

SERIES: CHRISTMAS BREAKTHROUGH
PART 3: MAKING ROOM FOR JESUS

Have you ever been invited to an event, and they didn't plan for all the people who came, and maybe you were one of those who were turned away? How did that feel? Maybe your spouse or child or friend that means so much to you is so caught up in their work or they're always on the phone, or their iPad or their computer, and they just don't seem to have room for you in their schedule.

As a culture there is less and less room for Jesus, Christianity and God's Word. In 1963 the courts decided that Jesus should be banned from the classroom. Soon after, prayer was outlawed in the classroom. There is no longer any room for Jesus in our public schools. Then, systematically over the last 55 years or more, we have been taking Jesus out of each of the rooms of our culture. Out of the courtroom the stateroom, the classroom, the news room and the work room. You can lose your job for talking about how Jesus has made a difference in your life. It has gotten so bad here in the United States that our culture has taken Jesus out of Christmas. If you say to someone MERRY CHRISTMAS you are accused of making a political statement. It is no longer CHRISTMAS, it is Xmas or Happy Holiday. Several years ago on the front page of the USA TODAY the headline was, "Jesus is no longer the reason for the season." Christmas is no longer about Jesus' birth. It's just a month-long party with friends. At Christmas you take a break, you go on vacation. It's been

downgraded on the religious calendar,’ said Barry Kosmin of the Institute for Study of Secularism. “‘Come o come all ye partiers, now trumps ‘Oh Come all Ye Faithful’ for nearly a third of Americans.” They did a survey, and this front page article said that today more parents tell their kids the Santa myth than actually tell them the true story about Jesus’ birth. This national survey revealed that kids today are more likely to learn the story of Jesus’ birth from Linus on a Charlie Brown Christmas than from their own parents. The Huffington Post, James Martin, wrote that even though retailers owed their year’s entire profits to Christmas, they now treat Jesus as “‘He who must not be named’ like the villain in the Harry Potter’s books and movies.” What is actually happening? **We’re making no room for Jesus.** We can say Seasons Greetings or Happy Holidays, but you cannot say Jesus. Satan through our culture has taken Jesus Christ out of Christmas.

What I want to look at this morning (afternoon) is Why don’t I make room for Jesus in my daily life? Why don’t you make room for Jesus in your daily life? I want to ask us three questions this morning (afternoon):

- 1. Why do we have no room for Jesus?**
- 2. What are the reasons for making room for Jesus?**
- 3. How to make room for Jesus?**

Please follow along as I read Luke 2:1-7, **“At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. ²(This was the**

first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.)
³All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. ⁴And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. ⁵He took with him Mary, his fiancé, who was now obviously pregnant. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her Baby to be born. ⁷She gave birth to her first, Child a Son. She wrapped Him snugly in strips of cloth and laid Him in a manger, because there was no lodging (room) available for them.”

The reasons the innkeeper didn't have room for Jesus are very similar to why we don't make room for Jesus. It is important to know that your heart is like an inn. In your heart you have many different rooms. You have a spiritual room where you get to know who Jesus is and develop a relationship with Him. You have a brain in which you think about different things and how you perceive this world. We call it a worldview. You have a family room in your heart where you spend time with your family. You have a work room which represents your vocation and hobbies. You have a bedroom which represents your sleeping life and how you conduct your sexuality, whether you're single or married. You have a dining room and kitchen where you learn how to eat so you can live your best life. You might have a reading room or study where you develop your curiosity for knowledge and how the world works. If during this Christmas season you're going to invite Jesus into every room of your life just like the innkeeper during Jesus' birth, you will have

to be willing to make room for Him. Let's look at our first point this morning (afternoon).

I. Why do we have no room for Jesus?

Luke 2:7c says, **“There was no room available for them.”**

A. We don't pay attention to Jesus

Jesus is coming to us all the time in different ways, situations, people and the Bible, if you are reading it, and we just don't see Him, because we don't know how to recognize all of the different ways He comes to us. Jesus shows up in your life through all of the opportunities you didn't know you were going to get, in problems you didn't know you would have, and He allowed them so you could grow and mature. Jesus comes to you in words other people say to you. It is just like radio and TV waves. Right now there are radio and TV waves going through this building. They're actually going through your body. If you had a tuner and you tune it in, you could get pictures. But you can't see them, but that doesn't mean they're not real. You're just not tuned in, and that happens way too often for all of us.

