

STORY OF GOSPEL HYMNS

Sankey's Collection of Sacred Songs and Solos

by

Ira D. Sankey

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CHAPTER THREE

~ I – J ~

I AM PRAYING FOR YOU

Words by S. O'Maley Cluff

Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“I have a Saviour, He's pleading in glory;
A dear, loving Saviour, tho' earth friends be few.”*

On our first visit to Ireland, in 1874, we came across these words in a printed leaflet. It was the second hymn to which I wrote music, and it was much used in our meetings in London. It has long been a favorite prayer-meeting hymn in many churches.

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At the close of a gospel service in Evanston, Illinois, the minister was requested to visit a man who was not likely to live many days, and who was a spiritualist.

Though pressed by other engagements, the minister said, “I will take time.”

He called, but thought it not best to introduce the subject of religion because of the patient's known hostility to evangelical views. Seeing a little organ in the room, the minister asked if he might sing a song. Consent being given, he sang “I have a Saviour, He's pleading in glory.”

The sick man seemed pleased, and asked the minister to sing it again. This he did, and then gave other songs. Thus he sang the truths which he had not the courage to mention in conversation. The songs evidently accomplished their work; for when the minister called again the sick man's heart had been opened, and the truth had been savingly received through their instrumentality.

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A gospel worker, of Hunter, New York, tells of this experience in connection with the hymn:

“While I was holding revival meetings at Hensonville, New York, a man and his wife were converted through the hymn ‘*I Am Praying for You.*’ The song went directly to the heart of the wife. All the way to her home the first line of the hymn, ‘*I have a Saviour, He’s pleading in glory,*’ kept ringing in her ears, and next morning as she awoke she heard my voice singing, ‘*I have a Saviour.*’

“That night she came to Jesus. Her husband followed immediately after her. They had sent out invitations for a large dancing party at that time, which no doubt would have injured the meetings very much had it taken place; but the dance was turned into a prayer-meeting. I shall never forget the night she stood up in a crowded church, and said, ‘Oh, Brother L-, your singing “*I have a Saviour*” brought us to Jesus.’”

* * *

A young man who came from Sweden writes:

“‘*I Am Praying for You*’ was the first Moody and Sankey hymn I ever heard. It was on a cold winter night up in the land of the midnight sun, more than a quarter of a century ago. Two evangelists had come to the neighborhood, but had found it difficult to get a place in which to hold their meetings.

“At last a poor woman opened for them her log house, consisting of two rooms. From house to house the meetings were announced. I was a small boy, and out of curiosity I attended the first meeting. About twenty people were present, seated on chairs borrowed from the neighbors. At one end of the low, dark room the evangelists were seated, by a small table on which two home-made candles were burning. After one of the evangelists had led in prayer, he said to the other, ‘Sing one of Sankey’s hymns.’ Upon which he sang this now well-known hymn, ‘*I Am Praying for You,*’ accompanying himself on a guitar. Since then I have heard these sweet hymns sung in many European countries, and in the small meeting-houses and primitive homes of the settlers on the Western plains, as well as by choirs of hundreds and congregations of thousands in the larger cities of this broad land.”

I GAVE MY LIFE FOR THEE

Words by Frances R. Havergal
Music by P. P. Bliss

*“I gave My life for thee,
My precious blood I shed.”*

Fifteen years after this hymn was written .Miss Havergal said about it:

“Yes, ‘I gave My life for thee,’ is mine, and perhaps it will interest you to hear how nearly it went into the fire instead of nearly all over the world.

“It was, I think, the very first thing I wrote which could be called a hymn—written when I was a young girl, in 1859. I did not half realize what I was writing about. I was following very far off, always doubting and fearing. I think I had come to Jesus with a trembling faith, but it was a ‘coming in the press’ and behind, never seeing his face or feeling sure that he loved me; I scribbled these words in a few minutes on the back of a circular, and then read them over and thought, ‘Well, this is not poetry, anyhow; I won’t trouble to write this out.’

“I reached out my hand to put it in the fire, when a sudden impulse made me draw it back, and I put it, crumpled and singed, in my pocket. Soon after this I went to see a dear old woman in the almshouse. She began talking to me, as she always did, about her dear Saviour, and I thought I would see if she, a simple old woman would care for these verses, which I felt sure nobody else would even care to read. I read them to her, and she was so delighted with them that I copied them out and kept them. And now the Master has sent them out in all directions, and I have heard of their being a real blessing to many.”

Miss Havergal showed the hymn some time afterward to her father, and he wrote a melody especially for it. But it is the tune which Mr. Bliss composed for it that became popular in America.

I HEAR THY WELCOME VOICE

Words by Lewis Hartsough
Music by Lewis Hartsough

*“I hear Thy welcome voice
That calls me, Lord, to Thee.”*

The words and music of this beautiful hymn were first published in a monthly entitled “Guide to Holiness,” a copy of which was sent to me in England in 1873. I immediately adopted it and had it published in “*Sacred Songs and Solos.*” It proved to be one of the most helpful of the revival hymns, and was often used as an invitation hymn in England and America.

