

Acts 16:6-40

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[0 : 00] Say something stupid. It just might happen. Acts chapter 16, we're starting at verse 6, page 925 in your pew Bibles, and we'll be reading to the end of the chapter.

All right.

And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony.

We remained in this city some days. And on the Sabbath day, we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.

One who heard us was a woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

[1 : 29] And after she was baptized in her household as well, she urged us, saying, If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay. And she prevailed upon us.

As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.

And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, I command you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city.

They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice. The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely.

[2 : 39] Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken.

And immediately all of the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

But Paul cried with a loud voice, Do not harm yourself, for we are all here. And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas.

Then he brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household. And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.

And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them, and he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

[3 : 45] But when it was day, the magistrate sent the police, saying, Let those men go. And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, The magistrates have sent to let you go, therefore come out now and go in peace.

But Paul said to them, They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison, and do they now throw us out secretly? No. Let them come themselves and take us out.

The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens, so they came and apologized to them, and they took them out and asked them to leave the city. So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia.

And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed. When I graduated from college, I joined the staff of InterVarsity, a campus ministry, and I was assigned to work half-time here in New Haven and half-time at Wesleyan University in Middletown.

Now, if you're not familiar with Wesleyan, Wesleyan is somewhere between a hippie commune, an elite private college, and a testing ground for unconventional ideas. Students are quite intelligent and thoughtful.

[4 : 46] At the same time, popular activities, at least among some students, included protesting for all kinds of reasons, throwing naked parties, and smoking pot on the hill on 420.

Wesleyan had long since abandoned its Methodist heritage, and it ranked at that time number one on the U.S. News and World Report listings for schools where students ignore God on a regular basis.

Occasionally, a Christian international student, usually from somewhere in Southeast Asia or something, would arrive on campus under the impression that Wesleyan was a Christian university because of its name.

Their misconceptions did not last long. When I arrived, the Christian fellowship was a group of about 25 students. They met on Friday nights in the basement of an administrative building.

In other words, they met where no one would ever find them. The administrators don't work on Friday nights, and students don't go there. Then they weren't intentionally trying to hide.

[5 : 47] In fact, they really wanted to be engaged with the broader campus. And over time, the group did grow. But they struggled with questions like this. Does Christianity really belong here, in a place like Wesleyan?

As a Christian, can I be deeply committed to Jesus Christ and deeply engaged in the life of my college? What does that even look like? Now, I wonder whether you've had similar questions yourself in the place where you live or work or study.

Does Christianity have a place in my research lab where people assume that science will one day explain everything? Does Christianity have a place in my suburban neighborhood where everyone's life seems just perfect?

Does Christianity make a difference to someone who has suffered, who's been wounded a lot? Is the Christian message really good news for my happy pagan neighbors or my committed Muslim and Hindu and Buddhist friends?

In an increasingly pluralistic society, can a church that's committed to the authority of the Bible and the uniqueness of Jesus Christ truly flourish? Or does Christianity really belong somewhere else?

[7 : 01] If you're not a Christian, perhaps you've wondered, why would I think that Christianity is good news for me? You know, I sort of feel like most Christians aren't like me. Some parts of Christianity feel foreign.

Historical relics of a bygone era. Well, this morning's text from the book of Acts addresses exactly these questions. What we see this morning in Acts 16 is the gospel of Jesus arriving, taking root and growing in the midst of a proud, pagan, privileged and diverse city, namely Philippi.

So far in the book of Acts, we've seen the gospel of Jesus expanding from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria and more recently throughout Syria and Galatia, which is modern Turkey. I've included an outline of the book of Acts in the center of your bulletin that shows this progression.

We put it in about six weeks ago, but we're at the beginning of a new section. And there's also a map, so you can see where some of the places are. And in this new section, the gospel of Jesus is proclaimed for the first time in Eastern Europe.

It sort of crosses another barrier into Macedonia and Greece. Now, compared to other cities, Luke's account of Paul's visit to Philippi is unusually detailed, indicating its special importance.

[8 : 22] It's also a time when Luke was present with Paul. Did you notice in verse 10, the pronouns change from they to we for most of the chapter? Some scholars have even wondered whether Philippi was Luke's hometown.

But regardless, we'll see two main things this morning. First, that Christianity belongs in cities like Philippi. And second, that Christianity flourishes in cities like Philippi.

So first, Christianity belongs in cities like Philippi. We see this in verses 6 through 10. In these verses, we see it's not an accident that Paul and his companions came to Philippi.

