

Opening Remarks

Good morning church...As you know, Pastor Brandon is in Europe on the footsteps of Paul trip with a group from our church and we trust they are having a good time. I'm sure this has happened before, but I have never heard of it. Do you guys realize that the text we are in today and next week is describing the exact place where pastor Brandon is right now? I bring that up especially because one of the points I am going to try and convey and encourage you with this morning is to have an overwhelming trust in God's perfect timing.

Intro

By show of hands, who here this morning has seen the movie the gladiator? Not the second one, the original gladiator with Russel Crowe? You heathens! Just kidding, I love that movie - in fact it's one of my all time favorites. I want to recall your attention to one of the opening scenes, some of you know exactly where I am going with this - where Maximus Decimus Meridius, Commander of the armies of the north, is on his horse and he is preparing his men for battle. And in a moment of inspiration he tells them this: what you do in life, echoes in eternity...What you do in life, echoes in eternity...

Today we find ourselves in a text where this truth is on full display...As we will see, what Paul and his band of brothers do, echoes not only throughout human history but will echo for all of eternity because of the lives changed through the gospel. This text describes Paul's second missionary journey, which is hugely important - why? Because for the first time, the Christian flag is planted on European soil. For the first time, the gospel is preached and the first church is established in Europe. The implications of this trip still echo today. To help connect the dots, as you see human history continue to unfold and the gospel take over Europe, you quickly realize that we as Americans are indirect beneficiaries of this second missionary journey.

Read Text - Please open your copy of God's Word to Acts 16:11-24

11 So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12 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. 13 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. 14 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. 15 And after she was baptized, and 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.

Paul and Silas in Prison

16 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. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” 18 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.

19 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. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Pray

This morning we are going to look at **God’s Sovereign Providence.**

Big words, so before we go any further I want to define those terms, because often I think we throw around theological buzzwords and run the danger of the princess bride effect. You keep using that word...I do not think it means what you think it means..So lets make sure our definitions are clear.

The doctrines of God’s sovereignty and God’s providence are **closely related**. They both describe aspects of God’s control over the universe, but they emphasize different facets of his relationship with creation.

Sovereignty: When we talk about God's sovereignty, we are referring to God's supreme and absolute rule over all things...i.e. There is no authority above God and nothing happens without His permission.

Providence: When we talk about God's providence we are referring to how he actively governs and cares for His creation. The way in which God sustains, directs, and provides for all things, bringing about his purposes for his glory and our good.

In the **Heidelberg Catechism**, Q&A 27 says it this way:

Q: What do you understand by the providence of God?

A: Providence is the almighty and ever present power of God by which he upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty—all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but from his fatherly hand...I love that...

While sovereignty focuses on God's authority and right to rule, providence focuses on God's active involvement in the world. I hope that's clear...if not, see pastors Rick or Jason and they will clear it up for you.

But often when people hear these terms they immediately think of at least two things...First...they associate sovereignty with Calvinism, I don't want to hear anything about that. Let me quickly debunk that, both Arminians and Calvinists believe in God's sovereignty, it's a biblical doctrine and character attribute of God...secondly, they say wait a minute..if we believe in God's sovereignty and providence, doesn't that mean man is a robot? And the short answer to that is no...

The final definition I want to give you in terms of big theological words is this: compatibilism.

Compatibilism says that God is sovereign but man is responsible... they are not in conflict with one another. God's sovereignty and human free will can coexist. Spurgeon when asked to reconcile the two said I don't need to reconcile two friends. God is sovereign and man is responsible and we see both of those realities in Scripture.

For example in Acts 2:23 we read: **this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.**

Why did I take the time to explain that? Well because that truth underpins our entire text today. We will see God's sovereign providence at work but we will also see man's responsibility to act.

For example, God sovereignly directs and sets the world stage for Paul's missionary work, but Paul is responsible to obey and be faithful in carrying out his work. Likewise, God opens the heart of Lydia - but Paul was responsible to preach the gospel to her...I think you get what I'm saying...

Here's the point...God's sovereign providence is a beautiful thing to understand...because in it, you realize that the God of all creation, is actively at work in his creation...not only at the macro level on the world stage...but in your life and my life. Our text today will show us 3 ways in which God's sovereign providence is put on display. Here's the outline, we will see God's sovereign providence 1) displayed in perfect timing, 2) God's sovereign providence in salvation, and lastly 3) God's sovereign providence over Satan.

