

The Potter and the Clay

Hymns from "Favorite Hymns of Grace."

Greeting and Opening Prayer

Hymns of Worship

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Devotional Summary: "The Potter and the Clay"

But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand. Isaiah 64:8 (NKJV)

Jesus taught us to pray: "Our Father, who art in heaven..." The Lord, God Almighty, is our Father! Behind this simple statement lies the foundation for the hope that each of His children hold so dear deep within their heart: we shall not perish, but have everlasting life! (John 3:16)

The Father loves His children. In the person of Christ Jesus, the only begotten Son, God showed in graphic, physical terms that He loves us. What ultimate price our Savior paid to demonstrate the magnitude and the quality of His love! Yes, it is a great revelation and a great privilege to call our All-Powerful Lord God, "Father."

As we direct our thoughts today about the eternal fact that our God is also our "Father," let us take a moment to quietly affirm in our own minds our confession that our God, who is in heaven, is also our own, personal Father! If it is true to you, in your own relationship with Christ, that God is your loving Father, then say the words to yourself silently in your mind: ***"God is my Father."***

Go ahead, if in your heart you know the Father, then strengthen your faith in your own mind and say the words to yourself: ***"God is my Father."***

Think about it.

(after a brief pause, continue...)

Now, if you are able, say, "God is my Father," out loud with me...Say it: ***"God is my Father!"***

(pause)

Say it again: ***"God is my Father!"***

Great! Now let us look at the rest of our text. Here we find the meat and potatoes of what it

means that we are the children of the Infinite God Almighty. We are putty in the hands of the only One qualified to shape us into who we know we should be! Our destiny is held in the hands of our Creator! We are the clay. He is the potter. We are not the ones who fashioned ourselves in our mother's womb. It was our Father God. We are not the ones who gave us talents and wit and emotions and resources. It was our Father God. We are not the ones who guided our circumstances and our experiences and the web of our relationships to this point in our lives. It was our Father God. Our Father God is the one who sustains us and guides us and provides for us even to this very day. We cannot do these things for ourselves! He is the potter. We are a hopelessly inert lump of clay when it comes to our own origin, our own destiny, and our own eternity.

Indeed, we are the work of His hands! Look at your hands. That's right, look at your own hands. What have your hands made, what have your hands done that could have possibly made God irrelevant and unnecessary in your life? It is God that we worship and it is God's hands that we yield to for our origin, our destiny and our eternal life!

Let us as His trusting, obedient children, soft and pliable clay in His hands, raise our hearts to Him for His fashioning, for His molding, for His loving care! You can trust Him. What He does in your life, the circumstances He leads you to, the experiences He allows you to enjoy...or endure...are all there to mold and guide and correct and encourage. God loves you! We need not fight to make everything and everyone around us be what we want them to be. We need not try to always have our own way. We can rest, we can trust, we can lean on the hands of the Potter...for we are only clay. We are happiest, we are the most fulfilled, we are the most productive when we surrender our selfish interests and let God have His own way.

Researcher and author Warren Shriver tells this story behind the writing of the great hymn, "Have Thine Own Way, Lord."

"Adelaide Pollard was forty-five years old when in 1907 she visited a prayer meeting, where she was inspired to write her most famous hymn. It was a simple phrase from a simple but sincere prayer that impressed her. For in offering her prayer, an elderly woman omitted the usual beseeching of the Lord to shower blessings upon her and the prayer meeting group, but instead she told God that it didn't matter what he brought into their lives, but "Just have your own way with us". As Adelaide left the prayer meeting that night the phrase from that prayer, "Have Thine own way", rang in her mind. On the way home she formed the lyrics in her mind and before going to bed that night, she wrote the words on paper.

Shortly afterwards, George Coles Stebbins set the words to music, and "Have Thine Own Way, Lord," was ready for the Christian world, and all because of a simple phrase in a simple prayer."

Have Thine Own Way Lord (read or sing a cappella)

Verse 1

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Thou art the potter, I am the clay;
Mold me and make me after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still.

Verse 2

Have Thine own way Lord! Have Thine own way!
Search me and try me Master today!
Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now,
As in Thy presence humbly I bow.

Verse 3

Have Thine own way Lord! Have Thine own way!
Wounded and weary, help me I pray!
Power all power surely is Thine!
Touch me and heal me, Savior divine.

Verse 4

Have Thine own way Lord! Have Thine own way!
Hold o'er my being absolute sway!
Fill with Thy spirit, till all shall see
Christ only always, living in me.

See your Heavenly Father's gentle hand in your life. Feel His loving touch in your heart! Hear His sweet voice of comfort and care deep inside. Sing to Him in your heart of heart, "Have Thine own way, Lord." Talk to Him. He knows your voice. Seek His face. He hears your cry. Call His name. His name is Daddy. He is there. He loves you. God is your Father!

Closing Hymn

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Prayer Requests and Corporate Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Recessional