Rather, it was part of God's providential design. Paul and his companions were twice prevented by the Holy Spirit from going to other places in verse 6 and verse 7.

But then finally in verse 9, Paul had a vision of a man from Macedonia saying, come over and help us. And they conclude, God has called us to preach the gospel to them.

[9 : 22] Now, you might wonder, what exactly do we take away from this? Is it possible for me to have that kind of confidence that God has specifically called me to be here in New Haven as his ambassador?

Should we seek out or wait for this kind of direct supernatural divine guidance before making major life decisions? You know, I find that some Christians are hesitant to accept a new job or get married or move far away without feeling some kind of supernatural guidance or at least an unusual coincidence that seems like confirmation.

Some Christian ministries make a practice of not making any new ministry initiatives unless someone feels specifically led by the Holy Spirit. And so some people actually start each day in listening prayer, waiting for God to impress on someone's heart what the group should do.

Now, while there is a value to spending extended periods of time with God in prayer and surrendering and laying before him our decisions and our questions and our priorities, it's actually not Paul's pattern to wait for special supernatural guidance before moving ahead.

That's not Paul's pattern here at all. Paul's default mode was not do nothing unless specifically directed by the Holy Spirit. Rather, his default was actively obey the command of Jesus Christ, which has already been given to us.

[11 : 00] In his case, the command to go and make disciples of all nations and to trust that God would redirect his path if necessary. So chapter 15, verse 36, Paul said to Barnabas, let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaim the word of the Lord to see how they are.

There was no dream, no vision, no prophetic word, just a thoughtful initiative to care for fellow believers in Jesus Christ. You know, and there's much that God has already called us to in his word.

Most broadly, to love the Lord your God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, to love our neighbors as ourselves, to do anything that fits under those two headings, broadly speaking.

More specifically, seek first the kingdom of God or work in order to earn our daily bread and to share with those in need. Love and support and encourage our fellow believers.

Pay our bills and taxes and honor the authorities, to do good to all as we have opportunity to live at peace with all as far as it depends on us and to bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in season and out of season.

[12 : 10] These are just a few of the exhortations that are broadly given to Christians in the New Testament. from Jesus and the apostles. And so, you know, the God of the Bible is not like a GPS.

You know, I find GPS is actually quite annoying. I mean, you know, it tells you in an annoying voice every time you need to turn right or turn left or the road is changing name and you need to keep going straight.

But really, a GPS is for someone who lacks a clear sense of direction. Now, you know, some of us do lack a clear sense of direction and a GPS is a blessing.

But God is far better than a mechanical device. God is our Father in heaven. And what He wants to do is not tell us in an annoying voice, go left, go right, go straight.

But He wants to reveal our ultimate destination. And He has. That we be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, His Son. And on the way to that destination, He desires that we walk in the wisdom that He's given us.

[13 : 19] In other words, He's sort of shown us the lay of the land, the big picture, and calls us to use our wisdom in making choices to pursue that long-term goal.

So has God called you to be His ambassador here in New Haven? I think you can be confident, yes, as long as you are here and as you seek to walk in obedience to His commands. You can be confident that He has put you here for a reason.

And if He sees fit to do so, He can redirect you. Now it's interesting, we don't know exactly how the Holy Spirit redirected Paul. Was it a prophetic word?

Was it a strong internal conviction? Was it a circumstance that made it simply impossible to proceed? I don't think we can be sure, but the redirect was clear enough. There does seem to have been a period of some uncertainty.

First God says no to preaching in Asia. That was to the west if you look at the map. Then they try to go north into Bithynia and there's no there. And then only after trekking through the mountains, people can't even figure out what roads they took because there weren't good roads through the mountains.

[14 : 28] They were sort of going through the middle of nowhere for two or three hundred miles all the way to Troas. Only once they get to Troas, does the way forward become clear?

And sometimes, maybe you can identify with this, sometimes there are seasons where God seems to say no to one thing and no to another and we wonder what God's up to.

And sometimes all we can do is keep going in the one direction that's not completely closed off to us. But the encouragement from this passage is that God's hindrances are not in vain.

By hindering them from preaching in Asia, Asia Minor, the Roman province, and by hindering them from going into Bithynia, the Holy Spirit launched them across the sea into a whole new region and brought them all the way to Philippi.

So we see that in God's providence, Christianity belongs in cities like Philippi, but we also see that Christianity flourishes in cities like Philippi. And this is the major theme in the passage.

[15 : 32] Now, as I said earlier, Philippi was a proud city. Verse 12, it was a leading city of the district of Macedonia. It was also a privileged city.

