

## **Have Thine Own Way, Lord!**

**Intro:** Every spring when we see nature awaken from the winter, we get a glimpse into the creative power of God. The sheer beauty of His creation is awesome. And we should not lose sight of the wonder of the human beings God has made.

*Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7)*

**Moses likens the creation of human beings to a skilled potter who molds the clay into the form He desires. And what a work of art the human being is!**

*I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Thy works, and my soul knows it very well.” (Psalm 139:14)*

**However, the Scriptures tell us that God is also working on another creation—a spiritual one. And each of us, as members of His church, is being shaped and molded by God into a spiritual masterpiece.**

*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)*

**God’s plan is two-fold.**

**By his new creation, He displays His manifold wisdom to the rest of creation.**

**By his new creation, God prepares us for His eternal kingdom.**

**However if God is to succeed, we must be pliable clay in the potter’s hands. We must let Him do His work. We have a part in the process of renewal. Consider these things we must do.**

**Never lower the standard God has set.**

*Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. (Colossians 3:9–11)*

**Just as God originally made man “in His image,” so in this new creation we are being made “according to the image of the one who created Him.” The standard God set is Himself; the standard God set is Jesus, who is the “image of the invisible God.”**

**It is tempting to say, “But I’ll never be like that. Or, “How can I become like God?” But we must not. Never lower the standard. Realize that God wants you to be like Him!**

**Never view grace as a license to sin.**

*The possibility of God's forgiveness carries with it a temptation to stay as we are and simply plead for forgiveness for repeated transgressions. It was a concern of some who first heard the gospel of grace; but Paul answered it perfectly.*

*"WHAT shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."*  
(Romans 6:1–4)

*Grace was never intended to be a license to sin. When we fail, we need to confess our wrongs to God; but we need to avoid the calculated misdeed under the justification that God forgives all.*

**Do not mark off any area of your life as "off limits" to God.**

*The problem with becoming like God is that it means we must part with some things we'd like to keep around. There may be certain sinful habits that bring us pleasure. So we mark them as "off limits." God you can change me here...but not here.*

*But to be made a masterpiece God must remove what He doesn't want there. Jesus taught that we must take drastic action to remove sin in whatever form it may take.*

*And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell.<sup>8</sup> (Matthew 5:29–30)*

*That means there is nothing "off limits" to God's change.*

**Recognize that spiritual transformation may require painful circumstances.**

*The process of spiritual renewal is not painless. God cannot apply anesthesia and take away what He doesn't like while we sleep away. Instead, some parts of our character are only perfected through suffering.*

*Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*  
(James 1:2–4)

*We at times must face painful discipline in order to be more holy. Don't resent it; but rather thank God for it.*

*All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. (Hebrews 12:11)*

*So, prepare yourself to endure difficult for the greater benefit of righteousness.*

**Don't compare with others.**

*It is tempting along the way to look around the sculptor's shop at some of the other work in progress; and if we are not careful one of two things may happen.*

We may see some exquisite masterpieces well on their way to completion; and we may become discouraged. Just remember that not everybody is on the same schedule.

We may see that we are well ahead of others in our spiritual development; and decide that we are good enough where we are.

***Paul corrected those who's measure of spirituality was someone else:***

*For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding. (2 Corinthians 10:12)*

**Stay humble as the transformation progresses.**

**If we understand the process, we know that, though we have a part in the spiritual transformation, God is the sculptor; and He deserves the glory.**

*But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. (Galatians 6:14–15)*

**You had just as well think you could make a world, as to think you can experience spiritual renewal without the help of God. And since that is true He deserves all the glory. Paul got it right:**

*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. (1 Corinthians 15:10)*

**Conclusion: You have the opportunity to become a testimony to the handiwork of God. God is glorified when you allow Him to make you into a spiritual masterpiece. But we must truly be pliable in the master's hands.**

*"Have thine own way Lord; have thine own way. Thou art the potter; I am the clay. Mould me and make me after thy will, while I am waiting, yielded and still."*