

## THE COMING MESSENGER

**Scripture:** Malachi 3:1-4

Thursday, December 6, 2018

*Malachi 3: 3..he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. (NRSV)*

A young family made their living traveling a circuit of Renaissance Festivals. The father was a medieval silversmith craftsman. He sat at his fire with his little pot, watching over the molten silver, and carefully skimmed off the impurities with a tiny spoon-like tool. The tiny drops of dross, or impurities, went into a bowl of wet sand. His concentration was intense. He crafted his purified silver into exquisite pieces of jewelry for the amazed crowd. The wife, spokesperson for the family, explained the process, took orders for custom pieces, and sold their wares. The children, dressed in period costume, adorned with shiny silver headdresses unique jewelry, danced through the crowd inviting people to “come and see” what Daddy was creating. Folks, charmed by the children, came to the booth. They watched, talked, listened, and longed for those beautiful pieces the silversmith crafted. Few were able to commit their meager savings to the master’s unique work. But they wanted to carry something tangible away from this experience.

So, they bought dross jewelry. The impurities skimmed off the silver and dropped into the bowl of sand formed strange, odd shapes and patterns. Sometimes the sand turned to glass around the edges of the dross as bits of silver shined through. The young family fashioned the dross into bits of inexpensive jewelry that the crowds purchased without hesitation. The dross, crafted into something beautiful, brought the crowds to the master craftsman and his delightful family.

We can place ourselves, the church, and seekers into this story. The dross, although not perfect, has been through the refiner’s fire. Each piece is a beautiful and unique creation. The Master can return the dross again to the fire to be combined and refined. Only then can the Master recreate it into more pure and beautiful works. So it is with us. We are not perfected – *yet*. From the moment of our baptism, God recreates us into more and more beautiful reflections of His love. As we gather and prepare for those times that refine us, let us celebrate the beauty the Master has already formed into our being.

As we journey toward the Christmas Season, our role is not to be the Craftsman seeking out impurities, but to invite the crowd “come and see” what our Father is creating.

**Prayer:** Creating God, purify me in your Love and Grace. I confess, I am afraid of change. I am afraid of letting go of the familiar “me”. Help me celebrate the works you have created and continuously recreate in me. Accept my life as a love offering humbly laid before your throne.

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