The first thing I want us to see this morning is

1) God's Sovereign Providence Displayed in Perfect Timing (vs 11-12) - that is to say, that God's timing is perfect! He is never late and he is never early...The timeless One is precisely on time.

In verses 11-12, we are told the following

11 So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12 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.

...because I am a visual person, I want to put this on a map so they aren't just random places. The following picture shows us the entire second missionary journey of Paul. If you remember from last week, we're told they pick Timothy up in Lystra. From there they travel through Galatia and want to go to Asia...and the Spirit of God says no.

Then they want to go north to Bithynia and again they are stopped. Then they go to Mysia and Troas which, as we learned last week, is where they pick up Luke. Now think about God's perfect timing...all the other doors are closed and they get to Troas and meet Luke...this is the first time we are introduced to Luke...They didn't know he was going to be there, but in God's perfect timing he was. Think of the significance of that...not only that he was a historian who recorded over 25% of the NT but also in the simple fact that Luke was a physician. Do you think that was important in the life of Paul throughout his journeys...through all the beatings, and illnesses to have a personal physician with him? You bet it was, I think it probably contributed to some of his longevity...and in that we learn that the stops, as well as the steps of a good man are ordered by God.

As Luke records their travel he is very careful to note some details for us. Usually, when a biblical author slows down like this to share these details, it typically means they are wanting to highlight something. The first detail I want you to observe is this, he says we set sail from Troas and made a **direct** voyage to Samothrace...I want to hone in on the word direct for a second because living in the day in which we live, we lose the significance of this...If you're sailing through the ocean, your experience of travelling from point A to point B is usually not direct. Why? Because you're dependent on the wind's direction. Sailors had to zig zag back and forth until they reached their destination. Here Luke is clear to call out that they had a direct voyage, i.e. the wind was at their backs. It's so wonderful to see this - I don't want to make more of this detail than the text actually does, but later on in Acts we will see them do the same trip, except in 5 days. Here it only took two days, and you can see the Lord's Sovereign Providence even in a detail as small as this...It's almost like God is saying nope, not there, nope not there. Yes, HERE! And gives them a direct wind at their back so they can get there in 2 days.

The second detail Luke gives us is about the city of Philippi - he says they landed in Neapolis, which was the port city, and had to go inland about 10 miles to get to Philippi...now he describes Philippi in two ways. On the one hand, he says it's a leading city, it's a bustling city...where commerce and trade was taking place, a place of high traffic...

and then he says it's a Roman colony. This is where having a good grasp of historical context can provide a richer and fuller understanding of the setting.

A little historical background...Philippi was named after Philip II of Macedon, who was the father of Alexander the Great. He conquered it in the 4th century BC, but it became part of the Roman province of Macedonia in the second century BC. During this time the roman road system made its way through macedonia...Specifically, via egnatia was the road that was built in this part of the world and it dramatically increased connectivity throughout the roman empire. Ever heard all roads lead to Rome? This was part of that broader network of roads.

By the time we get to 42 BC there is a huge battle that takes place..the battle of Phillippi...and in this battle Antony and Octavian defeat the armies of Brutus and Cassius and with that, Philippi becomes a Roman Colony...to be a Roman colony was significant - why? Because as a Roman colony Philippi now enjoyed autonomy from the provincial government, they were treated like the other Italian cities and Roman citizens enjoyed the full benefits of being a Roman citizen...this was huge! It's this very thing that compelled the magistrates to release Paul and Silas from prison and send them on their way when they realized they were Roman citizens...

Couple that with the fact that Pax Romana was in place...it was a time of general peace and prosperity that led to significant improvements in infrastructure, it led to greater and faster travel...it allowed for one uniform language that was predominantly used enabling an ease of communication that hadn't been experienced up until this point...In AD 49, Jews were expelled from the city of Rome and disperse throughout the empire...and Paul and his missionary team make it to Philippi around AD 50

When you zoom out on the lens of history, you realize that God in his perfect timing is ordaining all things according to his perfect plan, and it's precisely and exactly on time..

So that when we get to a passage like Galatians 4 and we read the following...**4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.**

When the fullness of time had come...

And you see Paul and Silas and Timothy and Luke reach the shores of Europe for the first time, but they're right on time...and the gospel spreads like wildfire, churches are planted and grow...and God's kingdom expands...

It's one of the greatest paradoxes to consider..how the Eternal God who sits outside of time - is always on time. He's never late, he's never early, and he's never in a hurry because he doesn't have to be.

