

The Refiner's Fire

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[0 : 00] A drill here, a sword drill for where we're going, Zechariah chapter 13 in the Bible, Zechariah 13.

I found it. I was looking into it, preaching something on excuses as I read through Luke, a passage in Luke this week, and it caught my eye and I was studying it out and trying to make sense of it, and it just wasn't coming together, and usually that's a sign that God's saying, no, it's not what I want you to do.

And so I laid that down and just waited on God, and he kind of led me to something that I preached a long time ago, just a message that I pulled out of my files. And I looked over it, as soon as I did, it just felt like, yes, this is it.

And didn't plan on it, but picking out the songs even, the songs this morning spoke, in some cases, very strongly to this passage of Scripture. So we're in Zechariah 13, and I want to read two verses, verses 8 and 9.

And we're dealing with future prophecy here, as far as getting your bearings in the book, and as much of this is tribulation context and second coming of Jesus Christ.

[1 : 32] And much of the book is all about that. It's all prophecy. And we come down to verses 8 and 9. He's dealing with the Jewish remnant as they're going through a terrible time here on earth.

And I want to spiritualize these thoughts of what God says to them and help us to get some light out of what it is to go through some tough times here on earth ourselves. Verse number 8 says, And verse 9 is going to be my text this morning.

And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them, and I will say it is my people, and they shall say the Lord is my God.

Now, keep your place and just turn a page or two over to Malachi. And chapter number 3, and I want us to see a verse out of this text. Malachi 3. And the first two verses will read.

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me. And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.

[2 : 52] Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts, 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 fooler's 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. This is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, being, he's called, he is like a refiner's fire.

Now, back in Zechariah, we read that God said, I'll bring the third part of them through the fire, and we'll refine them, and we'll try them. I want to preach this morning on the refiner's fire.

And it's a place that God will lead his children. In some cases, it's when they'll take a step toward God, and they want to be used by God.

God says, well, I want to use you, but not the way you are. There's some things that need to change in your life, some things that need to come off of you. And in some cases, you need to be tested, or tried, as the scripture says.

[3 : 54] And it's a place that God will lead his children into, that they must endure before God can entrust them to do something for him. In 1 Peter 4 and verse 12, Peter writes, Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.

It's nothing awkward about going through a trial, and it certainly shouldn't be anything awkward or scary about it when it's to draw you closer to God. God's not going to call a newborn babe in Christ to leave his family and home and go to the mission field.

God's going to try to draw somebody into growing and training and then put them through some things that's going to try them and test them and really prepare them, ultimately. But one way to avoid the refiner's fire is to never take a step toward God.

One way to avoid God leading you into something tough is just to stay away from the Lord and to live your life for yourself. And there's many Christians today that won't even think of it because they know if I start serving God, he's probably going to test me or he's going to put me through something or he's going to ask me to give up something, and I'm not willing to do that.

And there's Christians all over the place that have drinking the cup of the water of life freely and tasted how good salvation is, but to take a step toward the Lord Jesus Christ and serving him to take up the cross that we read in Matthew, they don't want to do it.

[5 : 25] They don't want to go through a fire. They don't want to get burned. And God doesn't get fellowship and get glory like he desires from somebody like that. Instead, they just waste their life and they'll regret it one day.

But many won't come near this thing. But if you do take a step toward God and desire a closer fellowship with him and you want your life to be his, it could be that he'll lead you into a fire.

And it's that refiner's fire that I want to preach on this morning. I want to draw some things out of this text, some promises out of this, that you can rest assured, even if it hurts and even if it feels like there's no God in this thing, I want to show you that it could be that he's just trying to help you and he's trying to bring you through something to get something better out of you.

And so we'll speak figuratively, obviously, about this place and what really happens, but address circumstances in your life. Before we do, let's pray and then we'll get back into Zechariah 13, verse 9.

Our Father in heaven, this book is yours. These words are yours. And I attempt this morning to speak them and to relate them to men and women that are in 2021. And so God, this can't be done but by your spirit.

[6 : 35] And so I pray that you'll lead the charge here and that you'll open up the hearts and minds and Lord, speak some truth and help. And Lord, just solidify some things in people's hearts.

Let them rest assured that even in the trials of life, if they're serving you and doing right, that you can be glorified through them and that they're only temporary. And Lord, thank you for that promise. I pray you'll help some people today and we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Verse number 9, I read the first part again. The Bible says, I will bring the third part through the fire.

