

Good News

From Getwell

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The Truth in Love

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SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY ACTIVITY

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:20 a.m.
Worship.....5:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

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ON THE HOME FRONT

Proverbs 7

- ¹ My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.
- ² Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.
- ³ Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.
- ⁴ Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman:
- ⁵ That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.
- ⁶ For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,
- ⁷ And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,
- ⁸ Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house,
- ⁹ In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:
- ¹⁰ And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.
- ¹¹ (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:
- ¹² Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)
- ¹³ So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him,
- ¹⁴ I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.
- ¹⁵ Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.
- ¹⁶ I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt.
- ¹⁷ I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
- ¹⁸ Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.
- ¹⁹ For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey:
- ²⁰ He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed.
- ²¹ With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.
- ²² He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;
- ²³ Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.
- ²⁴ Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.
- ²⁵ Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.
- ²⁶ For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her.
- ²⁷ Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Ron Wallace

RON'S REMINDERS



God's Refining Shop

"Why me Lord?" We have all asked it. Why does it always have to rain on my parade? Why did this have to happen to me? Why my child? Why my marriage? Why my job? Why? Why? Why?

The answer may be found in an obscure Old Testament passage where God is pictured as sitting over a refiner's fire making silver of His people. Malachi wrote: "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" (Malachi 3:3).

A woman read this verse in Bible class and was curious enough to seek out a silversmith to see what it meant. She found him sitting before a crucible, gazing intently into a boiling pot. She asked, "Do you have to sit here all the time or just come back when it's finished?" He replied, "I have to keep my eye on the crucibles. If it gets too hot, the silver is injured. I know the process of purifying is completed when I see my own image reflected in the silver."

The answer to "why me?" is found in the silversmith's shop.

THE REFINER'S POT

God values us far more than a prospector does his "mother load," a miser does his coins, an addict does his fix, or a mother does her newborn (Psalm 16: 15: Isaiah 43:4). He wants the best for us and demands the best of us. Just as the refiner's job is to increase the value of his product by removing impurities, God sees His job as removing the impurities — sin — from us.

Lehman Strauss knew the heartache of suffering. In the midst of dealing with his wife's stroke, he wrote a book entitled, *In God's Waiting Room: Learning through Suffering*. As he attempted to better understand the events that moved into his life, he likened his experience to childhood memories of his 1110th making a cake. Dr. Strauss recalled the various ingredients—flour, baking powder, shortening, raw eggs—that went into a cake. By themselves they weren't very enjoyable snacks, but when properly mixed together and baked for the correct length of time, they collectively produced a delicious dessert. In our lives we experience ingredients that seem unpalatable, and our temptation is to tell God He's ruining everything. At those times we will find greater strength and peace when we acknowledge that God knows what He is doing.¹

What kind of furnace does the Refiner use? He uses the furnace of affliction, physical injury, disease, prolonged sickness (2 Corinthians difficulty in rearing our children, problems with parents, financial reverses, or other overwhelming cares of life. Such suffering is an effective teacher in the great school of life. Some important lessons are only learned at her feet. Robert Browning Hamilton wrote:

I walked a mile with Pleasure, she chattered all the way;
But left me none the wiser, for all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow and ne'er a word said she;

But, oh, the things I learned from her when Sorrow walked with me!²

At the same time, God watches to see that the fire never gets so hot that it injures us. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13). These things hurt us but they do not permanently injure us—unless we turn from the Refiner.

THE REFINER'S PURPOSE

Amy Carmichael wrote, "A wise master never wastes his servant's time." No matter what set of circumstances we receive, God is not wasting our time. He is educating us; He is improving us; He is molding us. A young woman was suffering greatly and confided to an older Christian friend: "If God loves me as you say He does, why did He make me so?" The older woman replied, "He is making you now." God's purpose is to prepare us for heaven.

The Refiner wants to make heaven attractive to us (2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1; Philippians 1:21–23; Hebrews 11:10; Colossians 3:1-2). One philosopher observed: "It is through our tears that we see the farthest into heaven." Hard times can build good character (James 1:24; 1 Peter 1:7).

The Refiner wants to test our faith (Genesis 22: 1; 1 Corinthians 3:12–15). The worthiness of the ship is not determined while it rides at ease in the harbor, but when it rides the waves of a storm. Our faith is worthless if it cannot get us through life's storms.

The Refiner wants to teach us to appreciate our blessings (Luke 17:17; Colossians 3:15). Domesticated bullfinches are placed in a dark room for several weeks before they learn to sing. When brought into sunlight, the bullfinch's song is sweeter and more beautiful than it would otherwise be. God often takes us into a dark room of suffering so that when we come back into life's sunshine, our song of praise will be sweeter than ever before.

The Refiner wants us to learn to comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:3–7). It is difficult to really feel compassion for someone if we don't know what he is going through. But when we have "walked a mile in his moccasins," we can feel sorry for the one with blisters.

Suffering can help us help others. One remarked, "I asked for health that I might achieve. I was made weak that I might do better things."

The divine Refiner wants us to learn to trust Him (Luke 14: 11; Proverbs 16:18; James 4: 10; Jeremiah 10:23; 2 Corinthians 12:9). Abraham Lincoln said, "I have often been driven to my knees the sincere conviction that there was nowhere else to go."

THE REFINER'S PRODUCT

As the refiner told the Bible class student, silver is ready when he sees his image in its reflection. God also looks to see His image in our lives. Paul wrote, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18; cf. Romans 8:29; Colossians 3:10).

A silversmith may make many pieces over the course of his days, but only a few of them are deemed worthy of display in his own house. God is fashioning of us what He wants to display in His own house. Ralph Waldo Emerson was once approached by a concerned and inquiring person who said, "Mr. Emerson, they tell me that the world is coming to an end." Emerson calmly replied, "Never minds we can get along without it." When God finishes refining us, we all will be very happy "doing without" this world and its suffering.

God is fashioning Us to display in His own house.

Endnotes:

¹In God's Wailing Room: Learning through Sumering, Lehman Strauss. 1984. p. 75–76.

²Along the Road, <http://www.giga-us.com/gigaweb1/quotes2/qutoppleasurex001.htm>.

³Hope for the Sick and Hurting, Linda Raney Wright. 1990. p. 156.

⁴Christ and Human Sumering. E. Stanley Jones. 1933. p. 198.