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“Don’t Throw Away the Hymnal”

by
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SYNOPSIS

It's time for the annual church music camp, BUT Pastor Brad has decided he can't find a musical that he likes! Desperate to claim the best musical title once again, the students are determined to convince Pastor Brad that just singing hymns that relay the gospel message will be too boring to ensure them the coveted trophy. Will they succeed and get Pastor Brad to change his mind, or will they discover new adventures in the story they claim to know so well?

Themes: Gospel, Music, Church Camp, Savior, Love story, Adventure, Treasure, Victor, Children's Choir, Ensemble, Children's Musical, Music Camp

CAST

Larger Roles

Emily- an assistant director (can easily be changed to a male actor)

Sarah- a student who is hoping for a love story princess-themed musical

Cole- a student who is hoping for a cowboy dueling-themed musical

Aaron- a student who is hoping for a fireman-themed musical

Gabby- a student who is hoping for an Olympic-themed musical (can easily be changed to a male actor)

Ton - a student who is hoping for a Pirate treasure hunt-themed musical (can easily be changed to a female actress)

Smaller Roles

Jamie- a student (can easily be changed to a male actor) (2 lines)

Jesse- a student (can easily be changed to a female actress) (4 lines)

Betty- an older woman, working at the church bake sale (9 lines)

Alma- an older woman, working at the church bake sale (7 lines)

Fireman- a local fireman (5 lines)

Dylan- a student (can easily be changed to a female actress) (3 lines)

Mrs. Jones- a secretary from another church (5 lines)

Tim- a student from another church (13 lines)

Jared- a student from another church (7 lines)

Kim- a student (3 lines)

Mr. Brownden- the church musical competition judge (can easily be changed to a female actress) (2 lines)

Lisa- a student (can easily be changed to a male actor) (3 lines)

Rob- a student (can easily be changed to a female actress) (3 lines)

Pastor Brad- the Music Pastor in charge of the music camp (4 lines)

Owen- A student who is hoping for an outer space-themed musical (can easily be changed to a female actress) (3 lines)

Ensemble- a group of students attending music camp

PROPS

Music stand

Bible for Emily

2 small New Testaments that will fit in gun holsters for Cole and Tim

Trophy

Box containing sheet music

Sheet Music

Cupcake

Cell phone for Emily

COSTUMES

Sarah- She should be in full princess attire- large glittery dress, with a tiara

Cole- He should be in full cowboy attire- cowboy hat, gun holster, cowboy boots and spurs, chaps, fringed shirt

Aaron- He should be in full fireman gear- helmet, fireman coat, big rubber boots

Gabby- She should be dressed as an Olympic Runner- shorts, shirt, white running bib pinned to her shirt displaying her name

Tony- He should be dressed in full pirate attire- eye patch, pirate hat, tall boots, and long coat

Owen- He should be in a space suit, ideally with a helmet (he can walk in with a helmet, take it off and then just hold it while he says his lines)

Fireman- He should be in full fireman gear - helmet, fireman coat, big rubber boots.

Aaron and the Fireman should have identical costumes

Emily, Students, Ensemble- They should all be dressed in clothing appropriate for a summer music camp.

Mr. Brownden, Mrs. Jones, Pastor Brad- Casual work environment attire

Alma, Betty- Casual attire with kitchen aprons tied around their waists

HOW

For a larger cast:

There are 6 main roles. If you would like to have more leads, all of the roles, except Sarah, can be divided between two actors / actresses. For example, the part of Emily, the assistant director, can easily be made into two roles.

Also, all of the smaller characters can also be part of the ensemble as long as they exit in time for a quick costume change.

For a smaller cast:

The following roles can be played by one actor/ actress with a few simple costume changes

Actress 1- Jamie, Kim

Actress 2- Betty, Mrs. Jones

Actress 3- Alma, Lisa

Actor 1- Fireman, Jared, Mr. Brownden, Pastor Brad

Actor 2- Jesse, Tim, Owen

Actor 3- Dylan, Rob

OR another option, to limit the number of characters, would be to have the following characters removed and their lines absorbed by the lead roles: Jamie, Jesse, Dylan, Kim, Lisa, Rob

EFFECTS

Scene 2 calls for smoke. If your church does not have the capability for a smoke machine, simply have the characters act as if they are seeing smoke.

