

643 Now Thank We All Our God

1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voice - es,
 2 O may this boun-teous God through all our life be near us,
 3 All praise and thanks to God, who reigns in high - est heav - en,

who won-drous things hath done, in whom this world re - joic - es;
 with ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us;
 to Fa - ther and to Son and Spir - it now be giv - en:

who, from our moth-ers' arms, hath blessed us on our way
 and keep us in God's grace, and guide us when per-plexed,
 the one e - ter - nal God, whom heaven and earth a - dore,

with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
 and free us from all ills in this world and the next.
 the God who was, and is, and shall be ev - er - more.

Although this hymn is often used on large and festive occasions, its first two stanzas had much humbler beginnings: they originated as a family table prayer during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). These words have been associated with this tune since the mid-17th century.

Though I May Speak 693

The Gift of Love

1 Though I may speak with brav - est fire,
 2 Though I may give all I pos - sess,
 3 Come, Spir - it, come, our hearts con - trol;

and have the gift to all in - spire,
 and striv - ing so my love pro - fess,
 our spir - its long to be made whole.

and have not love, my words are vain,
 but not be given by love with - in,
 Let in - ward love guide ev - ery deed;

as sound - ing brass, and hope - less gain.
 the prof - it soon turns strange - ly thin.
 by this we wor - ship, and are freed.

As paraphrases of 1 Corinthians 13:1, 3 the first two stanzas here are in the first person singular, yet they lead into a plural prayer for the gift of such love, for it thrives in community. These words are especially poignant with this adaptation of an English folk melody.

O for a World 372

1 O for a world where ev - ery - one re - spects each oth - er's ways,
 2 O for a world where goods are shared and mis - er - y re - lieved,
 3 We wel - come one world fam - i - ly and strug - gle with each choice
 4 The poor are rich; the weak are strong; the fool - ish ones are wise.
 5 O for a world pre - par - ing for God's glo - rious reign of peace,

where love is lived and all is done with jus - tice and with praise.
 where truth is spo - ken, chil - dren spared, e - qual - i - ty a - chieved.
 that o - pens us to u - ni - ty and gives our vi - sion voice.
 Tell all who mourn: out - casts be - long, who per - ish - es will rise.
 where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

Everything longed for in this text is a reminder of how far our present world is from what God wants. Yet this is not just wishful thinking; it is a call to action, a summons to participate in the fulfillment of God's desire for all earth's people to live in radical *shalom*.