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Theme: “God is refining me, not rejecting me.”

(Malachi 3:3) “He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver.”

Life Enrichment Discussion

Question 1:

What is the difference between punishment and God's refining process?

Question 2:

Why do you think God sometimes allows believers to go through difficult seasons?

Question 3:

What are some impurities God may need to remove from your life?

1. What does It mean to be refined?

To ***refine*** means to remove impurities so that something becomes purer, stronger, and more valuable.

When gold is refined, it is heated so that the impurities can be separated from the precious metal.

Spiritually, God uses the refining process to remove things from our lives that do not reflect His character.

God is not trying to destroy us.

He is developing us.

The refining process can involve:

- Trials
- Waiting
- Correction
- Discipline
- Disappointment
- Change
- Conviction
- Closed doors

Sometimes we ask:

God, why am I going through this?

But the better question is:

God, what are You trying to produce in me through this?

2. The Refiner knows what is inside the metal

A refiner knows that valuable metal may contain impurities that cannot be seen from the outside.

Likewise, God knows what is inside of us.

(Proverbs 17:3) The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart.

Throughout the OT, testing is often compared to refining precious metals.

God doesn't only look at our behavior.

He looks at our:

- Motives
- Attitudes
- Thoughts
- Desires
- Character
- Faith
- Obedience

We may fool people, but ***we cannot fool God.***

God knows what needs to be removed.

3. God uses pressure to reveal what is inside us

A trial doesn't necessarily create what's inside us.

Sometimes it ***reveals what's already there.***

When everything is going well, it can be easy to say:

"I trust God."

But what happens when:

- The answer doesn't come.
- Someone disappoints you.
- Your plans don't work?
- God tells you to wait.

The pressure reveals our spiritual condition.

James 1:2–4

James teaches that trials test our faith and produce perseverance.

The trial is not the final product.

The maturity produced through the trial is the goal.

4. God Is not trying to break you—he Is trying to build you

There is a difference between breaking something and breaking something down so it can be rebuilt properly.

God may tear down:

- Pride
- Self-reliance
- Disobedience
- Wrong thinking
- Fear

Why?

Because He wants to build:

- Humility
- Faith
- Obedience
- Patience
- Love
- Wisdom
- Dependence on Him

Remember: God will sometimes remove what you have become comfortable with to prepare you for what He has called you to become.

5. The heat Is part of the process

Gold does not become pure without heat.

Likewise, spiritual growth doesn't always happen in comfortable circumstances.

(Isaiah 48:10) “See, I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.”

The furnace represents difficult seasons.

But here's the good news:

The furnace has a purpose.

God doesn't waste your pain.

He can use difficult experiences to develop your character.

Don't only ask:

“How do I get out of this?”

Also ask:

“God, what are You teaching me while I'm in this?”

6. God controls the temperature

A refiner doesn't randomly heat the metal.

There is a purpose behind the process.

Likewise, God knows how much pressure we can handle and what He is trying to accomplish.

(1 Corinthians 10:13) God is faithful and will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear.

That means:

Your trial is not outside God's awareness.

God knows where you are.

God knows what you're facing.

God knows how long you've been waiting.

And God knows what He is producing in you.

7. The refiner doesn't leave the metal alone

This is one of the most powerful pictures of God's refining process.

The refiner stays involved.

God doesn't put you in the fire and walk away.

(Psalm 23:4) "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me."

Notice:

"I walk through."

You are not staying in the valley forever.

You're going through it.

Somebody needs to hear:

The fire is not your final destination.

8. Job: Refined Through Suffering

Job experienced tremendous loss and suffering.

He lost possessions.

He lost children.

He lost his health.

He experienced confusion and disappointment.

Yet Job declared:

(Job 23:10) "But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold."

Job didn't understand everything God was doing.

But he trusted that God knew the way.

That's faith.

Faith doesn't always say:

"I understand."

Sometimes faith says:

"I don't understand, but I still trust God."

9. Your character is more important than your comfort

One of the hardest lessons in Christianity is understanding that **God's goal is not always to make us comfortable.**

God wants to make us Christlike.

(Romans 8:29) God's purpose is that we be conformed to the image of His Son.

That means sometimes God will work on our:

Character before our circumstances.

We may be asking God:

"Change my situation."

While God is saying:

"I'm changing you."

10. The refining process removes impurities

What are some spiritual impurities God may want to remove?

Pride

"I can do this without God."

Bitterness

"I will never forgive them."

Fear

"I don't trust what God is doing."

Impatience

"I need it right now."

Anger

"I have to get even."

Selfishness

“It's all about me.”

Unforgiveness

“I refuse to release them.”

Disobedience

“I know what God said, but I'm going to do what I want.”

The refining process exposes these things so that God can deal with them.

11. Sometimes God uses people to refine us

This can be uncomfortable.

God may place people in our lives who challenge our:

- Patience
- Love
- Humility
- Forgiveness
- Communication
- Self-control

Not every difficult person is necessarily sent by God, but *God can use difficult relationships to reveal areas where we need spiritual growth.*

(Proverbs 27:17) “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”

Some people sharpen us.

Some situations stretch us.

Some experiences teach us.

And God can use all of them to mature us.

12. The refining process requires surrender

We cannot fully cooperate with God's refining work while constantly fighting Him.

Sometimes we have to say:

"Lord, have Your way in me."

That means:

"Search me."

"Correct me."

"Change me."

"Remove what doesn't belong."

"Make me more like Jesus."

(Psalm 139:23–24) "Search me, God, and know my heart... See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."

That's a refining prayer.

13. Don't waste your refining season

If God is allowing you to go through a difficult season, don't waste it.

Learn something.

Grow.

Pray.

Read the Word.

Develop patience.

Strengthen your faith.

Change your attitude.

Become more dependent upon God.

You don't want to come out of the fire the same person who went into it.

14. What happens after refining?

(1 Peter 1:6–7) Peter compares tested faith to gold that has been refined by fire.

The goal is **genuine faith**.

After the refining process, you should have:

- Stronger faith
- Greater wisdom
- Deeper dependence on God
- Greater patience
- Better character
- Stronger testimony
- Greater spiritual maturity

The process produces a testimony:

“I went through it, but God brought me through it.”

Life Application: How to Respond to the Refining Process

1. Don't run from God.

Run **to** God.

2. Don't complain about every trial.

Ask what God is teaching you.

3. Don't resist correction.

Allow God to transform you.

4. Don't compare your process with someone else's.

God knows what **you** need.

5. Don't give up in the fire.

The process is not permanent.

6. Stay connected to God's Word.

The Word keeps you grounded while you're being refined.

7. Trust God's hands.

The Refiner knows what He is doing.

Conclusion

A piece of gold does not determine its value by the amount of fire it experiences. Its value is revealed by what remains after the impurities are removed.

You may be in a difficult season right now.

You may feel like you're under pressure.

But don't automatically assume that God has abandoned you.

You may be in God's refining process.

God is removing what doesn't belong.

God is strengthening what does.

God is developing your character.

God is deepening your faith.

God is preparing you for what comes next.