There are two stories that profoundly demonstrate this point. Jesus had just been crucified. These two disciples of Jesus on the road to Emmaus were overtaken with grief, depression, and were shocked at what they had just witnessed in the trial, beating and state torture of Jesus in His crucifixion. The Bible says that Jesus joined them and asked them what they

were talking about, and Luke 24:16 says, **“But their eyes were kept from recognizing Him.”** Scholars do some impressive things with this verse from the Greek language in which it was written. Some argue that God supernaturally constrained their ability to see until He was ready to reveal Himself to them. There is some truth to that. But one clear clue we’re given in simply reading the Bible is found in Luke 24:25-26, **“O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. ²⁶Wasn’t it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering His glory?”** The leading reason they didn’t see Him—Jesus—it says He called them foolish and slow of heart to believe the Scriptures, the Bible. In other words, Jon Bloom argues, **“Their outward inability to recognize Jesus mirrored their inward unbelief of what the Scripture revealed about Him.”** In other words they were not paying attention to all of the clues God’s Word had given to them. There are thousands of people around us, and maybe many of us who are clueless to what God desires to do in and around us is simply because we’re not paying attention to Him. If you’re here this morning and you could say you don’t know Jesus or you don’t believe in Him yet, I guarantee you that Jesus is presenting Himself to you every day—you’re just not paying attention. You’re here today because He drew you. You might say, “No, I came with a friend.” Yes. That is Jesus reaching out to you.

Just like the inn, which is like our modern day hotels, are meant to serve people. There is a parallel to your heart. Your heart was made as a place for Jesus to relate to you. You were

created to have God live on the inside of you by His Holy Spirit. You were made by God for God. He wants to relate to you 24/7. The problem is we are not paying attention. The 2nd reason we don't have room for Jesus is:

B. Our lives are full of other things

Collins in his book, GOOD TO GREAT, argues that often times our worst enemy in experiencing greatness is too much good in our lives. In other words, most likely most of us have enough good that there is no room for Jesus and His purposes and plans for our lives. Have you noticed that stuff multiplies? Especially in your garage. Question: How many of you can't use your garage because it is full of stuff? That is true at my home. I can go home tonight, and there will be things in my garage that were not there while I was away at work. It is amazing. 1 Corinthians 2:14 NJB says, **“The unspiritual person has no room for the gifts of God's Spirit; to them they are foolish; they cannot even recognize them.”** The nonbeliever does not have the ability to see spiritual things. In 2 Corinthians 4:4 Paul argues that, **“Satan, who is the God of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News.”** Their lives are so full of the stuff of life, it blinds them from seeing God's grace, love and forgiveness that can only come through Jesus Christ.

The truth is that your heart was made for God. That's the purpose of your heart, your mind, emotions and will, so that you can communicate with God and He with you. He wants

to fill your life overflowing with Who He is, His goodness, wisdom, love, joy, hope, knowledge, purity, and grace so that you influence others for His purposes and rule and reign. In Mark chapter 4 Jesus tells a parable concerning God's Word and the receptivity of people's hearts and uses the condition of the soil that God's Word, His seed, falls into. He says this in 4:18-19, **"The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God's word, ¹⁹but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced."** Jesus says all the different worries and fears that we have, the attractiveness of getting wealth and the desire to accumulate stuff, crowds out and chokes out the power of God's Word. These things crowd your heart, and there is no room for Jesus in your mind, emotions and actions. Your life is full of other things. Jesus describes this kind of overcrowded lie that perfectly describes Southern Californians. We overbook our lives, we overspend our budget, we overestimate our strength, and all these things cause us to walk around exhausted all the time.

C. We do not make room for God

We don't because we don't think we need to. Bottom line if you're not making room for God it is because you don't think you need to and that He is not important enough to do so. This happened to the innkeeper. He most likely said to himself, "My rooms are full. I've made my money. I couldn't care less about anyone else. Why? Because my life, my inn, my rooms are full." Today, it is still the same. People say to

Jesus, “My life, the rooms of my heart, are full. I don’t have any room for You, and there is no room for Your Son. It is our human nature that says, “I don’t need You. I can figure out my life by myself.” Psalms 10:4 in the New Century Version says, **“People are too proud to seek God. They do not look for Him; there is no room for God in their thoughts.”** We don’t have room in our hearts for God, because we don’t pay attention to Jesus. Our lives are full of other things, and we don’t make room for Him. He is not a priority. Matthew 6:33-34 says, **“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need. ³⁴So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”**

II. What are the reasons for making room for Jesus?

Here is the Good News, especially in this marvelous Christmas season. Making room for Jesus in my life has an amazing number of benefits that result. What are those benefits? Why should I make room for Jesus in my life, even if it means clearing out some of the stuff and junk I have collected over the years? I want to give you two reasons this morning (afternoon).

