
INTRODUCTION



It's natural to believe that a step forward equals progress. It's natural to think that forward momentum means going forward. It is programmed into our heads to think that progress is only evidenced by bearing the fruit of production. This natural thought process that all human beings inherit, without being taught, directly opposes God's process of preparing us for exceptional living. Jesus absolutely left the crowd spell bound when He taught that the greatest among all the disciples was the least of them. The greatest leader then becomes everyone's humble servant.

Well, if we understand this principle (at least in our minds) then we can come to comprehend the unorthodox way in which God consecrates, sanctifies, and perfects His people. God may not send us to the most prestigious schools, we may not sit under the greatest trainers, and we may not memorize the entire Bible, but He will bring us to maturity. God calls us from the sin condition that we're in and He allows pain, suffering, and trial to be our great teachers and trainers in life. No better way to learn how to ride a bull than to saddle up and ride. God wants to teach us how to ride hurricanes, persecution, poverty, betrayal, and failure until these things no longer threaten our success. Jesus gave Peter the authority to walk on water. God desires to produce such a glory in your life that you conquer insurmountable circumstances with a smile.

We must learn to trust Him so much and become so steadfast in the face of adversity that we stand like those Hebrew boys did, dancing in the fire. He wants us to tread on top of the serpents and scorpions. God wants us to bring order to disorganization. He's called us to be light in a world of darkness. This is why He refines us, that we be made into the finest and rarest of treasure; the most precious in all the land. All through the Bible, we see the people of God regulating the cultures in which they live. They are a beacon of hope. They stand on a hill and God's glory shines through them so brightly that souls are led to the Lord through them. This is why we are refined by fire.

I know that our minds can't comprehend God's ways of operation, that's why we have the book, *Refined by Fire*. This book and the entire series is dedicated to the body of Christ; the people who are enduring this

present darkness for the glory to come. This book is for the women who have taken a temporary loss for the sake of the greater, eternal gain. Let this book inspire and instruct you along a sometimes mysterious and painful road to destiny. The words written by the women in this book will empower you to stick with it and finish your race. This is no lighthearted book of people whose journeys consists of a free parking spot blessing and constant sunny days. These are stories that will help you get through the darkest of times and instruct you as you operate in the best of times. The entire *Refined by Fire* book series is a constantly developing series of books that will energize and educate Christians who have specific needs in life. The **Refined by Fire** message is based on the scripture 1 Peter 1: 7.

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be refined by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

Here you have stories written by prominent women from all over the nation, all walks of life, and representing a diversity of backgrounds who have committed to sharing their most sacred strategies of successful Christian living. These women are speakers, writers, entrepreneurs, pastors, and leaders in the Body of Christ and many specialize in the needs of women’s ministry.

Grab yourself a latte or cup of tea, grab a pen and paper to take notes, snuggle up, and be blessed by this celebrated collection of success strategies for walking through the fiery times of life.