Sound Design:

Scene 1 calls for western theme music. This is not necessary to the plot line, but will add humor to Cole's entrance.

Scene 2 calls for a fire alarm to sound. This is not necessary to the plot line, but will add suspense.

Winning the Students Over

Slowly, the students each find something unexpected in the songs that they are singing. Ex) Aaron realizes there's adventure in the gospel message. As they do, there

needs to be a change from that point on in how they say their lines and how they respond to Emily and the songs. **The ensemble needs to be ‘won over’ too. Each ensemble member should pick for themselves which song will change their characters’ mind about the production.

Song choices

Public domain songs have been chosen for this musical. If your church wants to change the hymns, feel free to do so. Just remember that you are responsible for paying all rights and royalty fees for songs outside of the public domain.

The easiest song to change would be song #2: Joyful Joyful

Feel free to substitute this song with your children’s choir’s favorite hymn or worship song.

Song Tempo

There are numerous versions of these hymns. I would suggest singing some of these hymns with a more modern, upbeat tempo. Having 8 slow songs will not energize the show. Be creative! Do some research. Find a good tempo that will work for you.

And feel free to add hand motions, or even a dance team

TIME

Total time should be around 45 - 60 minutes, depending on the song arrangements. The script alone (without music) should be about 20 minutes.

SCENE 1

The stage is set as a choir rehearsal, with risers upstage center.

Emily stands downstage facing upstage behind a music stand that is strewn with sheet music as well as a Bible. To her side sits a box containing stapled pages of choir music.

The ensemble is upstage facing Emily, standing on the risers.

Be Thou My Vision

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light

Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise
Thou mine inheritance, now and always
Thou and Thou only first in my heart
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art

High King of heaven, my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all

Emily: Guys that was a great warm up! Pastor Brad is running a little late, so let's just take five and we'll get started in a few minutes.

Some of the ensemble exits. Others sit and take a break on the stage.

Sarah enters from stage left, dressed in full princess garb. She moves toward center stage.

Sarah: *(to Emily)* Am I late?

Emily: *(looking down at her music)* Just a few minutes. No problem. *(Looking up at Sarah)* Umm, Sarah, what are you wearing?

Sarah: Like it?

Emily: You're dressed like a—

Sarah: Princess.

Emily: Why?

Sarah: Well, I know Pastor Brad hasn't officially picked the leads for this year's musical yet. I was hoping to maybe come looking the part.

Emily: I still don't understand why you're wearing a Princess costume.

Sarah: *(admittedly)* My mom was in the church office the other day and saw the different musicals on Pastor Brad's desk. It looked like he was still deciding which one to choose.

Emily: *(admittedly)* It was a very last-minute decision this year.

Sarah: There was clearly one that stood out. *Rescued: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told*.

Emily: *(understanding)* The musical about the princess.

Sarah: Exactly.

Emily: Actually, he didn't—

Sarah: *(not hearing Emily)* There was no way he was going to choose those other ones. I mean what was that Cowboy one? The Good, the Bad...

Cole enters from stage right, dressed as a cowboy.

Cole: The Good, The Bad and The Bible.

Western theme music plays.

Emily: Wow.

Sarah: Cole, who are you supposed to be?

Cole: Seriously?

He stands in a duel stance.

Cole: Go ahead, make my day.

Sarah: Clint Eastwood?

Cole: Clint Northward. Fastest scripture slinger in the west.
He resumes the duel stance. Suddenly he draws a Bible out of his holster and says the following line as fast as he can.

Cole: "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that is given among men, by which we must be saved!"
(Acts 4:12)

Slight pause.

Cole blows on his Bible and puts it back in his holster.

Sarah: (to Emily) Please tell me Pastor Brad did not choose that musical.

