jesus gave the young man back to his mother.

The text doesn't tell us how the mother reacted, but I have a pretty good guess. She probably gave her son a huge hug and didn't want to let go. She probably fell down at Jesus' feet and worshiped him. She probably thanked him over and over for giving her son back to her. By raising him from the dead Jesus had given her her own life back. Maybe she even thought to herself that the Lord had met her greatest need.

Jesus did meet this woman's greatest need, but it didn't happen when he brought her son back to life. It happened when God the Father gave up his one and only Son. It happened when Jesus gave up his own life on the cross. It happened on Good Friday when Jesus died for this woman and her son and you and me.

This account doesn't explain why such a young man died at such an early age. It could have been a tragic accident. It could have been a genetic defect. It could have been a fatal disease. We don't know what caused the widow's son to die, but we do know what caused God's Son to die.

It was sin, not his own sin because he was sinless. Jesus died because of our sin. Jesus died to pay for our sins of selfishness and indifference, for those times when we act like we care only about ourselves, for those times when we act like we don't care at all.

Jesus died to save us from the eternal death we deserve, but this one and only Son didn't stay dead either. He rose. He rose from the dead to demonstrate that he is more powerful than death itself. He rose to remind us that a day is coming when our dead bodies will be raised to eternal life. By his death and resurrection Jesus met our greatest need, and by his dying and rising the Lord also showed us how much he cares.

Jesus counts the number of hairs on our heads. Jesus encourages us to come to him with our worries and our cares. Jesus invites us to eat his body and drink his blood for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus promises us that he is with us, and that he will be with us always. Jesus is intimately involved in every detail of our lives because he loves us, because he cares.

And so the next time you are engaged in a conversation and you hear those two little words, you don't have to get upset. Because the question is usually hypothetical, you don't have to respond. Instead you can sit back and smile because you have the answer. Who cares? Because Jesus knows your every need, because Jesus has met your greatest need, you know who cares. The Lord cares! Amen.