

# Finding Joy In Refinement (Growing In Maturity pt. 2)

Sunday Morning  
Pastor Jim Lowe III  
Sunday Morning, 9:30am Stream  
11/21/21 (2nd Sunday Message)

**{All scriptures are NIV84 unless stated}**

Last week we talked about maturity.

We talked about a scripture in James that talks about one way we are matured.

**James 1:2-4**

**2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**

Consider it pure joy...

When you face trials of many kinds.

Consider it pure joy...

The first sentence says so much.

**James 1:2 (NCV)**

**2 My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy,**

You should be full of joy!

**James 1:2 (ESV)**

**2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,**

Count it joy!

**James 1:2 (MSG)**

**Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides.**

The message says consider it a gift!

All of these scriptures present trials as something we should be happy about.

Why?

**James 1:2-4**

**2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**

Testing your faith develops perseverance.

The ability to persevere is to maintain walking forward when you don't know what's going to happen.

*{From last week:}*

- 1. We Should Be Happy When We Face Trials**
- 2. When We Face Trials, Our Faith Is Tested**
- 3. When Our Faith Is Tested, It Makes Us Stronger**

The bible says to “consider” it joy.

“Consider it joy.”

## **Things James 1:2 Tells Us About Joy:**

- 1. Joy Is Available**
- 2. Joy Is A Choice**

The bible wouldn't tell us to consider it if it were impossible to get.

How can you consider something if it weren't available in the first place?

How can you consider “joy” if it's impossible to be found?

This means joy can always be attainable!

But we have to CHOOSE joy!

Joy is available!

## **Even In The Worst Of Times, Joy Is Available!**

It doesn't matter what it looks like...you can find Joy!

This is what the bible is telling us.

Find excitement in the thought that God is making us better!

God wants to move us from being “babes” in Christ.

### **Philippians 1:6**

**6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.**

He who began a good work...

Will carry it till completion.

It's not complete when it began.

It needs to finish.

It needs to be completed!

### Hebrews 12:2

**2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

Something New Today:

God is established as the Author and Perfecter

He is the start of it.

He is the completion of it.

In Revelation 21:6 (I am the alpha and omega)

God is the beginning and the end.

The author and perfecter of our faith.

When you joined the faith... God began that work in you.

This is not about someone else.

God wants to work on YOU.

He authors this work.

He will complete this work!

{From last week}

## **God Wants To Complete What He Started In You!**

God began it...

He wants to complete it.

{Someone say:}

## **“God Wants To Finish What He Started In Me!”**

He wants to take where we are now and create something even better!

This is how he works through trials.

This is how he refines us.

**Isaiah 48:10 (MSG)**

**Do you see what I've done?  
I've refined you, but not without fire.  
I've tested you like silver in the furnace of affliction.**

God is a refiner.

Through our trials...God is improving us.

**Job 23:10**

**10 But he knows the way that I take;  
when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.**

## **God Is Refining You!**

The bible says take joy in hard times....

Because God is refining us!

**Psalms 66:10**

**For you, O God, tested us;  
you refined us like silver.**

God tests us to refine us.

To make us BETTER than we were!

What does refine mean?

## **Refine Means To Purify Something That Is Impure**

When you take something and make it in its best state.

**Watched a video of gold refining...**

A man took some gold alloy.

It's dirty...probably mixed with other stuff. {dirt...mud.}

- Looks like pebbles or "gold stones."

He adds something to it (looked like some other metals).

Then he burns it until it melts.

He adds more stuff to it.

Then he puts it back on the fire.

Then he adds more stuff to it.

Sifts it a few times.

Then it goes back on the fire.

It is melted again...

Finally he takes what's left.

It goes into a mold.

When it is cooled off.

It's 99.14% pure gold.

## **The Refining Process For Gold:**

- 1. Things Are Added To The Gold**
- 2. It's Melted In The Furnace**
- 3. More Things Are Added To The Mixture**
- 4. It's Melted Again**
- 5. More Things Are Added**
- 6. Back On The Fire**
- 7. What's Left Is Molded**
- 8. Pure Gold**

Few things to note:

It's a multi step process that requires the furnace multiple times.

When the metal is melted, it allows things to be removed that are below the surface.

It can't get the impurities out the first time.

It might take multiple times.

Things need to be added at the beginning to the gold.

Before the process starts.

