

Taking It Home

In Zephaniah's day the people of Judah had grown deaf to the warnings of God's coming judgment. Even when he took extreme measures, such as sending the northern kingdom into exile, God still could not shake Judah out of their complacency. Despite all his efforts, Judah remained stubbornly rebellious and defiled, refusing to receive correction. They had become insensitive to their sinfulness, and in that state judgment was unavoidable. But it is not unavoidable if we listen to God, accept his correction, trust him and draw near to him. Ask God to reveal to you any areas in your life in which you may have grown insensitive to his correction. As we draw near to him, he will continually refine us in order to transform us into the image of Christ. Set aside time in your day to pray and seek him. Our receptivity to his correction is vital to our growth. Jeremiah 29:12-13 says, "Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."



Life group lesson—Zephaniah Week of 3/15/15

Quick Review:

What insight, principle or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye opening or troubling?

My Story:

1. When you were a child growing up, did your mother ever get mad and threaten, "Wait till your father gets home!" Did that get your attention?

Digging deeper:

The book of Zephaniah tells of the coming judgment on all people for their sin, followed by the restoration of God's chosen people. The people of Judah had fallen deeply into sin in the reigns of the recent kings, Manasseh and Amon, who had both done evil in the eyes of the Lord. Zephaniah's prophecy was calling out for godliness and purity in a nation that was sinful to its core. This book mentions "the day of the Lord," or the coming judgment, more than any other book of the Old Testament. He wrote that it was near, that it would be a time of wrath, that it would come as judgment on sin, and that ultimately it would result in God's presence among his people. The Israelites had turned their backs on God in both their personal lives and their worship. Zephaniah was warning them that God would judge their sin, but he also was reminding them that there was reason to hope, because God's great love could restore them into a right relationship with him.

1. Read Zephaniah 1:4-6. What religious practices are listed that will lead to judgment?
2. According to Zephaniah 1:8-13, how thorough will God's judgment be? What groups of people are included for judgment in this passage?
3. Read Zephaniah 2:1-3. Discuss the hope that is extended to the people in this passage. Pastor Bob referred to living life as if you're in the two minute drill. Do these verses indicate that there's still time for these people?
4. Zephaniah 2:4-15 tells of judgments against the nations around Judah. Discuss some possible motives for God to exact his judgment on these nations, particularly in light of verse 11.
5. In Zephaniah 3:1-7 the prophet turns his attention back to Judah and Jerusalem. Discuss the offenses that are listed as well as those who are listed as the offenders.
6. In Zephaniah 3:9-20 the prophet speaks of a time of restoration and redemption. How is this redemption consistent with the judgment spoken of in verses 3:5 and 3:8?