



*1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: 2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: 4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.* (Prov 3:1-4)

*6 There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself as a ransom for all men.* (1 Timothy 2:6)

Many children around the world are starving for food. The very next morsel is given them only by the grace of God; however, children in America suffer not for the food that sustains the body as can be witnessed in our growing problem with childhood obesity. They do, however, starve for the food of heaven that will nourish the soul and spirit. How spiritually wan and weak they have become for want of that spiritual nourishment. Instead of productive action in doing good, they linger in the family lounge viewing every imaginable worldly website and playing bloody and demeaning games on their computers and iPods. It is not the fault of the child for children do not bear the responsibility God gave the parents to “*Train up a child in the way that he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*” (Proverbs 22:6) Instead of taking time to bear witness of our love and guidance by patiently teaching and setting an example, most modern parents ‘buy off’ the child’s attention by allowing them to be taught by the social culture, TV’s, and social media. How tragic – not only for the child – but for the nation and the Church.

There are at least two hymns of which I am aware by today’s title; however, I have chosen the one that has witnessed to my heart when as a child I heard it often from the lips of my mother. It is yet another spiritual masterpiece by the beloved Fanny Crosby. The musical score is composed by John R. Sweeney and first appeared in ‘*The Quiver of Sacred Song*’ in 1880.

## Tell Me the Story of Jesus

Refrain

(Tell me the story of Jesus,  
Write on my heart every word.  
Tell me the story most precious,  
Sweetest that ever was heard).

*Tell how the angels in chorus,  
Sang as they welcomed His birth  
.“Glory to God in the highest!  
Peace and good tidings to earth.”*

Refrain

(Tell me the story of Jesus,  
Write on my heart every word.  
Tell me the story most precious,  
Sweetest that ever was heard).

*Fasting alone in the desert,  
Tell of the days that are past.  
How for our sins He was tempted,  
Yet was triumphant at last.  
Tell of the years of His labor,  
Tell of the sorrow He bore.  
He was despised and afflicted,  
Homeless, rejected and poor.*

Refrain

(Tell of the cross where they nailed Him,  
Writhing in anguish and pain.  
Tell of the grave where they laid Him,  
Tell how He liveth again).

*Love in that story so tender,  
Clearer than ever I see.  
Stay, let me weep while you whisper,  
Love paid the ransom for me.*

Refrain

*“Tell me the story of Jesus, Write on my heart every word. Tell me the story most precious, Sweetest that ever was heard.”* Exceptional to the rule, this hymn opens with the refrain which is repeated in its first two verses and in altered form in the last. How many hearts, especially young ones, hunger and yearn to hear of the Lord their Savior - a form of malnutrition that does not present until the patient is dying or dead. It is the same yearning expressed by those of Bethsaida who came to Philip: *The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.* (John 12:21) Those who thirst to know God can only know Him by His Son, Jesus, who is God in the flesh. If we learn of Him, we shall see Him by and by. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* (Matt 11:28-30) As a small child, my mind could not fully comprehend such a magnificent Savior as our Lord, however, I learned much of Him for future years from those good old hymns which my mother sang daily about the house while I was still very young. I am still learning of His majesty and grace through

those same hymns which are on record in my heart.

*"Tell how the angels in chorus, Sang as they welcomed His birth. "Glory to God in the highest! Peace and good tidings to earth."* Throughout the lectionary of the Church Year, we are taught the unfolding beauty of the story of Jesus as a rose whose pedals are opened by God and impossible of being done by man. Only the Word of God can reveal Christ to us along with the tutelage of the Holy Ghost for us to understand that Word. The Christmas story appears in the first verse of our hymn – *"Tell how the angels in chorus, Sang..."* How those powerful Words of Scripture are burned into our hearts with the branding iron of love! *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* (Luke 2:13-14) Frankly, there can be no good will toward men, or peace on earth, without the love of Christ.

*"Fasting alone in the desert, Tell of the days that are past. How for our sins He was tempted, Yet was triumphant at last. Tell of the years of His labor, Tell of the sorrow He bore. He was despised and afflicted, Homeless, rejected and poor."* Truly the days of his fasting in the wilderness and of his affliction are past. He has paid the penalty for our sins once and for all. He was tempted as we are sorely tempted daily, yet, He was without sin – He never succumbed to the temptation – and that is what sin truly is. We are tempted to disobey God's Moral Law – that is not sin. But when we follow through with the temptation and are disobedient to the will of God – that is sin. A young man or woman is not guilty of the abomination of homosexuality or lesbianism until they bow to the temptation, then it is sin. But Jesus was triumphant truly from the moment of His birth until the day of His burial. He sealed that triumph at Calvary, the Garden Tomb, and the Ascension. It is true that Jesus was a man of sorrows. He not only bore our sins, but our remorse for them as well. *He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.* (Isaiah 53:3)

*"Tell of the cross where they nailed Him, Writhing in anguish and pain. Tell of the grave where they laid Him, Tell how He liveth again. Love in that story so tender, Clearer than ever I see. Stay, let me weep while you whisper, Love paid the ransom for me."* Do you remember that old rugged cross where they laid our Lord down and nailed long, 9-inch spikes into His hands and feet? You should remember, because you were there along with every other desperate sinner. The penalty for YOUR sins was paid on that cross. No less than the ridicule of the Scribes and Pharisees, your jeers of rejection (through your careless living) also echo from that lonely Mount of Calvary. If you are Christ's, you were also buried with Him in that Garden Tomb. Do you remember? Have you died to self and been made alive in Christ? Have you risen in Christ as He did on that Third Day? Should we not weep as did Mary Magdalene did outside that Garden Tomb for remorse, and should we not weep for joy as did that same Mary when she heard the Gardener of her Soul call her name, "Mary," as none other could do?

This is a lovely hymn that spans the whole of the Church Calendar from Christmas to Resurrection!