**The Spirit & The Understanding, Part 27**

**Reading – 1 Corinthians 14:1-15**

***[Colossians 3:16-17]*** ***Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*** ***And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.***

**Wherever He Leads I’ll Go # 675**

A self-appointed missionary named R.S. Jones was speaking at a Gospel Meeting in Clanton, Alabama. After many years of preaching in Brazil, he had been forced to return home.

Doctors said the he could not return to the mission field.

B.B. McKinney was a leading song and hymn writer who happened to be leading the singing that night. After the meeting, he talked with Jones and asked him about his future plans.

The missionary said, “I don’t know, but wherever He leads, I’ll go.”

McKinney couldn’t get those words out of his mind. He went to his room and wrote the words and music for this hymn.

R.S. Jones was speaking again at the close of the week long meeting, and after his message, McKinney told Jones’s story and then sang the new hymn, “Wherever He Leads, I’ll go,” to the congregation.

**Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us # 391**

Of all the names and titles given to Jesus, perhaps the most beloved is Shepherd, a title Jesus gave Himself in John10.

The Good Shepherd knows His sheep, guards His sheep, and even gives His life for His sheep.

Scripture also says that He knows His sheep by name.

On Christmas Eve 1875, Ira Sankey, the gospel singer who accompanies evangelist Dwight Moody, was traveling with friends by steamboat up the Delaware River.

He was asked to sing for the other passengers, but instead of singing a Christmas carol, he felt he should sing, “Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us.”

Afterward, another passenger asked him if he had been doing picket duty on a particular night at a particular place during the Civil War.

Sankey agreed that he was.

The other passenger said, “I too, was on duty that night: I was serving in the Confederate Army, and I saw you and raised my musket to take aim.”

“And then you began to sing. It was the same hymn you sang tonight. I remembered my mother singing that hymn to me, and I could not shoot you.”

On board the steamboat, Sankey put his arm around the man and introduced him t the Good Shepherd, who gave his life for his sheep.

**Seek Ye First # 555**

Karen Lafferty always seemed to be coming in second.

She kept reaching for the brass ring, but it always seemed to elude her grasp.

She had graduated from Eastern New Mexico University with a degree in choral music and oboe, and by that time she also played piano, saxophone and guitar

She entered the Miss New Mexico contest and ended up as first runner-up.

Thinking that she could climb the ladder in show business, she started singing in saloons in New Orleans.

But as a Christian, she recognized that this was not the right place for her to be.

She said, “I was faced with a strong decision. Either I’m going to live for Christ or I’m not.”

She renewed her commitment to the Lord and decided to use her talents for Him.

When she auditioned for Campus Crusade’s music ministry, she was turned down; they didn’t think she was mature enough as a Christian.

“I was crushed,” she says, ‘we studied from Matthew 6, about how God takes care of the birds of the air, and there was that verse, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness.’”

That evening she went home and began plucking on her guitar.

It did not take long for this verse and melody to come out.

She took that hymn to Maranatha Music and it soon was included in every song book worldwide.

**Sweet By and By # 878**

Sanford Bennett owned a pharmacy in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. One of his regular customers was Joseph Webster, who was prone to depression.

Bennett regularly supplied some pills to Webster to help him out of his melancholy

Since they both liked music, Bennett found something else that worked better than pills.

Bennett described the composition of the hymn in his autobiography.

“Mr. Webster, like many musicians, was of an exceedingly nervous and sensitive nature, and subject to periods of depression, in which he looked upon the dark side of all things in life. I had learned his peculiarities so well that on meeting him I could tell at a glance if he was melancholy, and had found that I could rouse him up by giving him a new song to work on. He came into my place of business [in Elkhorn, Wisconsin], walked down to the stove, and turned his back on me without speaking. I was at my desk. Turning to him, I said, "Webster, what is the matter now?" "It's no matter," he replied, "it will be all right by and by." The idea of the hymn came me like a flash of sunlight, and I replied, "The Sweet By and By! Why would not that make a good hymn?" "Maybe it would," he said indifferently. Turning to my desk I penned the words of the hymn as fast as I could write. I handed the words to Webster. As he read his eyes kindled, and stepping to the desk he began writing the notes. Taking his violin, he played the melody and then jotted down the notes of the chorus. It was not over thirty minutes from the time I took my pen to write the words before two friends with Webster and myself were singing the hymn.” —*Sanford Fillmore Bennett (1836-1898)*[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_the_Sweet_By-and-By#cite_note-2)

**Oh, They Tell Me of a Home #968**

Josiah Alwood was one of those legendary circuit-riding preachers.

He was associated with a group who were known as the United Brethren.

He traveled on horseback to small churches in isolated areas.

Sometimes he had to cross swamps and creeks, then preach in wet clothing.

He traveled northwest Ohio, southern Michigan and the northeast Indiana.

One August night in 1879, Alwood was returning after midnight from a Gospel Meeting in Spring Hill, Ohio, to his home in Michigan – AND HE SAW A RAINBOW!

The sky was clear except for one dark storm cloud.

From that storm cloud came a heavy shower of rain, and through that shower the rays of the moon were streaming.

A rainbow at night is an unusual sight, and Alwood said later, “You can scarcely imagine the feeling of solemn joy which came over me as I gazed upon the rainbow of promise.”

When he awoke the next morning, he was still in awe from the experience.

He went to the small pump organ in his home and with one finger drummed out the tune. Then he wrote the words as quickly as he could.

He remembered the tune, so the next time a music teacher came to the area, Josiah Alwood asked the teacher to write down the music for him. The rest is history.