

# Abide With Me

“Never will I leave you;  
never will I forsake you”

Hebrews 13:5 (NIV)

As a preschooler I had numerous episodes of running away and getting lost. It was not that home life was something to be avoided, it was simply the adventure of being in some other place. I loved to explore and see new and different places and people even at so tender an age. Sometimes I found my way back home and other times I was found by a friendly police officer or other kind person and reunited with my family.

I vividly recall one occasion when I was totally lost for several hours. I remember going into a gas station and telling the owner that I was lost and needed help finding my way home. How he determined who I was and to whom I belonged I cannot recall. What was impressed on my mind was the fact the man knew exactly how to stop the tears and put a smile on a little boy's face. He gave me an ice cream cone and for me all was instantly well. Then he sorted through the possibilities and made the correct connection with my family.

I have walked a long and challenging journey through life. At times events have caused me to feel I was once again lost. Health issues with children, my wife and myself, and being misunderstood by some friends, were among the issues that twisted the road for me. These matters brought me to my knees to confess once again to the Lord that I was dependant on Him for guidance through the maze of life.

Henry Francis Lyle (1793-1847), a Scottish Anglican clergyman, wrote a hymn entitled Abide With Me that had 8 verses in its original form. Lyle never had any doubt about the abiding presence of the Lord with him. Reading the verses and especially the last line of each verse, the reader might wonder about why the request “abide with me” is used if Lyle held to the conviction that God would never leave or forsake him.

Even when we feel assured the Lord is with us it is good to repeat this very brief prayer to the Lord, “Abide with me.” If we lose our sense of God's eternal presence with us we

need this prayer even more. The Lord has made many precious promises to stay with His people through the whole journey of life. Yet, we are weak and can easily lose our hold on that truth so we need to make this prayer often as we travel home to heaven.

I especially like one verse of Lyle's beloved hymn and it goes as follows.

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

Every day, every hour we need this divine Guide to journey along with us. Today pray this beautiful verse to the Lord and expect Him to make His strong and comforting presence known in your life. He is the Guide for all who seek Him through Jesus our Saviour. God is as good as His promise.

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