

January 9, 2022

Prelude

Mary Hay

Call to Worship C#11 *Come, Thou Fount*

“Come, Thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace.”

Have you ever watched a piano tuner at work? There are between 220 and 240 strings on a piano sound board and every single one of them must be tuned to perfect pitch relative to all the others. Each string must be hit with the hammer over and over again while the tuner uses a special wrench to add the right tension to each string to produce exactly the right sound from that string in order for it to function correctly with all the others. Each string must be stretched correctly and adequately to satisfy the ear of the tuner.

Some tuners have an electric device that measures the sound waves produced by the tense string. Others, like one of my Bible college roommates, are gifted with perfect pitch. He would sit for hours hammering and twisting each string until it made just he right sound. God has perfect pitch for His purpose. He knows exactly how much tension, how much hammering each of our lives must take in order to produce the resonance of grace that reveals His glory and fulfills His purpose for us.

This is what you are asking God to do in your life as you sing this hymn this morning. You are asking God to tune your heart. You are asking God to hammer and twist, to add just the right tension, according to His wisdom, so that when life strikes your heart, when the world sits down to play your soul, the sound they hear is the grace of God. You are asking God, for the sake of His glory, to take the laziness, the complacency, the sin, and guilt, and shame that keeps your life out of tune with Him, you are asking Him to work His way in you so that you are the music of His heart to the world.

“Come, Thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace.” Let’s sing it again.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Worship

Welcome and Announcements

1. Wednesday 6:30 PM Video Bible Study: *What is Reformed Theology?*
 - a. I realized as I listened to John Hay make this announcement last week, that I’ve fallen into a bad habit. So, I’d like to try and correct it this morning.
 - i. The habit is this: make a ministry plan, design or devise a ministry program, announce it, and expect that just something will be all the information and motivation you need to add that ministry to your life schedule.
 - ii. Additionally, there’s that assumption that since some of us have been involved in a particular church related conversation, you’re all on the same page, even when you haven’t been in the conversation.
 - b. We’ve been talking about Reformed Theology for several years, since October of 2017, when I preached a series on TULIP
 - i. Heart of Reformed doctrine of salvation

- (1) Total depravity
 - (2) Unconditional election
 - (3) Limited Atonement
 - (4) Irresistible grace
 - (5) Perseverance of the saints
 - ii. There is more to Reformed Theology than just the doctrine of salvation.
 - (1) This is a way of interpreting the entire word of God that exalts God in all His glory and puts everything else in relation to His divine person and purpose
 - (2) Not all theologies do that.
 - (3) So, we're going to investigate this biblical theology further.
2. Four Reasons to Make This Study Part of Your Life
- a. Practical Question
 - i. "Why should I care?"
 - ii. Why include this series in my schedule?"
 - b. Four Reasons
 - i. Theology is knowing God and knowing God is the reason you are saved.
 - (1) **John 17:3 (ESV)** *And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*
 - (2) Theology is the discipline of studying and knowing God.
 - (3) People sometimes have the really, really wrong idea that theology and doctrine are just dry, boring pursuits of academics and scholars and people who think too much.
 - (4) Using different vocabulary, here's what Jesus says, "And this is the sum of soteriology and eschatology, that they may theology and Christology."
 - (5) Theology is knowing God and knowing God is eternal life and eternal life is the functional outcome of genuine saving grace, so does it not make sense if knowing God is the reason God saves us that saved people should spend the time they have knowing God, doing theology for the sake of eternal life?
 - ii. Faith in Jesus Christ and love for the church is fertile soil for growth in the knowledge of God.
 - (1) **Ephesians 1:15-19 (ESV)** ¹⁵*For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints,* ¹⁶*I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,* ¹⁷*that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,* ¹⁸*having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called*

you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

- (2) Paul affirms the faith and love of the Ephesian Christians.
 - (a) Then he tells them what He asks God to add to their lives: the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of God
 - (b) Then he shares with them the benefits of genuinely Christian people receiving the Spirit of wisdom and revelation by which they will come to know God
 - (i) The eyes of their heart will be enlightened.
 - 1) No more walking in spiritual darkness
 - 2) Seeing God and the world more clearly
 - 3) Added capacity to endure in the world without being confused or deceived
 - (ii) Know the hope to which they are called
 - (iii) Know the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints
 - 1) Look around you and see these people
 - 2) Remember Scrooge McDuck, Donald Duck's filthy rich, good hearted uncle who used to spend the afternoon diving into all the gold stored in his massive vault?
 - 3) The church is the vault in which God stores Christ's inheritance
 - 4) The people around you are, by analogy, God's gold.
 - (iv) Know the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe
 - (v) These are the rewards of theology!

iii. Personal spiritual development is the product of the pursuit of good theology.

(1) **Philippians 1:9-11 (ESV) ⁹ And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.**

- (2) Abounding love is the condition of a spiritually developed heart
- (3) Accompanied by knowledge and discernment: the knowledge of God and the ability to discern what is of Him and what is not.
 - (a) Approve what is excellent
 - (b) Be fully prepared to stand in the presence of the Glory with fearless, shameless love

- (c) Filled with the moral and spiritual character of Jesus Christ Himself
 - (d) To the glory not of yourself but of God, since He will have done His work in you as you pursued knowledge of Him.
- iv. The times in which we live demand that Christian know the truth of God in order to articulate that truth to the world
- (1) **2 Timothy 4:1-4 (ESV)** *¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.*
 - (2) I don't have to tell you how truly these words have come to pass in our day.
 - (3) If you are going to stand against the onslaught of the evil one in our day, whose deceiving lies continually turn people away from the Truth, from God's truth, then we must be students of truth, students of God, we must do good theology.
 - (4) Wednesday nights at 6:30 we are exploring good theology and I think you should make the time to be there.
 - (a) Of course, the same principles apply to Sunday mornings at 9:15 for Sunday school and at 10:30 AM for worship and Sunday evenings at 6:30 for PrimeTime and any other occasion you can find for pursuing the knowledge of God.
 - (b) It is easy to think that having begun a journey with Christ we can simply drift along like others do the time-consuming work of knowing Him.
 - (i) But we cannot.
 - (ii) Those who drift, drift away and are lost.
 - (iii) You need to make time to pursue God and the knowledge of God in your life.

HYMN C#548 As the Deer

HYMN C#549 Higher Ground

Pastoral Prayer

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Benediction