And let me say, first of all, the refiner's fire is a place with a promise. The promise is, I will bring through the fire. I will bring you through it.

The promise is, this thing is only temporary. God's not looking to leave you there. God's looking to obtain a result out of you. I'm looking to bring you through it.

[7 : 34] He never intends to put somebody in the fire that he doesn't intend to bring out of the fire. God's not punishing you if you're in a situation or you find yourself in a place that you're not fond of and you think you're doing right and you think, why God me?

Or how should this ever happen to me? This is not a, even if it's somebody in here or if it's a lot of, or if it's everybody in here, there's no temptation taking you but such as is common to man.

And the truth is, if you could look back through church history and find the people that have literally been tossed into a fire or go back even into the Old Testament and find out those who have lost their lives, there's situations that God has allowed men to go through and allowed himself to be glorified in that we're not even close to.

We're not even scratching the surface with some of the things that I myself have been through or perhaps you are as well. But the promise of the refiner's fire is that I will bring them through the fire. It's a temporary thing. It could be quick. It could take several fires. I guess it depends on you maybe and on your reaction on what God's seeking to do.

[8 : 43] I think some of us sow way too much to the flesh and we reap way too much corruption and there's way too much baggage on us that God has to just put us back in there a little bit longer to try to get something out of us.

I believe though God is preparing a man by putting him in the fire and it's only temporary and there's a purpose. It's not punishment. It's for your good. He'll bring you through the fire.

It's on his terms though for him to be glorified by a dirty, worthless, rotten sinner like you and I. So it's a temporary thing. There's a promise with it.

But secondly, see that this place is a place with a partner. In verse number nine, he says, I will bring the third part through the fire. The refiner's fire, the place that God may place you in in life that hurts and that doesn't suit you in the way you want to live your life.

It's a place with a partner. It's not a place that you have to go through alone. If he led you there and said, follow me, then he's there with you. And this is where folks quit on God.

[9 : 49] This is where folks get frustrated with it all and say, I can't deal with it. And they focus on what hurts and on the trial itself rather than on the partner that they have in that trial.

Folks say, where's God in all of this? Instead of following the scripture, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, the one that promised he'd never leave nor forsake as we just sang. The refiner's fire is a place with a partner. He wants you to succeed in this fire and he'll help you in this fire. And as the Bible says, he wants you to come boldly under the throne of grace that you may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Remember, the apostle Paul had a thorn in his flesh that he besought the Lord thrice, that he would take it from him, saying, I just can't deal with this anymore. And the Lord gave himself that. He said, my grace is sufficient for thee.

God offered him his grace. And God's there to give it to you as well. It's a place with a partner.

Think of Daniel chapter 3. Remember that fire? Remember that fire that those three Hebrews got tossed into by an angry, angry king?

[10 : 56] Daniel wasn't in that fire, was he? No, because it wasn't his to be in. He had other things. He had something else coming. And it was a den of lions just a little bit down the road.

He was going to get tossed into that one. And he found that to be a place with a partner. But here's one where these three Hebrews get tossed into a fire and the king looks up and says, weren't there three?

I see a fourth. And the form of the fourth is like the son of God because they had a partner. And whether you realize it or not, you have the same partner in the dungeon with you, in the fire with you, the same partner that gave dying grace to the martyrs down through the ages is the same one that'll see you through the fire.

It's not just a place with a promise that I'll bring you through it. It's a place with a partner saying, I will bring you. I'll be there with you. Thirdly, let's notice that this fire is a place of purifying.

In verse number nine, he says, I will refine them as silver is refined. Now, come back to Malachi. I mentioned, we read the verse, but I'll draw your attention to it again.

[12 : 06] Verse number three, he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. To refine is to purify. It's purging.

It's cleansing. The refiner's fire is a place of purifying. In other words, there's things that you pick up along the way in this life.

The Bible says, the whole world lieth in wickedness. And if you're down on this planet, you're going to pick stuff up and you're going to find that your flesh likes some things that God doesn't want you to have.

You're going to find that you have some desires that aren't God-given desires, but they're carnal and they're worldly. And you'll pick things up and you'll pick up a mindset sometimes or pick up items or fall in love with things that aren't godly or that take your heart away from God.

They're the thorns that we preached on a few weeks back. There's things you're going to pick up that don't belong there and they have to go. And God doesn't want to use you like that. So he says, I'm going to put you through the fire and see if I can purify you.

