

## Week 4: REFINED - P Mike Palompo

July 13-14, 2024

### SERMON NOTES WITH QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION AND PERSONAL REFLECTION



We're about midway through our Abide in Purpose Series, called RISE

- Week 1: REALIZE we were called by God to a divine purpose
- Week 2: RECOGNIZE our specific SHAPE in order to fulfill our purpose
- Last week: Be ROOTED in our faith to be strengthened for our purpose.

Before I comment on being REFINED, a quick update on our building project...

[Play Video in background while I'm speaking]

[LOH Rendering "Coming Soon"](#)

#### LOH (Legacy of Hope Building Project) UPDATE

- Recall June 2022, we were all set to begin construction (permits granted, loan approved)
- And inflation hit the whole country dramatically

- Interest rate shot up suddenly and substantially
- LOH came to a screeching halt
- USDA Loan 3%, 35 years
- We need to provide a for-profit service to the community
- FAMILY WELLNESS CENTER (Christian counseling, training, and mentoring for marriage, keiki, suicide prevention for military and teenagers, maybe even tutoring for students)

[Slide: FAMILY WELLNESS CENTER]

- **Key Passage:**

Meanwhile, while we await the fulfillment of that vision, the Spirit continues to refine us into the Church that will not just build a building but accomplish His Kingdom purpose for our communities!


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“Remove impurities from the silver and the silversmith can craft a fine chalice; Remove the wicked from leadership and authority will be credible and God-honoring” (Proverbs 25:4-5 MSG).

- **Focus (From our synopsis):** As we continue our journey, we will examine how God refines us through trials and challenges, much like a silversmith refines silver, removing impurities to reveal its true beauty and value.

Proverbs 25:4 reminds us, “Take away the dross from the silver, and a silversmith can produce a vessel. T” (Prov. 25:4-5 NAS95).

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**Chalice(MSG):**  (KELIY)

Translation: article, vessel, implement, utensil (general); utensil, implement, apparatus, vessel; implement (of hunting or war); implement (of music); implement, tool (of labour); equipment, yoke (of oxen); utensils, furniture; vessel, receptacle (general container)

So the silversmith could be making any number of a variety of utensils for any purpose he chooses!

How many ministers do we have in the church? Raise your hand.

I know we're going to have a ministry fair coming up in 2 weeks, and it's primarily going to help you find your ministry in the Church. But it's possible that God did not design you for any ministry in the Church at all! Maybe you were designed for the DOE or the shipyard, or a ministry that is, at present, beyond our imagination.

But *whatever* the Silversmith ends up making out of you, the silver has to be PURIFIED AND PROVEN first before it can be usable.

And that's what we mean by the REFINING PROCESS. Everybody say REFINED. Turn to someone next to you and say, "We need to be REFINED."

[Slide] REFINED

Through this process, God prepares us to better fulfill our divine purpose and reflect His glory.

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## The Silver Chalice of Leadership

Here in Proverbs, Solomon is specifically talking about your area of leadership.

Think of yourself as the finest silver. What is your Silver Chalice of Leadership right now? Are you a new husband? A father? A supervisor at the shipyard? A teacher of our children?

Listen again to what King Solomon says...

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We have a leadership crisis in this country and in the church.

How is dross removed from silver? FIRE! 🔥

Dross impurities are removed from silver through a process of refining. This typically involves heating the silver to a high temperature, which causes the impurities (dross) to separate and rise to the top of the molten metal. The dross can then be skimmed off, leaving behind a more pure form of silver. This process may need to be repeated multiple times to achieve the desired level of purity.

## **One of Those Days - One of Those Months! 😊**

Ever have “one of those days?” Well, at the moment, Mona and I are in one of those seasons! It’s not just a bad day, singular, but a bad time! Bad Days = Bad Times

Don’t worry this has a happy ending. But let me quickly go through the list:

- Stroke and dialysis
- (March) Water pipe breaks, cabinets and flooring ruined - Repairs are still underway! 4 months later.
- (May) Scheduled in-person appointments at Mayo Clinic Phoenix canceled (flights and all reservations canceled)
- According to Mayo, Medicare was listed as my primary care provider, but the requirement was that HMSA be listed as primary! The frustration was HMSA IS MY PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER but it doesn’t display it that way on my Medicare government profile. Someone made a clerical error on my account. And because of this, all my appointments, flight reservations had to be canceled!

- Then I had to CALL both HMSA and Medicare to ask them to fix the order. Have you ever tried calling a government agency? Placed on hold, make sure you don't miss your call-back appointment.
- (June) Prius breaks down
- As soon as the weather turned hot, air conditioning in both our two remaining cars break down

When I shared this with the staff, Mark called me "first-world Job!" So nothing I'm going through is life-threatening. They are all first-world problems. I get it.

But have you ever had one of those days? I'm having one of those months!

