



⁹ And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. ¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (Luke 11:9-10)

Much like the hidden gems of Holy Writ, the depth of meaning of this old and comforting hymn is hidden in its simplicity of expression. Its simplicity approaches that of a child's understanding, but appeals to our thoughts at a depth of grave moments of our looking deep in the face and not flinching. The secret to that possibility exists in knowing that *"every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. **Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.**"* (1 John 4:3-4) Our Friend and Intercessor is a Strong Friend – in fact, stronger than any enemy that dares rear his ugly head against us. Shall we not trust such a Friend who willingly died in our stead on that desolate and demeaning brow of Golgotha's Hill?

The hymn lyrics and music are composed (in the German language) by Edmund S. Lorenz in 1876, and translated into the English by Jeremiah E. Rankin in 1880. I consider it notable that Lorenz authored this hymn at the tender age of twenty one.

Tell it to Jesus

Are you weary, are you heavy hearted?
Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.
Are you grieving over joys departed?
Tell it to Jesus alone.

Refrain

Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus,
He is a friend that's well known.
You've no other such a friend or brother,
Tell it to Jesus alone.

Do the tears flow down your cheeks unbidden?
Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.
Have you sins that to men's eyes are hidden?
Tell it to Jesus alone.

Refrain

Do you fear the gathering clouds of sorrow?
Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.
Are you anxious what shall be tomorrow?
Tell it to Jesus alone.

Refrain

I remember knowing every word of this stanza and the others at an age before I could read or write. I learned them by the process osmosis from hearing them sung repeatedly by my mother in the 1940's. Our nation had just recently emerged from the deprivation of the Great Depression and the Second World War, and this hymn gave particular comfort to those who had endured those deprivations. Since the advent of Christ and His redemptive work for us, we have never lacked a Counsel and an Intercessor to whom we may go at any time for succor. Our grief's are all in vain since we have no joys that depart from our ownership - if they are backed by the gold on deposit with our Heavenly Father. ²⁸ *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* ²⁹ *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* ³⁰ *For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* (Matt 11:28-30)

Refrain

*Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus,
He is a friend that's well known.
You've no other such a friend or brother,
Tell it to Jesus alone.*

It is not enough to merely KNOW Jesus, for the devils themselves "*know and tremble.*" Rather, we must know Him intimately as the Friend that He is to all who believe unto salvation. There is no other who can intercede for us save Christ. *A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.* (Prov 18:24) If we would retain Christ as our Friend, we must show ourselves friendly to His Word and Person. All who are not friendly remain friendless.

*Do the tears flow down your cheeks unbidden?
Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.
Have you sins that to men's eyes are hidden?
Tell it to Jesus alone.*

Refrain

Mary Magdalene gave no thought to the tears she shed without the Garden Tomb. They simply flowed as a river seeking the lowest terrain. But her tears were for the wrong purpose. She wept in mourning, but soon wept with joy as her tears were turned to joyful flow. The true Christian has no need of tears if he has the Lord Jesus Christ as his Keeper of Tears. We often forget, in moments of abject sorrow, to turn those sorrows and tears over to the One who can turn them to joy as He turned the water to wine. Our Lord Jesus Christ is our Keeper of Tears: *Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book? When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.* (Psalm 56:8-9) If we allow our Lord to keep our tears in His Tear Bottle, there shall be plenty to spare in washing the feet of our Redeemer!

*Do you fear the gathering clouds of sorrow?
Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.
Are you anxious what shall be tomorrow?
Tell it to Jesus alone.*

Refrain

On a lonely drive home from Chattanooga almost three decades ago, I was overcome with remorse at the loss of my dear mother, Chloe. As I approached Montgomery, Alabama, I turned the radio on (I should not have done) and they were singing a song entitled, "*Too Late to Send Pretty Flowers*." The words to that song, though quite country and western, broke my heart anew. But then I remembered how much my mother loved pretty flowers and work tirelessly in her garden to grow them. Suddenly, I felt much better in the realization that mother would be among the most beautiful of Gardens in the Paradise of the Lord. I could not help singing the lines of the song my mother taught me those many, many years ago - Tell it to Jesus. My heart was no longer broken, but full of joy - and a broken heart can only hold misery. ²⁵ *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* (Matt 6:25) ³¹ *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?* ³² *(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* ³³ *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* ³⁴ *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* (Matt 6:31-34)

*Are you troubled at the thought of dying?
Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.
For Christ's coming kingdom are you sighing?
Tell it to Jesus alone.
Refrain*

The imagination of a child is filled by the fears of the unknown in a dark room. Why? Because it is not the darkness that scares him, but the unknown which may lurk there. Once he realizes that the dark room contains exactly what it did when it was a lighted room, his fear vanishes - because he understands the nature of the darkness. Many of us fear the advancing clutches of death. It looms as the one final enemy. We suppose, too, that it brings with it the same darkness into which Judas fled the night of his betrayal of Christ. But as our hearts are enlivened (quicken) by the Holy Ghost and Comforter of our Souls, we realize that death is not a darkness at all to God's Elect, but rather the dawning of a glorious and brilliant Sun Rise - that of the "*Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings*." As was the poor beggar Lazarus, we shall be given an angelic escort to the bosom of our father, Abraham, because we have believed that Promise made to Abraham. We close our eyes for the shortest night we have ever experienced. In fact, Paul calls it the "twinkling of an eye," at which we shall be changed and given a glorious new body. ⁵¹ *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,* ⁵² *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.* ⁵³ *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.* ⁵⁴ *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.* ⁵⁵ *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* ⁵⁶ *The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.* ⁵⁷ *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* (1 Cor 15:51-57)

Are you facing a grave and mortal illness? Fine, it is bedtime in Heaven!