[13 : 13] I had a guy I used to work with in construction that he was one of the boss's sons and just being that guy, he kind of got away with stuff and most of the guys in the company didn't care for him too much.

But there was times where I was on jobs with him and there was times when I was just young in the trade and I was his helper and he would pretty much make me do whatever he didn't want to do. But there came a day where I was running my own jobs and there was certain times where he came to assist me on the jobs. There would be two of us there and this guy would show up, he'd get out of his truck and he'd get the two most important things to him, his radio and his tea jug and he'd have both hands with his radio and tea jug and go into the job and look where he wants to set up and where we're going to be working at.

And there's a time and you know wherever he went that was what went with him because that's what was most important to him and then he'd have to go back and get his tools or he'd ask me to carry my tools and his tools because he's got the two most important things to him.

There was a time on a job site that I was working and I needed his help and I two-wayed him back when they had the Nextel beeping whatever they were called I forget and I asked him come over here and give me a hand and the guy came over with his radio and his tea jug and I'm up on a ladder pretty high up and I looked down and I was just so just frustrated like I don't need your I said to him what do you think I needed a drink and he didn't know what to say because that's just how he was always that's just what I carry with me.

[14 : 49] I'm like I need you I need your tools I need you ready to work and he wasn't ready to work. That guy needed some things to change he needed to drop some stuff before he could be of any help to me.

There was a similar situation when I was in Florida working in jobs there was a guy very similar to that who always took a fan with him he was blazing hot in Pensacola Florida and the humidity at 7 in the morning is just it just take your breath away when you get working it was hot stuff and so this guy always had a fan and of course to have a fan you have to have an extension cord on a job site so everywhere he went and literally we're moving through running pipes through rooms and so we're moving from room to room to room to room everywhere he went was got to take my fan into the next room get it set up get the cord run it over there it would take him three to five minutes just to move not just a ladder but to move all of his situation and he frustrated the death out of me because I couldn't stand moving forward with waiting on him waiting on him waiting on him why because all he wanted to do was be comfortable his priority wasn't get the job done get through this mess and let's get on the other side of it it was I just want to be comfortable while I'm in this room I want to be comfortable while I'm in this room and it was the kind of guy that mindset

I just couldn't take it frustrated me as you can hear in my voice it's a place of purifying and the thought is that sometimes there's things that we carry around with us or there's a way we want our life to go that's just not the way God's calling us and it's not profitable to him and he wants to call you to drop some of that and it may be that God puts you into the fire and says that stuff needs to go I'm not getting the production out of you that I ought to get out of you you're holding on to too much stuff or it's holding you back and it's slowing you down God says I need you that's all I need just you so let go of the junk it's holding you back God wants to use some folks in the ministry or use folks in this world to be a blessing and to point others to Jesus Christ and he's happy to do the work but he wants to do it through you and he may put you in the fire and squeeze on a few things until you're willing to let go the definition of refine listen to this is to free from earthiness did you get that in this context to free from earthiness putting the metal into the fire tries to free it of those elements that are in there those impurities the same thing's true

God wants to purify you it's a place of purifying a negative place that hurts because it's breaking you down but it's ultimately to help and to make you more valuable to him it's a hot place a place where impurities can be released a place that the fire brings those impurities to the surface the squeezing the heat the being wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ in that fire those impurities show up and they need to go and in that heat when they rise to the surface and if you say okay God I see just take this from me then take this from me that's purifying you're getting purged you're getting closer and more like him and those things begin to be revealed they say if you can't take the heat then get out of the kitchen and Christians today don't like the heat too much they don't like to be squeezed and to be melted down they like to be comfortable they don't like what the fire does to them

Christians even in some cases like to do it themselves and like to think that they're on their own two feet they'll do it and they'll serve God on their own terms but the fire is going to force something different out of you it'll force you to trust him to acknowledge that he's all you have and as the songwriter said when I come to the place that he's all I have I find he's all I need God says you spend too much time thinking about yourself and I want you to think about me and I'll put you in the fire and the fire will either cause you to get bitter at God and you'll say I'm done with this or to help you to see him and to yield to him and surrender to him and focus on what he's thinking about for your life God says you got too many things in your life that have your heart and so I'm going to take them from you why because I want your heart and the proverb says my son give me thine heart God wants your heart and by the way you'll do better without those things if God wants to take them

from you and it's for your good the refiner's fire is a place of purging and purifying [19:37] God wants your heart and it's a place where the end product is always better than the original but it takes that pain and it takes that fire to get it out there's a fourth thing the refiner's fire in verse number 9 it's a place of proving I will bring the third part through the fire and will refine them as silver is refined and will try them as gold is tried it's a place of proving it's a place of a trial something to try you it's hard it's supposed to be hard it's meant to be hard to get the results and it's only by proving you know when you go to school you sit through a chapter of whatever material you're proved at the end of that chapter you're tested there's a test that comes it's a trial to reveal whether you received and understood and got it you don't pass on you don't move ahead until you're tested until you prove that you got it this place is a place of proving look back at