* * *

Shortly after this hymn was written, while it was being sung by a large congregation in Washington, a passing merchant stopped to listen.

It had been twenty years since he had crossed the threshold of a church. The congregation was on their feet and sinners were passing to the altar for prayer. Stanza after stanza of this hymn was sung, with increasing interest.

The Holy Spirit so pressed the Lord’s claims that the merchant yielded and joined the penitents. He was converted and this hymn became his favorite.

He sang it in his home, on the street, and in his store. It seemed a special inspiration to him.

One morning, about two weeks after his conversion, as he started for his store, his wife, having accompanied him to the door to say good-bye, heard him joyfully begin to sing "*I am coming, Lord, to Thee,*" as he reached the street. She listened a little while, looking after him, and then turned to her room.

A few moments later the door-bell rang. She answered it in person, only to find that men were bearing home her husband's dead body. He had slipped on the icy pavement and was instantly killed. The memory of those last words of song that fell upon her ears, as he triumphantly sang "*I am coming, Lord, to Thee,*" was to her a lasting comfort.

* * *

"While holding meetings at Eastbourn," says an English evangelist, "a man by the name of David was converted. His very wicked workmate, whose name was Stephen, noticed the change in him the next day, and asked David what had caused it. David boldly confessed that he had found the Saviour at the Mission, and expressed a wish that Stephen would accompany him there next Sunday to which he finally agreed.

"As we began the service on Sunday evening, I gave out the hymn, '*I hear Thy welcome Voice.*' During the singing I noticed that the Spirit had touched a man who was sitting on the first form under the platform. After a short comment on the verses, I said: 'We will have the prayer-meeting at once,' and in another minute I was down by the side of Stephen—for it was he—and with my arm around his neck I said to him: 'The Lord is speaking to you, is he not?'

"After the meeting Stephen testified that he had been able to knock down two men in a fight, but that he never was so knocked down in all his life as when he felt my arm around his neck. Stephen became a brave and true follower of CHRIST. He brought his wife to church, and though at first she had ridiculed her husband, she, too, soon gave heed to the '*welcome voice.*'"

I'LL GO WHERE THOU WOULD'ST I SHOULD GO

Words by Mary Brown
Music by Carrie E. Roudsdell

*"It may not be on the mountain's height,
Or over the stormy sea."*

This well-known missionary and consecration hymn was adopted by a class of over a hundred missionary nurses at the Battle Creek (Michigan) Sanitarium as their class hymn. Every Sunday afternoon they would gather for a social meeting and always sing, "*I'll go where Thou would'st I should go, dear Lord,*" which they called "their hymn."

In this class were students from nearly every State of the Union, from Australia, South Africa, South America. Bulgaria, Armenia, and nearly all the European countries.

At the close of the course they agreed that after they had parted and gone to their different fields, they would sing this hymn every Sunday afternoon as they had done during their happy class-days.

I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY

Words by Miss Kate Haukey

Music by W. G. Fischer

*“I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above.”*

Last winter a young man appeared here from British Columbia,” says a letter from Surrey, England , “He was in the Royal Marines. He was a total abstainer and was doing all he could to promote temperance among his comrades. While here he went to church, and the curate, who had a conversation with him, was much pleased with his manly behavior and resolute desire to do right. He wore a medal and had good-conduct marks on his clothes.

“This man was the little boy whom Miss T. had picked up in Battersea Park many years before, and who had learned of the gospel of salvation entirely by listening to the maidservants singing sacred songs while scrubbing doorsteps and cleaning windows. The hymn that, as a child, he seemed to make entirely his own was, ‘*I love to tell the story,*’ though he knew several others when he was picked up in the park. As he had never been to church or chapel, the hymns were the only channel through which divine truth had been conveyed to him, and by which the first seed was sown in his heart that made him a man of character and usefulness.”

I NEED THEE EVERY HOUR

Words by Annie S. Hawk.

Music by Robert Lowry

*“I need Thee every hour,
Most gracious Lord.”*

A chaplain of the State prison at Concord, Massachusetts, tells how an ex-prisoner, who had never had a home in his life, prepared one, humble but tasteful home and then asked the chaplain to help him dedicate it. Together they entered the home – the man’s wife had not yet come – and the service began.”

Mr. B., with evident brokenness of spirit, for he was naturally a proud man and not unacquainted with larger surroundings, could not refrain from some criticism upon his poor things; but his heart was so full that his embarrassment was only temporary, and he immediately went on with a firm purpose. He started the hymn, *'I need Thee every hour'* for the first number of the service."

"I need Thee every hour" was first sung at a Sunday-school convention in Cincinnati, in November of 1872. Two years later I sang it for the first time at Mr. Moody's meetings in the East End of London. After that we often used it in our prayer-meetings.

