

Room For Jesus  
December 13, 2015

One of the wonders of the Christmas stories is that in these events, God main room for normal, average people. The main characters, Joseph and Mary, were average, normal people. There was nothing special about Mary or Joseph that we know of. Though both Joseph and Mary were of the lineage of King David, there were hundreds of descendents of David in Israel. In addition, David's family was not currently on the throne of Israel. Therefore, they were not treated as special. They were not considered royalty. Joseph was a common laborer, a carpenter. He and Mary were a poor couple living in Nazareth, a small, out-of-the-way town. Have you heard of a place being in the sticks? Nazareth was in the sticks. Even among the other towns in that region, it was considered to be nothing special. In fact, it had something of a negative reputation beyond just being small and out of the way.

The related minor characters of Zechariah, Elizabeth, and the shepherds were also average people. Zechariah, though he was a priest, was not the high priest, nor a part of the high priest's family. Zechariah was just one of several thousand priests who served at the temple for only two weeks out of each year. After his two weeks were over, he went back home to his wife Elizabeth to care for his sheep and goats.

Then there were the shepherds. They were near the bottom of the social ladder because they usually smelled of sheep and other sheep things.

The wonder is that God shared the wonderful events of Christmas most with these normal, average people. They had the special privilege... of being part of God's plan to bring a Savior to the world. They had the privilege of witnessing the miracles of the arrival of the future Messiah. They had the privilege of seeing the supernatural power of God at work in the world. What a wonderful blessing God bestowed upon these average people.

You and I can experience God's presence in the world too. We can be part of what God is doing around us. We can be part of it because of who Jesus is and what He did for us.

Is there room in your life for Jesus? There wasn't room for Him when He was born.

**Luke 2:6-7 (NIV) While they were there (in Bethlehem), the time came for the baby to be born, and she (Mary) gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.**

I want to put in a good word for the innkeeper. I have heard people say the innkeeper was a mean man for not taking in a young family with a new baby. However, you cannot make room if there is no room. The inn, whatever it was, was packed out already. Remember, not just Mary and Joseph, but everybody had to go and register in their hometown. So there were lots of other people here too.

Every room was full of people. The lobby was full of people. The dining room was full of people. The exercise room was full of people. Even the indoor swimming pool had

people all around it. There just was not any space left. They couldn't squeeze another family inside and keep within the fire code for the building.

And who are you going to kick out? Most of the other families probably had kids too! In addition, most all of the homes in town were full of extra people. Hospitality was extremely important to that religion and culture. Every place was full.

So Mary and Joseph were camping out. And they probably were not the only ones sleeping outside. The innkeeper, as far as we know, was a nice guy, doing the best he could in a bad situation. There was simply no room for Jesus.

There are a lot of people today whose lives are the same way. Their lives are so full that there isn't room for Jesus. They are simply too full to make room for Jesus. They are full of possessions, full of friends and family, full of job and/or school, full of sports, full of hobbies and recreation. They may also be full of worries, full of fears, full of doubts, full of medical and money problems.

Maybe you are one of these people. Even Christians, especially around Christmas time, can get so busy that there isn't any room for Jesus. There isn't any room in their thoughts for Jesus, except at those designated times like Sunday morning, the Sunday evening choir concert, or Christmas Eve.

We have all the regular stuff to do associated with home, family, and work or school. We are not doing any less in all of that stuff. And what little spare time we usually have is all used up with holiday preparations and activities. Some of you already had more than you could get done before the holidays arrived. And now there is so much extra to do, that something has to give. Something HAS to be left out.

So maybe... in your life right now... Jesus is one of the things you leave out.

Joseph and Mary and Jesus were on the outside. We don't know where outside they were. We don't know that they were in a stable. The Bible doesn't say they were in a stable. All we know is that she put the baby in a manger, a common feeding trough to feed animals from. We don't even know anything about the manger. It might have been wooden. Or it might have been carved into a rock. It is a place of lots of rock, and very few trees.