Things that will help separate the "gold" from the "non-gold"

- Things that will help the gold in the “burning process.”

After each melting, things were added to separate more.

There are so many things here...let’s look at how God can do this with us.

## God Uses A Similar Process To Refine Us

{scripture from earlier}

**Isaiah 48:10 (MSG)**

**Do you see what I’ve done?**

**I’ve refined you, but not without fire.**

**I’ve tested you like silver in the furnace of affliction.**

## God Uses Our Trials To Refine Us!

This is where the melting comes in.

We might have things on our surface.

- The things others can see on us.
- Some sins we aren’t trying to stop.
- Some sins we may not be trying to hide.

There are also things we have beneath our surface also.

- The things people might not know we do/think.

Things that have to be slowly and carefully removed.

Just like in the video...all the dirt and trash are being removed.

{repeat}

## “God Is Removing All Traces Of Dirt Off Of Me!”

This is why we can’t “rush” the process.

**Romans 12:12**

**12 Be joyful in hope, *patient in affliction*, faithful in prayer.**

Patient in affliction...

As soon as trouble comes...we want it gone immediately.

As soon as sickness comes...we want it gone immediately.

As soon as something comes up...we want it gone.

But we can't rush it.

We're trying to get off the fire and he isn't finished with us yet.

*"perseverance must FINISH it's work..."*

## We Can't Be Refined If We Rush The Process!

**Romans 5:3-4**

**3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.**

We now start to see how we can find joy.

God is removing everything that needs to go.

God is refining us!

God is changing us!

So what about the mixture?

Before I could think about it...

I heard clearly...

## God Adds More And More Of Himself To Us

Let's make the case:

Why?

Because he said he is with us.

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

**9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

## God Says His Power Rests On Us!

Before the Gold hits the furnace...

It has it's mixture already added.

From the moment we accept Christ...

He gives a little of himself.

Now we're waiting on the refining.

But not only is God with us during our trials...

## **God Is What Protects Us During Our Trials!**

**Isaiah 43:2**

**2        When you pass through the waters,  
I will be with you;  
and when you pass through the rivers,  
they will not sweep over you.  
When you walk through the fire,  
you will not be burned;  
the flames will not set you ablaze.**

When you go through the furnace of affliction...

You will NOT be burned.

The FIRE won't burn you up.

And when you come out of the fire...

He adds a little more of himself.

Then the trial comes again...

He sees us through...

When we come out...

He adds more of himself.

The process continues.

We complain about the process.

We complain about the pain.

## **This Process Is To Refine You, Not Take You Out!**

The fire we go through is to refine.

He will protect us.



He will keep us.

When we think of fire and refinement...

#### **Daniel 3:16-27**

**16** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. **17** If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. **18** But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

**19** Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual

**20** and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. **21** So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace.

**22** The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, **23** and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace.

**24** Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?"

They replied, "Certainly, O king."

**25** He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

**26** Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, **27** and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.

So let this be where we find joy.

*{Repeat}*

## **God Is With Me, And I'm Coming Out Better!**

#### **Psalms 16:9-11**

**9** Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;  
my body also will rest secure,

**10** because **you will not abandon** me to the grave,  
nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

You won't let me die.

You won't let the sacrifice Jesus did be in vain!

#### **Romans 8:28**

**28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

all things God works for the good.

So with all of this.

Consider it joy...

When we face trials...

Because when we face trials...

God is refining us.

**How To Find Joy In Refinement:**

## **1. Remember Our God Is A Master Refiner**

He is a purifier.

He is working to make us the best version of ourselves.

It will be better than 99.14%

The gold in the video had all type of dirt on it.

But it was all burned away.

## **God Is Burning All Your Dirt Away**

The things we've done.

He's burning off.

The things done to us.

He's burning off...

The things said about us...

He's burning off.

The things people have used to stop our growth.

He's burning off!

**How To Find Joy In Refinement:**

## **2. Every Trial Is An Opportunity For God To Change Us**

We aren't alone.

This trial is going to help create the best version of you.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abendego

Joseph

Job

## **What May Had Been Meant To Take You Out Is Going To Push You Forward**

**How To Find Joy In Refinement:**

## **3. It May Take Longer Than We Want, But He Is With Us The Whole Way**

He will never leave us or forsake us.

He will walk through the flood.

The fire will not harm us.

God is with us!