Proverbs chapter 17 Proverbs 17 the Lord's trying you and testing you but what's he testing verse 3 the finding pot is for silver and the furnace for gold but the Lord trieth the hearts God's checking your heart he's seeing what's in your heart come to let me show you one more 1 Peter I think it's chapter 1 yeah 1 Peter 1 a place of testing God has to do this he has to test you he has to see you and you need to see you as well and when you pass the test you're prepared for something for him or prepared you know hey

I can get through that hey I can endorse some things for Jesus Christ 1 Peter 1 and there's just this little phrase in this verse verse 6 wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for a season if need be year in heaviness through manifold temptations that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire might be found under praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ there's this thing about being in heaviness and the phrase if need be if God needs to do this to you then he does this to you and he tries your faith tries it with fire as verse 7 says it's a place of proving and it could be that some in here and throughout your life there'll be that need there will be the need the need will be for you to go into the refiner's fire and to be tested and to be proven and tried and you might think well God wouldn't do this to me why would God do this to me what have I done again it's not punishment but our human side thinks what's wrong it may not be that anything's wrong maybe God's moving you forward somebody would say well God wouldn't destroy my family like that would he and God say whose family or God you might say well God wouldn't take my job from me would he or my car or my possessions God wouldn't do that to me why is this happening and God says whose possessions are they they're yours your heart's tied to those God wouldn't take my health feels like he's ruining my life whose health whose life God might have to find out whose life it actually is if somebody gave their life to God then God might want to make sure it's still his and so we'll put you in the furnace in Isaiah 48 and verse 10 he speaks of refining his people in the furnace of affliction he calls

Egypt the iron furnace think of a man in the old testament named Job that lost his children he lost his possessions he lost his health he had his wife and his friends coming against him and literally Job's all alone and he's all the way down on the bottom scraping the sores that's how bad he was on his back but Job comes out talking like this in chapter 23 verse 10 saying he knoweth the way that I take and when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold Job understood I am in this furnace of affliction the refiner's fire he's trying me right now he's proving me and testing me and I'm coming through this one Job had resolve that I'm going to pass because I trust him why the trial well maybe it's preparation why the trial maybe God's just not getting what he deserves out of your life refiner's fire is a place of proving come back to

[25:17] Zechariah if you're there in chapter 13 again there's something else about this fire we see Zechariah 13 again in verse number 9 and I will bring the third part through the fire and will refine them as silver is refined and will try them as gold is tried and now notice they shall call on my name and I will hear them the refiner's fire is a place of prayer where they'll call on his name they're not calling on his name before this but they get placed in the fire and now they're turning their hearts and their minds and their efforts toward God this is a place where just like Jacob in the old Genesis where he wrestled all night with God it's a place where you're not sleeping it's a place where you talk to God and sometimes it even takes your appetite away where you're not eating and you seek that answer from

God and you get to that place where you just call on his name you call on his name you don't know what's going on you can't understand this fire why you're there what's the purpose of it all but it's in this fire that you learn how to pray I don't believe a lot of Christians know how to pray because they haven't ever needed to pray they haven't ever needed to get through something they haven't ever

been in a place where they had to call on God but in the fire you will amen and every individual that I know that's got a form of spirituality to them that I can perceive they're an individual that's learned how to pray there's a man that has a friend of mine who's been through a mess I mean a real mess with his family with his health with his job his company he owned just a total mess and he's a strong spiritual man he loves the word of God he loves the Lord Jesus Christ and he'll testify that I didn't know how to pray until God put me through some things and now I know how to pray and now I know how to walk with Christ and he's improved because of it he looks back on these trials and the refiner's fire in his life and says God was changing me

