

Christmas 1998

Dear Family and Friends:

Dad likes clean, quiet, uncrowded places. Aunt Sarah's Pancakes is just fine by him. Jessi likes happening places, packed with people talking and milling about with techie age gadgets everywhere. RV prefers meat and potatoes in large quantities. Daughter likes veggie wraps and salads with specialty weeds, and bird-like portions of this yuppie chow will do. Jessi enjoys a cup of coffee, but her choices go by names Dad cannot pronounce. Dad drinks more coffee than he should, but it is a no-frills cup of Joe.

This odd couple act continues when we get to campus. Jessi wants to see the soccer field and the student union, Dad the humanities lecture hall and the chemistry lab. RV looks for the roster of speakers coming in during the Fall; Jessi inquires about Homecoming. Daughter found a neat 10K trail through the woods. Dad cannot figure out how to get a car down a path that narrow. Jessi wants to take a break and run the stadium steps. The mere suggestion leaves RV nonplussed. Do they have a cardiac unit standing by?

So, this is a college trip. Father-daughter bonding time. We plan these trips, so we have plenty of time to talk. Dad has so much to say—how much we love her; how proud we are of her; how the nature of our relationship will change; how much dad wants to be friend, counselor, encourager, and supporter. RV reminisces about his own college experience. Watch out for this. Look out for that,

Jessi is tired. She just had a Calculus test, then a Madrigals rehearsal, followed by a soccer match. Besides, she has heard this lecture before. Cut out the melancholy, Dad, and drive. Right now, it is time to zonk.

Sound familiar? You say you have been there, done that. We will be glad and sad when we can say that too. But for now—“we have this moment to hold in our hands, and to touch as it slips through our fingers like sand.”

This Christmas finds us treading new ground and waiting on the Lord for his gracious provision. The Christmas story reminds us that we can have unexpected turns at times. Think of Joseph's situation. From engagement to heartbreak to regal wonderment. This little baby—the Son of God proclaimed by majestic hosts on High. What could Joseph have thought? “Lord, show me how I fit into this plan of yours? How can a man bring up the Son of God? Father, I am only a simple carpenter. How can I raise a king, indeed, the King of kings?”

We wish you a very Merry Christmas. “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.” (Num. 6:24-26).