**God’s Plan to Restore Eden**

Whole Bible Series

Sermon 32: Zephaniah

McDonald Bible Methodist

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October 11, 2020

**SERMON NOTES**

*Question: Why did God create the universe?*

1. **God’s Goal for Creation** (3:9-20)
   1. Renewed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with God (3:9-10)

*God longs to enjoy communion with His people!*

* 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and gathering of His people (3:11-12, 18-20)
  2. Justice, truth, and safety (3:13)
  3. Our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in salvation (3:14, 16)
  4. God’s rejoicing over \_\_\_\_ (3:17)

1. **What Inhibits God’s Purpose**

*Christ came to enable reconciliation!*

* 1. Man is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rebellious (1:4-6; 3:7)
  2. Sin continues to bring pain and death

1. **God’s Solution for Sin: The “Day of the Lord”** (1:7-3:8)
2. The rebellious will be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ harshly (See esp. 1:3, 15, 17; 2:11; 3:6, 8)

*God still pleads for the rebellious to repent!*

1. This enables the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Eden (3:9-20)

Application from Zephaniah

1. The promise of future judgement motivates us to invite sinners to \_\_\_\_\_\_ the people of God
2. Chapter 3 inspires us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ communion with God now!
3. God’s people are called to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ follow Him.

**Answers:** communion, **Cleansing,** rejoicing, **us,** persistently, **punished,** restoration, **join,** enjoy, **faithfully**

**Questions for Small Groups or Individual Study**

**Bible study:** Read chapter 3:9-20, marking descriptions of the coming kingdom that appeal to you.

1. *What are the biggest differences you see between our current world and Zephaniah’s description of God’s Kingdom on earth?*
2. Discuss the *Question* at the beginning of the sermon.
3. Why is heaven incompatible with evil? Practically, why must God purge the earth of sin in order to bring heaven to earth?
4. Read Zephaniah 3:7, and discuss reasons why people are so reluctant to leave their sin.
5. In light of coming judgement and blessing, which is more kind: leaving people alone and keeping your religion to yourself, or presenting an opportunity for them to be confronted by God’s grace? Who do you think is encouraging these inhibitions we have? What can we do to overcome them?

**Prayer from Zephaniah**

“God, give me a longing for communion with you that makes me hate sin, especially the sin of (*your susceptible area*), and that drives me to abide in your presence every day.