As a Roman colony, its citizens enjoyed special benefits, special perks. Its economy had also been boosted by nearby gold mines, so it was prosperous.

It was also a diverse city. It was located on the main east-west road called the Via Ignatia, and Philippi attracted a wide range of people, including a large number of military veterans from the Roman army.

So it was proud, it was privileged, it was diverse, it was also pagan. Most people in Philippi had no background in the Bible. There was no Jewish synagogue inside the city.

There was only a small group of women who gathered outside the city gate by the river to pray on the Sabbath. So biblical faith was seen as a foreign religion, as something not to be trusted, as something that was not included within the city limits.

[16 : 38] And in fact, that's a substance of the accusation that's made against Paul in verse 20 and 21. What do they say? These men are Jews. They're disturbing our city.

They advocate customs that are not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice. In other words, they're saying, you guys don't belong here, go back where you came from. But what Luke wants us to see is that this accusation is completely unfair and completely baseless.

That Christianity belongs and flourishes not just in Jerusalem, the historic center of biblical faith, not only among Jews in the diaspora, where there was a large number of people who had moved from Jerusalem, enough to form a synagogue, but also in a proud, privileged, pagan city like Philippi.

And that Paul himself, Paul himself was a faithful Jew who believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But he was also a Roman citizen who sought the good of the Roman cities.

Now what we see in Luke's detailed account is that the gospel of Jesus took root among all kinds of people in Philippi. People from across the social spectrum. People from all kinds of different backgrounds.

[17 : 55] And in particular, Luke introduces us to three people, three very different people in whom the gospel of Jesus took root to make this point that the gospel of Jesus flourishes in cities like Philippi.

So first, we're introduced to Lydia, verse 14 and 15. Lydia was a successful independent businesswoman, a seller of purple goods, that meant she would have been catering to high-end clients.

Purple clothes signified wealth and royalty. She had a house and a household. But while she was successful, she was also, in some ways, an outsider in Philippi.

She was a foreigner. She herself was from the city of Thyatira. Now, I think it's quite interesting that her hometown was smack in the middle of, guess where, the Roman province of Asia, the exact

place where the Holy Spirit had just hindered, prevented Paul from going.

Because, perhaps, because he didn't want him to stay there, he wanted him to go further. And yet, in his sovereignty, God prevented Paul from preaching in the Roman province of Asia, but then led him to a woman from that very province just in the city of Philippi.

[19 : 08] Perhaps on her next business trip home, she also brought with her the good news of Christ. But verse 14 tells us Lydia was not only a foreigner, she was also a worshiper of God.

And that was a term used for Gentiles who had rejected pagan polytheism, who had become very interested in the one God revealed in the Bible, who had started attending Sabbath prayer services, joining with the Jewish community that read from the Old Testament, but hadn't formally converted to Judaism.

She hadn't yet been received into the covenant family of God. And in verse 14 and 15, we see three ways that the gospel took root in Lydia.

This successful businesswoman who was yet, in some ways, an outsider. So first, she listened to God's word. Verse 14 says, the Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. Her attention was gripped. Her mind was persuaded. Her heart was strangely warmed. And she said, yes, this is what I have been searching for. This God who came in Jesus Christ, who has sent his Holy Spirit, he's the one who has been searching for me.

[20 : 35] So, she was baptized. She didn't hold back. She took the plunge. Not only her, but her household as well. And third, she started treating other Christians like family.

God had opened her heart, so she opened her home. Through Jesus, God had included her in his family, so she included others in hers. One commentator said, Lydia's generosity of spirit showed the genuineness of her faith.

You know, it's no small thing to invite four grown men, Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke, into your home on an indefinite basis. And, you know, one of the ways you can tell when someone genuinely becomes a Christian is that their attitude toward family and toward possessions dramatically changes.

Family is no longer just blood relatives. Family is also, in an even more enduring sense, brothers and sisters in Christ, in the family of God.

And possessions are no longer things to grasp onto and take pride in. They become resources to be used creatively by God, used creatively to advance God's purposes and to serve other people.

[21 : 49] And so we see that happening right away in Lydia. At the end of the chapter, it seems that Lydia's house becomes the gathering place for the Christian community in Philippi.

And Lydia's generosity left an enduring legacy in the Philippian church. You know, the church in Philippi became well known for its sacrificial generosity.

Paul writes in his letter to the Philippians, he says, in the beginning of the gospel when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving except you only. He says, you sent me help for my needs time and again. Philippians 4, he writes that. And so this generosity fueled by the gospel of Jesus Christ became a defining mark of this church.