Emily: He didn't—

Aaron enters from stage left, dressed as a Fireman. Aaron and Cole move towards center stage, near Emily and Sarah.

Aaron: Clearly, that wild west theme was way too cheesy for our church. He chose *Fire Extinguisher: How Jesus saved the day*.

Cole: I'm too cheesy?

Sarah: You can't be serious.

Emily: Aaron, where did you even find that costume?

Aaron: Cool, right? I was hoping it would give me an edge when Pastor Brad was picking the leads this year.

Emily: Guys listen. I have some news.

Gabby runs in dressed as an Olympic Athlete from stage left and carrying a large trophy.

Gabby: Sorry I'm late.

Tony enters from behind the audience dressed as a Pirate and eating a cupcake.

Tony: (between bites) I'm late too, but it's not my fault. Those bake sale ladies are cooking up a storm in the kitchen and needed a taste tester.

Everyone turns to look at Tony as he walks down the aisle towards the stage.

Emily: (to Gabby) Gabby, what musical did you think we were doing?

Gabby: We're doing "Go for the gold: Running the Race to Win", right?

Tony: *(confidently)* No way. Pastor Brad chose *Treasure Hunt: Searching for what matters most*. The other ones were ridiculous. Did you hear about the Princess one? Who would ever want to—

As Tony enters the stage, he passes Sarah and realizes that she is dressed as a Princess.

Tony: *(a little less confident, trying to not hurt Sarah's feelings)* That one was really...different.

Sarah: Different? Tony, I'm not the one dressed like Captain Hook, with frosting all over my face.

Tony: *(to Sarah, while wiping his face)* You're just jealous the bake sale ladies didn't give you a cupcake.

Emily: Ok. I can see you're all really excited about the musical this year.

Gabby: Of course, we are. Look at this. *(She holds up the large trophy)* We have a trophy to defend!

Everyone loudly agrees.

All: *(except Emily ad lib)* Yeah! Sure do. Definitely.

Tony: *(grabbing the trophy and reading the inscription)* Best church musical 2022.

All: *(except Emily)* Yeah!

Cole: Where's Pastor Brad? We need to get practicing if we're going to win again this year.

Emily: He's running a little late, so as the assistant director I get the exciting opportunity to inform you that...this year...this year we're umm...

Gabby: You don't know which one we're doing yet, do you?

Emily: Ummm...actually—

Aaron: That's ok. We can wait for Pastor Brad.

Tony: I'm sure he'll be here soon.

Sarah: Let's warm up before he gets here.

Gabby: Remember that song from last year?

Tony: Oh yeah.

Aaron: We can warm up singing that one.
Tony places the trophy on the ground next to Emily's music stand.
Ensemble re-enters once the music starts.

Joyful Joyful

Joyful, joyful, we adore You,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You,
Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!

All Your works with joy surround You,
Earth and heav'n reflect Your rays,
Stars and angels sing around You,
Center of unbroken praise;
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain
Praising You eternally!

Always giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living,
Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Loving Father, Christ our Brother,
Let Your light upon us shine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus,
Which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us,
Joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife;
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life.

SCENE 2

Emily: That sounds awesome! This year's show is going to be great. While you were singing, I got a text from Pastor Brad. His car is having trouble

starting. He's getting a ride, but he'll be a few more minutes. So, he said we should just get started.

Sarah: How can we get started when you don't even know what script we're doing?

Emily: I don't need a script.

Aaron: Why not?

Emily: Because we're actually not doing a musical this year.

All: *(except Emily ad lib)* What?! Excuse me? Huh??

Cole: That doesn't make any sense.

Gabby: This is a music camp.

Emily: Exactly. So, since Pastor Brad didn't find any musicals that he liked, he decided that this year we should just focus on singing.

Tony: Just singing?

Emily: Yeah.

Everyone groans.

Gabby: *(to Emily)* What songs are we singing?

Emily: Great question. This packet contains all the sheet music.

Emily hands out the packets of sheet music.

Tony: *(looking over the packet)* These are hymns.

