



### ***Living Out God's Vision!***

*CtK exists to connect all people to the life-giving message of Jesus, as we experience God, find freedom, discover purpose, and make a difference in our world.*

## **Day 18, Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> —Experience God**

***Soon afterward Jesus went with his disciples to the village of Nain, and a large crowd followed him. A funeral procession was coming out as he approached the village gate. The young man who had died was a widow's only son, and a large crowd from the village was with her. When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with compassion. "Don't cry!" he said. Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. "Young man," he said, "I tell you, get up." Then the dead boy sat up and began to talk! And Jesus gave him back to his mother. Great fear swept the crowd, and they praised God, saying, "A mighty prophet has risen among us," and "God has visited his people today." And the news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding countryside.***

***Luke 7:11-17***

Can you imagine the contrast of emotions this widow experienced that day? She had already lost her husband and now her only son. In this time and culture, with no male in the family to provide, this certainly meant a very difficult life of poverty and struggle. She was in a situation of great loss, grief and despair. Then, out of nowhere, the funeral procession runs into Jesus; God himself! Then, beyond all hope or expectation, her real experience with God came when Jesus raised her dead son to life again. The text says that Jesus heart overflowed with compassion. Isn't that how God does it, showing up in the most un-expecting moments to reveal himself in ways greater than we could have imagined, because of His great compassion for us?

I recently lost my father. I was attending to my mother and serving as a pall bearer at what I expected to be a very small graveside service. I had, in my mind, wanted and expected to get this painful day over with. Then God showed up, in the care and concern of family members, co-workers and friends; in the words of faith from the scriptures, in the encouragement of the pastors' message; each bringing the compassion Jesus must have felt for this widow. What a beautiful day it became.

As His church, God wants us to allow Him to show up so that others experience His compassion, His life-giving good news, His freedom and purpose for our lives. We are to allow others to experience God in the way we greet them and make them feel welcome, in how we share our stories of finding freedom and discovering our purpose, in how we minister to their needs, and in how worship with all our lives.

*Jesus, you are so compassionate, the creator of the infinite universe and still so mindful of each one of us. You enter our lives with freedom and purpose and we are thankful. Lord, we ask that you show us where you want us, so that others experience you in such a great way that their lives are changed forever, into who you have called each of them to be. In your holy name. Amen.*

*Philip Brooks*