The singing of this hymn at a meeting in Chicago, at the time of the World's Fair, led to the writing of the now famous song, *"Moment by Moment,"* by D. W. Whittle.

IN THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE

Words by Ellen Lakshmi Goreh

Music by George C. Stebbins

*"In the secret of His presence how my soul delights to hide!
Oh, how precious are the lessons which I learn at Jesus' side!"*

The author of the words of this beautiful hymn was a high-caste native of India. After her conversion to Christianity, it is said, she spent some years in the home of an English clergyman, and wrote the poem *"In the Secret of His Presence"* while there.

It made its appearance in a book of poems of which she was the author. In 1883 the attention of Mr. Stebbins was called to it, and he wrote the music at that time. The hymn was first sung by him as an offertory in one of the churches in Brooklyn, New York. It was often repeated as an offertory, and on occasions was sung in evangelistic services. But it had its larger introduction to the public during the All-Winter Mission conducted by Mr. Moody and myself in London in the winter of 1883-84, when I sang it frequently, as did Mr. Stebbins, who spent several months assisting in the mission.

It was also often sung by Miss Beaucham, daughter of the late Lady Beaucham and since the wife of Colonel Drury-Lowe, one of the heroes of the Indian Mutiny, and uncle of Lord Curzon, Viceroy and Governor-General of India. The hymn at once came into general favor, and the deeply spiritual tone of the words brought blessing to many. The song was afterwards published in *"Gospel Hymns,"* and in *"Sacred Songs and Solos."*

Very soon it found its way into all parts of the world. Dr. Hudson Taylor, head of the great China Inland Mission, stated at Northfield that it was the favorite hymn of his missionaries.

The winter of 1890-91 Mr. and Mrs. Stebbins spent in India. While visiting the city of Allahabad, the home of Miss Goreh, Mr. Stebbins sought her out and made her acquaintance.

He found her engaged in mission work among the women of India, a modest, devoted Christian, held in high esteem by missionaries of all denominations and by all who knew her. Thus the two singers whose names had become associated in Christian song met each other, – one from the far East, and one from beyond far Western seas – both inspired by the same Lord, in the secret of whose presence they long since came to abide.

IT IS FINISHED

Words by James Proctor
Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“Nothing, either great or small
Nothing, sinner, no.”*

The Scotch people are especially fond of this hymn. The author prefaced it with these lines:

“Since I first discovered Jesus to be ‘**the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth,**’ I have more than once met with a poor sinner seeking peace at the foot of Sinai instead of Calvary, and I have heard him again and again in bitter disappointment and fear groaning out, ‘What must I do?’ I have said to him, ‘Do, do? What can you do? What do you need to do?’”

IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL

Words by H. G. Spafford
Music by P. P. Bliss

*“When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea-billows roll.”*

When Mr. Moody and I were holding meetings in Edinburgh, in 1874, we heard the sad news of the loss the French steamer, “Ville de Havre,” on her return from America to France, with a large number of members of the Ecumenical Council, whose meetings had been held in Philadelphia.

On board the steamer was a Mrs. Spafford with her four children. In mid-ocean a collision took place with a large sailing vessel, causing the steamer to sink in half an hour. Nearly all on board were lost. Mrs. Spafford got her children out of their berths and up on deck.

On being told that the vessel would soon sink, she knelt down with her children in prayer, asking God that they might be saved if possible; or be made willing to die, if that was His will.

In a few minutes the vessel sank to the bottom of the sea, and the children were lost. One of the sailors of the vessel, named Lockurn – whom I afterward met in Scotland – while rowing over the spot where the vessel disappeared, discovered Mrs. Spafford floating in the water.

Ten days later she was landed at Cardiff, Wales. From there she cabled to her husband, a lawyer in Chicago, the message, “Saved alone.” Mr. Spafford, who was a Christian, had the message framed and hung up in his office. He started immediately for England to bring his wife to Chicago. Mr. Moody left his meetings in Edinburgh and went to Liverpool to try to comfort the bereaved parents, and was greatly pleased to find that they were able to say: “It is well; the will of God be done.”

In 1876, when we returned to Chicago to work, I was entertained at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Spafford for a number of weeks. During that time Mr. Spafford wrote the hymn, “*It is well with my soul,*” in commemoration of the death of his children. P. P. Bliss composed the music and sang it for the first time at a meeting in Farwell Hall. The comforting fact in connection with this incident was that in one of our small meetings in North Chicago, a short time prior to their sailing for Europe, the children had been converted.

While still living in Chicago Mr. and Mrs. Spafford became much interested in the Second Coming of Christ. So zealous did Mr. Spafford become that he decided to go to Jerusalem with his wife and the one remaining daughter, and there await the coming of the Lord. Mr. Spafford died there not long afterward.

Mrs. Spafford is the head of a society whose headquarters are in a building outside of Jerusalem, where a large number of people live, having all things in common. When I visited Jerusalem some years ago I met Mrs. Spafford on the Street of David. The next day I received a call from Miss Spafford, who is very popular among the natives and has become the teacher for a large body of children, instructing them in English literature and in American ways.