So that's Lydia, the first person who is affected by the gospel of Jesus. But we also see another person in verse 16 through 18, we see a slave girl. Now this slave girl was almost the exact opposite of Lydia, socially speaking.

[22 : 56] Lydia was an independent business owner. She was a head of her household. This girl was absolutely dependent. She owned nothing. She was a slave.

She was at the mercy of her owners who exploited her for financial gain. Lydia was a worshiper of the one true God. This girl was deeply entrenched in pagan practices.

She had a spirit of divination, was engaged in fortune telling. The same word was used to describe the priestesses in the temple of Apollo at Delphi who would allegedly be thrown into a frenzy and then supposedly have special insight into the future.

Lydia listened attentively to Paul's words. This girl followed Paul around, interrupting him day after day, crying out, these men are servants of the Most High God who proclaim to you a way of salvation.

Now in one sense, what she said sounds true. Paul was a servant of the Most High God. But you know, most people in Philippi, if they heard that, he's a servant of the Most High God, you know who they would have thought of?

[24 : 06] They would have thought of Zeus, one of the greatest of the Greek gods, not of Yahweh, the God of the Bible. And Paul was proclaiming the way of salvation.

Actually, it's a little more ambiguous in the Greek. It says, not, it literally just says, who proclaim to you way of salvation. So it could be the way of salvation, but it could be just a way of salvation. And that word salvation had a very broad meaning. It could have simply, sometimes it was used simply to mean health or well-being. So some people might have thought, huh, Paul's giving us some new advice about how to be healthy, how to live a better life, a new way of living. So verse 18 says, eventually Paul became annoyed. And I don't think that means he just got really impatient. It's more like Paul was indignant, deeply troubled, like Jesus was at times in the Gospels. This girl's loud declarations were misleading and distracting. But Paul, I think, was also troubled by seeing the bondage that she was in. The bondage to her owners who were exploiting her.

[25 : 24] The bondage to the evil spirit who controlled her. And so he turned and said to the spirit, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And after years of enslavement, this girl was finally free.

You know, in every privileged, prosperous city, there's a dark underside. Prostitution, slavery, drug addiction, physical abuse, self-harm, bondage to evil spirits, all kinds of things.

And you know, the Christian Gospel is good news for all who are lost, for all who are enslaved, for all who are exploited. Jesus Christ has come to set the captives free.

You know, we don't hear what happened, the rest of what happened to the slave girl, because her owners were immediately furious. They stirred up a riot, had Paul and Silas beaten and thrown in prison.

The slave girl was set free, but Paul and Silas paid the price. They were imprisoned. And yet, even in the prison, the Gospel of Jesus flourished.

[26 : 42] Verse 25, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God at midnight. The other prisoners were listening. What a picture of joy in the midst of opposition.

Later on, during another imprisonment, Paul would write in his letter to the Philippians, he said, what has happened to me has really served to advance the Gospel. Because he says, now everyone knows that my imprisonment is for Christ.

And he says, as a result, most of the brothers and sisters are much more bold to speak the Word of God without fear. So Paul's writing from prison and he says, you know, the fact that I'm in prison, God's actually using this for the good of his kingdom, for the good news of Jesus to go forth. So the Gospel of Jesus speaks to Lydia and opens her, her heart is opened. The slave girl is liberated and third, we meet a jailer.

Verse 25 through 34, now compared to Lydia and the slave girl, the jailer would have been somewhere in between on the social ladder. He worked for the state. Perhaps like many others in Philippi, he was an army veteran.

[27 : 59] Regardless, as a corrections officer, we can assume he was a tough guy. He saw human beings at their worst and every day he had to lock people up.

But what we see is that God broke through, even to this hardened jailer. First, God displayed his majesty by sending a powerful earthquake.

Earthquakes happened occasionally in that area and people often interpreted them as a sign of coming divine judgment. The jailer's initial instinct was to take his own life. Because if his prisoners had escaped, he was liable to the same punishment that they would have all received.

And who knows, some of them may have been, it's possible that he would have been executed. But you know, God didn't just display his majesty to the jailer in this powerful earthquake that opened all the doors of the prison.

God also displayed his mercy. Verse 28, Paul cried with a loud voice, don't harm yourself. We are all here. And interestingly, the result was he was even more afraid.

[29 : 17] Trembling with fear, it says, he fell down before Paul and Silas. You could have escaped, but you didn't. You've saved my life. Why in the world would you do that for me?

