

## Abide With Me

### Introduction:

1. This song was written by Henry Francis Lyte near the end of his time upon Earth.
2. Lyte was born in 1793 and passed away in 1847 at the age of 54.
3. The well-known music for the song was composed in 1861 by William Henry Monk.
  - a. Though H. F. Lyte originally composed a melody for the song, it was viewed by many as dull.
  - b. After the song was sung at his funeral, it began to be passed down as poetry without any music.
  - c. When it was read by Monk, he composed the tune he called "Eventide" in a matter of 10 – 30 minutes.
4. The beautiful and powerful message of the song is demonstrated in the life of H. F. Lyte and in the words of Scripture.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
 Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away.  
 Change and decay in all around I see.  
 O thou who changest not, abide with me!

- I. Stability in the Presence of the Lord (Hebrews 13:8)
  - A. H. F. Lyte experienced change and decay throughout much of his life.
  - B. At the age of 9 he was abandoned by his father and experienced the deaths of his mother and only sibling.
  - C. A teacher at his school saw the child's situation and brought him into his own household – paying his fees and caring for him over holidays.
  - D. This brought a sense of stability to the young man's troubled life.
  - E. However, he soon learned that true stability is found in the presence of the Lord (Hebrews 13:8; Psalm 90:2, 4; James 1:17).

I need Thy presence every passing hour;  
 What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
 Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?  
 Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me!

- II. Strength in the Guidance of the Lord (John 10:4-5)
  - A. In 1815, Lyte entered into the ministry, becoming a clergyman in the Church of England.
  - B. Three years later he sat at the bedside of a fellow minister who was at the door of death.
    1. This man confided in Lyte that he felt that they had misunderstood the Bible, not interpreting it literally.
    2. Yet, Lyte wrote of him: "He died happy under the belief that though he had deeply erred, there was One whose death and

sufferings would atone for his delinquencies, and be accepted for all that he had incurred.”

- C. Following his friend's death, Lyte wrote: “I was greatly affected by the whole matter, and brought to look at life and its issue with a different eye than before; and I began to study my Bible, and preach in another manner than I had previously done.”
- D. The Bible teaches that the Lord guides man through His Word (Psalm 119:105; John 10:4-5).

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;  
 Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
 I triumph still, if Thou abide with me!

- III. Security in the Victory of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:55-57)
  - A. Lyte was plagued with poor health his entire life, suffering from asthma and eventually tuberculosis.
  - B. Because of this, he was often forced to travel to drier locations attempting to alleviate the symptoms of his sicknesses.
  - C. Yet, he came to understand that physical maladies could not rob one of victory in Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:55-57; John 16:33; Romans 8:37; 1 John 5:4-5).

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;  
 The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.  
 When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
 Help of the helpless, O abide with me!

- IV. Support in the Faithfulness of the Lord (Hebrews 13:5)
  - A. Lyte spent the final 23 years of his life serving the fishing village of Lower Brixham in Devonshire.
  - B. It seems that as he grew older some of his doctrinal views changed and he was abandoned by those he had served so diligently.
  - C. Yet, when others flee, the Lord abides faithful – so long as one is faithful to Him (Joshua 1:5; Psalm 37:25; Hebrews 13:5-6).

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;  
 Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.  
 Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
 In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

- V. Salvation in the Cross of the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:18)
  - A. The cross in man's only hope of salvation (1 Cor. 1:18; Colossians 1:20).
  - B. The way of the cross leads home (John 12:32; 14:1-6).