

The Widow of Nain - All Age Service

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Preacher: Matthew Todd

- [0 : 0 0] Smooth. All right. Great. Thank you so much, guys. Very well acted. Sorry about the technology not quite working, but hopefully you got the idea.
- Isn't that an amazing story? It's just a gift, isn't it, to have such an exciting and just uplifting story like that. However, I think really at the crux of what it's saying, there is something which is quite scary and is quite difficult.
- So if anything that we sort of say or discuss today does kind of strike a chord and make you feel that you'd like to discuss it, then do take that opportunity. Speak with any of us, or if you're younger, speak with your parents or whatever, and don't just let that lie.
- Because at the crux of this story, it really is this ultimate encounter with Jesus and the ultimate enemy. Which is death.
- I have a very good friend. I teach their son. And his grandfather was just killed in a motorbike accident. Just went out, you know, driving along Loughlin.
- [1 : 1 1] He'd been on his motorbike every day for 75 years. Gone. Done. Finished. It just doesn't seem right, does it? There's something that just seems fundamentally wrong about death.
- And it does make us wonder when it affects us. But it affects us all at some point in our life. And what this story says, I think very, very clearly, is that Jesus hates death even more than we do.
- And also, that he will, and he can deal with it. I hope you know that. I hope you know that Jesus hates death.
- I hope you know that he can deal with death and that he is going to deal with death. But sometimes it can be difficult to really trust him on that because it just is so unknown and it's so scary.
- I don't know if you've ever been abseiling. I was just on a scripture union camp where a lot of children were not abseiling. Out of a, you know, maybe there's a sort of 20% success rate.
- [2 : 1 4] Because it looks fun, you know, when you see it, just lowering yourself off a cliff. But, you know, when you get to that point where you're, you know, you're kind of horizontal, like this, and you go, okay, this is fun.
- I can do this. I can do this. And then you get to the point where you're just sort of teetering the edge. You think, oh, I'm doing it. I'm doing it. And they're like, no, you're really not. You need to go right down. And then you need to start walking. And to get past that point where you know that if it weren't for that rope holding you, you would die.
- Whew, that's hard. Your body's not up for that, really. You know, it doesn't want you to die. So it tries to stop you from doing it. And it takes an awful lot of mind over matter to get to that point where you can really lower yourself off the end of a cliff.
- I'm sure you've seen this demonstration before. But I'm looking for a young person in the congregation who thinks that they more or less trust me. No one.
- That's encouraging. Nobody trusts me. Right. Come on. One of you peck boys or something. No, fair enough.

- [3 : 17] Okay. Illustration won't work then if nobody trusts me. But the basic... No? No? Okay. Okay. Any small adults trust me?
- Small adults. Okay. Yeah, yeah. I think we could handle that. Yeah. Okay. So Rolly trusts me.
- Allegedly. A small cat voice. Yeah. Here we go. Right. Right. So this is just the basic thing where, you know, we're going to do the whole, you know, you stand with your back to me.
- Yeah. And I'm just going to be standing here and with your heels together, you know, you just fall backwards and I'm going to support you. I'm quite strong. I can do this. I've got a cushion on you. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. You trust me enough to...
- Okay. So there we go. So that was well done. Children are bad at this. They sort of do this because they don't really trust you even if they say they do. Okay. I'll go a bit further. Yeah, yeah.
- [4 : 17] That's quite impressive. That's hard to do. That's hard to do. Okay. I need you to close your eyes this time and do it one more time. One more time. You still trust me? Yeah. Great. Okay.
- One more time. Great. Okay. I'm going to do it one more time. Keep your eyes closed. Okay. Keep your eyes closed. Okay. And...
- No, no, no. No, no. You have to... You didn't trust me. I'm sorry. I didn't trust you. You didn't trust me. Sorry.
- It's hard, isn't it? It's hard to believe. It's all very well when you can sort of more or less work out how it's going to work.
- Someone's going to catch me. They're standing behind me. But at the point where somebody's telling you to trust them and you think, I'm falling into oblivion. I don't know what's going to happen. But, of course, I wasn't going to let Rolly fall.
- [5 : 15] That would have just been cruel. So I had pre-planned. I actually was on the wrong direction. So luckily, Simon was on it. So he'd managed to get all the way around the church. Pre-planned a plan so that if he did fall, there was somebody there who was going to catch him.
- So although there was no way he could logically know that he'd be safe, he had to trust me to the extent that he would believe that he was safe. And I guess it's a bit like that when we have to trust that when we die, Jesus really does have us.
- And the Bible is full of assurances that we can rely on him for that. So in this story about the widow of Nain, we have a picture of a woman who is utterly helpless.
- She's a widow, as we were hearing in the drama. There's no welfare state. She's got no children to care for her. Unless somebody has mercy on her, she will be living off charity for the rest of her life.
- But Jesus just loves to turn around impossible situations. He loves to take situations which to us seem completely helpless, completely hopeless, and turn them into something glorious and wonderful and joyful.
- [6 : 25] And if we believe what the Bible says, that is the destination for all of us. We are, almost all of us, going to die before Jesus comes back, unless we're very lucky and he comes back before we die.
- But we're going to have to face that. It's probably time, if we haven't made our peace with that, that we do make our peace with it. But the Bible promises that Jesus has got us. Although we might feel like we're falling into oblivion, if we put our trust in him, then we truly believe that he has the power over death, then he's got us.
- And that's what this story demonstrates so beautifully. So we're going to sing again. And the words of this song really brilliantly illustrate that Jesus has the power over death.

So if you believe that, then let's really sing this as a prayer. Let's sing this as a prayer of thanks, that we don't need to be afraid of that anymore. Thank you. Thank you.