

**REFLECTIONS FROM
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND, 2014**

*Meditations from Paul McPheeters' Sermon on Joshua 5
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Warwick, RI, Monday night*

I. Joshua Fell on His Face in Worship (5:14b)

"Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence."

II. Joshua Asked a Great Question (5:14c)

"What message does my Lord have for his servant?"

III. Joshua Obeyed God (5:15)

"The commander of the LORD's army replied, 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.' And Joshua did so."

Never let go of these things. Let's pray for each other, that we will always be in God's eyes among that small number who *fell*, who *asked*, and who *obeyed*!

Notes:

*Meditations from Ed Stetzer's Sermon on 1 Peter 4:10-11
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Warwick, RI, Tuesday morning*

I. All Have Gifts (4:10a)

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received

John 20:21—"Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'"

II. God Intends All to Use Their Gifts (4:10b)

to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

III. For Which He Empowers Us (4:11a)

If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides,

IV. To Bring God Glory (4:11b)

so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."

God is glorified when we serve.

We want everyone to say with Isaiah, "Here am I, send me" (Isa 6:8b).

Wednesday Evening Sermon on "Bethlehem, a Small Town in Scripture" (my title for it) by Jason McConnell

I. Bethlehem, a Little Town Famous in Scripture for Death

Genesis 35:16-19

Then they moved on from Bethel. While they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and had great difficulty. ¹⁷ And as she was having great difficulty in childbirth, the midwife said to her, "Don't despair, for you have another son." ¹⁸ As she breathed her last—for she was dying—she named her son Ben-Oni. ^f But his father named him Benjamin. ¹⁹ So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).

II. Bethlehem, a Little Town Famous in Scripture for Disgrace

Judges 19:1ff

In those days Israel had no king. Now a Levite who lived in a remote area in the hill country of Ephraim took a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah.

III. Bethlehem, a Little Town Famous in Scripture for Destitution (Famine)

Ruth 1:1

"In the days when the judges ruled, ^a there was a famine in the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah,

IV. Bethlehem, A Little Town Famous in Scripture for its Destiny

1 Sam, Mic, Matt

Human eyes only saw Death, Disgrace, and Destitution. But God saw a perfect piece of real estate to accomplish His plan.

Naomi >> Obed >> Jesse >> David!

1 Samuel 16:1—"The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

God chose a rural, small town man, David—the smallest and youngest of the brothers—to be king of His nation.

Micah 5:2—"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."

Matt 2:1-6—"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶ 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

Greatness is not a function of size. Size, significance, and success—or buildings, budgets, and _____—are what make churches great in our nation, but not in the Kingdom of God.

False: if a church is not growing it is dying.

Zechariah 4:10a, NASB—"For who has despised the day of small things?"