



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

December 15, 2024: 3rd Sunday in Advent
Preparing for a Real Christmas:
Results in Great Joy

Zephaniah 3:14–17

¹⁴*Sing, Daughter Zion;*

shout aloud, Israel!

Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,

Daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵*The Lord has taken away your punishment,*

he has turned back your enemy.

The Lord, the King of Israel, is with you;

never again will you fear any harm.

¹⁶*On that day*

they will say to Jerusalem,

“Do not fear, Zion;

do not let your hands hang limp.

¹⁷*The Lord your God is with you,*

the Mighty Warrior who saves.

He will take great delight in you;

in his love he will no longer rebuke you,

but will rejoice over you with singing.”

1. Did you know much of anything about the book of Zephaniah before today's sermon? Why do you think we are so much less familiar with the books at the end of the Old Testament (The Minor Prophets)?
2. How did things get so bad leading up to the time of Josiah, when the prophecy of Zephaniah takes place? (Consult 2 Kings 21 if needed)

3. Zephaniah says in verse 1:12 “**The Lord will do nothing, either good or bad.**” How does this summarize the attitude of the wicked in Zephaniah's day and in our day?
4. In Zephaniah 2:3, the prophet calls on believers to “**seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility.**” How does this correspond to Jesus words in John 17:16, “**They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.**” ?
5. What does the story of King Josiah in 2 Kings 22-23 inspire us to do?
6. The book of Zephaniah is 2 ½ chapters of fire and brimstone and then ½ a chapter (including our text) of joyful singing. What happens that makes the surprising switch from law to gospel?
7. Multiple studies have proven that the holiday season exacerbates mental health issues. Whether it's the dark time of year, or the pressure, or busyness or loneliness, it all can have the opposite of the desired effect. Where do we find enduring joy during this season?
8. Maybe you never got picked first for kickball or to go to the dance. What does it mean to you that the Lord, “the Mighty Warrior” will take great delight in you and will rejoice over you with singing?