Practically - what does that mean? How does that apply to us? Well for one, it should give us overwhelming confidence and trust in God's timing. It means that you can trust God with your future, and you can trust in his timing...That might be hard for some of us to hear this morning, because we have gone through some challenging things in life, painful moments, closed doors...here we're reminded that God's providence usually only makes sense when we look backwards

Some of you have been praying to God for an answer in your life for a long time...perhaps for a parent, or a child, or a loved one...I find myself in a season of asking God to make his directional will for my life clear...

And perhaps if you're like me - you're tempted to jump the gun...To take matters into our own hands...to try and force a square peg through a round hole and it doesn't work! God I've been praying for this for 2 whole days...its day 3, I'll just deal with it and figure it out...Isn't that what Abraham does with Hagar? Lord, you're not answering fast enough... Isn't that what Moses does when he strikes the rock? We have example after example, not only from Scripture but from our own lives...Lord I've been praying for you to give me a spouse...now that you've given me a spouse, Lord I've been praying for you to change my spouse...I'm tired of this...for my children to be saved...for illness or pain to go away...Lord are you hearing me? God's sovereign providence displayed in perfect timing reminds us, as Solomon said, that God makes everything beautiful in his time. It doesn't mean that he answers the way we want - but it does mean we can trust in him.

The story is told of the great New England preacher Phillip Brooks who was known for his calm demeanor, but even he could have his patience tried at times. One day a friend observed him pacing the floor like a caged lion.

"What's the trouble, Dr. Brooks?" Asked the friend. "The trouble is that I am in a hurry," he replied, "but God isn't."

Is that you today? Can I remind you that waiting time is never wasted time. We serve a God whose Sovereign Providence is displayed in perfect timing, both at the macro level, and the micro level, in your life and in mine - trust in him.

Secondly, I want you to see

2) God's Sovereign Providence in Salvation (vs 13-15)

As the text continues, we are told the following:

13 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. 14 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. 15 And after she was baptized, and 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.

Luke tells us that on Sabbath day they went to the riverside where they supposed there was a place of prayer. Sermon for another time, but I do want to note - God's people have always been a praying people. But they go to the riverside and this is a little different. Typically, when Paul entered a city, he would go where? The synagogue! The language here would indicate that there was no synagogue to go to. You needed at least 10 men to form a synagogue and we are told here they went outside by the riverside. Why the riverside? It was typical for Jews to gather here because the water was used for ceremonial cleansing. So Paul and the other men with him go there expecting to find some Jews or Jewish proselytes praying. And they do...they encounter these women, one stands out named Lydia and the Lord saves her and she ends up getting baptized.

In God's perfect timing, pastor Brandon found himself right smack dab in Philippi this week where we believe Lydia got baptized. Take a look:

Play Video

Is that cool or what?! The timing of this trip was not planned by us...You get a sense of what it may have looked like in Lydia's day...I'm sure it's changed a little in 2,000 years.

I'm thankful Pastor Brandon included some great contextual background which I won't repeat...but here's what I want to highlight from this portion of the text...

- a) We are told Lydia was a worshipper of God... some translations may say a God fearer...now we know this doesn't mean that she was already a Christian because a few moments later God had to open her heart... this is more referencing the fact that Lydia, who was a gentile proselyte, had a proper reverence, fear, and belief that God existed.

As we look at our text, it becomes immediately clear that simply fearing God or believing he exists is not enough for salvation. Did you know that? For some of you that's a reminder, for others, perhaps you're hearing it for the first time.

James tells us that in 2:19 the following: 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!

The demons are great theologians! But, belief alone in God's existence does not save you!

- b) The Lord opened her heart. This is where you can start to connect the dots with God's Sovereign Providence in salvation...who initiated this? The Lord did, that's what the text says...it says he opened her heart to pay attention to what was said. So that she can receive what was said...

I'm not an expert in the Greek language, but am very thankful for the internet because the Greek language is so much more robust than our English vocabulary...

Kind of like our use of the word love...I love cowboy ribeye steaks, I love my wife...

That's how we use the word open. One commentator said, we use the word open for everything - like opening a door. That's easy, it's got a knob, hinges, it's supposed to open...But when we read that the Lord opened Lydia's heart, the Greek word is so different it means to open something that has no opening. A good analogy is how we blast through mountains to open tunnels...layer upon layer of rock is blasted out of the way

When the Lord opened her heart, just as when he opens anyone's heart..he breaks through layer and layer and layer of sin and hardness and rebellion and opposition...and opens up something that had no opening, that had no hope. If you're

in Christ today that's what God has done for you, it's a supernatural work. Peter tells us that God has caused us to be born again to a living hope!