We also don't know how long they were in Bethlehem or how many nights they stayed outside. Every day people were arriving, or leaving to go back home. It seems likely that after one night they had a place inside to stay until they left town. There is a lot about Jesus' birth story that we don't know.

One thing we do know, and it is a very important thing, is that the baby Jesus did not stay a baby. At the end of Luke's accounts of Jesus' birth it says.

**Luke 2:40 (NIV) And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.**

Jesus grew. He did not remain a baby. Further in Luke's gospel we read of an event when Jesus was 12 years old. Later still we see Jesus all grown up. As far as we know He worked as a carpenter like Joseph until He was about thirty years of age, Then He

began a preaching tour through Israel, announcing the arrival of the kingdom of God. The Bible goes on to say that He died on a cross, that God raised Him from the dead, and that He lives and rules today in heaven.

**Romans 14:9 (NLT) Christ died and rose again for this very purpose—to be Lord both of the living and of the dead.**

His birth is only celebrated because of His special death. It is only because Jesus died for us and was resurrected by God that we celebrate His birth. Yes, the miracles of His birth are special and memorable. But the Bible's emphasis is not on His birth, but rather on His death and resurrection. The birth isn't even listed in two of the biographies about Jesus in the Bible. His death and resurrection are recorded in all four of them, and emphasized in all the succeeding books of the Bible. He died for us and was raised so that we might be forgiven of sins. He lives today as the Lord of all the universe.

So when you say, "I don't really have time for Jesus this week, it isn't a baby you don't have time for. It is the grownup Jesus. It is the crucified Jesus. It is the raised-from-the-dead Jesus. It is the savior-from-sins Jesus. It is the Lord-of-the-universe Jesus. You don't have time for the Lord of the universe?"

You might be thinking that you don't have time for another thing to add to your To Do List this week. But that is speaking of Jesus as if He is an event. Making room for Jesus is not adding another event to your busy schedule. Making room for Jesus is not about going to church. It is not about a few minutes of prayer each day. It is not about reading the Bible. It is much more inclusive than a few more activities on your To Do List.

Jesus doesn't want to be an event in your day. Jesus doesn't want to be an event in your week. Jesus doesn't want to be an activity or To Do in your Christmas season. **Jesus doesn't want to be an event to you. Jesus wants a relationship with you.**

He wants a permanent, constant, relationship with you of caring, love, and friendship. In such a relationship, you will experience His presence. In such a relationship you will learn to live in obedience. In such a relationship you will see God working in the world around you. In such a relationship you will see people as Jesus does. In such a relationship you will treat people as Jesus does. This only happens as you make room for Jesus as Lord of your life. **Making room for Jesus means to receive Jesus as Lord of your life.**

In this relationship you will work your job with Jesus. In this relationship you will relate to your spouse with Jesus. In this relationship you will go to school with Jesus. In this relationship you will do your chores with Jesus, watch TV with Jesus, engage in your hobbies and sports with Jesus. In this relationship you will live in your home, your family, your diet, your everything with Jesus. When you live in relationship to Jesus as Lord, you will do everything with Jesus.

And doing everything with Jesus you will see what Jesus is doing in the world and be a part of that. Jesus is speaking to your neighbor. Are you a part of that? Jesus is speaking to your co-workers, pulling them to the truth. Are you a part of that? Jesus is transforming your prayer partners. Are you a part of that? Jesus is working in your Bible Study group. Are you a part of what He is doing there?

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You know about gifts. Christmas is about gifts. We give gifts and receive gifts. The gifts we receive are not earned. They don't depend on your goodness, your efforts, your deeds. They are not given because you've been a good boy or girl, despite what some believe.

Maybe you have heard the old song, "I'm getting nothing for Christmas. Mommy and Daddy are mad. I'm getting nothing for Christmas, cause I ain't been nothing but bad."

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So maybe... in your life right now... Jesus is one of the things you leave out.

