

The Flame That Forms Us [Identifying]

Discussion Guide

Summary

This sermon discusses the second step in the spiritual refining process: identification. Just as precious metals require heat to bring impurities (dross) to the surface, God uses seasons of refinement to reveal hidden sins in believers' lives. Jonathan emphasizes that this refinement isn't punishment, but rather God's loving preparation to help believers become more pure and Christ-like. Using examples from Job and David, the sermon illustrates how we should approach these seasons with humility and openness, allowing God to search our hearts and remove impurities.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather to discuss Your refining process in our lives, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to Your truth. Help us to be honest with ourselves and with You about areas that need refinement. Give us the courage to face what You reveal and the wisdom to understand Your loving purpose in this process. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

When you were a kid, did you ever try to hide a mess you made from your parents? How did that work out?

Key Verses

- Malachi 3:1-3
- Job 23:10
- 2 Corinthians 7:1
- Psalm 139:23-24

Questions

- What's your initial reaction when you hear God wants to 'refine' you?
- How do you typically respond when God reveals an area of sin or weakness in your life?
- Why do you think we often try to hide our sins from God, even though He already knows about them?
- How is God's refining process different from punishment?
- What does it mean to you that God 'sits like a refiner of silver' watching over the process?
- How can we maintain a proper perspective during difficult seasons of refinement?
- What's the difference between trying to clean up our lives on our own versus allowing God to refine us?
- How can we practically apply David's prayer of 'Search me, O God' in our daily lives?

Life Application

This week, spend time each morning praying Psalm 139:23-24, asking God to search your heart and reveal any areas that need refinement. Keep a journal of what He shows you and commit to surrendering these areas to His refining process.

Key Takeaways

- God's refining process is an act of love, not punishment
- We cannot purify ourselves - we need God's help in the refining process
- Like dross in metal, sin must be brought to the surface to be removed
- Being open and honest with God about our sins is essential for spiritual growth

- The goal of refinement is to make us more like Jesus

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for loving us enough to not leave us in our current state. Give us the courage to face what You reveal in our lives and the humility to allow You to remove it. Help us trust Your refining process, knowing that You watch over us carefully and lovingly through it all. Make us more like You through this process. In Your name we pray, amen.