

## SINGLES CONFERENCE

Tyrone R. Knight

Greater Baltimore Church of Christ

The Joy of Living in God's Furnace

06/15/2007

**Lesson was given at a house church service and the annual singles conference hosted by the GBCOC and Chuck Taylor, Florence Richie, Sharon Alston and a few other brothers and sisters.**

*Text:*

**Eze. 22:13-22**

**Intro:** I want you to imagine for a moment what it would be like to be in a furnace.

How would you feel?

Do you believe that you can survive in a furnace?

*Give back drop of lesson-*

In our text, this morning Israel is pictured as impure silver. They have allowed themselves to become mingled with the world, and, as a result, they are no longer pure, but have become worthless and weak. **God is pictured as a refiner of metals.** (Ill. Alternatively, the process.) **God is determined to rid them of their impurities and to mold them into His image.** Israel is facing the fierce judgment of Almighty God. You and I also become mingled with the impurities of the world. **When we do**, we also lose our value and are weakened. However, unlike Israel, our sins have already been judged at Calvary and were forever forgiven at the very moment of salvation. If that is the case, then why does it seem that so many of God's children are in the furnace? **With Israel, it was a matter of Divine judgment.** With us, God is trying to see His image. Perfected in you and I. Now, we all know it is no fun at all, being down in the furnace -of **trouble, trials and tribulations, but** God's furnace can prove to be a wellspring of joy. This morning, I want to talk for a while about **"The Joy of Living in God's Furnace."**

**Read the Text: Eze 22-13-22- & Pray:**

**Furnace:** *A large apparatus with an enclosed chamber designed to produce intense heat for warming a building, melting metal, creating steam power, an intensely hot place.*

**I. THE PAIN OF THE FURNACE** A. The furnace is a place of fire.

When God places us in the furnace, He is turning up the heat in our lives. In addition, when this takes place, it is never pleasant. (*Talk about leaving the stove on*) When you are in the furnace Gods refining and molding you **has God been molding you?**

**God's furnace is a place where our impurities are burned away Rev-3:19**

Always something is lost! When we pass through the hands of the refiner  
The pain of loss and of God burning out the junk in our lives **v-22**  
God knows our heartstrings. He knows the things in our lives that keep us from pleasing  
He, Israel was not pleasing God they were rebellious and they committed spiritual  
adultery. ***They prostitute themselves with many other religions/ Idols***  
**What area of your life you know, that is not pleasing to the Lord?**  
Job was tested he was in the furnace for quite some time  
The furnace is always a place of pain - Just ask **Job - Chp. 1-2.** (Ill. Lost finances,  
family, fitness, and friends) D. It hurts, but God always have a plan and a - purpose to  
renew and restore, *his people-* (Ill. **Isa. 1:-26**) (Ill. He is always seeking you best interests  
- **Rom. 8:28**)

**III. THE PRIVILEGE OF THE FURNACE** A. As hard as it may be to believe, the  
furnace is a place of privilege.  
B. There are several reasons why this is true. **1.** Only metals that can be used go into the  
furnace - **Jer. 6:29** (Ill. The refiner will not waste His time on metal that will never be  
profitable. **You see**, when God has you in the furnace, He is seeing something in you that  
He wants to bring out.) (Ill. The image of Jesus!)  
**2.** The furnace also reveals a side of the refiner that could not otherwise be known. (Ill.  
The patience of the refiner.) (Ill. The 3 Hebrews in the fiery furnace; Daniel in the loin's  
den; Noah in the flood; Israel in the wilderness; disciples in the storm; thief on the cross!)  
**3. When we are** In the midst of the furnace, the refiner's personal touch can be felt. (Ill.  
Breath!)  
(Ill. **Paul - 2 Cor. 12:7-9**) **4.** The furnace reveals the impurities in our lives - Ill. When  
things are level and cool, often there are things that go unnoticed. However, the fire  
reveals these things!  
5. The furnace is temporary, but the benefits are eternal - **two Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:18.**  
The furnace reveals our salvation - The lost are never tried in God's furnace! It is a  
privilege for the saints alone! To be tried in God's furnace.

**IV. THE PRIZE OF THE FURNACE** A. After the dross is removed, the refiner is able  
to see His image reflected in the metal. At this point, He can mold it into a valuable  
vessel of His own choosing.  
B. When you and I are passing through the furnace, we must be aware that when we  
endure it, we will: 1. Reveal Him more clearly to a watching world - **Matt. 5:13-16;**  
**John 14:9**  
Our will will be a clear testimony.  
2. Be more valuable to His work - **2 Tim. 2:22; Pro. 25:4** **3. Be moldable**  
**Are you moldable? Do you embrace or do you run from God's correction and**  
**training?**

Ill. Jesus set the example for us in the Garden - **Luke 22:42.** C. The furnace is painful  
and hard, but for the dedicated believer, the prize is worth the price.  
**Conc:** Are you in the furnace today? If so, just yield to the Father's hand; allow Him to  
finish His work. Then, be a vessel of honor for His glory. When these things take place,  
you will know the joy of life in God's furnace.