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So when you say, "I don't really have time for Jesus this week, it isn't a baby you don't have time for. It is the grownup Jesus. It is the crucified Jesus. It is the raised-from-the-dead Jesus. It is the savior-from-sins Jesus. It is the Lord-of-the-universe Jesus. You don't have time for the Lord of the universe?"

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He wants a permanent, constant, relationship with you of caring, love, and friendship. In such a relationship, you will experience His presence. In such a relationship you will learn to live in obedience. In such a relationship you will see God working in the world around you. In such a relationship you will see people as Jesus does. In such a relationship you will treat people as Jesus does. This only happens as you make room for Jesus as Lord of your life. **Making room for Jesus means to receive Jesus as Lord of your life.**

In this relationship you will work your job with Jesus. In this relationship you will relate to your spouse with Jesus. In this relationship you will go to school with Jesus. In this relationship you will do your chores with Jesus, watch TV with Jesus, engage in your hobbies and sports with Jesus. In this relationship you will live in your home, your family, your diet, your everything with Jesus. When you live in relationship to Jesus as Lord, you will do everything with Jesus.

And doing everything with Jesus you will see what Jesus is doing in the world and be a part of that. Jesus is speaking to your neighbor. Are you a part of that? Jesus is speaking to your co-workers, pulling them to the truth. Are you a part of that? Jesus is transforming your prayer partners. Are you a part of that? Jesus is working in your Bible Study group. Are you a part of what He is doing there?

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You know about gifts. Christmas is about gifts. We give gifts and receive gifts. The gifts we receive are not earned. They don't depend on your goodness, your efforts, your deeds. They are not given because you've been a good boy or girl, despite what some believe.

Maybe you have heard the old song, "I'm getting nothing for Christmas. Mommy and Daddy are mad. I'm getting nothing for Christmas, cause I ain't been nothing but bad."

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So, is there room in your life for a savior, for Jesus? Receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord. You really can't do the one without the other.

The reason many people have no room for Jesus is that they might want a savior, but they don't want a Lord. But Jesus is both Savior and Lord. You can't receive Him as only one and not the other.

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December 13, 2015

One of the wonders of the Christmas stories is that in these events, God main room for normal, average people. The main characters, Joseph and Mary, were average, normal people. There was nothing special about Mary or Joseph that we know of. Though both Joseph and Mary were of the lineage of King David, there were hundreds of descendents of David in Israel. In addition, David's family was not currently on the throne of Israel. Therefore, they were not treated as special. They were not considered royalty. Joseph was a common laborer, a carpenter. He and Mary were a poor couple living in Nazareth, a small, out-of-the-way town. Have you heard of a place being in the sticks? Nazareth was in the sticks. Even among the other towns in that region, it was considered to be nothing special. In fact, it had something of a negative reputation beyond just being small and out of the way.

The related minor characters of Zechariah, Elizabeth, and the shepherds were also average people. Zechariah, though he was a priest, was not the high priest, nor a part of the high priest's family. Zechariah was just one of several thousand priests who served at the temple for only two weeks out of each year. After his two weeks were over, he went back home to his wife Elizabeth to care for his sheep and goats.

Then there were the shepherds. They were near the bottom of the social ladder because they usually smelled of sheep and other sheep things.

The wonder is that God shared the wonderful events of Christmas most with these normal, average people. They had the special privilege... of being part of God's plan to bring a Savior to the world. They had the privilege of witnessing the miracles of the arrival of the future Messiah. They had the privilege of seeing the supernatural power of God at work in the world. What a wonderful blessing God bestowed upon these average people.

You and I can experience God's presence in the world too. We can be part of what God is doing around us. We can be part of it because of who Jesus is and what He did for us.

Is there room in your life for Jesus? There wasn't room for Him when He was born.

**Luke 2:6-7 (NIV) While they were there (in Bethlehem), the time came for the baby to be born, and she (Mary) gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.**

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