Isn't that what Ezekiel tells us? In Ezekiel 36:26 as God is describing the new covenant he says this: **26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.**

A malleable heart, a heart that's receptive to God and his Word...it's a supernatural work of God...a few chapters later in Acts, King Agrippa tells Paul man, you almost convinced me...intellectually I can get there..but his heart wasn't opened...that should inform the way we think and pray about our gospel interactions with others...Lord OPEN THEIR HEART...because if you don't, there is no hope...

God opened her heart to hear what Paul had to say...which begs the question...what in the world did he say? Well we don't have to go too far to answer that.. Look at verse 10 of this same chapter.

10 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 what did he say? He preached the gospel - the apostle Paul had an unwavering commitment to preach the gospel...elsewhere he says For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified...Paul's singular focus was exalting Christ through the proclamation of the gospel...he understood that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

Sadly, much of what passes for the gospel today is really no gospel at all...it's become another buzz word...I listen to speeches given and people talk about the gospel...and it goes something like this...My life was terrible, I was having a hard time then I asked Jesus for help and now my life is great...while that might be true...that's not the true gospel...that's not the gospel that God used to open Lydia's heart...her life seemed to be great, she was wealthy, successful...that is a man centered theology and understanding of the gospel...and I need to say this because in an audience of this size, statistically there are people here who are not saved...or an even greater danger, people that think they're saved, but are deceived because the gospel message they have heard has only ever been presented as a message of self help and self realization...

You see the gospel is simple but it's not simplistic...

It starts with God and is about God...This eternal God who is holy and righteous, all wise, and perfectly satisfied in the unity of the Godhead, created the world not out of lack, not because he needed something or there was a void...but out of abundance...an abundance of love...and he created the world to reflect his glory, and he created man to reflect his image...and placed man in the garden in absolute perfection...and man looked at all that God had given him and said...it's not enough...and through one act of defiance and rebellion against this good God, sin enters the world and death through sin...and the good world that God created was forever changed, and man was forever separated from God because of sin...And anyone born after this moment would be born in bondage to sin, spiritually dead in their trespasses and sins, alienated from God, and destined to an eternity in hell because the wages of sin is death and the wrath of God had to be satisfied...But God being rich in mercy! **when the fullness of time had come, sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law,** by living a perfect life, dying on the cross, taking upon himself the sinfulness of humanity and the wrath of his Father, rising from the dead 3 days later conquering sin, death, and satan so that anyone who would repent of their sins and place their faith in Jesus Christ and his finished work would not only be forgiven, but they'd be given the righteousness Christ, they would be restored to a right relationship with God, and they would spend eternity in a place where righteousness dwells worshiping with the King of Kings as his children and co heirs of his eternal kingdom! It's the greatest story ever told! That is the good news! **Not** that Jesus came to give you a better life full of health, wealth, and happiness. C'mon.

That is the full gospel that Paul preached, and that is the same and only gospel we have today... Do you believe in that gospel?

You see, when we have a right understanding of God, of man, of Christ, of the personal response we need to have in repentance and faith we have a complete gospel message. All of that is important...because God uses this gospel to change lives. It's this gospel that softens the hardness of man's heart, It's the gospel that breaks the chains of bondage to sin, that overcomes cultural and demonic barriers, it's the gospel that demolishes lofty arguments, it's the gospel that takes a person from the kingdom of darkness and transfers them into the kingdom of light, It's the gospel that provides true freedom and liberation, it's the gospel that gives life and hope, it's the gospel that is the power of God! I love what one author said - the gospel

is not only the most important message in all of history, it's the only essential message in all of history. It's the only one that matters...

So let me ask you again, do you believe in that gospel? Has it changed you? You see Lydia hears this gospel message and it changes her...we read that her whole household got saved...how did that happen? The text doesn't tell us, but I'd like to think she went back home and shared the same gospel message with them. She opens her home to Paul and the other men with him, she's overcome with a desire for fellowship with other believers...her home becomes the home base for the church in Philippi and God uses that church for wonderful things. It's the church that literally becomes the gift that keeps on giving... The gospel forever changed Lydia...

An even better question is, not has the gospel changed you, past tense, but is it changing you, present tense? Even as Christians we make the mistake of thinking the gospel is for beginners...you just need it to get saved and then you can graduate to the more important stuff...to the deeper things...Oh my friend, there is nothing more than the gospel - you never outgrow it. It's why Jerry Bridges rightly says that gospel is central to everyday life, and because of that we need to preach it to ourselves daily. I wish I could develop that further, but I don't have the time...maybe you can talk about what that looks like during small groups this week.