Aaron: Maybe you copied the wrong songs?

Sarah: They look like the hymns for Sunday morning.

Cole: This can't be right.

Emily: These are the songs we're going to sing.

Cole: This is going to be so boring.

Emily: Hang on guys. These are great songs.

Gabby: Maybe for church. Not for camp.

Emily: What do you mean?

Sarah: There's no rescue.

Gabby: No race.

Cole: No duel.

Tony: No treasure hunt.

Aaron: No adventure.

Emily: That's not true.

Aaron: These aren't just worship songs, that would be bad enough. These are hymns!

Tony: About Jesus.

Emily: You're at a church music camp. Didn't you expect to sing about Jesus a little bit?

Tony: Of course. But let's be honest the gospel can be a little dull. We all know how it ends.

Aaron: Yeah. It makes it more interesting when we can just squeeze the gospel message into an exciting story line.

Gabby: There's no way we're going to win first place again.

Emily: I think you guys are wrong.

Jesse: What's that smell?

Cole: Failure. Defeat. It smells like we're going to lose.

Tony: No. It smells like... *(realizing what he's saying)* burning cupcakes!

Smoke is seen coming from behind the auditorium.

Jamie: *(pointing behind the audience)* Is that smoke?

Betty runs in from behind the audience.

Betty: Fire!!

Betty runs to the stage.

Jesse: What's on fire?

Betty: The cupcakes for the church bake sale.

Fire alarm sounds.

Jamie: Let's get out of here.

Emily: Everyone, leave your stuff, we're going to head out the back door towards the playground.

Everyone starts to exit off stage right.

Fireman enters from behind the audience. He heads towards the stage.

Fireman: Fire's out.

Fire Alarm stops.

Fireman: Everyone is safe to return to the kitchen.

Alma enters from behind the audience and heads towards the stage. She is soaking wet.

Betty: (to *Alma*) What happened to you?

Alma: I tried to save the cupcakes when the sprinkler system went off.

Betty: I don't know what happened. I've been cooking in that kitchen for the past 30 years.

Fireman: Well, the church may want to invest in a new stove. Those electric ones can get old and finicky.

Alma and Betty say the following lines quickly. There should be a build, so that their final lines are almost on top of each other.

Alma: As I've said a million times, it wouldn't hurt to put a nice gas oven—

Betty: We don't need a gas oven. If you hadn't thrown water on an electric fire—

Alma: I saw fire. I poured water. That makes sense to me.

Betty: Clearly, you haven't been in the kitchen that long.

Alma: I have been cooking for over 40 years with gas stoves. These old fashioned electric jobs—

Betty: Old fashioned?! I'm old fashioned?

Alma: I didn't say that *but* if the shoe fits—

Emily trying to calm them down.

Emily: Ladies, I'm sorry to interrupt. But we are in the middle of rehearsal here.

Betty: *(noticing all the children)* I'm sorry. We have a mess to clean up.

Alma: And more cupcakes to bake.

Jesse: If you need a taste tester, I'm available.

Emily: *(to Jesse)* After rehearsal, of course.

Jesse: Right.

Alma: *(to Fireman)* Thank you, Sir, for saving the day.

Betty: *(to Fireman)* We'll try not to bother you again. *(To Alma)* I'll just have to remind the women's ministry that we're dealing with old fashioned electric ovens.

Betty and Alma exit behind the audience. Fireman sees Aaron's costume.

Fireman: *(to Aaron)* Looking sharp. Is this year's musical about a fire rescue?

Aaron: Well, it should be.

Emily: It kinda is.

Aaron: *(to Fireman)* It's not that exciting.

Fireman: *(sensing the tension between Emily and Aaron)* I guess I'll have to come to the show on Friday and see for myself.

Fireman exits.

Aaron: *(to Emily)* Listen, you can't convince me that these songs are more exciting than the fire department saving the church building from burning down.

Emily: Are you kidding me? That fireman simply put out a small oven fire. Jesus came down, died for our sins, rose and conquered death to save us—his church—from eternity without him. We get to tell the story of that adventure. We're just going to tell it through song this year.

