

Shedding Light on GOSPEL SONGS

#1 – Softly and Tenderly

Verse 1:

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
Calling for you and for me;
See, on the portals He's waiting and watching,
Watching for you and for me.

CHORUS:

Come Home, come Home,
You who are weary, come Home;
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
Calling, O sinner, come Home!

Verse 2:

Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,
Pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not His mercies,
Mercies for you and for me?

CHORUS...

Verse 3:

O for the wonderful love He has promised,
Promised for you and for me!
Though we have sinned, He has mercy & pardon,
Pardon for you and for me.

CHORUS...



“Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
(Matthew 11:28)

Will L. Thompson was a successful songwriter, having amassed wealth beyond his greatest expectations when he had first set out from Liverpool, Ohio, trying to sell his writing. Actually, he ended up developing his own publishing company and churned out hit after hit, eventually earning the nickname “The Bard of Ohio”.

But it wasn’t until he determined to commit all of his music to the praise of the Lord, rather than continue in the secular music he had been so successful with, that he ended up writing the most significant song of his life. Thompson had a heart for reaching small-town churches with music, and as he developed his ministry of travelling back roads of the midwest to bring quality worship music to those ignored by other big-name evangelists and musicians, he wrote “Softly and Tenderly”, inviting all of its hearers to “come Home”.

The song so beautifully poses the invitation that Jesus offers over and over throughout the Gospels:

“Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”
(Matt. 11:28);

“Come, follow Me” (Luke 18:22);

“He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (John 6:35).

It quickly became a staple of evangelistic meetings and concerts across the United States. In fact, Thompson developed a relationship with famed evangelist D. L. Moody, and as Moody lay on his deathbed, he told his friend, “Will, I would rather have written ‘Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling’ than anything I have been able to do in my whole life.”

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