

REFINER'S FIRE

Text:

1 Peter 4:14: If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified.

1. Those of us who have gone to our own funeral — and died to self — can take reproach, and it will not chafe us, for we are DEAD to SELF and SIN.



2. Those of our number who are not yet crucified with Christ, along with the OLD MAN (our carnal nature), according to the following:

Romans 6:6: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

will have a hard time with reproaches from unbelievers and carnal Christians, especially in these areas:

- (a) **Carnal Christians do not take it too kindly to be laughed at, mocked, ridiculed, or jeered at.**
- (b) **When they curl up the lip and sneer at you, and ridicule you as a lame brain, a simpleton, or “have a screw loose upstairs”, some will take offense. The more pride that is in the heart, the greater the offense will be.**
- (c) **The more CARNAL and worldly minded a professing Christian is, the less he or she will be severely tried by the world, such as being beaten, stoned, or have personal property destroyed.**
- (d) **Try passing out Gospel tracts to any great degree, and you will find sinners making light of you. But watch your attitude. If you are full of Holy Spirit love, the response will be much better, for you will give them out with JOY and in a LOVING manner. Sinners will find this hard to PERSECUTE.**



(e) **As new Christians, we have stood on street corners and witnessed for Christ, and have been bombarded with garbage, trash, rotten eggs, tomatoes, rotten potatoes, and other missiles taken from behind the grocery store across the street from us. We'd have to come to church prepared with a new set of clothing to change into after the street meetings. We could not dodge all the stuff thrown when it was coming from so many directions.**

3. COWARDS would thin out from our witnessing group, taking this as an insult to their official dignity. Plainly, they were too proud to be shamed in this manner.
4. We had street meetings in our churches. It was amazing to me how the spiritually-minded Christians would come and boldly declare their faith in Christ. On the other hand, the carnal would shy away from going out, especially in front of BARS, to have a STREET SERVICE. They would rather stay at the church and pray for us while we ministered to the lost. You see, they had only indoor religion. We need both — Outdoor and Indoor Salvation!



Job 23:10: But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

THE VALUE OF HARDSHIPS

**For every hill I've had to climb,
For every stone that bruised my feet,
For all the blood and sweat and grime,
For blinding storms and burning heat,
My heart sings but a grateful song - - -
THESE WERE THE THINGS that made me strong!
For all the heartaches and the tears,
For all the anguish and the pain,
For gloomy days and fruitless years,
For the hopes that lived in vain,
I do give thanks for now I know
THESE WERE THE THINGS that helped me grow
‘Tis not the softer things of life**

**Which stimulate man's will to strive;
But bleak adversity and strife
Do most to keep men's will alive.
O'er rose strewn paths and weaklings creep,
But brave hearts dare to climb the steep.**

The Heavenly REFINER has a purpose in allowing us to go through these FIERY TRIALS. It is not to destroy us, but to purge and purify us, by consuming the DROSS.

Fire can't destroy GOLD, SILVER, or BRASS. Any refiner can tell you that it only melts it before it can become pure enough for the RING, or to house a JEWEL. The sooner you melt, the sooner the fire ceases.

God wants us to be 24 carat purified. When gold is purified to 18 carat, its nearly pure, but to be truly pure it must be 24 carat. Some of us are only 5, others, 7 or 10, some 15, and some gold-plated. Dross will come to the top — the refiner skims it off and continues to skim until he can see his image in the purified metal in the refining pot.



- (a) Romans 8:29: For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of His Son, that He [Jesus] might be the Firstborn among many brethren.***
- (b) 1 Corinthians 15:48: As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.***
- (c) Hebrews 12:10: For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His Holiness.***
- (d) 2 Peter 1:4: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.***

Only the Heavenly REFINER knows when the refining is done.

He is like a REFINERS fire, and like Fullers soap. He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and HE shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness;

Malachi 3:2-3:

2 But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And He shall sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in Righteousness.

At times, we will pass through the FIERY FURNACE of mankind, as the Three Hebrew children — Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego — who were thrown into the fiery furnace because they would not bow down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had erected.

Daniel 3:14, 20-21:

14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

20 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.



ALWAYS REMEMBER, our earthly enemies can be heartless and cruel. When they came out of the fiery furnace, four things had happened:

- 1. Their hair was not singed.**
- 2. The fire burned off the ropes, fetters, and bands.**
- 3. There was no harm done to them.**
- 4. The Lord walked with them in the midst of the fire in the furnace.**

REMEMBER also, **satan uses people**. SATAN desired to SIFT PETER, and the Lord didn't stop him:

Luke 22:31: And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

The Holy Spirit places this seven-lettered word at the very commencement of the verse. He wants us to know that were intensely loved. We are inclined to think that He doesn't when we're going through fiery trials.

Revelation 3:19: As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Before, having a self-pity party, we need to consider the SUFFERINGS OF OUR SAVIOUR. HE sets out before us the example of what we will go through and how we will come out if we don't try to run away from the fiery furnace.



THIRD REMINDER!!!

1 Peter 4:13: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His Glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

We are made partakers of Christ's sufferings in our fiery furnace experiences. The Lord Jesus was hated, because HE condemned the SINS in SINNERS, including church member sinners.

Matthew 23:37-39:

³⁷ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

³⁸ Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

³⁹ For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

Nothing will get us into quicker trouble than crying out against religious sinners. The Lord Jesus' spotless purity showed up the dirt in these polluted church members. It made them mad as a hornet, and they did strike Him with their stinger.



NOTE: ***Partakers***: this word used 3 times by the Apostle Peter:

1. PARTAKERS OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS

1 Peter 4:13: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His Glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

2. PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE:

2 Peter 1:4: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

3. PARTAKERS OF THE GLORY

1 Peter 5:1: The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

When we're made of the RIGHT STUFF, the harder the devil tries to throw us down, BUT the HIGHER WE WILL BOUNCE.

The devil had to learn too late not to fool around with Peter so much. We see him as the spokesman on the day of Pentecost, and even more so afterwards. None other of the original twelve was more mightily used in the realm of the supernatural and the miraculous realm.



Peter, because of the REFININGS, became so much more CHRIST-LIKE in nature, that we see it manifested in all the eight chapters of the two epistles written by him.

The KEY WORD in just about every chapter in this epistle is: **TRIALS.**

It forms the basis for our refining when we see how the Lord brought him through.

1 Peter 1:6-7:

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

1 Peter 2:19-23:

19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth:

23 Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him Who judgeth righteously:

1 Peter 3:12-18:

12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For it is better, if the Will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1 Peter 4:12-19:

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His Glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified.



15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the Will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

1 Peter 5:8-10:

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10 But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.



I like what the Apostle Paul adds in:

2 Corinthians 4:17: For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

It all depends upon HOW MUCH DROSS is in us, as to how much fire we have to face. That is why Peter said:

1 Peter 1:6-7:

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

A. **PRAISE:**

We will PRAISE HIM more when we see the refinement in our lives.

B. **HONOR:**

Going through the FIRE will entitle us to HIGH RANK in the Kingdom. Viewing ourselves amongst the over-comers, we will be glad with exceeding joy

C. **GLORY:**

The glory comes when the rewards are given in Heaven. Salvation is a gift, lovingly given by Christ. The rewards are for having DONE WELL.

Matthew 25:20-23:

20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.



THE DIVINE PURPOSE accomplished in our FIERY TRIALS is discovered in:

1 Peter 5:10: But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

MAY HE MAKE YOU PERFECT, ESTABLISH, STRENGTHEN, and SETTLE YOU.

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