**“Sing, O Daughter of Zion”**

Going deeper in Zephaniah 3:14-17

**INTRODUCTION –** Zephaniah preached. He preached during the time of King Josiah who was a good and wise king. He ruled Judah for 31 years and during his reign he truly attempted to turn the nation of Israel around; to turn them from the grave sin of idol worship; to turn around the corruption of the religious leaders and the greed of the political leaders. He tried. But after his death, God allowed Babylon to invade and send the people of Judah into exile.

The Prophet Zephaniah was sent by God to give waring. This short book in the Old Testament is a book of judgement against Judah and the capital city of Jerusalem. It imparts a stark and somber assessment not just of Israel, but of the world – the state of all mankind. The first two and a half chapters are filled with dire prophecy of what is coming because the people have sinned against the Lord. But, at the end of chapter 3, in the midst of judgement, comes a shining ray of light as the Prophet of God begins to speak of One who is Mighty to Save.

**READ** – *Read (passage) aloud. Read it several times. Listen for what the Spirit of God is saying, don’t just think about it.*

**14**Sing, O Daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O Daughter of 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, O Zion; do not let your hands hang limp.
**17**The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you; he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.”

**ENGAGE** – *Questions for going deeper. God is speaking… to you.*

1. What punishment has the Lord taken away? Who/what is the enemy that has been turned back? How was this accomplished?

2. Would you describe God as a mighty warrior? Why? Why not?

3. What words would you use to describe God’s love for you?

4. Is there anything in your life that is robbing you of joy? What can you do to remedy this?

5. How would your life change if you could believe, receive and rest in the promises of verse 17?

**PRAY** – *God has spoken. So, reply.*

\*Give thanks to God for the gifts of grace and forgiveness we have in His Son Jesus!

\*Ask the Holy Spirit to help you pinpoint the sin in your life that may be robbing you of the joy that is your inheritance as a Child of God.

\*Give thanks for the fierce, delightful and joyous love the Lord holds for you, always.

**LIVE** – *This is where the rubber hits the road.*

In her book “Choose Joy Because Happiness Isn’t Enough”, Kay Warren defines joy as: “the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in all things”. In the New Year, how could this definition affect the “level” of the joy of the Lord in your life?