This hymn was heard by a gentleman who had suffered great financial reverses in the panic of 1899, and who was in deepest despondency. When he learned the story of the hymn he exclaimed:

“If Spafford could write such a beautiful resignation hymn I will never complain again.”

I’VE FOUND A FRIEND

Words by J. G. Small
Music by George C. Stebbins

*“I’ve found a Friend, oh, such a Friend!
He loved me ere I knew Him.”*

On one occasion when Mr. Moorehouse and I were holding meetings at Scarboro, in the north of

England, the services were attended by a number of Quaker ladies, among them a cousin of John Bright, the great English statesman.

Wishing to have this hymn sung at one of the meetings, this lady wrote out the following request:

“Will Mr. Sankey please repeat the hymn, ‘*I’ve found a Friend,*’ in his usual way?”

In thus wording her note she avoided asking me to sing, which is against the custom of the Society of Friends.

* * *

“We were holding a cottage prayer-meeting in a lodging house,” says a minister of Nottinghamshire, England, “when a young man lodging there came in to the meeting in a fun-seeking manner. We sang, prayed and read a chapter out of God’s Word, and then the young man asked if we would sing a hymn for him. He chose ‘*I’ve found a Friend, oh, such a Friend.*’

“When we had sung one verse he began to shed tears, and I am glad to say that he gave his heart to God through the singing of that beautiful hymn. The next morning he left the place, but before leaving he wrote me a letter, of which I give these extracts: ‘I asked you to sing that hymn because it was a favorite of my darling sister, who is waiting for me at the gates in heaven. I have now promised to meet her there. By God’s help, if we do not meet again on earth, I promise to meet you in heaven. You will always think of me when you sing, “*I’ve Found a Friend.*” Show this letter to my two other friends.’”

* * *

The author of this hymn, J. G. Small, who was born in Edinburgh in 1817, and died in 1888, wrote many hymns and poems and published several hymn-books.

~ J ~

JESUS, I WILL TRUST THEE

Words by Mary J. Walker
Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“Jesus, I will trust Thee,
Trust Thee with my soul.”*

Major Whittle gives an example of this hymn’s usefulness, out of many instances:

“I was holding meetings in Belfast. At one of the after-meetings I noticed a man remaining behind when almost all the others had gone. I spoke to him and found that he was a merchant in the city. He was in much distress about his sins.

“I showed him Christ the Saviour, who died for sinners, and tried to get him to appropriate that Saviour to himself.

“I saw there was a great struggle going on in his soul, the powers for good and evil evidently striving for the mastery. We went down on our knees and prayed. Then after a while he straightened himself up and gave vent to his feelings in this hymn, for he was a capital singer:

‘Jesus, I will trust Thee,
Trust Thee with my soul;
Guilty, lost, and helpless,
Thou canst make me whole.’

“It was a song of victory over Satan, and a song of praise to Christ, through whom he had conquered. From that hour he has done splendid work for Christ among the worst of men.”

JESUS, LOVER OF MY SOUL

Words by Charles Wesley
Music by Simeon B. Marsh

*“Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly.”*

Several incidents have been narrated as having suggested to Charles Wesley this hymn. One, that a narrow escape from death in a storm on the Atlantic inspired him to portray the thoughts of a Christian in deadly peril. Another, that as he stood at an open window on a summer day a little bird, pursued by a hawk, sought refuge in his bosom, giving him the idea of pointing out the soul’s one sure place of refuge in time of need.

Mrs. Mary Hoover, of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, whose grandmother was the heroine of the story, has related to her pastor this family tradition: Charles Wesley was preaching in the fields of the parish of Killyleagh, County Down, Ireland, when he was attacked by men who did not approve of his doctrines.

He sought refuge in a house located on what was known as the Island Band Farm. The farmer’s wife, Jane Lowrie Moore, told him to hide in the milk house, down in the garden. Soon the mob came and demanded the fugitive. She tried to quiet them by offering them refreshments. Going down to the milk house, she directed Mr. Wesley to get through the rear window and hide under the hedge, by which ran a little brook.

In that hiding-place, with the cries of his pursuers all about him, he wrote this immortal hymn. Descendants of Mrs. Moore still live in the house, which is much the same as it was in Wesley’s time.

* * *

The great evangelist and president of Oberlin College, Charles G. Finney, was walking about his grounds shortly before his death. In the church where he had preached for forty years the evening service was going on. Presently he heard this hymn floating to him from the distance. He joined with the invisible congregation in singing the hymn to the end. Before the next morning he had joined the choir about the throne.

* * *

“An ungodly stranger,” said Mr. Spurgeon, “stepping into one of our services at Exeter Hall, was brought to Christ by the singing of *‘Jesus, Lover of my soul.’* ‘Does Jesus love me?’ said he; ‘then why should I live in enmity with him?’”