A. To know my Creator and Savior

John 1:10-14 is one of the most powerful passages in the entire Bible concerning why it makes so much sense to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. **“He (Jesus) came**

into the very world He created, but the world didn't recognize Him. ¹¹He came to His own people, and even they rejected Him. ¹²But to all who believed Him and accepted Him, He gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. ¹⁴So the Word became human and made His home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen His glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son." John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life." Throughout the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, God has always demonstrated His deep desire to have a family and to have an intimate relationship with each member of His family. You have an innate desire to know your Creator, because you have been created in His image. With all of the hurt, abuse, traumas and negative experiences we all have encountered, often times our misperceptions cause us to either not be interested in Jesus, or our anger fuels our unwillingness to make room for Him. You see it in this passage. Jesus comes to the very creation He created, but they did not recognize Him, meaning they didn't pay Him attention, their lives were filled with other things. Vs. 11 says even His own people the Jews rejected Him, meaning they refused to make room for Him. But when you hear the Gospel, the Good News that Jesus Christ who is the light of the world comes to earth so that you can have a relationship with Him, and you believe that He is God's Son, that He is God Himself, and you accept Him as your Lord

and Savior, He gives you the right the freedom and the authority to become His son or daughter. Authority means it is divine to become His child that no human effort could ever accomplish. This is why Jesus says to Nicodemus, a Jewish leader who was a Pharisee, John 3:3, **“I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.”** Because Jesus came from above, from the Father, and He has always been. Jesus is eternal; He says to become a true child of God, you must be born from above, which means you must believe in who Jesus is. That He is God, He came to die for your sin and to take the punishment that you deserved because of your rebellion, disobedience and rejection of who He is. The first reason to make room for Jesus is you get to know Jesus for who He is and receive His love, acceptance and forgiveness personally and on an ongoing basis.

B. To enjoy God’s purpose for my life

Jesus says to His disciples just before He was crucified and He says to us in John 14:27, **“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.”** The peace the world gives is temporary. We’ve had hundreds if not thousands of peace treaties over the last 242 years. The majority of them have not been kept. The peace that comes from the world is totally circumstantial. I’ve got a good job, so I’m at peace. I lose my job; I’m not at peace anymore. I’ve got money in my stock portfolio, I’m at peace. The stock market tanks, I’m not at peace any more. Jesus says “I don’t

give you that kind of peace—the peace the world gives. I give you the kind of peace that comes from an eternal perspective. Philippians 4:6-7 says, **“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. ⁷Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”** Paul gives us four action steps to take to experience God’s peace, purpose and power. First He says, **Make the decision to stop worrying.** You simply say when you go to worry, “I will choose to stop that.” ^{2nd}, He gives us something to do. The Bible never just tells you to stop one action without giving you another action to take: **Pray about everything.** What am I supposed to pray about? Everything you worry about, are anxious about or angry about. ^{3rd}, **Tell God what you need.** This is where you get incredibly specific. Express your need to Jesus **SERFVIP** style. That stands for your **Spiritual, Emotional, Relational, Financial, Vocational, Intellectual and Physical** areas of your life. ^{4th}, **Thank Him for all He has done.** This is where you start your day and end your day with thanking God for how He answers all of your prayers. This is the only and best way to stay in peace and connected to Jesus Christ as you let Him into every room of your life and develop an intimate and obedient relationship with Him.

III. How to make room for Jesus: Invite Him into your life

God has made it so simple that any one of us here today can understand how to do this. Invite Him into your life. You acknowledge that He made you and that He created you. Psalm 119:73 says, **“You made me; You created me. Now give me the sense to follow Your commands.”** You love me. You came for me on that first Christmas morning, most likely scholars say in September-October. You died for me and You rose from the dead for me. I open my life so that You can come in and live with me. In Revelation 3:20 in the CEV, Jesus says, **“Listen! I am standing and knocking at your door. If you hear My voice and open the door, I will come in and we will eat together.”** If you let Him in, it is true He will rearrange the rooms in your house. You will learn from reading His Bible every day that you will learn how to think like He does. You will learn to have His attitude, His ethics and His values. You will learn through the power of the Holy Spirit to learn how He feels so His feelings shape your feelings. You will begin to understand His will and purpose for your life, and the actions and behaviors you take will begin to reflect His life. This is how you make your biggest impact and influence for His Kingdom in other people’s lives. The question is, “Will you make room for Jesus this Christmas season?” You will tell how many rooms He is actively living in by the breakthroughs you will experience this Christmas season. Let’s pray.