I was letting go of how much I love the world and how much I love my boat and my possessions and how quickly I'd give up my Sundays in church to go enjoy these things that God has blessed me with in this life he changed he lost his health he's been in such a trial with his health that he realizes I don't want to go anywhere but to church and to walk with God and to serve him because I see how quick this life could be gone and I don't want to have spent my time on the lake when I should have been serving Christ and getting something that will get through the judgment seat of Christ he learned how to pray and he learned how to call on God this fire will force you to call on God and to trust him and to the song says learning to lean on Jesus this is where you learn to lean on the Lord Jesus Christ look at Psalm 66 66 Psalm 66 I'll just run you through a few passages here and we'll begin

I don't want to read the whole thing how about 10 through 14 verse 10 this is David and he's learning to call on God in the fire and you know the Psalms are a great place to park if you feel like you're in a fire you get in here from somebody who's been there verse 10 for thou O God has proved us thou has tried us as silver is tried thou brought us us into the net thou laidest affliction upon our loins thou hast caused men to ride over our heads we went through fire and through water but thou brought us us out into a wealthy place I will go into the house with burnt offerings to thy house with burnt offerings I will pay thee my vows which my lips have uttered and my mouth has spoken when I was in trouble David learned how to call on God when he was under the getting pressed by the thumb of God in the fire he uttered some vows his lips uttered some things before God he learned how to pray because what happened come to 69

Psalm 69 first three verses save me O God for the waters are coming unto my soul I sink in deep mire where there is no standing I am coming into deep waters where the floods overwhelm me I am weary of my crying my throat is dried mine eyes fail while I wait for my God he feels like he's a prisoner here verse 10 when I wept and chastened my soul with fasting that was to my reproach I made sackcloth also my garment and I became a proverb to them they that sit in the gate speak against me and I was the song of the drunkards but as for me my prayer is unto thee O Lord in an acceptable time O God in the multitude of thy mercy hear me in the truth of thy salvation deliver me out of the mire and let me not sink let me not or let me be delivered from them that hate me and out of the deep waters let not the water flood overflow me neither but let the deep swallow me up and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me hear me O Lord for my thy loving kindness is good turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies and hide not thy face from thy servant for I am in trouble hear me speedily

[31 : 13] David is a prisoner in fire and you know that's exactly what you are come to verse 30 if you're in this refiner's fire you're held captive by God verse 30 I will praise the name of God with a song and will magnify him with thanksgiving this also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hooves the humble shall see this and be glad and your heart shall live that seek God for the Lord heareth the poor and despiseth not his prisoners that's David's cry in his day of trial in his day where he's being proved and tested it's a place of prayer David learned how to pray he called on God and he said I'm a prisoner here Lord you're holding me captive but please hear me please deliver me there's a man that I he's with the Lord now but I grew up knowing him a man that's been through the fire his name is Dave

Dave had a son that he lost that was a teenager he knows what it's like to bury a child and it tore him up it broke his heart as you can imagine not only that but Dave through the fallout of some things down the road lost his wife into a nasty divorce and Dave he had really worked hard and built up a business and had some property and some things and his wife just went after everything of his and I remember him in church just asking prayer for grace and trying to deal with this stuff because it was just lawyers it was so much of a mess and it just ripped him down things were going pretty well for him in life but he was losing it quickly and after he got on the other side of that the business

that he still had burnt to the ground the entire factory the whole thing just to the ground he lost it all and Dave just he came out of that mess and I still remember him through the through this very as this was going on and he was just coming out of that

Dave we had request time and he requested one of his favorite songs it was very important to him is he is able to deliver thee and Dave wanted to sing that song that it's the grandest theme for a mortal tongue our God is able to deliver thee he felt like a prisoner in a fire he felt like things are just all this work gone all this time and devotion to a relationship to a family gone and there he was with kids that hated him a wife that spited him and wanted nothing to do with him cursed his name a business burnt to the ground he stayed faithful to the Lord he ended up remarrying a sweet sweet woman and he would tell you that before his death the years that he had in the late stages of life with that lady a godly lady were the best years of his life Dave was a man who went through the fire he didn't quit on God because he found God was able to deliver him the Bible says in Romans 8 28 we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called according to his purpose the last thing