Sirs, what must I do to be saved? What must I do to be rescued from the judgment of this God who sent the earthquake? What must I do to receive this saving mercy that you have extended to me?

And Paul and Silas said, verse 31, believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. You and your household. It's that simple. You see, the Bible speaks of a majestic God, a holy and righteous God who will one day judge the world.

It says, no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. But the Bible also speaks of a merciful Savior, Jesus Christ, who willingly shared in our own flesh and blood, who endured God's judgment on our behalf so that we might live by believing in him, by trusting his work on our behalf.

And the circumstances of the jailer's conversion and of Lydia's conversion were as different as they could be. God opened Lydia's heart on a peaceful Saturday afternoon by a riverside while she was listening to Paul speak.

[30 : 46] God saved the jailer after rudely awakening him in the middle of the night and barely preventing him from killing himself. But the results were the same. Do you see these same three results?

of the gospel coming to Lydia's heart are expressed by the jailer. Like Lydia, he listened attentively to God's word. Verse 32. Like Lydia, he and his household believed and were baptized.

Verse 33. And like Lydia, he immediately treated his brothers in Christ like family. Verse 34. He washed their wounds, he brought them into his house, he fed them a meal.

not typical behavior for a corrections officer then or now to do with his inmates. Now it would be absolutely prohibited by the law.

But do you see how the gospel transforms people's lives? Makes us attentive to his word, makes us committed to his people, makes us loving each other like family. Have you experienced this transforming power of the gospel in your life?

[31 : 55] Verse 34 says, the jailer rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

You know, I don't know what your experience is like here in New Haven, but I don't find New Haven to be a particularly joyful place. Many people in New Haven are busy, driven, and ambitious.

Others are bored, weary of life, seeking pleasure in order to fill a deep emptiness. But you know, the gospel of Jesus Christ creates a community characterized by joy.

Deep and lasting joy that penetrates the heart of even the most cynical, hardened, world-weary people. And this was the witness of the church at Philippi, beginning with the jailer and his family.

The theme of joy appears over and over in Paul's letter to the Philippians. I make my prayer for you with joy. He says, my brothers and sisters whom I love and long for, you are my joy and crown.

[33 : 08] And he reminds them, rejoice. Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say, rejoice. Brothers and sisters, this is what the gospel has called us to here in New Haven.

To be a community of people who find joy in the Lord Jesus Christ. Not in our circumstances, not simply in pleasure, not simply in always smiling and pretending, but enduring joy of knowing that God is for us, that Christ has died for us, that his spirit is with us, and that he will come again in glory one day.

This is what the gospel does. In a proud, privileged, pagan city, the gospel of Jesus opens the heart of a successful businesswoman, sets free an oppressed slave girl, and brings joy to a hardened corrections officer, and it brings them all together in the family of God.

One commentator put it like this. He says, what we see in this chapter is that the gospel triumphs in the Jewish meeting place outside the walls of the city, and in the Roman stronghold, inside the city, even inside the prison.

It triumphs over magistrates and their jails, and it triumphs over demons. Luke shows that the gospel and its followers can exist within the place of Roman authority by creating its own space in-house.

[34 : 39] Thus he shows that the Christian faith is neither subservient to Rome, nor is it fundamentally at odds with Rome. In other words, he's saying Christianity belongs in cities like Philippi.

Christianity flourishes in cities like Philippi, and Christianity will endure in cities like Philippi. Verse 40, before Paul leaves town, it says, he went to visit Lydia and to encourage the brothers.

Once again, a reminder that God had brought these different people together into his one family as brothers and sisters in Christ. The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news.

It's good news for all kinds of people. It satisfies the inquiring mind of thoughtful spiritual seekers. It brings profound meaning and purposeful generosity to successful business people.

It brings liberation and healing to the poor, the downtrodden, and the oppressed. It brings joy to hardened police officers and weary social workers who have seen it all. And it brings us together

into one family of God.

[35 : 45] Let's pray that we would be changed by this good news. Lord, we pray in the words of Paul's prayer for the Philippians that our love may abound more and more with knowledge and all discernment so that we may approve what is excellent and be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.

Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God. We pray that you would make us a joyful people. We pray that you would give us confidence as we go forth into the different places where you have put us with this saving message of the gospel, with this healing reality of Christ in us.

And Lord, we pray that you would make us a people who reflect the glory of this gospel of Jesus Christ. We pray in his name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Well, let's stand and let's praise the one whose rain brings joy even in the most unlikely places.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

[37 : 35] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does its successive journeys run. His kingdom spread from shore to shore till