

Two Critical Words for Pastors in This Hour

But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a Refiner's Fire and like launderers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness (Mal. 3:2-3).

This is a very important word especially for ministers. Lives and destinies are at stake and a new spiritual door has been opened, but we cannot walk through it unless we are willing to yield to the Refiner's Fire.

As my wife and I were praying for a sick minister recently the Holy Spirit cut in. He began to teach us by revelation the reason ministers often don't enter into the fullness of their callings, and why sometimes even their lives are cut short. This is what He said:

"There are reasons why men were limited and didn't enter into the times and seasons of their lives. There are limitations through character. Over and over again I deal with men, but until they're put under the Refiner's Fire and My dealings they cannot go into that new season, and walk in that new place."

The Lord has turned up His Refiner's Fire on our own lives and ministry. He has spoken to us more thoroughly and more urgently about our love walk, our words, our lifestyle and our diet. These things do matter, friends if we want to fulfill the call of God on our lives and enter into the fullness of our ministry. These things do matter if we want to run our race and finish our course.

When we allow the Refiner's Fire to deal with our soul,

fleshly strongholds, attitudes and emotions, then the devil cannot have a handle on you. So it is really God's mercy and protection for ministers that they don't receive a greater glory on their lives and gifts because with it comes a greater judgment. To whom much is given much will be required, and ministers receive a greater condemnation (Jam 3:1).

History is littered with casualties of mightily anointed men who left this earth prematurely and whose callings were aborted for lack of the Refiner's Fire. God was merciful in taking them home when He did so their fruit could be saved and their works could follow them.

Let me give you a recent example from our lives so you can learn from it. A few months ago when we were ministering in another nation two ministers asked my wife and I how a certain mutual minister friend of ours was doing. We told them that we had heard he was now divorced and his adult children had backslid. In the past this divorced minister preached frequently and had a platform in the nation we were in. The Lord told us our comments could rob him of favor and future opportunities to minister in that nation.

We didn't know the details of the divorce nor did we know if the minister was at fault, or if he was, whether he had repented. You are siding in with Satan, the accuser of the brethren, when you accuse others after they've repented. Many ministers would think nothing of making comments like this, but the Lord does. We repented before the Lord and apologized to those two ministers the next day.

Our attitudes, words, offenses and dealings with other ministers and the body of Christ in general are so important in determining our health and whether we enter into the new doors and seasons of our lives and ministries. Yielding to the Refiner's Fire can take us into our next assignments, open doors and new levels of blessing and glory that God has ordained for us.

The gifts and callings of God are without repentance—meaning God will not change His mind about your calling and purpose in Him, but the fullness cannot be seen in a man's life until they go through the Refiner's Fire. Ministers need to go to the altar again and live from there. For ministers to go through certain doors of utterance of greater glory they have to be refined, not easily offended and not given to any appetite.

Years ago in an extended time of prayer and fasting the Father told me that he had not opened certain doors for me because of His protection. Then I wept when He said that I would've ceased to be a man after His own heart if He had opened those doors when I had wanted Him to. He is a good Father. He will not give us instructions that He knows we cannot obey through our insufficient character, thus giving access to the enemy to legally attack us.

Parents do not give their elementary school children instructions fit for a college student. Lack of maturity of character limits what they are able to do and obey.

Moses was a great example of a minister who moved in the flesh, killing a man to deliver his brethren from bondage, and as a result he spent 40 years in the Refiner's Fire on the backside of the desert. God had big plans and a high calling for Moses, but he could not fulfill it until the Refiner's Fire had done its work in his life. There is a difference in how God deals with us in the New Covenant versus the Old Covenant, but the principle remains the same.

Let's not judge other men but let us judge ourselves (1 Cor. 11:31).

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