



THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER  
**TRINITY**

Study Notes for the Christian Layperson

by: Rev. Marcus Baikie

**Collect of the Day:**

O Lord, we pray that Your grace may always go before and follow after us, that we may continually be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Introit:**

Psalm 86:1, 7, 12-13 (antiphon: Psalm 86:3, 5) —  
*Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to You do I cry all the day*

**Psalm:**

30 (antiphon: v. 5b) — *Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning*

**Old Testament Reading:**

1 Kings 17:17-24 — *Elijah raises the widow's son*

**Gradual:**

Psalm 102:15-16 — *Nations will fear the name of the LORD*

**Epistle:**

Ephesians 3:13-21 — *Paul's prayer for strength to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge*

**Verse:**

Psalm 115:11 — *Alleluia. You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield. Alleluia.*

**LUKE 7:11-17 ESV**

**Author and Date:**

The Holy Spirit caused Luke the physician to write the words of this Gospel around AD 55-60. This text, follows immediately after another miracle: the healing of the centurion's servant (Luke 7:1-10). Following this text, disciples of John the Baptism come to Jesus, asking on behalf of John, "Are you the One who is to come, or shall we look for another." Jesus' response to them includes the fact that "the dead are raised up." (Luke 7:22)

**11 Soon afterward Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him.**

- Nain is a small village approximately 20 miles southwest of Capernaum. The name "Nain" means "beautiful meadow."
- During this time, Jesus was ministering in and around Galilee. The widow therefore was Jewish, unlike the centurion, whose servant Jesus healed prior to this account. By these two miracles Jesus demonstrates that His compassion is for all people, Jew and Gentile alike.
- Jesus is very popular, as shown by the fact that His disciples and a great crowd are with Him.

**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 from the town was with her.**

- As Jesus enters the gate, the dead man is exiting, with his mother (a widow who lost her only son) and also a considerable crowd. The two large groups of people, one of Life and the other of death, have a head-on collision.
- Like Jesus, the man who had died is an "only-begotten son" (*monogenes*).

**13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not weep.”**

- When the Lord (note the use of the divine title “Lord”) saw her, He had compassion and comforted her. This indicates who the Lord God is: One who has compassion and speaks His Word of comfort to those in distress.
- This Word must be taken by faith; Jesus has not yet done anything to end the widow’s weeping. When He says this, her son is still dead. Nevertheless this Word works; His command begins the miraculous removal of her grief.
- Jesus’ command to the widow is present tense. It is literally, “Stop weeping” – a rather remarkable command to make at a funeral to a grieving mother!

**14 Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, arise.”**

- Jesus does two things here: He touches the bier and speaks. Touching this bier was a provocative act, because it would have rendered Jesus unclean. However, in this head-on collision, Jesus makes that which is unclean righteous, not vice versa.
- In the Old Testament reading, the prophet Elijah likewise also raises a widow’s son. However, he did so by crying to the Lord, “O LORD my God, let this child’s life come into him again.” Unlike Elijah, the Lord Jesus spoke of His own authority.
- Martin Luther: “By way of illustration, as God brought forth heaven and earth through the Word, that is, through Him, even so He, too, performed all that He wished by uttering a word.” (*Luther’s Works Vol. 22, p. 114*)

**15 And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.**

- The Word of God is powerful and does what it says. Thus the dead man sits up straightaway and begins to speak. This proves that he was raised back to life alive. So also it is with the Christian; upon being raised by Jesus’ Word of forgiveness, he speaks by praising God and confessing Him. And as the hymn puts it “works serve our neighbor and supply the proof that faith is living.” (LSB 555:9)
- Note that Jesus does not take him away to follow Him with the crowds. Rather He gives him to his mother and to his vocation as son. This likewise is evidence of Jesus’ compassion for the woman, that He cares for her ongoing daily needs.

**16 Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has arisen among us!” and “God has visited his people!”**

- Fear seized the people, which perhaps here is more amazement than terror (but it is possible that they were, in fact, afraid). They respond by glorifying God. Their responses are confessions of faith: a great prophet has arisen, and God himself has visited his people. In both responses, the emphasis is on Jesus’ presence among them. In other words, in Christ God visits His people.
- “Visited” – literally, “oversaw”. This Greek word has the same root as the word for “Bishop” or “Overseer”. Thus God has taken notice of his people and looked upon them in a pastoral way.

**17 And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.**

- C.F.W. Walther: “Therefore, if you are weak in your faith, go in spirit to Nain; see how Christ Himself seizes death by its jaws and took his plunder from him. Rejoice that you believe in such a great Savior, who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. And, my dear Christian, if you are attacked by your sins, if you are anxious for comfort because of your misdeeds, return quickly to Nain; there you will find comfort...If you are frightened of death, if you must weep at the grace of your loved ones, you also hurry in spirit to Nain. Jesus Christ, who turned tears of sorrow into tears of joy, can also dry your tears...Finally, my dear Christian, if the thought of your own last hour worries you, take the Word of Christ into your heart, ‘Young man, I say to you, arise.’” (*Gospel Sermons, Vol. 2 p. 154-155*)

