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### Have Thine Own Way, Lord

*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.*

*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.*

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

**WORDS: Adelaide Pollard (w. 1902)**  
**MUSIC: George C. Stebbins (w. 1907)**



<sup>8</sup> *But now, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand. Isaiah 64:8*



Fred Willon



### THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

My dear Christian sister-friend is a potter. Recently, she graciously demonstrated her work and gave me pointers on the whole process.

When working with clay, “wedging” is an essential step. Wedging is like kneading dough to get air bubbles out so the bread will rise. If bubbles are not removed from clay, there will be problems with the clay. Centering the lump of clay on the wheel is the most important step. The potter must be anchored when centering the clay on the wheel. If the clay is not centered on the wheel, the shape of the vessel will not be right. If we are not centered on “God’s wheel,” our spiritual shape will not be right. When God is the center of our lives, we will yield to His touch just as clay yields to the touch of the potter.

The firing process is at a very high temperature. When pottery pieces are fired and do not come out as they should, they go back to being clay. Sometimes we find ourselves in “high temperature” spiritual situations that are uncomfortable. If we do not stay true to God through that process, God reworks us and reshapes us. Just as the clay yields to the touch of the potter, so we must yield to the touch of the Creator.

The creation story in Genesis tells us that God created man in His own image, Genesis 1:27. Man was created from the dust from the ground, Genesis 2:7, and the man was named Adam. Genesis 2:20 tells us that no suitable helper for Adam existed at that point, so God caused a deep sleep to fall on the man. While the man was asleep, God took a rib from his side. Then He closed the man’s side, Genesis 2:21-22. He then fashioned the rib into a woman called Eve and brought her to the man. What an amazing God we serve!

In Genesis 2:23-24, “Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be

called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”

Think about the couple God created. They were the first man and the first woman. They were the first couple, and they were the first parents of the first family. They were the first to sin. The “Potter” who created them had the cure for man’s sins. The blood of His only begotten Son would be shed so that men and women could be cleansed of their sins. Only the touch of the Master’s hand could create all, and only His hand can cure the sin problem we all have.

Jeremiah wrote about potters in Jeremiah 18:2-12. God said in verse 2, <sup>2</sup>“Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will announce My words to you.” <sup>3</sup>Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. <sup>4</sup>But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter. So, he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the Potter to make.” Our lives become soiled by sin, and we are spoiled vessels. Thankfully, God provided for cleansing us of our sins.

<sup>5</sup>Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, <sup>6</sup>“Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?” declares the Lord. “Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel. <sup>7</sup>“At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it; <sup>8</sup>if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it. <sup>9</sup>“Or at another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant it; <sup>10</sup>if it does evil in My sight by not obeying My voice, then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it.”

How long can America continue, considering the way we are heading. America desperately needs the touch of God’s hand. It may come as discipline/punishment. God always knows best.

Evelyn Waite, Rolla, MO



## THE TEACUP STORY

“There once was a couple who traveled to England to celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. An antique store caught their eye, and they went inside. They both

liked antiques and pottery and had a special fondness for teacups. Spotting an exceptional cup, they asked, “May we see that? We’ve never seen a cup quite so beautiful!” As the lady handed it to them, the teacup suddenly spoke! You don’t understand. I have not always been a teacup. There was a time when I was just a lump of clay. My master took me and rolled me and pounded and patted me over and over; and I yelled out, “Don’t do that. I don’t like it! Let me alone!” But the master only smiled and gently said, “Not yet!”

Then, WHAM! I was placed on a spinning wheel and was spun around and around and around! “Stop it! I’m getting so dizzy, I’m going to be sick!” I screamed. But the Master only nodded and said quietly, “Not yet.”

“He spun me and poked and prodded and bent me out of shape to suit himself, and then he put me in the oven! I never felt such heat. I knocked and pounded at the door and yelled, “Help! Get me out of here!” I could see him through the opening, and I could read his lips as he shook his head from side to side, “Not yet.”

“When I thought I couldn’t bear it another minute, the door opened. He carefully took me out and put me on the shelf, and I began to cool. ‘Ah, this is much better,’ I thought. But after I cooled, he picked me up, and he brushed and painted me all over. The fumes were horrible. I thought I would gag! ‘Oh please, stop it. Stop!’ I cried. He only shook his head and said, ‘Not yet.’

“Then suddenly he put me into another oven. It was not like the first one. This was *twice as hot*, and I just knew I would suffocate. I begged. I pleaded. I screamed! I cried! I was convinced I would never make it. I was ready to give up. Just then, the door opened and he took me out and again placed me on the shelf...and I cooled and waited and waited, wondering, ‘What is he going to do to me next?’

“An hour later, he held up a mirror and said, ‘Look at yourself.’ And I did. I said, “That’s not me. That couldn’t be me. It’s beautiful. I’m beautiful!!!”

