#580 – Have Thine Own Way, Lord – Hymn Study (Cayden Gibello) – 26.10.11

*[Read the hymn, then pray. Ask the first question, then read the hymn **again**.]*

- **Q1: What does Pollard mean by "Have Thine own way, Lord"?**
    - This whole hymn is a prayer; and prayer should never be entirely passive: "Christian, seek not yet repose, / Cast thy dreams of ease away; / Thou art in the midst of foes: / Watch and pray. … Watch, as if on that alone / Hung the issue of the day; / Pray, that help may be sent down: / Watch and pray."
    - You can't become "wounded and weary" without working or warring (stanza 3): "I've found a Friend, O such a Friend! / All pow'r to him is given, / To guard me on my onward course, / And bring me safe to heaven: / Eternal glory gleams afar, / To nerve my faint endeavor: / So now to watch, to work, to war; / And then to rest for ever."
    - The goal of the hymn/prayer is to show all how Christ is *living* in the believer (stanza 4): "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (*Gal. 2:20*).
    - One of Scripture's principles is that Christ's life in the believer is evidenced in the believer's life in the world: "Having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. … For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness" (*Rom. 6:18-9*).
    - *1 Cor. 6:19-20*—"Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from: God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."
    - ***Follow up question: How does the flow of the hymn support this theme?***
    - This is a prayer for God to work in us (stanza 2), so we can work for Him (stanza 4).
    - The first verse is an introduction; the second asks for *preparation*; the third asks for *preservation*; and the fourth is the conclusion.
    - There's a sharp distinction between the actions of the Potter and the Clay until the last three lines where they intertwine: "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (Jam. 4:8a)—until He draws into you.

[Read Jer. 18:6b, 11b-2.]

- The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words." Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.

  Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the Lord. "Look, **as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand**, O house of Israel! The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.

  "Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the Lord: "Behold, I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. Return now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good." ' "

  And they said, "**That is hopeless!** So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one obey the dictates of his evil heart."

[Ask the second question.]

- **Q2: How does the hymn's response contrast with Israel's? Why are their responses so different?**
    - Israel despaired at God's call to perfect holiness (v. 12) because they missed His point. They *rightly* recognized that their own strength would never avail to attain perfect holiness; but, instead of submitting to God and asking Him for cleansing (like the hymn does), they despaired of perfection and rejected Him. As our Maker, God legitimately demands our total obedience, but that is too great a burden for sinners to bear; thus, we need God to change and transform us into the image of His Son.
    - God's *absolute sovereignty* calls for us to live in *absolute submission and service* to Him.
    - ***Application question: How can we display daily dependence on God here at Hillsdale?***
    - *Asking*: Prayer (this hymn is framed as a prayer); asking for help/advice from the brethren.
    - *Informing*: Reading God's Word regularly; taking as many opportunities as reasonable to hear God's Word exposited. The 10 Commandments describe the whole spectrum of the areas in which God demands our total submission, i.e. all the areas over which He has sovereignty.
- **Any final thoughts?**

SUMMARY:

- ***Main Idea and Intended Response***: Because God has complete sovereignty over us, Christ calls His followers to a radical submission which should determine every aspect of our lives. Such entire subservience is not drudgery: Slavery is only wrong when among equals. Since God is categorically superior to us, complete service to Him is right and proper. In fact, He made us to serve Him; and, therefore, we will find our joy in submission to Him: "The beasts would not think it hard if I told them to walk on their heads. It would become their delight to walk on their heads. I am His beast, and all His biddings are joys" (the Green Lady from C.S. Lewis, *Perelandra*).

[Sing. Introduce the complementary hymn, then sing it.]

- "**Father, I know that all my life**"
    - *Connection*: This hymn shows how submission and service go hand in hand because of God's sovereignty. It's a prayer acknowledging that our greatest joy will be found in following God's will in every aspect of our life, even when we desire grandeur and glory. And that's what makes the last two lines such a beautifully freeing paradox: "A life of self renouncing love / Is one of liberty" (cf. Mat. 18:3)

[Pray.]

Have Thine own way, Lord,
Have Thine own way;
Thou are the Potter,
I am the clay. Job 10:8-12; Is. 29:15-6; 45:9-13; 64:6-9; Jer. 18:1-12; Rom. 9:19-24; 2 Tim. 2:20-1
Mold me and **make** me
After Thy will,
While I am *waiting*,
Yielded and *still*.

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.