I want us to think in this fire is that there is a purpose it's a place with a purpose it's God's intention to bring you through the fire it's to strengthen your relationship with him the end of that verse in Zechariah 9 when they when they call on his name he says I will hear them I will say it is my people and they shall say the Lord is my God and what's happened in this fire is God's people have turned their hearts to him they're crying out to him he's recognizing their voice he's recognizing them as his people they're recognizing that he is their God in Malachi 3 the Levites needed to be purified we read about them for a minute and the ending of that verse says that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness these men had to be purified they were they weren't doing it right God had to get them right to get them back to where they could offer the right kind of sacrifices before him in 1 Peter 1 when we read about that passage that it may be it's that they're to offer up the sacrifice of praise and honor and glory to Jesus Christ they're saying in this fire that he's my God they're not saying oh you're my friend or you're my helper they're not calling out an angered rebellion against him who are you but they're submitting saying the Lord is my God the Lord is my God there's a purpose in this fire the refiner's fire there's a promise there's a partner there's purifying and improving a place of prayer and the purpose is to draw you closer to God for him to get out of you what he needs to get out of you

I want to read this little thing here will be done it says a bar of steel is worth five dollars when it is wrought into horseshoes it's worth ten dollars if it's made into needles it's worth three hundred and fifty dollars if it's wrought into fine blades it can be worth thirty two thousand dollars but if it's wrought into springs for watches the worth of that five dollar bar of steel is now two hundred and fifty thousand dollars what a drilling the poor bar must undergo to be worth a higher value but the more it's manipulated the more it's hammered the more it's passed through the fire the more it's beaten the more it's pounded and polished the greater the value and so those who suffer most are capable of yielding most and it's through pain sometimes it seems that God gets the most out of us it's the refiner's fire do you feel like you're in there have you been there you may end up there in the near future be prepared for it because God's not trying to kick you out he's trying to draw you closer to him but it's going to be through his terms he's drawing you to him through the fire he's trying you refining you and in the end you respond right you're calling on his name

[37 : 54] I don't know if there's anybody in here that needs this why God kind of felt like the Lord led this on my heart laid this on my heart point me to this and I know that it's not an easy topic for some and it's for some that just can resonate with this thought I just want to draw you to it and draw you to the Lord really and draw you to the word of God you feel like you're going through the fire then get in the Psalms you feel like you're in the fire then humble yourself and pray and seek the face of God and you're not going to necessarily say oh it's going to be okay but he'll tell you I'm here with you I'll never leave you nor forsake you I know what's going on and God may just be asking you to give up and surrender to him you may just have to get this kind of firm in your mind that I'm going to face trials in life and it doesn't mean that God's punishing me or it doesn't mean that God's forgotten about me but maybe you need to turn your mind to look and say

Lord what do I need to learn from this Lord how can I draw closer to you from this and be prepared to be refined let's bow our heads together Father thank you for the word of God and for giving us answers to the questions that we have in this life Lord it's true that you're after our hearts first and foremost and God it's also true that you deserve our hearts and our allegiance our worship and so

Lord there's probably there's probably some impurities inside each one of us there's probably some filth of this world that's on us that ought to go and Lord if you've just brought that to light to someone today I pray God that you'll give them the courage to take the step and to call on your name and to try to be refined and allow you to purify them

God for others who have been through it or will go through it or are going through this kind of thing right now we pray that your grace would be sufficient that they'd react according to truth according to the word of God knowing that it's for their good I pray Lord that Jesus Christ could receive glory it's hard to see this stuff it's hard to understand in this life and on this side of eternity how these things can work together for good but Lord help us to trust you help us trust your word and to believe in it and to go to it and not neglect it but to seek out your face I wonder if there's anybody here that says yep that's me I'm facing this this is for me it could be half the crowd here that says this is for me in some way or another the Lord's putting me through something I'm getting tested here and I know it I wonder if you would admit that to God and say yeah I acknowledge it this morning I'm facing a trial I feel like I'm in a fire and can't get out but now I know it's not for me to try to climb out of it's for God to bring me through it and maybe clean some things up along the way some people say oh my life's good

I don't even know what you're talking about well maybe it's because you haven't taken a step toward God in a while maybe you're a little comfortable in your lifestyle maybe God's will for your life's not even on your radar today but if you'll turn your heart toward him if there's that longing inside God I want my life to last and mean something for you be prepared for a fire think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you be prepared for it we'll give you a moment to pray as she plays through this song give you a moment to just talk to the Lord maybe commit to him whatever it is that's hurting you maybe surrender to him but i it's never even saw you cause a completa■■ irritated

Amen. Amen.

[43 : 10] Amen. Amen. Amen. Alright, let's stand together and we'll be dismissed here.