

## THE REFINER'S FIRE: A Personal Reflection

June 2026

Recently, I listened to the song *Refiner* for the first time, and it hasn't left me. The lyrics gave voice to my quiet prayer—one that demands complete surrender: *“Lord, do whatever You need to change in me so that my heart reflects Yours.”* I'm certainly a work in progress, but this is my deepest longing, even as I walk forward in faith, not fully knowing where this prayer might lead.

Lately, I often think of how the Bible compares God's work in our lives to the refining of precious metals: fire that removes what doesn't belong, heat that reveals what's hidden. It's never easy while we're going through it, but later we can often see God's purpose more clearly.

Several years ago, my husband and I went through a serious financial crisis. We earnestly prayed for God to see us through, but in the end, we lost everything. And yet, in that season of loss, we experienced His faithfulness in ways we had never known before. Time after time, He provided exactly what we needed, often in unexpected ways. Through it all, we learned that God can be trusted—even when life doesn't unfold the way we hoped.

At the time, I thought that would be the greatest test of my faith—but God knew what lay ahead. Years later, I now find myself walking through an even deeper loss.

Six months ago, my husband passed away unexpectedly. Yet this time, I've been praying differently—not only for God's strength and peace, but asking Him to show me what He wants to change in me through this grief. And this Psalm became my daily prayer:

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart... See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”* (Psalm 139:23-24)

That's when a deeper season of refining began—quiet, steady, and not always easy to go through. Since then, as I sit with the Lord in prayer and in His Word each day, He's been lovingly showing me where my faith needs to grow. In the silence and loneliness, I've also come to know His presence more deeply.

I've known Him as Savior and Lord for many years, but in this season of grief, He's been drawing me into a deeper relationship through the biblical picture of Jesus as the Bridegroom of His Church: His people, His bride—deeply loved, cared for, and made holy.

My response to this beautiful imagery is a growing desire for Him to be my all-in-all. I need His sufficiency—not only in my belief—but in my everyday life. I need it in every circumstance, especially when the ache is sharpest. Because, emotionally, I still ache.

I miss my husband every day... There are moments when grief catches me without warning, and the loneliness feels heavier than I can carry. Learning to live without him is one of the hardest things I've ever faced. Yet as I turn to the Lord, He always gives me exactly what I need for the

moment. He understands sorrow. He's not distant from grief. He has promised never to leave or forsake us, and that promise has become a lifeline I hold onto more tightly than ever before.

So I keep coming back to this truth:

*"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)*

I don't always see all the good yet, but I see how God carries me. I see the people He's placed around me—friends and loved ones who stay, who listen, who hold me up. There are no words to express how thankful and grateful I am.

Until the day I see Jesus face to face, my desire is simple, though not always easy: to keep walking with Him, to keep trusting Him, to reflect His character more today than I did yesterday. I'm learning slowly, one day at a time, to adapt, to let go, to keep going, to follow Him even when I can't see the next step.

This refining fire isn't what I would have chosen. But I can see that God is not absent from it. He's still here—still loving, still faithful—patiently shaping me into the image of His Son, Jesus. As 2 Corinthians 3:18 reminds us:

*"As all of us reflect the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, we are becoming more like Him with ever-increasing glory by the Lord's Spirit."*

God allows trials in our lives to reveal His will and constant presence—always ready when we need Him most. Even though I don't fully understand everything He's doing right now, this personal journey has had its deep valleys, but also profound moments of hope. In the end, I'm confident that I will emerge shining brighter than ever before for His glory!

And because of His enduring love and faithfulness in the midst of it all, I can sincerely say:

*"It is well with my soul."*

Beth♥