Aaron: I guess.

Emily: I guess?! Everyone, turn to page 8. Let's sing and this time really listen to the lyrics.

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come
This grace that brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been here ten thousand years
Bright, shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind but now I see.

SCENE 3

Emily: *(to Aaron)* Well, what do you think, Aaron?

Aaron: I guess I never really paid too much attention to those lyrics before. We do serve a God who saved the day.

Emily: We do.

Aaron: *(hesitantly but being won over)* Ok. Let's try singing another one.

Emily: Everyone, go back to page one.

Suddenly the lights go out.

Dylan: What just happened?

Tony: First the fire, now the lights. I think the Lord is trying to get our attention.

Students respond to Tony, some laugh, some roll their eyes.

Emily: Oh yeah, Tony? What's he saying?

Tony: Clearly, we need to do the pirate musical.

Emily: Searching for what matters most?

Tony: Or in this case, searching for the light.

Students again respond to Tony, some laugh, some roll their eyes.

Emily: Dylan, can you go check in with the office and see what's going on?

Dylan: Sure thing.

Dylan exits stage right.

Emily: Let's move on. Can you still read the music?

Tony: I'm just saying, the next step might be lightning strikes.

Emily: *(to Tony)* Just give this singing thing a chance.

Mrs. Jones, Tim and Jared enter from behind the audience. Tim and Jared are dressed as cowboys.

M. Jones: Hello?

Emily: *(turning toward Mrs. Jones)* Hi? We're down here.

Mrs. Jones, Tim and Jared move toward the stage.

M. Jones: Hi. We're with Redeemer Fellowship.

Emily: The church down the street?

M. Jones: Yes. Pastor Brad said that we could borrow some costumes.

Emily: Absolutely. What do you need?

M. Jones: We're doing a cowboy musical for our camp this year.

Emily: Sure. Right this way. *(To students)* Let's take a quick break. I'll be right back.

Emily and Mrs. Jones begin to exit stage right.

Dylan enters. He meets Emily and Mrs. Jones downstage right.

Dylan: Some kid in the nursery stuffed something in an outlet. It tripped a breaker. They'll have it fixed soon.

Emily: Great. Thanks.

Emily and Mrs. Jones exit stage right. Tim and Jared enter the stage downstage left. Sarah fixes her hair as she sees Tim approaching.

Sarah: Hi, Tim.

Tim: Hey.

Cole: (to *Tim*) The Good, The Bad, and the Bible?

Tim: No, the sequel, *The Empty Tombstone*.

Sarah: Are you Wyatt Earp?

Tim: Wyatt Verse.

Tim assumes a dual stance.

Tim: Draw!

Pulls out a Bible from his holster.

Tim: "For God so loved the world—

As Tim pulls out his Bible and begins quoting scripture, Cole, not to be outdone, also pulls his Bible out of his holster, points it at Tim and also begins quoting scripture at the same time.

Tim: —that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him, shall not perish but have everlasting life." (*John 3:16*)

Cole: "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that is given among men, by which we must be saved!" (*Acts 4:12*)

Tim wins the duel, saying his scripture the fastest.

Tim blows on his Bible and puts it back in his holster.

Cole, clearly frustrated, puts his Bible back in his holster and moves toward center stage to talk with Gabby, Tony, Aaron and Sarah.

Jared and Tim stay stage left, quietly conversing. They do not hear the following dialogue.

Gabby: I'm really glad we're not doing that musical.

Cole: Are you kidding me? They get to wear spurs. We're going to be in choir robes. They'll win that musical trophy for sure.

Tony: First our baseball team takes second to them and now this.

Aaron: You got to get over that baseball thing.

Tony: It was one run. One run.

Gabby: I don't know what you're so upset about. *(Clearly thinking they look silly)* They're dressed as cowboys.

Cole: And dueling it out on stage.

Gabby: *(still not impressed)* With Bible verses.