* * *

Tom was a drummer boy in the army, and the men called him “the young deacon” because of his sobriety and religious example. One day the chaplain found him sitting under a tree alone, with tears in his eyes.

“Well, Tom, my boy, what is it?”

“I had a dream last night, which I can’t get out of my mind.”

“What was it?”

“My mother was a widow, poor but good. She never was like herself after my sister Mary died. A year ago she died, too; and I, having no home and no mother, came to the war. But last night I dreamed the war was over and I went back home, and just before I got to the house my sister and mother came out to meet me. I didn’t seem to remember that they were dead. How glad they were “Oh, sir, it was just as real as you are real now.”

“Thank God, Tom,” said the chaplain, “that you have such a mother, not really dead, but in heaven.”

The boy wiped his eyes and was comforted. The next day Tom’s drum was heard all day long in a terrible battle. At night it was known that “the young deacon” was lying wounded on the field. In the evening, when all was still, they heard a voice singing away off on the field, and they felt sure that it was Tom’s voice.

Softly the words of *“Jesus, Lover of my soul”* floated on the wings of the night. After the second verse the voice grew weak and stopped. In the morning the soldiers found Tom sitting on the ground, leaning against a stump, dead.

* * *

A vessel had gone on the rocks in the English Channel. The crew, along with their captain; took to the boats and were lost. They might have been safe, had they remained on the vessel, as a huge wave carried her high up on the rocks. On the table in the captain's cabin was found a hymn-book, opened at this hymn, and in it lay the pencil which had marked the favorite words of the captain. While the hurricane was howling outside and the vessel sinking, he had drawn his pencil beneath these words of cheer:

“Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.”

“I would rather have written that hymn of Wesley's, ‘Jesus, Lover of my soul,’” Henry Ward Beecher once said, “than to have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on earth. It is more glorious; it has more power in it. I would rather be the author of that hymn than to hold the wealth of the richest man in New York. It will go on singing until the trump brings forth the angel band; and then I think it will mount up on some lip to the very presence of God.”

* * *

Dr. George Duffield-himself the author of so fine a hymn as “Stand up, stand up for Jesus” – in his old age paid this tribute out of a lifelong experience: ‘One of the most blessed days of my life was when I found, after my harp had long hung on the willows, that I could sing again; that a new song was put in my mouth; and when, ere ever I was aware, I was singing, ‘*Jesus, Lover of my soul.*’ If there is anything in Christian experience of joy and sorrow, of affliction and prosperity, of life and death-that hymn is the hymn of the ages!’ This was the last hymn we sang as the body of Mr. Moody was being lowered into the grave.

JESUS LOVES EVEN ME

Words by P. P. Bliss

Music by P. P. Bliss

*“I am so glad that our Father in heaven
Tells of His love in the Book He has given.”*

“I think it was in June, 1870, that ‘*Jesus Loves Even Me*’ was written,” writes Major Whittle.

“Mr. and Mrs. Bliss were at that time members of my family in Chicago. One morning Mrs. Bliss came down to breakfast and said, as she entered the room: ‘Last night Mr. Bliss had a tune given to him that I think is going to live and be one of the most useful that he has written. I have been singing it all the morning, and I cannot get it out of my mind.’ She then sang the notes over to us.

“The idea of Bliss, in writing the hymn, was to bring out the truth that the peace and comfort of a Christian are not founded so much upon his love to Christ as upon Christ’s love to him, and that to occupy the mind with Christ’s love would produce love and consecration – as taught in Romans 5:5, ‘**The love of God [to us] is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.**’ How much God has used this little song to lead sinners and doubting Christians to look away to Jesus, eternity alone can tell.”

* * *

Mr. Bliss said that this song was suggested to him by hearing the chorus of the hymn, “*Oh, how I love Jesus,*” repeated very frequently in a meeting which he attended. After joining in the chorus a number of times the thought came to him, “Have I not been singing enough about my poor love for Jesus, and shall I not rather sing of his great love for me?”

Under the impulse of this thought he went home and composed this, one of his most popular children’s hymns.

* * *

“A young woman in England,” says Major Whittle, “went to a meeting where she heard Mr. Sankey sing, ‘*I am so glad that Jesus loves me.*’ While the hymn was being sung she began to feel for the first time in her life that she was a sinner. All her sins came up in an array before her; and so numerous and aggravated did they appear that she imagined she could never be saved. She said in her heart, ‘Jesus cannot love me. He could not love such a sinner as I.’ She went home in a state of extreme mental anguish, and did not sleep that night. Every opportunity to obtain more light was eagerly seized. She took her place in the inquiry-room; and there she found, to her astonishment and joy that Jesus could, did, and does love sinners. She saw in God’s open word that it was for sinners that he died, and for none others. When she realized this she began to sing ‘*I am so glad that Jesus loves me - Jesus loves even me.*’”

* * *

A minister was holding meetings in Indiana. A few miles distant lived an old Englishman who had not been inside a church for seven years. He was persuaded to take his children to the meeting one Sunday night. He declared afterward that nothing of what was said or done interested him until the close of the service, when ‘*Jesus loves me*’ was sung. On his way home, and until he went to sleep, he could think of nothing but the hymn. When he awoke in the morning the first thing he thought of was, ‘*Jesus loves me.*’

He could not get it out of his mind, and when he was out in the field afterward he could think of nothing else. Was it possible that God could love a sinner like him? His eyes were so blinded with tears that he could not see to go on with his work. Out on that lonely field the old man found his Saviour. The next evening he visited the meeting, and as he told his experience tears were in the eyes of all the people.