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### **"Bad Times" (Jeremiah to his assistant, Baruch, during the siege of Jerusalem, no food, no money)**

"These are the words of God, the God of Israel, to you, Baruch. You say, 'These are bad times for me! It's one thing after another. God is piling on the pain. I'm worn out and there's no end in sight' (Jeremiah 45:2-3 MSG).

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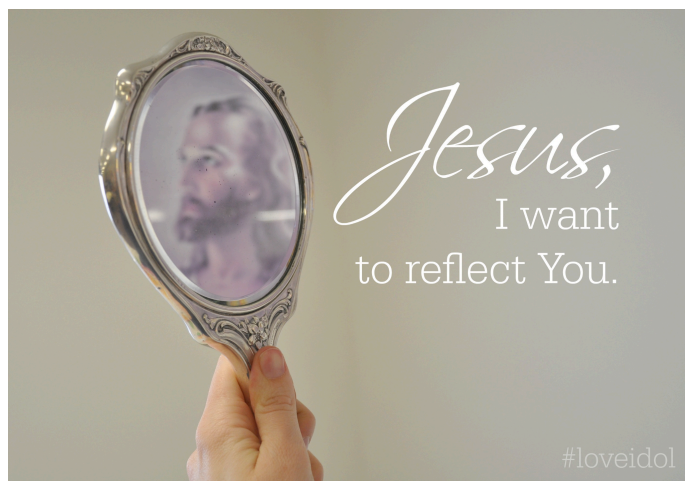
### **BAPTISM OF FIRE 🔥**

It feels like you're being squeezed. This is a TEST from the Lord to see what you're made of. Will you respond from CARNALITY or the SPIRIT? We won't know until we put you under pressure!

Someone famously said, your public reputation is who people think you are, but your character is who you really are in private, when no one is looking, while you are roasting in your car with no air conditioning, stuck in traffic.

The Silversmith is at work in that moment! He is proving you, testing you, burning away the impurities, teaching you to respond in the Spirit no matter what the circumstances. And the armorer will keep up the heat until your silver is pure.

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And now I see the Master Silver Craftsman is just doing His thing, what He has always done in me since I entered the door of His Silver Shop. He is literally turning up the heat again for a new assignment for me.

Lord, I exist to love and serve You. And You cannot use me as I am apparently, more refining is necessary. And I am not only willing, I rejoice in the flames of the Silversmith!

The Bible speaks of sin as if it's a living, personal force or spirit. We know the Devil is real but I'm talking about SIN. Sin has a kind of force or energy like gravity.

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"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it" (Genesis 4:7).

Paul puts it this way:

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"For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members" (Romans 7:22-23).

## **Is This the Spirit-Filled Life?**

You should have a conversation with your ohana group about this because some might say, if you're filled with the Spirit, you don't have this struggle anymore. I think the struggle is the evidence in this fallen world that you are filled with the Spirit! If you didn't have the Holy Spirit, there would be no struggle, you just go do it.

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"For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

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## **FIRE PURIFIES AND PROVES**

"The purity of silver and gold is tested by putting them in the fire; The purity of human hearts is tested by giving them a little fame" (Proverbs 27:21 MSG).

You're not being punished, you're being tested

When the fire comes, and let's define fire as not just temptations but challenges, ones that you put yourself through voluntarily and the ones God puts you through involuntarily, Solomon says that the fire doesn't just refine and purify the silver, the fire is also used to test the silver.

Battle-tested warriors are the best! They have proven they can get the job done. They are reliable, responsible, punctual, and tenacious!

Are you this way? Would you like to be? If your answer is yes then embrace the heat! Don't just look for the path of least resistance! But walk on the coals and rejoice as the Silversmith transforms for His good and powerful purpose. The more heat the better the silver. The better the silver the better the chalice of leadership you will be!

So how do you go through the fire of testing?

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“This is the kind of life you’ve been invited into, the kind of life Christ lived. He suffered everything that came his way so you would know that it could be done, and also know how to do it, step-by-step. He never did one thing wrong, Not once said anything amiss. They called him every name in the book and he said nothing back. He suffered in silence, content to let God set things right. He used his servant body to carry our sins to the Cross so we could be rid of sin, free to live the right way. His wounds became your healing. You were a lost sheep with no idea who you were or where you were going. Now you’re named and kept for good by the Shepherd of your souls” (1 Peter 2:21-25 MSG).

[Testimony Introduction: Mona]

[Testimony: Kimo & Carleen Dunn]

“In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:6-7).

Stand for Closing Prayer Response

### **Questions: Small Group Discussion & Personal Meditation**

1. When you go through “bad times,” what goes through your mind? Why do you think it’s happening to you?
2. According to Proverbs 25 and 27, what is God, the Silversmith, doing?
3. What is your Silver Chalice of Leadership right now? Who are the people over whom God has made you an overseer leader?
4. If we live by the law of the Spirit, why do we still struggle with the law of sin?
5. When we go through a “baptism of fire,” how should we imitate Christ?
6. What “impurities” still need to be removed from your life?
7. How will you respond next time you have a “bad day?”