

**Articles and Sermons :: Three Challenging And Comforting Thoughts - Zac Poonen****Three Challenging And Comforting Thoughts - Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2009/4/30 9:33****Three Challenging And Comforting Thoughts***by Zac Poonen*

## 1. God delights in honest people

"If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another" (1 Jn.1:9). To walk in the light means first of all that we hide nothing from God. We tell Him everything, exactly as it is. I am convinced that the first step towards God is honesty. God detests those who are insincere. Jesus spoke against hypocrites more than He spoke against anyone else. God does not ask us to be holy or perfect first of all but to be honest. This is the starting point of true holiness. And from this spring flows everything else. And if there is one thing that is really easy for anyone of us to do, it is to be honest. So, confess sin immediately to God. Don't call sinful thoughts by "decent" names. Don't say "I was only admiring the beauty of God's creation" when actually you lusted adulterously with your eyes. Don't call "anger" as "righteous indignation". You will never get victory over sin if you are dishonest.

And don't ever call "sin", "a mistake", because Jesus' blood can cleanse you from all your sins, but not from your mistakes!! He does not cleanse dishonest people. There is hope only for honest people. "He who covers his sin will never prosper" (Prov.28:13). Why did Jesus say that there was more hope for prostitutes and for thieves to enter God's kingdom than for religious leaders (Matt.21:31). Because prostitutes and thieves make no pretence of being holy.

Many young people are turned away from churches because church-members give them the impression that they themselves have no struggles. And so those young people think, "That holy bunch of people will never understand our problems!!" If this true of us, then we are unlike Christ Who drew sinners to Himself.

## 2. God works all things for our good

"Who can harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?" (1 Pet.3:13) God is so powerful that He makes ALL THINGS work together for the good of those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose - that is, for those who have no ambition on earth outside of His will for their lives (Romans 8:28). One who has selfish ambitions cannot claim this promise. But if we accept the will of God totally, we can claim this promise every minute of our life on earth. Nothing can harm us. Everything that others do to us - good or evil, accidental or deliberate - will go through the filter of Romans 8:28 and will come through working for our very best - conforming us each time a little more to the likeness of Christ (Rom. 8:29) - which is the good that God has planned for us. This filter works perfectly every single time for those who fulfil the conditions listed in this verse.

Further, 1 Peter 3:13 tells us that no-one can harm us if we are "zealous for what is good". Unfortunately this is not as well known a verse as Romans 8:28 is. But we must popularise it now. However, this promise too is applicable only to those who are zealous to keep their hearts good towards all people. It will be impossible for any demon or human being to harm such a believer.

So whenever any Christian complains that others have harmed him, he is indirectly admitting that he does not love God, is not called according to God's purpose and has not been zealous for what is good. Otherwise, whatever those others did to him would have only worked for his good, and then he would not have had any complaints at all. Actually, the only one who can harm you is you yourself - by your unfaithfulness and your wrong attitudes to others.

I can honestly say that no-one has ever succeeded in harming me in my entire life. Many have tried to do so, but EVERYTHING they did only worked for my very best and for the good of my ministry. So I can praise God for those people too. Those who have opposed me have been mostly so-called "believers" who have not understood God's ways. I am giving you my testimony only to encourage you to believe that this can be your testimony too - always.

## 3. God detests all that this world considers great

"That which men esteem highly is detestable in God's sight" (Luke 16:15). The things that are considered great in the world, not only have no value in God's eyes, but are actually an abomination to Him. Since all worldly honour is an abomination to God, it must be an abomination to us too. Money is something that everyone on earth considers valuable. But God says that those who love money and long to get rich will suffer the following eight consequences sooner or later (1 Tim . 6:9,10). (a) they will fall into temptation, (b) they will fall into a trap, (c) they will fall into foolish desires, (d) they will fall into harmful desires, (e) they will plunge into ruin, (f) they will plunge into destruction, (g) they will wander away from the faith and (h) they will pierce themselves with many a pang. I have seen this happen again and again to believers everywhere.

One of the main reasons why a prophetic word from the Lord is hardly ever heard these days in our land, is because most preachers are lovers of money. Jesus said that the true riches (the prophetic word being one of them) would not be given by God to those who were unfaithful with money (Lk.16:11). This is why we hear so many boring sermons and so many boring testimonies in church-meetings and conferences.