Sarah: They do look pretty good with those hats on.

Cole: You thought I looked ridiculous.

Sarah: Well, you do.

Gabby: *(teasing Sarah)* But Tim looks pretty good, huh?

Sarah hits Gabby and gives her a "stop it" look. Tim and Jared approach center stage.

Tim: *(to Cole)* So what musical are you guys doing this year?

Cole: *(trying to save face)* We actually decided to focus on—

Tony: *(trying to help Cole)* Really hone our music skills.

Cole: We didn't want to distract from the gospel message by adding too many costumes.

Jared: So what show is it?

Cole: We're going to...umm...

Tony: Sing.

Jared: Just sing?

Cole: *(defensive)* It's not just singing. It's telling the most exciting story just, just—

Tony: *(trying to sound confident)* Thru song.

Tim: So, you're just singing?

Jared: There's no duel? Or fight scene?
Tim: Cole, why are you dressed like a cowboy?
Cole: Well...umm...there's kind of a duel...we're just singing about it.

Jared: What do you mean?

Cole: Listen to this.

Cole grabs the sheet music, desperately trying to defend his point.

Cole: *(reading the lyrics)* "Crown Him with many crowns, The Lamb upon the throne, Hark How the heav'nly anthems drowns, All music but its own! Awake, my soul and sing, of Him Who died for thee. And hail Him as thy matchless King, thru all eternity!"

Jared: I guess I never really thought about it that way before.

Tim: Me either.

Cole: *(reflecting on what he just read)* Yeah.

Emily enters from stage right.

Cole: *(handing Emily some sheet music)* Hey Emily, can we practice this one?

Emily: Sure. *(To Tim and Jared)* Mrs. Jones is just getting some costumes together. She'll be done in a few minutes. You guys are welcome to join us for this song if you want.

Tim and Jared can either join in singing or stand downstage left, listening.

Crown Him with Many Crowns

Crown Him with many crowns
The Lamb upon the throne
Hark How the heav'nly anthems drowns
All music but its own!
Awake, my soul and sing
Of Him Who died for thee
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Thru all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of heav'n
One with the Father known
One with the Spirit thru him giv'n
From yonder glorious throne
To Thee be endless praise

PURCHASE

For thou has died for me
Be Thou, O Lord, thru endless days
Adored and magnified.

Crown Him with many crowns
His glories now we sing
Who died and rose on high
Who died eternal life to bring
And lives that death may die.

SCRIPT

SCENE 4

Voice: *(offstage)* Does anyone know where the breaker box is?

Kim: Are they still looking for that?

Cole: How do they not know where that is?

Tony: I know what musical we could do. Raiders of the Lost Breaker Box.

Forced laugh.

Emily: Very funny. Tony, have you even heard the lyrics we've been singing?

Tony: Which ones?

Emily: The ones about treasure hunts.

Tony: No way. Where?

Cole: *(reading the sheet music)* "I once was lost, but now I'm found." Sounds like a treasure hunt to me.

Aaron: *(looking at the music)* "High King of heaven my treasure thou art." That sounds like a treasure hunt too.

Emily: *(reading out of a Bible Matthew 13:44)* Listen to this: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field."

Tony: Where are you reading that?

Emily: Matthew 13.

Tony: I've never really thought about it that way before.

Emily: The most important treasure any of us could ever find is Jesus. And when we find him, he brings the hidden things, the mysteries of heaven, into the light and reveals them to us. Finding the gospel and daily learning more about Jesus...it's all a treasure hunt.

The lights go on.

Voice: (offstage) Found it!

Emily: Finally!

Tony: (to Emily) Let me see that.

Emily hands Tony the Bible; he moves to stage right, looking over the Bible passage. Tim and Jared move toward Sarah, Gabby, Kim and Cole center stage.

Tim: That sounded really good guys.

Sarah: Thanks. I'm sure your show is going to be great too. Is it Friday night?

Tim: Yeah, around six.

Sarah: Maybe I can come and see you in it.

Jared: Isn't your show at 6 too?

Sarah: Umm...

