

Big Things from Small Places

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times" **Micah 5:2 (NIV)**.

It is an exciting time here in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Last weekend, the college football playoff brackets were announced, and our own James Madison University has earned the right to be in the playoffs. Needless to say, the entire community is abuzz with excitement as JMU gets to compete against some of the best football programs in the nation. Purple and gold are everywhere, and there is a sense of pride in the air.

However, if you turn on the national sports shows, the vibe is different. Many outside of Harrisonburg aren't as excited as we are. The critics argue that JMU isn't a deserving program. They say we don't have the same draw as the big schools, we don't have pedigree, or that we simply aren't "worthy" of standing on the same field as the giants of the sport. The world looks at the resume, the budget, and the history, and decides who belongs and who doesn't.

It reminds me of the very first Christmas.

Think about what Scripture tells us about the arrival of Jesus. If the world were planning the entrance of the King of Kings, they would have chosen Rome, the seat of political power, or perhaps the Temple in Jerusalem, the center of religious authority. They would have chosen a place that was "worthy."

Instead, God chose Bethlehem.

On that day, Bethlehem was a "nobody" town. It was a dusty outpost—a small suburb that no one paid much attention to. The prophet Micah even described it as "small among the clans of Judah." No one expected anything world-changing to come out of Bethlehem. It had no prestige, no draw, and certainly no luxury.

Yet, this is exactly where heaven touched earth. Jesus was born not in a palace, but in a stable; he was laid not in a royal crib, but in a feeding trough. God completely flipped the expectations of the world on their head. He bypassed the VIP section to show up in the most humble, unexpected place imaginable.

The Incarnation reminds us that God rarely works the way we think He should. We often look for God in the loud, spectacular moments—the "championship" moments of life.

We expect Him to show up in the big breakthroughs and the flashy signs. But the story of Christmas tells us that God is often found in the quiet, the small, and the mundane.

This Christmas season let's humble our hearts and stop looking only for the fireworks. Instead, ask God to reveal Himself in the small, delicate moments of your day. God doesn't always show up in the big, loud places we expect. Sometimes, He is waiting to meet us in the simple stillness of a stable.

Merry Christmas- and GO DUKES!

John Prater, CBC Ex. Board

Weekly Prayer Point

"Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints" **Romans 1:1-7 (NKJV)**.

Please pray for these congregations and pastors:

- Guaymate Iglesia Apostolico del Asento Alto Congregation in Guaymate, Dominican Republic and Pastor Danny Luis
- Hainamisa Comnunte de Christ Congregation and Pastor Makensy Galin

CBC Prayer Committee