* * *

During the winter after the great fire in Chicago, when the place was being built up with small frame houses for the poor, a mother sent for me one day to visit her little sick girl, who was one of our Sunday-school scholars. I remembered her quite well, and was glad to go. Finding that she was beyond hope of recovery, I asked how it was with her.

“It is all well with me,” she replied; “but I wish you would speak to father and mother.”

It was plain that she loved Jesus, and I asked her when she became a Christian.

“Don’t you remember last Thursday in the Tabernacle,” she said, “when we had the children’s meeting, and you sang ‘*Jesus loves me,*’ and don’t you remember how you told us that if we would give our hearts to him he would love us? It was that day that I gave myself to Jesus. And now I am going to be with him, for the doctors say that I will die to-day.”

The testimony of that little girl, in that neglected quarter of the city, did more to encourage me to sing on than anything else, for she was my first convert.

This song was much used in the meetings conducted by Mr. Moody in Great Britain in 1873-4, and was given out to the congregation as an opening hymn more often than any other. As written by Mr. Bliss it consisted of three verses and a chorus. Someone unknown to the writer has written three additional verses beginning, ‘*Jesus loves me, and I know I love Him.*’”

JESUS LOVES ME

Words by A. I. B. Warner
Music by William B. Bradbury

*“Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so.”*

Dr. Jacob Chamberlain, who for many years has been working among the Hindus, writes as follows regarding this hymn, long one of the most popular children’s songs in the world: “Many years ago I translated into Telugu the children’s hymn, ‘*Jesus loves me*’ and taught it to the children of our day-school.

“Scarcely a week later, as I was going through the narrow streets of the native town on horse-back, I heard singing that sounded natural, down a side street. I stopped to listen, cautiously drawing up to the corner, where unobserved I could look down the street and see and hear.

“And there was a little heathen boy, with heathen men and women standing around him, singing away at the top of his voice:

*'Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so . . .
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so!'*

“As he completed the verse someone asked the question: ‘Sonny, where did you learn that song?’

“‘Over at the Missionary School,’ was the answer. ‘Who is that Jesus, and what is the Bible?’ ‘Oh! the Bible is the book from God, they say, to teach us how to get to heaven, and Jesus is the name of the divine Redeemer that came into the world to save us from our sins; that is what the missionaries say.’

“‘Well, the song is a nice one. Come, sing us some more.’ And so the little boy went on – a heathen himself, and singing to the heathen – about Jesus and his love. That is preaching the Gospel by proxy,’ I said to myself, as I turned my pony and rode away, well satisfied to leave my little proxy to tell his interested audience all he himself knew, and sing to them over and over that sweet song of salvation.”

JESUS OF NAZARETH PASSETH BY

Words by Emma Campbell
Music by T. E. Perkins

*“What means this eager, anxious throng,
Which moves with busy haste along?”*

An officer of the English army sends me the following incident:

“A soldier was stationed at Edinburgh Castle, and one evening left his post on a pass until midnight. He had a week’s pay in one pocket and the washing money earned by his wife in the other, and was on his way to the public house to have a night in gambling. His eye caught the poster outside the Tolbooth Church, announcing your meetings. The officer liked the singing, and went in just to hear one song. As he entered Mr. Moody was preaching on ‘The Blood.’ That had no interest for him. After the address you sang, ‘*Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.*’ He listened with deep interest to the hymn. ‘*Too late, too late,*’ was God’s arrow to his soul. An officer of his regiment and I went into the inquiry-room, and among a great crowd we saw this comrade’s red coat. He was in great distress. We spoke to him, holding to John 3:16.

“That night the man went home instead of to the public house, and his wife was astonished to see him so early, and sober. He laid down all the money on the table, which astonished her still more. Then he went to bed, but was in too great distress to be able to sleep. The words ‘*Too late, too late*’ rang in his ears. About two o’clock in the morning John 3:16 gleamed into his soul. He leaped from the bed, pleaded that grand promise, and Jesus received him.

“This was told the following morning by himself at the Castle. He held to his faith, and when the regiment left he was known throughout the camp as a man of God. The glorious Gospel with him began in song and goes on in song.”