Cole: Yeah, Sarah, our show is Friday night too. At six.

Gabby: (to Sarah) And you're in *this* show.

Sarah: Yeah. I just forgot.

Kim: You forgot?

Sarah glares at Kim.

Sarah: (to Tim) Anyways, break a leg.

Tim: Thanks. You too. (Beat) Why are you in that dress?

Sarah: Oh. Like it?

Gabby jabs her.

Sarah: I mean. I – I – I just thought umm we were doing a different musical. Miscommunication.

Mrs. Jones enters from stage right, holding a number of costumes.

M. Jones: (to Emily) Thanks again. (To Tim and Jared) Come on boys, we better get going.

Jared: Well, break a leg.

Sarah: See ya.
Tim: Bye, Sarah.
Tim and Jared help Mrs. Jones with the costumes. They all exit behind the audience.

Sarah: He knows my name!

Gabby: So, you like him?

Sarah: *(trying to deny her crush)* Who?

Cole: Oh, come on.

Aaron: *(mockingly imitating Sarah)* Maybe I can come see your show, even though it's the same time as my show, that I forgot I was in.

Sarah: Ok. Maybe a little bit.

Gabby: I think you were hoping for a musical with a love story so that Tim would come and audition.

Sarah: That is so not true.

Pause.

Sarah: I mean, if he wanted to come over and be part of our show—

Gabby: Ha! I knew it. This is church. We're never going to do a musical with a love story in it.

Emily: Not true.

Sarah: Are we doing a love story for Christmas this year?

Gabby: She might want to ask Tim to audition.

Sarah glares at Gabby.

Emily: Actually, we're presenting a love story this year for camp.

Gabby: Which camp?

Emily: This camp.

Sarah: I thought you said we were just singing.

Emily: *(reading off the sheet music)* "The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell."

Kim: That sounds almost poetic.

Gabby: It does.

Emily: You guys want poetry, listen to this: "Here's my heart, take and seal it."

Sarah: Where are you reading this?

Emily: Everyone turn to page fifteen.

Love of God

The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star,
And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,
God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled,
And pardoned from his sin.

When years of time shall pass away
And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall,
When men who here refuse to pray,
On rock and hills and mountains call,
God's love so sure shall still endure,
All measureless and strong;
Redeeming grace to Adam's race
The saints' and angels' song.

O love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure
The saints' and angels' song!
Could we with ink the ocean fill
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill
And ev'ry man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

O love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure
The saints' and angels' song!

O love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure
The saints' and angels' song!

Come Thou Fount

Come Thou fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace
Streams of mercy never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise.

Teach me some melodious sonnet
Sung by flaming tongues above
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it
Mount of Thy redeeming love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer
Here by Thy great help I've come
And I hope by Thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wandering from the fold of God
He to rescue me from danger
Interposed His precious blood.

Oh, that day when freed from sinning
I shall see Thy lovely face
Clothed then in blood washed linen
How I'll sing Thy sovereign grace.

Come my Lord, no longer tarry
Take my ransomed soul away
Send Thine angels now to carry
Me to realms of endless days.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be
Let Thy goodness like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.

Prone to wander, Lord I feel it
Prone to leave the God I love
Here's my heart, oh take and seal it
Seal it for Thy courts above

PURCHASE

Here's my heart
Oh take and seal it
Seal it for Thy courts above.

SCENE 5

Mr. Brownden enters from stage left.

Brownden: (*clapping*) That sounds wonderful. I see it's going to be a tight race this year, as always.

Mr. Brownden enters and moves towards center stage.

Emily gets the trophy that is next to the music stand and begins to hand it to Mr. Brownden.

Emily: Hi, Mr. Brownden.

The following is an aside conversation that takes place downstage right, and is not heard by Emily and Mr. Brownden.

Lisa: Who's that?

Rob: The head of the church musical competition. He's the one who picks the winner.

Gabby: It's just a friendly competition that is supposed to encourage kids to come to camp and learn more about God. But the truth is we have a title to defend and it's going to be hard not to win again.

