

# In the Garden

**TEXT: John 20:1-16**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

- A. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THE BEAUTY OF THIS SONG – EMOTIONAL.
- B. WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT, IS IT SCRIPTURAL? In answer to a request.
- C. BACKGROUND:

Written in 1912 by C. Austin Miles.

*Born:* January 7, 1868, Lakehurst, New Jersey.

*Died:* March 10, 1946, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

*Buried:* Hillcrest Memorial Park, Sewell, New Jersey.

Miles attended the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and the University of Pennsylvania. In 1892, he abandoned his career as a pharmacist and wrote his first Gospel song, "List 'Tis Jesus' Voice" which was published by the Hall-Mack Company. He served as editor and manager at the Hall-Mack publishers for 37 years. In his own words:

It is as a writer of gospel songs I am proud to be known, for in that way I may be of the most use to my Master, whom I serve willingly although not as efficiently as is my desire.

It was in 1912 that music publisher Dr. Adam Geibel asked C. Austin Miles to write a hymn text that would be "sympathetic in tone, breathing tenderness in every line; one that would bring hope to the hopeless, rest for the weary, and downy pillows to dying beds." Miles has left the following account of the writing of this hymn:

One day in March, 1912, I was seated in the dark room, where I kept my photographic equipment and organ. I drew my Bible toward me; it opened at my favorite chapter, John 20-whether by chance or inspiration let each reader decide. That meeting of Jesus and Mary had lost none of its power to charm.

As I read it that day, I seemed to be part of the scene. I became a silent witness to that dramatic moment in Mary's life, when she knelt before her Lord, and cried, "Rabboni!"

My hands were resting on the Bible while I stared at the light blue wall. As the light faded, I seemed to be standing at the entrance of a garden, looking down a gently winding path, shaded by olive branches. A woman in white, with head bowed, hand clasping her throat, as if to choke back her sobs, walked slowly into the shadows. It was Mary. As she came to the tomb, upon which she place her hand, she bent over to look in, and hurried away. John, in flowing robe, appeared, looking at the tomb; then came Peter, who entered the tomb, followed slowly by John. As they departed, Mary reappeared; leaning her head upon her arm at the tomb, she wept. Turning herself, she saw Jesus standing, so did I. I knew it was He. She knelt before Him, with arms outstretched and looking into His face cried "Rabboni!"

I awakened in full light, gripping the Bible, with muscles tense and nerves vibrating. Under the inspiration of this vision I wrote as quickly as the words could be formed the poem exactly as it has since appeared. That same evening I wrote the music.

Next to "The Old Rugged Cross", this hymn has been one of the most popular gospel hymns ever written, beginning with the days when Homer Rodeheaver led singing for the great Billy Sunday campaigns and used the hymn extensively.

**Quoted from "101 Hymn Stories" by Kenneth Osbeck. Kregel Publishers, P.O. Box 2607, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, 1982.**

## **I. I COME TO THE GARDEN.**

**I come to the garden alone, While the dew is still on the roses;  
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear, The Son of God discloses.**

- A. MAN IS BORN FOR TROUBLE (**Job 14:1**).

1. The complaint of Jacob (**Gen. 47:8-9**).
  2. Man is born to sorrow (**Gen. 3:17-19**).
  3. Death is the master of the wise and the foolish (**Ecc 2:15-17**).
- B. THE GARDEN IS A PLACE OF **SORROW** AND **SEEKING**.
1. Mary came early to mourn the death of Jesus. Instead, she found Jesus alive.
  2. We come in our sorrow, but we find Jesus to comfort us.
    - a. He frees us from the anxieties that destroy so many (**Matt. 6:19-21, 33**).
    - b. We are comforted in his promise to deliver (**2 Thess. 2:16-17**).
    - c. Jesus knows our every care (**Matt. 10:29-31; Psa 56**).
    - d. Victory in Jesus (**1 John 4:4**).
    - e. What does coming to the garden involve? (**1 Pet. 5:6-7; Phil. 4:4-7**).
- C. WHEN IS DEW ON THE ROSES? **EARLY!** THE EARLIER YOU COME ...

## II. THE SOUND OF HIS VOICE.

**He speaks, and the sound of His voice Is so sweet, The birds hush their singing,  
And the melody that He gave to me, Within my heart is ringing.**

- A. THE **POWER** OF JESUS' VOICE.
1. Filled with purpose and reason (**John 7:46**).
  2. Filled with might (**Matt. 8:23-27**).
  3. Filled with authority (**Matt. 7:28-29**).
  4. Filled with passion (**Matt. 23:37**).
  5. And compassion and love (**John 8:11 Matt. 11:28-30**).
- B. IT IS THE **VOICE OF GOD**.
1. Jesus is God's spokesman today (**Heb. 1:1-2**).
  2. What Jesus says comes from the Father (**John 12:49**).
  3. His word is in the NT (**John 16:13-14; Luke 10:16**).
  4. The New Testament is God's word (**1 Thess. 2:13**).
- C. THE MELODY OF HIS WORDS REMAINS (**Psa. 1:1-3; 119:97**).
- D. ONE DAY JESUS WILL **SPEAK AGAIN** (**John 5:28-29**).

## III. I'D STAY IN THE GARDEN WITH HIM.

**I'd stay in the garden with Him, Though the night around me be falling,  
But He bids me go; Through the voice of woe, His voice to me is calling.**

- A. OUR DESIRE IS TO **REMAIN** IN MEDITATION AND PRAYER.
1. There is no greater blessing than **fellowship with Jesus** (**John 8:12**).
  2. In Christ there is mercy and **forgiveness** (**1 John 1:7**).
  3. And the **protection** of God (**Deut. 31:6; 2 Tim. 1:12**).
- B. **BUT HE BIDS ME GO** – THERE IS WORK FOR US TO DO.
1. Created in Christ Jesus for good works (**Eph. 2:10**).
  2. The Lord needs us to **"bear fruit"** (**John 15:8; Titus 3:14**).
  3. He is in us working his will (**Phil. 2:13; 4:9**).

## CONCLUSION:

**And He walks with me, And He talks with me, And He tells me I am His own;  
And the joy we share as we tarry there, None other has ever known.**

- A. JESUS WALKS WITH HIS CHILD TO WATCH OVER HIM (**Phil. 4:5**).
- B. HIS MESSAGE IN THE BIBLE IS HOW HE SPEAKS TO US (**1 Thess. 2:13**).
- C. **HE CLAIMS US** (**Rom. 8:16; Heb. 2:11**).
- D. IN CHRIST IS OUR GREATEST **JOY** (**Phil. 4:4-7**).

# Are you in Christ?