

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2024 – 3RD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Zephaniah 3:14-20

1: 1 – *The word of the Lord that came to Zephaniah in the days of King Josiah of Judah (640-609 BC)*

3: 15 - The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

3: 17 - The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will exult over you with loud singing.

Lyrics by Cory Asbury – "Reckless Love"

Before I spoke a word, You were singing over me.

Before I took a breath, You breathed Your life in me.

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God.

3: 18-19 - I will remove disaster from you. I will deal with all your oppressors. I will save the lame and gather the outcast.

3: 20 - At that time I will bring you home; I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

It would be over seventy years before these promises would be fulfilled.

If God says it, how long can you keep on trusting and waiting?

Isaiah 12:2-6 (instead of Psalm)

2 - God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might and has become my salvation.

3 - With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

Philippians 4:4-7

4 - Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

1 Thessalonians 5: 18 – Give thanks in all circumstances.

Philippians 1: 12 – I want you to know that what has happened to me has actually helped to spread the gospel.

1: 13 – It has become known throughout the whole imperial guard.

1: 14 – Most of the brothers and sisters, having been made confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, dare to speak the word with greater boldness and without fear.

1: 15-18 – Some proclaim Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. What does it matter? Just this, that Christ is proclaimed whether out of false motives or true, and in that I rejoice.

1: 21 – For me living is Christ and dying is gain.

5 - Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

6 - Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

How do you do at not worrying?

Whenever Terry says, "Now don't panic, but" I always start to panic.

Most of the things I worry about never happen, and most of the things that happen I never think of to worry about.

1 Peter 5: 7 – Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

7 - And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

What does it mean for peace to surpass all understanding?

Have you ever experienced that kind of peace? If so, when was it and what was it like?

Luke 3:7-18

7 - John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

8 - Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

Show me by what you do that you are sorry.

9 - Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

10 - The crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise."

12-13 - Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

Whom would you be most surprised to see coming to Jesus and showing an interest in the Lord?

14 - Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation and be satisfied with your wages."

15 - As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah

16 - John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

17 - His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Matthew 11: 2-6 or Luke 7: 18-23 – When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" (in Luke comes right after Jesus raised a widow's only son from the dead)

18 - So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.