Brownden: (*to the students*) Just coming by to grab this trophy and give it a little polish before Friday night. You never know, it might be coming back here for another year.

Mr. Brownden takes the trophy and exits stage left.

Gabby: I doubt it.

Rob: We're saying goodbye to that trophy for sure.

Sarah: Hang on. I think we might have a chance at winning.

Lisa: Really?

Sarah: Listen, we all wanted something different in a musical this year, right? I wanted a love story.

Aaron: I wanted an adventure.

Tony: A treasure hunt.
Cole: A duel.
Sarah: Maybe we all got what we wanted.
Tony: You know, you might be right. The gospel is an adventure story about a hunt for a lost love.
Sarah: A lost love? Who's that?
Tony: Jesus' bride. The Church.
Cole: And he has to duel it out to win her.
Lisa: Yeah. Kinda.
Rob: I guess this could be cool.
Emily: The Bible really is the most exciting story we could ever tell, and we don't need to add plotlines to make it more interesting.
Gabby: (*admittedly*) I'm just not sure Mr. Brownden is going to agree with you. I just wanted to win the trophy. Is that wrong?
Tony: It's not about trophies.
Emily: It's not, *but* Jesus likes winning too.
Gabby: What do you mean?
Emily: I mean we *are* talking about the ultimate victor. Jesus always wins. Listen to this: "The Lord of hosts His name, from age to age the same, And He must win the battle." Jesus wins. Every time.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing
Our Helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe
His craft and pow'r are great, and, armed with cruel hate
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He
The Lord of hosts His name, from age to age the same
And He must win the battle.

And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us
We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us
The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly pow'rs, no thanks to them, abideth
The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him who with us sideth
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also
The body they may kill; God's truth abideth still
His kingdom is forever.

Gabby: I never really thought about the gospel like that before. You know, Jesus winning. Destroying the competition.

Tony: Yeah. Emily's right. He does win. He is the victor.

Sarah: I think maybe I'm starting to understand why Pastor Brad wanted us to sing.

Aaron: Me too. Once you really understand everything God has done—

Gabby: *(agreeing)* The price he paid—

Cole: The battle he won.

Tony: It only makes sense that we should praise him—and sing about it.

Emily: That's right. I think that's exactly what Pastor Brad was thinking.

Gabby: What are we waiting for? Let's do it.

Praise to the Lord

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!
Join the great throng,
Psaltery, organ and song,
Sounding in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord! Over all things he gloriously reigneth.
Borne as on eagle wings, safely his Saints he sustaineth.
Hast thou not seen
How all thou needest hath been
Granted in what he ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy way and defend thee.
Surely his goodness and mercy shall ever attend thee.

PURCHASE

Ponder anew
What the Almighty can do,
Who with his love doth befriend thee

Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath breath, join with Abraham's seed to adore him!
Let the "amen"
Sum all our praises again,
Now as we worship before him.

Emily: You guys sound really great! Pastor Brad is going to be so excited when he hears you. He should be here any minute. Let's take a quick water break and meet back here in five minutes.

All begin to exit toward stage right.

Gabby: Emily, I'm glad we're doing this.

Emily: Good.

Gabby: I've never really focused on these lyrics before. They're really powerful.

Emily: They're telling the best story ever told.

Emily and Gabby exit stage right with the rest of the cast. Pastor Brad enters from behind the audience and goes to center stage.

Brad: Hey where is everyone? We need to get started! You'll never guess the surprise I have in store for you this year!

Owen enters from stage left, dressed as an astronaut.

Owen: Hey Pastor Brad. I'm sorry I'm late. I wanted to make sure I got the costume perfect before I got here. We're doing the *Out of this World Adventures with Jesus*, musical, right?

Brad: Actually, we're doing something better.

Owen: Better? What's better than saving the galaxy?

Brad: Redeeming the world.

Owen: What?

Brad: Let's find everyone else and I'll tell you all about it.

Pastor Brad and Owen exit stage right.

The End