A similar experience is related by another convert:

“It was on the 28th of December that I like (I dare say) a great many others, went up to the Assembly Hall, out of sheer curiosity, an unconverted sinner. I heard Mr. Moody preach, and I am sorry to say I was very little affected by it. After Mr. Moody had finished his discourse, Mr. Sankey sang, ‘*Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.*’ I was deeply moved by it, and when he came to the lines,

*‘Too late! Too late! Will be the cry;
Jesus of Nazareth has passed by;’*

Oh! I thought to myself, will that not be my cry? Will God not then say to me, ‘**Depart from me, I never knew you?**’ I felt a great anguish of soul, but I went home without remaining to the inquiry-meeting. All the way home those two lines still rang in my ears. It was a long time before I could go to sleep. My brain seemed all afire; my past sins came up one by one before my mind.

At last I fell asleep, but only to wake with a start under the impression that a bright light had suddenly been extinguished in my room, and had left me in utter darkness.

Immediately those lines sounded in my ears. I was able to be the interpreter of my own dream. The bright light was Jesus, and the darkness was that of my own soul; for he had passed by and I had not been saved. I had very little sleep that night. On the Monday night I came to the inquiry meeting and Mr. – spoke to me, showing me plainly that I had nothing to do – Christ had done it all. I was only to believe in him. And before I left the hall that evening, by the blessing of God I was able to accept Christ as my Saviour.

Upon going home I opened a Bible, and the first words that met my eye were Joan 3:16: ‘**God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**’

I knew the whosoever included myself, and I rejoiced in it. I am doing so now; and, by the help of God, I hope to do so till I find myself in my Saviour’s arms.”

* * *

At one of our early meetings in Edinburgh an old gentleman, more than seventy years of age, threw himself down on his knees and, sobbing like a child, said:

“I was utterly careless about my soul until last night, but I have been so unhappy since I could not sleep. I seemed to hear ringing in my ears, ‘*Jesus of Nazareth passeth by,*’ and I feel that if I am not saved now, I never shall be.”

* * *

A lady traveling in the East tells of a visit she made to the Girls' Orphanage in Nazareth, an institution established many years ago in the town where Jesus spent so many years of his early life. The Orphanage was established by a society of Christians in London. Here the lady heard the children sweetly singing: "*Jesus of Nazareth passeth by,*" and she says that the children were sure the words were all meant for them.

* * *

A young naval officer attended one of our meetings in London. On being asked how he liked the address he replied:

"I did not hear it, but I did like that song, '*What means this eager, anxious throng?*' He was invited to attend again, and he responded: "Well, I enjoyed that solo, and I will go to hear the singing." He did so; the same song was sung again, and so moved him that he remained for the inquiry meeting. There he was saved through the mercy of God. A week later, in an accident, he was instantly killed, and so suddenly passed into the company of the redeemed.

* * *

The hymn was written during a religious revival in Newark, New Jersey, in 1863-'64, where hundreds were converted. One afternoon Mr. R. G. Pardee made a very earnest address from Luke 18:37:

"They told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

Miss Emma Campbell was present, heard the address and saw how the community was stirred, and soon afterward she wrote these stanzas. E. P. Hammond, who had conducted the revival meetings, tried the verses to the tune of '*Sweet hour of prayer.*'"

Later Mr. T. E. Perkins wrote the tune to which this hymn is now sung. It was one of the first favorites at our meetings in England. The printed records of the meetings of these days bear testimony that hundreds confessed to have accepted Christ during the singing of this hymn as a solo.

Andrew A. Bonar – brother of Dr. Horatius Bonar, the great hymn-writer – speaking of this hymn in his "*Life of James Scott,*" says,

"Some of us in listening to these two messengers, the one singing, the other preaching, used to think of what is told in Second Kings 3:15. Elisha, before beginning to prophesy, called for a minstrel, and when the camp of soldiers had been calmed and melted by harp and song, the hand of the Lord came upon the speaker. Had you been in Edinburgh during the four months when these brethren were there in 1873, you would have seen multitudes of all ages and stations hastening to the place of meeting, at whatever hour, any day of the week. The scene was exactly that described in the hymn, so often sung, and so much blessed,

*‘What means this eager, anxious throng,
Which moves with busy haste along,
These wondrous gatherings day by day?
What means this strange commotion, pray?’*”

JESUS, SAVIOUR, PILOT ME!

Words by Edward Hopper

Music by J. E. Gould

*“Jesus, Saviour, pilot me,
Over life’s tempestuous sea.”*

Major D. W. Whittle told me the following incident in connection with this hymn:

“I went with General O. O. Howard to hold meetings for the soldiers at Tampa, Florida, and one day while going through the camp I found a young man dying of fever. I knelt by his side and asked him if he was a Christian. He replied that he was not, but said that his father and mother were Christians; and he asked me to pray for him. I did so, but no deep impression was made upon his heart. I went away with a sorrowing heart and promised to return another day. Two days later I visited him again and, praying with him, the Lord put into my mind to sing, *‘Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.’*”

“The dying soldier said: ‘Oh, that sounds good; it puts me in mind of my beloved sister in Michigan, who used to sing this hymn for me before I entered the army.’”

