

“When I See My Reflection”

This article is from the "Edifying the Body" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website, (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Aug. 30, 2025.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—This year, I have the opportunity to speak at two festival sites during the 2025 Feast of Tabernacles. My speaking opportunities at the two sites will be vastly different.

At our Big Sandy Feast site, I will have the opportunity to give two full-length sermons (40 minute each). At our Destin Feast site, I will have the opportunity to give three short sermonettes (10 minutes each).

Which is harder?

Since those assignments are vastly different, I ask you a question to ponder—which assignments will be more difficult for me?

Many readers would think it is personally harder for them to give a 40-minute presentation than a 10-minute presentation. But is that always the case?

Every week, I have the opportunity to give longer presentations. At our home congregation, I regularly speak for 40 minutes. When I travel as a guest speaker, I am often asked to speak for 60 minutes. Sometimes when I travel, I give two 30-minute presentations, separated by some special music.

So, giving a few 10-minute presentations will be outside of my normal pattern—and therefore will have a challenging element for me. (By the way, I know that a major key to giving a short presentation is picking the right subject for the time frame.)

Dented can

Since you have heard many messages at church, I imagine that all of you can remember short sermonettes that were so well done.

For those of you who attended the Feast in Destin over 20 years ago, can't you still remember a sermonette by Dennis Benson? That's right. He talked about a "dented can."

I am not going to talk about that presentation today, but I am going to refer to another presentation that I heard approximately 36 years ago.

Image in the fire

The presenter used scriptures to talk about the purification of silver and the important role of the silversmith. I don't want to mention the conclusion of

the sermonette just yet. He gave his presentation long before the following story has flooded the Internet.

When searching the Internet the other day, I found many references (video and print) that gave information similar to that sermonette those many years ago. One printed version discussed how a group of women were studying the book of Malachi.

The ladies came across Malachi 3:3, which says: "He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver. He will purify them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness."

The women wondered how this showed God's character, so one of them volunteered to learn more about the process of refining silver. She promised to report her findings the following week. She called a local silversmith to make an appointment to study how he worked. She explained that she was curious about the process of refining silver, but never mentioned the Bible study.

On the appointed day, the volunteer observer watched the silversmith hold a piece of silver over the fire to heat it. To refine silver, he said, one must place it in the middle of the fire, where it is hottest, and allow the heat to burn away the impurities.

The volunteer suddenly understood how God purifies those He loves by holding His followers in the hot spots.

She asked more about the process. She asked the silversmith how long he had to stay holding the piece of silver in the flames. Did he have to stay the whole time?

The silversmith answered emphatically, "Yes!"

He told her that there was more to his job than just sitting and waiting, though.

He told her that he had to monitor the silver the entire time it was in the fire—never taking his eyes off it.

The silversmith was quoted as saying: "If the silver is not in the flame long enough, impurities would remain in it. But, if the silver is left in the flame even a second too long, it will be impaired."

The lady listened and then sat silently for a moment before asking: "How do you know the exact moment when the silver is completely refined?"

The silversmith smiled at her and began his answer: "That is a good question, but it has an easy answer."

After a pause, he continued: "The silver is fully refined when I see my reflection in it."

- The Father is with you in the refining process.
- The Father is removing your impurities.
- The Father won't leave you in the fire too long.
- The Father will see your reflection of Him.