Quietly, he spoke, “I want you to remember. I know it hurt to be rolled and pounded and patted, but if I had just left you alone, you would have dried up. I know it made you dizzy to spin around on the wheel; but if I had stopped, you would have crumbled. I know it hurt and it was hot and disagreeable in the oven. But if I hadn’t put you there, you would have cracked. I know the fumes were bad when I brushed and painted you all over; but if

I hadn't done that, you never would have hardened. You would not have had any color in your life. If I hadn't put you back in that second oven, you wouldn't have survived for long because the hardness would not have held. Now you are a finished product. Now you are what I had in mind when I first began with you.'

Always remember, God knows what He's doing with each of us. He will mold us, shape us, and expose us to just enough pressures of just the right kinds that we may be made into beautiful pieces of work to fulfill His good, pleasing, and perfect will. He is the potter, and we are His clay." (Author Unknown)

My potter sister/friend taught me that clay comes from the earth, and so do we. He molded and fashioned Adam and Eve, our first ancestors, in just the form He wanted them to be. Sometimes we don't understand what God has in mind, especially when we are going through sorrows, heartaches, health problems, financial problems and more. Just remember that with each sorrow, heartache, and so on, God is molding us into just what He wants us to be. But just as the teacup had to yield to all the potter put it through, so we must yield to God in all things and follow His lead.

During creation, God fashioned man's body. From Adam's body came a rib from which God formed woman, Eve. They were the first man and woman, the first couple, the first parents of the first family. They were the first to sin. They were the first to experience the sorrow of losing a child to death.

*From the beginning*, the potter (God) had the cure for mankind's sins—the blood of His only begotten Son, Jesus! He knows best.

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### ***Broken Dreams***

***As children bring their broken toys  
With tears for us to mend  
I brought my broken dreams to God  
Because He was my friend  
But then instead of leaving Him  
In peace to work alone  
I hung around and tried to help  
With ways that were my own  
At last I snatched them back and cried  
“How would you be so slow?”***

***“My child,” He said,***

***“What could I do?”***

***You never did let go.”***

***By Erwin Lutzer (1941-present)***

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### **Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?**

This is a question we have all heard. Are we meant to know the answer? Christians have never been immune to the work of Satan. As a matter of fact, it's us he is always after. "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking for someone to devour," 1 Peter 5:8.

We tend to ask questions when something bad happens to us or others we love, and that is only natural. God doesn't mind. "Why me?" is often the lament of people who don't know God, and He is often blamed for their own troubles and the bad things in the world. The character of God is very misunderstood.

All of us have gone through, or are now going through, dark times. It may be a devastating illness, the loss of someone dearly loved, an accident that may leave someone crippled, a divorce or many other sad and scary events in our lives. At the time, we can't see anything good about our situation. In fact, we may not ever see it in our lifetime. But – if it strengthens our faith and trust in Him, if it causes us to get our priorities straight, or it causes us to see how wholly dependent we are upon Him—these are good things we may see in our lifetime.

We have all heard the saying, "God doesn't promise us a rose garden." He does promise to walk with us, lead us, or carry us through the thorns in that garden.

The poem, "Footprints in the Sand," has some very moving words.

"One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord. Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky. In each scene, I noticed footprints in the sand. Sometimes, there were two sets of footprints. Other times, there was only one. This bothered me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life when I was suffering from anguish, sorrow, or defeat, I could only see one set of footprints, so I said to the Lord, "You promised me, Lord, that if I followed you, you would walk with me always. But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life, then there has only been one set of footprints in the sand. Why, when I needed you

most have you not been there with me?" The Lord replied, "The times when you have seen only one set of footprints, my child, is when I carried you."

Christians are always assured of a great light at the end of our long dark tunnel. Consider Paul. He suffered many calamities all at the same time. His faith in God never wavered. He questioned God about what was going on, but he continued to trust.

When I was going through one of my darkest times years ago, I trusted in Romans 8:28 a lot. At that time, I also wrote a compilation of all the comfort scriptures I could find. "And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28

Another comfort scripture is Psalm 46:1 (there are so many!). "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in the time of trouble." Our heavenly Father truly is our comfort zone!

James says in 1:2-4, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers (and sisters) whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Look for the good. Trust Him completely, and He will carry you through. But remember, God understands when that's hard for you!

Mary Anna Melton, Rolla, Missouri

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### **The Gate of the New Year**

And I said to the man

Who stood at the gate of the year:

"give me a light,

That I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness,

And put your hand into the hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light

And safer than the known way."

So I went forth and, finding the hand of God,

Trod gladly into the night.

And he led me toward the hills

And the breaking of the day in the lone East.

So, heart, be still:

What need our little life,

Our human life, to know,

If God hath comprehension.

In all the dizzy strife

Of things both high and low,

God hideth His intention.

--M. Louise Haskins

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### ***New Year Message***

***I am the new year.***

***I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.***

***I am your next chance at the art of living.***

***I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last twelve months.***

***All that you sought and didn't find is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it out with more determination.***

***All the good that you tried for and didn't achieve is mine to grant when you have fewer conflicting desires.***

***All that you dreamed but didn't dare to do, all that you hoped but did not will, all the faith that you claimed but did not have—these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose.***

***I am your opportunity to renew your allegiance to Him who said, "Behold, I make all things new." I am the new year.***

***Author Unknown***

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***Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. Revelation 3:20***

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