

Articles and Sermons :: True Holiness by Zac Poonen

True Holiness by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/7/8 9:21

In Joel 2:15-17, we are encouraged to call all of God's people to fast and pray as a church - the elders, the children, the bridegroom and the bride, everyone. And let them all pray saying, "Lord, spare Your people. Don't let us become an object of mockery among the heathen".

Do you know that Christians are an object of mockery among the heathen in most countries of the world? There was a meeting recently in a city in India where a Christian preacher claimed to be able to heal the sick. They had advertised the meetings saying, "The blind are seeing, the lame are walking and the deaf are hearing...", etc. Some anti-Christian people brought a doctor and some sick people (with problems much less than blindness) to the meeting, and asked the preacher to heal them. Of course, he couldn't heal any of them. Then they rebuked the Christian preacher and his team and told them not to deceive people with false claims, when they did not have the power to heal anyone. I must say that I agree 100% with what those people said. We must not deceive people by making false claims. That is why the Name of Jesus is being mocked today. Let us not claim to have gifts which we don't have. If you have the gift of healing, go ahead and exercise it - and people will be genuinely healed, as Jesus healed people. But don't go around claiming that you have a gift when you don't have one. Jesus didn't go around advertising His healing gift. He did not have to advertise, because He actually healed the sick, and soon everybody knew about it, without any advertisement.

"Then the LORD will be zealous for His land and will have pity on His people" (2:18). When we sincerely repent and confess our sins, the Lord will be indignant for the honour of His name and will answer us. And how will He answer us? He will pour out His Spirit upon us. "I will pour out My Spirit on all the people, and your sons and daughters will prophesy and your old men will dream dreams" (2:28).

This was the verse that Peter quoted as being fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. 120 of them fasted and prayed in the upper room for ten days, repenting, seeking God and saying, "Lord, don't let Your people be the object of mockery here in Jerusalem". And the Spirit was poured out on them and they went forth and the Lord's Name was glorified where it had once been dishonoured.

So let me encourage you to blow a trumpet and call a fast and get people to seek God - people who are concerned that the Name of Jesus is being dishonoured in the land today. What a word of prophecy Joel has for us today! Seek God now. Very soon the day of the Lord will come. Today, you and I must call God's people to repentance, to turning from their idols and to seeking God in fasting and prayer.

The burden of all the prophets was holiness: Give up your idols and put God first in your life. True holiness is to have no idols at all in our life. Holiness is to have God filling our whole heart. Our calling is to proclaim that today so that the church can be a place where God dwells with delight.