

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Robert Morris

Focus The reasons why God chose the small town of Bethlehem for the Savior's birthplace and the circumstances surrounding His birth give us insight into His heart towards us.

Open How would you describe the way you decorate your home for Christmas—simply, just about average or over-the-top?

Read In Matthew 2 and Luke 2, we read about the circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth and discover that God's ways of doing things are much different than ours. Rather than the Messiah being born in a prominent place to influential parents surrounded by pomp and circumstance, He was born in a dirty cave in the smallest, most insignificant town to an unwed teen mom and a builder on a night marked with problems. Nothing was as one would think it should have been for the arrival of a King. Yet this problem-filled, difficult, insignificant environment was just perfect for the arrival of the Prince of Peace.

The story of Christmas encourages us that when we feel weak, lowly, insignificant and overwhelmed, we're in just the right place for the miracle of the Savior to be birthed in us.

- Talk**
1. Read 1 Corinthians 1:26–27. How are these verses related to the Christmas story? How do they relate to you?
 2. Mary and Joseph were ordinary people facing a very long trip on foot and donkey during Mary's last term of pregnancy, struggling under a cloud of misunderstanding and scandal. Do you relate to their situation at all? In what way?

3. *“Mary and Joseph didn’t choose the timing or the terms of God’s miracle, and neither do we.” ~ Pastor Robert Morris*

Describe a time when God worked in your life when you least expected it. How would you encourage someone else who is struggling this season?

Live

1. The story of Christmas shows us that God will bring peace in the midst of our problems. Why do you think God chooses to send us His peace/miracles into the midst of our problems rather than just remove our problems?
2. What are some practical ways that we can focus our heart and mind on the promise of God during this season, in our current circumstances?

Pray

Pray for one another and the specific needs and challenges each of you are facing during this Christmas season. Thank God that He uses and works through the insignificant to birth miracles in your life. Ask Him to help you live with your heart inclined towards Him, believing Him for peace in the midst of your problems. Thank Him for sending you a Savior.