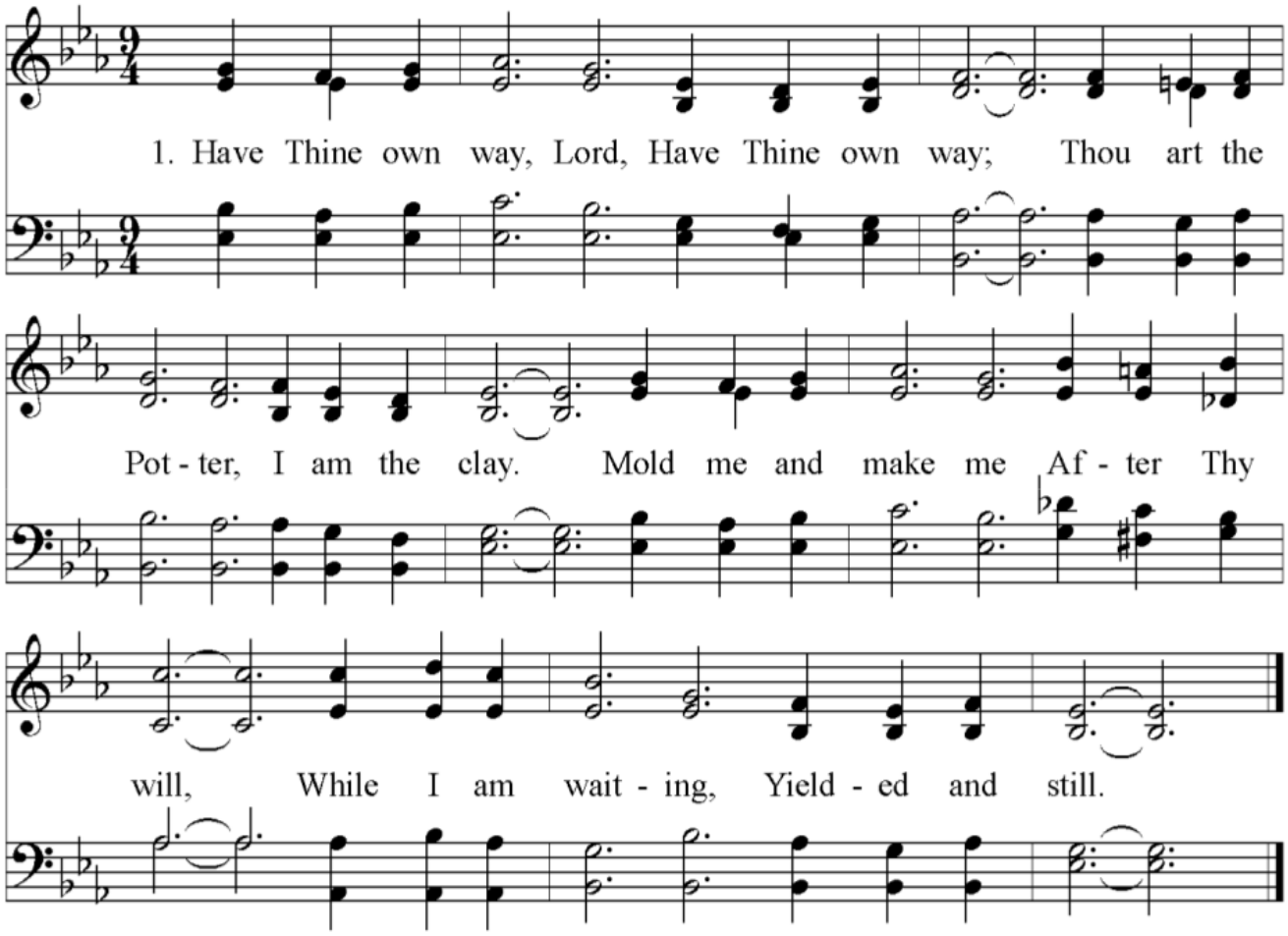
Have Thine own way, Lord,
Have Thine own way;
Search me and **try** me, Ps. 139:23
Master, today.
Whiter than snow, Lord,
Wash me just now, Ps. 51:7
As in Thy presence
Humbly I *bow*.

Have Thine own way, Lord, Father
Have Thine own way;
Hold o'er my being
Absolute sway.
Fill with Thy Spirit Spirit
Till all shall see
Christ only, always, Son
Living in me.

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O Lord, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our Potter. Isa. 64:8

Adelaide A. Pollard 5.4.5.4.D. George C. Stebbins



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.

2. Have thine own way, Lord!
Have thine own way!
Search me and try me,
Savior today!
Wash me just now, Lord,
wash me just now,
as in thy presence
humbly I bow.

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!

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,
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Jeremiah 18:6b, 11b-2

"Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!" ...

"Behold, I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. Return now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good."

And they said, "That is hopeless! So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one obey the dictates of his evil heart."

500 Father, I Know That All My Life



Anna L. Waring, 1850

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Charles Steggall, 1826–1905