

I Love to Tell the Story

By Maggie Moller

"I love to tell the story, for some have never heard / The message of salvation from God's own holy Word" - Arabella Hankey

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

(Matthew 5:14-16)

"Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life."

(Philippians 2:14-16a)

With the theme of "Witness" this month, I could think of no better hymn to write about than "I Love to Tell the Story." In my opinion, this hymn perfectly describes how we as Christians should feel about telling others about the good news of the Gospel! As Christians, I believe we are often not open enough with sharing our faith to a lost world. I know I personally need to greatly improve in this area of my faith. However, I think we need to be careful to not assume the approach to witnessing must be generalized across all Christians. It is true that some are called to lives of full-time ministry such as being pastors or missionaries. Some people would argue these occupations are the only ministries that witness and evangelize, but I would argue that are we not all called to lives of full-time ministry once we have accepted Christ into our hearts? It is my firm belief that we can be effective witnesses for Christ our Lord in whatever life He has called us into. By simply living as examples of Christ and demonstrating His love to an unlovable world, we will be presented with numerous opportunities to share His Gospel to the lost. Do not be fooled: we are witnesses each and every day we wake up. Every time you step into the grocery store or gas station you are presented with the chance to be a witness. Something as simple as being cheerful to your cashier can make all the difference in showing Christ's love through your actions. I feel I cannot reiterate this thought enough that no matter what God has called you to in your life, whether it be ministry, teaching, business, or any other career, you are called to be a witness for Him. And regardless of the path you are called to, you will encounter many opportunities to share God's love and the good news of His saving grace.

The Lyrist: Arabella Katherine "Kate" Hankey

Kate Hankey was born into a wealthy English family on January 12, 1834. Her family belonged to an evangelical group called the Clapham Sect which was led by William Wilberforce. Under Mr. Wilberforce's teaching, the group was widely known for its stand on anti-slavery and pro-missionary views. When she entered her teenage years, Kate began volunteering as a girls Sunday school teacher for the Clapham Sect meetings. When she reached her adult years, Kate became convicted to travel to South Africa to serve as a nurse. Her brother, who was an invalid, was already living in South Africa. When she was in her early thirties, Kate

became seriously ill and was greatly weakened. During her lengthy recovery period, she penned an extensive two—part poem telling the story of Jesus and His life. Two of our most widely known hymns come from this poem: “I Love to Tell the Story” and “Tell Me the Old, Old Story.” Kate died on May 9, 1911, in London, England, at the age of seventy-seven.

The Composer: William Gustavus Fischer

William Fischer was born to German immigrant parents on October 14, 1835, in Baltimore, Maryland. Early on in his life, he began showing strong musical aptitude. When he was only eight years old, he started singing at his German church in Baltimore. From this experience, he was taught to read music as well as how to play the piano and organ. When he was old enough to take on an apprenticeship, he went to Philadelphia to work under a bookbinder. Despite his busy days working at his apprenticeship, he did not lose his love for music. Each evening, after his work was completed for the day, he would study and practice his music. Soon his musical talents became known all over Philadelphia, and he was greatly sought after to lead sacred choirs throughout the city. In addition to leading choirs, he also began teaching singing, piano, and general music theory classes. When he was only twenty-three years old, he began teaching music as a professor at Girard College in Philadelphia. He taught music at Girard College for ten years until 1868 when he left to enter the piano business. He worked in the piano industry until his retirement in 1898. Fischer passed away on August 13, 1912, in Philadelphia at the age of seventy-seven.