

In the Crucible

Gregg Brenes

God works for our good to mold our lives into the image of Christ.

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. ²⁹For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. Romans 8:28-29

Hope for the future

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, ⁵who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 1 Peter 1:3-5

Joy in the present

In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:6-9

All kinds of trials have the potential to forge us into people of faith.

- We become more loving.
- We become more trusting of God.
- We become people of joy.

Fire intensifies *what is*.

- It makes the good better.
- It makes the bad come to the surface.

Let's Connect

What is one thing you're looking forward to when the stay-at-home order is lifted?

Let's Talk About It

This current crisis could be one of the greatest moments for spiritual formation in the home; however, we must stay with God in the crucible and allow Him to refine our lives. The fire of the crucible magnifies what is already there. It makes the good even better, and it also makes the bad come to the surface. Stay with each other, stay with Jesus in the trial, stay with God in the crucible and allow Him to mold you into the image of Christ.

Romans 8:28-29; 1 Peter 1:3-9; Galatians 5:22-24; Hebrews 6:19

- Which part of the message made an impact, caught your attention or challenged you?
- Read Romans 8:28-29. What does it mean to *be conformed to the image of his Son*? What would this look like in your life? What would be different?
- Read 1 Peter 1:3-9. What has been the most challenging thing for you during this season? What "dross" has risen to the surface of your heart? How can you allow this situation to refine your faith rather than erode it?
- What did you learn about staying *in the crucible* from Pastor Gregg's interviews with David, Mariko and Lesley? How can you apply this to your life?
- Relationships are one of the greatest areas God will use to fashion and form us. Where are you experiencing relational tension right now (arguments, irritability, impatience, loneliness)? What is one thing you can do this week to allow God to refine you in the crucible of this trial?

Take a Step

- Spend time reading the Bible and applying SOAP this week: **Day 1:** Psalm 3, Acts 15; **Day 2:** Psalm 29, Acts 16; **Day 3:** Psalm 56, Acts 17; **Day 4:** Psalm 62, Acts 18; **Day 5:** Psalm 96, Acts 19; **Day 6:** Psalm 107, Acts 20; **Day 7:** Psalm 121, Acts 21.

Here's My Prayer

- Lord, thank You for the living hope I have in Jesus and for the opportunity to be molded into Your image in a greater way through the crucible of this trial. Refine me and make me more loving, trusting and joyful (even in the middle of trials). As the dross comes to the surface of my heart, please remove it, refine my life and make me more like You. In Jesus' name, amen.