

# Who You Are in the Fire Is Who You Really Are

I don't really like this truth, but here it is: Who you are in the fire is who you are.

I want to imagine that who I am on television is the true representation of who I am. I like the edited version of me. I like how I look after an hour with a makeup artist and someone who actually knows how to style my hair. I like kind lighting and a controlled set. But none of these dynamics reveal my hidden flaws. Those usually come out when some area of my life is crossed.

This reminds me of something God spoke through the prophet Isaiah:

*"See, I have refined you, but not with silver; I have chosen you in the furnace of affliction"* (Is. 48:10, MEV).

I would have loved it if God had rephrased some of this. "I have tested you in the sauna of the spa experience," for example, would have been nice.

In the book of Esther, we read: "Before a girl's turn came to go in to King Xerxes, she had to complete twelve months of beauty treatments" (2:12, NIV). I have told my husband he would have an Esther too if I could go through a year's worth of beauty treatments. But alas, just like Esther, we are not defined by who we are in the spa. We are defined by who we are in the fire.

Many years ago, I was given a portion of an amethyst geode. The outside is gnarled and rusty. Looking at it, you would never guess that it encases pristine purple crystal formations. Nothing on the outside of the geode betrays even a hint of the beauty on the inside. The outside tells the story

of the heat and the pressure, but the inside reveals what beauty has been born of this encounter with fire.

Most gemstones are mined. This means they are forged in a hidden environment of pressure before they are ever unearthed and brought into the light. In the same way, you and I hold much beauty and worth. But we must be willing to face some heat in order to allow the treasure inside to come through.

There is something of beauty to be learned from every dark and lonely place in our lives. It is in those times of obedience during suffering that we have an opportunity to experience our Father as more than enough. Out of the rough material of our trials, He is more than willing to fashion objects of beauty.

The Bible tells us that Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before Him. In our trials, large or small, it is crucial that we allow joy to be set before us.

Are you facing some pressure today? Do you believe God is ready to take the pain and frustration and make it an object of beauty? If so, let's pray together.

"Heavenly Father, I come to You in the name of Jesus. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, I ask You to take the rocks in my life and make them objects of beauty. Have Your way, Father. Purify me and bring forth what is precious with Your holy fire. Give me Your eyes to see and the faith to receive Your promise of beauty and strength in every season. In Jesus's name, amen."

*If you want to dive deeper into this topic, you can check out my book Fight Like a Girl: The Power of Being a Woman. {eo}*

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