

## Handout #3

### Handout #2 for Jigsaw Activity

**Source:** Fannie Lou Hamer, "I Don't Mind My Light Shining", Greenwood, Mississippi, Fall, 1963 (Excerpted)

From the fourth chapter of St. Luke beginning at the eighteenth verse: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and recover the sight to the blind, to set at liberty to them who are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Now the time have come that was Christ's purpose on earth. And we only been getting by, by paying our way to Hell. But the time is out. When Simon [of] Cyrene was helping Christ to bear his cross up the hill, he said, "Must Jesus bear this cross alone? And all the world go free?" He said, "No, there's a cross for everyone and there's a cross for me. This consecrated cross I'll bear, till death shall set me free. And then go home a crown to wear, for there's a crown for me."

And it's no easy way out. We just got to wake up and face it, folks. And if I can face the issue, you can too. You see, the thing — what's so pitiful now about it — the men been wanting to be the boss all of these years, and the ones that ain't up under the house is under the bed.

But you see, it's poison; it's poison for us not to speak what we know is right. As Christ said from the seventeenth chapter of Acts and the twenty-sixth verse, says: "Has made of one blood all nations, for to dwell on the face of the earth. " Then it's no different, we just have different colors.

And, brother, you can believe this or not: I been sick of this system as long as I can remember. I heard some people speak of depression in the '30s. In the '20s, it was 'pression with me! De-pression. I been as hungry — it's a funny thing since I started working for Christ — it's kind of like in the twenty-third of Psalms wher he says, "Thou prepareth a table before me in the presence of my enemies. Thou anointed my head with oil and my cup runneth over."

And I have walked through the shadows of death because it was on the tenth of September in '62 when they shot sixteen times in a house and it wasn't a foot over the bed where my head was. But that night I wasn't there — don't you see what God can do! Quit running around trying to dodge death because this book said, "He that seeketh to save his life, he's going to lose it anyhow!"

So as long as you know you going for something, you put up a life. That it can be like Paul, say, "I fought a good fight." And I've "ept the faith." You know, it had been a long time — people, I have worked, I have worked as hard as anybody. I have been picking cotton and would be so hungry — and one of the poison things about it — wondering what I was going to cook that night. But you see all of them things was wrong, you see! And I have asked God, I said, "Now Lord" — and you have too — ain't no need to lie and say that you ain't. Said, "Open a way for us." Said, "Please make a way for us, Jesus." Said, "Where I can stand up and speak for my race and speak for these hungry children." And he opened a way and all of them mostly backing out.

You see, he made it so plain for us. He sent a man in Mississippi with the same name that Moses had to go to Egypt. And tell him to go down in Mississippi and tell Ross Barnett to let my people go. And you know I feel good, I feel good. I never know today what's going to happen to me tonight, but I do know as I walk alone, I walk with my hand in God's hand.

And, you see, you know the ballot is good. If it wasn't good how come he trying to keep you from it and he still using it! Don't be foolish, folks: they going in there by the droves and droves and they had guards to keep us out of there the other day. And dogs. Now if that's good enough for them, I want some of it too.

You see, as I said, it was on the tenth of September when they shot in the house for me sixteen times, but I didn't stop. Now some of the time since then I got hungry, but I got consolation because I had got hungry before I got in it. Wasn't going to be no more hungry now than I was then. Then, on the ninth of June, this year, I was beat in a jailhouse until I was hard as metal. And I told the policeman, I said, "It's going to be miserable when you have to face God." I said, "Because one day you going to pay up for the things you have done." I said, because, as the Scripture says, "Has made of one blood all nations."

He said, "It's a damn lie," he said. "Abraham Lincoln said that." So that's pitiful — I'm telling you the truth, but it's pitiful, you see — that people can have so much hate that will make them beat a person and don't know they doing wrong.

But open your New Testament when you get home and read from the twenty-sixth chapter of Proverbs and the twenty-seventh verse: "Who so diggeth a pit shall fall down in it." Pits have been dug for us for ages. But they didn't know, when they was digging pits for us, they had some pits dug for themselves. And the Bible had said, "Before one jot of my word would fail, Heaven and earth would pass away. Be not deceived for God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

All we got to do — that's why I love the song "This Little Light of Mine" — from the fifth chapter of Matthew, He said, "A city that's set on a hill cannot be hid," And I don't mind my light shining; I don't hide that I'm fighting for freedom because Christ died to set us free. And he stayed here until he got thirty-three years old, letting us know how we would have to walk.

And we can come to this church and we can shout till we look foolish, because that's what we're doing. And we can come out here and live a lie and like the lie and we going just as straight to hell, if we don't do something. Because we got a charge to keep too. Until we can sing this song of Dr. Watts: "Should earth against my soul engage and fiery darts be hurled, but when I can smile at Satan's rage and face the frowning world."

Thank you.