

**Articles and Sermons :: Four Qualifications to Live With the Consuming Fire by Zac Poonen****Four Qualifications to Live With the Consuming Fire by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/9/16 12:41**

In Isaiah 33:14, 15 it is written "Sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling has seized the godless (hypocrites - KJV). Who among us can live with the consuming fire? Who among us can live with continual burning? He who walks righteously, and speaks with sincerity, he who rejects unjust gain, and shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe; he who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil".

The first qualification to dwell with this consuming fire mentioned here is: "He who walks righteously and speaks with SINCERITY" (Isa. 33:15). That refers to those who walk according to the light they have, in sincerity in their private lives. They may not be perfect, but they are SINCERE. They are not hypocrites. If there is one thing that we must fear more than anything else in the church, it is giving people an impression about our spirituality that is not true. Do you give others the impression that you pray a lot, when you don't pray at all? Do you give them the impression that you fast much when you don't actually fast that much? Do you want others to consider you as wholehearted when you are not? Then you are in danger of falling away - not because you are imperfect, but because you are insincere. God desires truth in our inward part. The hypocrites in Zion tremble, because they are afraid of being exposed.

The second qualification to live with the consuming fire is "rejecting unjust gain" (Isa. 33:15) - in other words, being righteous and faithful in money matters. We may have thought that the alternative master to God is Satan. But Jesus Himself stated in Luke 16:13 that the alternative master to God was Mammon (money and material riches)! No believer imagines that he can love God and Satan at the same time. But there are multitudes of believers who imagine that they can love money and God simultaneously. No believer will ever fall down and worship Satan. But there are millions of believers today who worship Mammon and who imagine that they can worship God too. But they cannot worship God, if they are not faithful with money. They don't realise that Mammon draws a person away from the true and living God.

The third qualification to live with the consuming fire is shutting our ears from hearing about bloodshed (Isa.33:15). This is more than avoiding gossiping. This refers to not wanting to HEAR even someone else gossiping. A God-fearing man will shut his ears not only to the main Accuser of the brethren (Rev.12:10), but to the Accuser's agents as well!!

A fourth qualification that is mentioned here, to live with the consuming fire, is shutting our eyes from looking upon evil. These two bodily senses - hearing and seeing - are the main channels through which good and evil enter our minds. We must decide what we allow to enter in. One who lives with the consuming fire does not look upon what will defile his spirit.