If you're here today and the Lord is opening your heart to this gospel message do not ignore it...do not leave today the way you came...repent of your sins, that means to turn from the direction you were heading, to change your way of thinking and put your faith where God has put your sin - On Jesus Christ and you too will be saved. If you're unsure of your salvation, or you want to talk to someone...come up after the service, find me, find another one of our pastors...and let us talk with you...tomorrow is not guaranteed, today if you hear his voice, don't harden your hearts...don't wait, don't put it off

Before moving to our last point I want to make this comment. I don't think it's insignificant here that Luke highlights Paul's interaction with these women, first with Lydia, then the slave girl...These surely can't be the only interactions Paul had, but these are the ones Luke recorded...Often, because we are complementarian, which means we believe men and women are equal in value but have different God-given roles, we are quick to say women can't preach or be pastors, and I agree with that, because that's what the Bible teaches...but we can swing so far in that direction that

we completely marginalize women in the church in an ungodly and unbiblical way...do you realize that the first european church starts with some women? Let that sink in.

John Stott said: "God's calling for women in ministry is not an optional extra but an essential part of His design for His church."

If you're a lady here today, a sister in Christ, young or old, I want to remind you this morning, that you are a daughter of the most high God...you are not marginal, you are not less than or inferior in any shape or form...you are co laborers in the work of the gospel and you are essential to the effectiveness of the church. I have 3 daughters and I pray that when they grow up, they will be faithful to the work that God has called them to and I pray they will change the world for Jesus Christ.

Our final point to highlight from our text this morning is

3) God's Sovereign Providence over Satan (vs 16-24)

This will be much shorter...but we see in our verses a slave girl that is in double bondage. Once to her masters, and then to the demon possessing her. We're told she made her masters a lot of money because she was essentially telling people their future...we find her following Paul and crying out **"These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation."** She wasn't wrong, but it was creating such a disturbance that it was deterring the work of the gospel...so Paul speaks to the spirit and exorcises it out of her...you see this pattern that wherever God is at work, Satan does not rest...but I think It's good for us to be reminded this morning, that God and Satan are not on equal footing...there isn't this cosmic battle where all of heaven is waiting to see who is going to win...if you're watching this in real time it might feel like that...because Satan sends this demon to oppose the work of the gospel, but not only that, Paul and Silas after this get beaten and thrown into prison...and you might be tempted to think Oh man, Satan 2, God 0...

But as each of these seeming blows come to Paul and Silas we see that God is ultimately sovereign even over Satan...and in his providence he uses each of these occasions not only to truly liberate the slave girl, but to do an amazing work in the life of the jailer as we will see next week...and the gospel continues to go forth and the kingdom continues to expand...

A few years later, Paul finds himself in another prison, he just couldn't stay out of jail...this time in Rome...and he writes back to this Philippian church and look at what he says...

Philippians 1:12: I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.

Individual guards were set to watch over Paul, and he would preach the gospel and they would be saved...and before you knew it, a good bunch of imperial guard had put their faith in Jesus and given Paul the right hand of fellowship...I imagine the Philippian church receiving this letter and reading it were thinking ...hah - nothing new, we've seen this before :)

God's Sovereign Providence even over Satan...what you meant for evil God meant for good

What that means for you and I practically is to remember that when we are obedient to God, when we are living in his will, when we see God using us for his purposes you should expect Satan to stand in opposition, that's his MO...but fear not...for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. This is, by the way, one of the reasons it's important to preach the full gospel...because often life can get harder as a result of coming to Christ...

We often sing Psalm 62 in our church. As we close this morning, I want to remind you of one of those stanzas...

You're my stronghold and my shield
In the midst of every threat
Though the wicked never yield
They will vanish like a breath
Yes I know the outcome's sure
Satan's evil plans will fail
In Your power I'm secure

What CONFIDENCE...

Conclusion:

I know that was a lot of ground to cover...but I hope you're leaving today with an overwhelming confidence in the sovereign providence of God as it's displayed not only in his perfect timing, but also in his work of salvation, and authority over Satan, using even him to accomplish his purposes. That is a God worth trusting, a God worth living for, a God worth worshipping for all of eternity. And one day, if you've placed your trust in Him, you will be with him in glory because of his sovereign providence in your life. Let's Pray

After songs:

Reminder of Men and Women's D2 groups.

Benediction: Jude 1:24-25

24 Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, 25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.