

September 6, 2026



CHECKPOINTS



Following Jesus: More Than A Checklist

“Serve”

Luke 7:11-17 (NLT)

Soon afterward Jesus went with his disciples to the village of Nain, and a large crowd followed him. ¹² 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. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with compassion. "Don't cry!" he said. ¹⁴ Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. "Young man," he said, "I tell you, get up." ¹⁵ Then the dead boy sat up and began to talk! And Jesus gave him back to his mother. ¹⁶ Great fear swept the crowd, and they praised God, saying, "A mighty prophet has risen among us," and "God has visited his people today." ¹⁷ And the news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding countryside.

Sermon Summary:

Some of us grew up with a version of faith that looked a lot like a checklist. Go to church—check. Try to be a good person—check. Pray when life gets hard—check. Over time, without even realizing it, following Jesus can begin to feel like just another box to check in an already busy life. But Jesus never invited anyone into that kind of relationship. He didn't say, "Fit Me in when it's convenient." He didn't say, "Add Me to your list." In Luke 9:23, Jesus said, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Following Jesus isn't about completing a religious checklist; it's about walking with Him every day.

Checkpoints aren't boxes to earn God's approval—they're markers that help us evaluate whether we're actually growing as followers of Jesus. They remind us to keep moving in the right direction, taking intentional steps toward becoming more like Christ.

Ice Breaker Questions:

1. Who has been one of the most compassionate people you've ever met? What made them stand out?
2. Tell about a time when someone showed up for you exactly when you needed them.
3. Have you ever witnessed something that completely changed the atmosphere in a room? What happened?
4. When you hear the word compassion, what comes to mind?
5. If you could instantly remove one kind of suffering from the world, what would it be and why?

Objective Questions:

1. Where was Jesus traveling when this event took place? (vv. 11–12)
2. Who was being carried out of the town, and what was his relationship to the woman? (v. 12)
3. What does Luke tell us about the widow's situation? (v. 12)
4. How did Jesus respond when He saw the widow? (v. 13)



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5. What did Jesus tell the widow? (v. 13)
6. What did Jesus do before speaking to the young man? (v. 14)
7. What command did Jesus give to the young man? (v. 14)
8. What happened immediately after Jesus spoke? (v. 15)
9. How did the crowd respond to what they witnessed? (v. 16)
10. What report spread throughout Judea and the surrounding countryside? (v. 17)

Interpretive Questions:

1. Why do you think Luke emphasizes that the woman was both a widow and had lost her only son?
2. What does Jesus' compassion in this story reveal about God's heart toward people who are suffering?
3. Why is it significant that Jesus touched the funeral bier, despite the ceremonial implications of doing so?
4. The crowd declared, "God has visited his people today!" What did they recognize about Jesus through this miracle?
5. How does this story point beyond physical resurrection to the greater hope Jesus offers?

Application Questions:

1. Where do you see people around you today who need compassion more than advice?
2. How can you become more attentive to those who are grieving or carrying heavy burdens?
3. What situation in your life feels hopeless, and how does this passage encourage you to trust Jesus with it?
4. In what practical way can you reflect Jesus' compassion to someone this week?
5. After seeing Jesus' power and compassion in this passage, what is one step of faith God may be inviting you to take this week?