“He wanted me to repeat it over and over again for him, and finally he asked: ‘Will Jesus be my pilot into the haven of rest?’ I told the young man that Jesus would.

“‘Then,’ he said, ‘I will trust him with all my heart.’”

“The next day I called to see him again, but his comrade said: ‘He passed away during the night.’”

* * *

The author of this hymn was born in New York in 1818, and for many years was the pastor of the Church of Sea and Land, in that city. The hymn was first published in 1871, in *“The Sailors’ Magazine.”*

JUST AS I AM

Words by Charlotte Elliott
Music by William B. Bradbury

*“Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me.”*

Miss Charlotte Elliott was visiting some friends in the West End of London, and there met the eminent minister, Cesar Malan. While seated at supper, the minister said he hoped that she was a Christian. She took offense at this, and replied that she would rather not discuss that question. Dr. Malan said that he was sorry if he had offended her, that he always liked to speak a word for his Master, and that he hoped that the young lady would someday become a worker for Christ.

When they met again at the home of a mutual friend, three weeks later, Miss Elliott told the minister that ever since he had spoken to her she had been trying to find her Saviour, and that she now wished him to tell her how to come to Christ.

“Just come to him as you are,” Dr. Malan said. This she did, and went away rejoicing. Shortly afterward she wrote this hymn, *“Just as I am, without one plea.”* It was first published in *“The Invalid’s Hymn Book,”* in 1836.

“In all my preaching,” said her brother, H. V. Elliott, “I have not done so much good as my sister has been permitted to accomplish by writing her one hymn, *‘Just as I am.’*”

* * *

A little street waif in New York City came to a missionary with a torn and dirty piece of paper, on which this hymn was printed.

“Please, sir,” he said, “father sent me to get a clean copy like that.”

The missionary learned that the child’s sister had loved to sing it, and that this copy had been found in her pocket after her death. The father wanted to obtain a clean copy of the verses in order to frame them.

* * *

During a service of song in a Christian church, John B. Gough was asked by a man in the pew with him what was to be sung, as the announcement had not been heard. The questioner was most repulsive in appearance, because of a nervous disease that disfigured his face and form. When the singing began, Gough was driven almost to frenzy by the harsh and discordant tones of the singer by his side. But when they came to *“Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind,”* the wretched creature lifted his sightless eyes to heaven and sang with his whole soul.

The great orator, in his impassioned and inimitable way, said:

“I have heard the finest strains of orchestra, choir, and soloist this world can produce, but I never heard music until I heard that blind man sing, ‘*O, Lamb of God, I come, I come.*’”

~ end of chapter 3 ~

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This is the story, in Sankey's own words, of the great campaigns, the trials and obstacles, and the victories won in the name of Christ. Here, too, are the back stories to scores of gospel songs and hymns, many of them born out of tribulation- many more, out of blessing. ...more. Get A Copy. Amazon. Stores ³/₄. Audible Barnes & Noble Walmart eBooks Apple Books Google Play Abebooks Book Depository Alibris Indigo Better World Books IndieBound. Libraries. Paperback, 358 pages.

For anyone who enjoys gospel hymns, the history of gospel music dates back centuries and has a rich tradition in the African-American church...Â These southern gospel hymns were not the traditional hymns of the white church. This style of worship songs was distinguished by fusing various styles of music into services that included spirituals, hymns, and other sacred songs. This music was sung in the church and accompanied by clapping hands and stomping feet. Changing Styles. My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns and of Sacred Songs and Solos. By Ira D. Sankey soloist for D.L. Moody. introduction. preface. Ira D. Sankey's Life story part 1. Ira D. Sankey's Life story part 2. Ira D. Sankey's Life story part 3. Ira D. Sankey's Life story part 4. Hymns are beloved because they share the richness of the gospel and the beauty of Jesus Christ in a catchy and memorable way. Hymns and other truth-filled songs have the habit of ministering to our hearts, giving us hope and faith. They teach us theology, help us minister to each other, unite us with Christians from the past centuries, and take our eyes off ourselves and put them on Jesus. This purpose of this post is to encourage you by sharing classic and modern Christian hymns and their gospel-centered lyrics. The list includes some classic hymns and some modern/contemporary church hymns. T Sankey's story of the gospel hymns and of sacred songs and solos. Item Preview. remove-circle.Â Sankey's story of the gospel hymns and of sacred songs and solos. by. Sankey, Ira David, 1840-1908. In addition, he documents a brief history behind over sixty gospel songs and hymns. Having known many famous hymn authors, he shares how many of those songs were written and what made them famous. Your heart will be stirred as you discover how "Follow On," "He Leadeth Me," "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," and many other popular hymns were developed and used of God. May this compilation bring light to the history behind your favorite hymns of the faith and reignite a passion for good, gospel music in your home and ministry. Read More. Publisher