

THE CHILD WITHIN
Luke 2.1-7

“There was no room in the inn.”

“No room in the inn...,” I always get stuck on that phrase.

Those can be some of the saddest words in the world.

They were some of the saddest words in the world.

But God redeemed those words

But the Baby Jesus in the womb heard the innkeeper say those words or something to that effect.

Jesus as he walked and talked with thousands, heard the religious leaders scowl,
we don't have room for you or your message around here.

On the cross Jesus would hear loud and clear those words of utter rejection,
“We don't have room for you in our world.”

Is it any different today?

Jesus goes from life to life, stands at the door and knocks on heart after heart,
and many say they have no room or no time for him. A few even slam the door.

There was no room in the inn for Jesus then and there
and there is no room for him in many people's lives in the here and now.

And for those of us that have experience the love of Jesus,
and welcomed him into our lives...

I think we must confess there are days
it's hard for us to find room in our lives for Jesus
or should I say **make** room in our lives for Jesus.

Well, here is the generous creator of the universe,
the gracious savior of our souls given to us,
wanting relationship with us,

wanting room to work within us,
wanting to free us from sin and death, guilt and shame,
and wanting to fill us with hope, love, peace, and joy.

Oh we even sing the prayer,

**“O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend on us we pray,
cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell,
O come to us , abide in us, our Lord Emmanuel.”**

We even sing about preparing him room;

**“ Joy to the world, the Lord is come, let earth receive her king,
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing.”**

But we don't always get around to preparing him room, do we?
Why?

Well we have a lots of reasons, many of them good ones.

We don't have time.

We're too busy.

We can't afford it.

We've got to take care of our stuff.

The first time I got to see Evie, Jess asked me if I wanted to hold her.

I had my hands and arms full of stuff.

Well if I wanted to hold Evie, I had to make room for her.

I had to get rid of some stuff.

Or it's like you giving me a beautifully wrapped and wonderful gift.

You see me a month later and ask me if I like the gift.

And I say, I don't know, I haven't even opened the gift.

Or if I have open it , I hem and haw and say something about not having the chance to use it yet.

Oh, I'm planning to but, just haven't gotten to it.

Would that be good, helpful, or healthy for our relationship?

Jesus has been given but has not always been received.

I think a lot of time not received, because we don't recognize
or acknowledge the need we have for forgiveness.

The thing is, this gift is given and driven out of God's love for us.

Jesus is the greatest gift and meets the greatest need.

John 3.17 tells us that, **“Jesus came not to condemn but to save.”**

There is the old clique, however old it's still true;

God loves us just as we are

but loves us too much to leave us as we are, dead in our sin.

All we have to do is make room in our lives for him.

One of my favorite Christmas stories gives us a wonderful picture of Jesus working within.

It's called the “Child Within.”

Mary was a woman of faith, with a sweet little smile,

a wonderful wife of an ex-Marine and awesome mother of two growing fun-loving children.

She started to have trouble breathing, was losing weight, and her color was turning grey.

So she began to doctor.

They found she had a hole in her lung from a form of tuberculosis
and so she had to be hospitalized.

Early treatments and medications didn't seem to slow the illness down at all. The hole continued to get bigger, and she continued to have trouble breathing. She lost more weight and turned more grey but still continued to smile.

The doctors finally tried a procedure that if it worked, would push the diaphragm up, pushing the diaphragm up would push the lung together, and pushing the lung together would close the hole in her lung.

It didn't work. The procedure just about killed her. So, they decided to try to just keep her comfortable.

So it was just a matter of time, nature would take its course. Each day the hole got bigger, she got smaller, greyer, and had more trouble breathing, but she continued to smile.

Well it got to be the week before Christmas and Mary reminded the doctor he had promised she could go home for Christmas Eve. He had promised her that thinking he'd never have to keep that promise.

But she held him to the promise and promised him she'd be back the next day. He took her to their car himself and as she and her husband drove away, she waved and he wondered if he'd seen that sweet little smile for the last time.

Well, she came back the next day, a bit more tired but still smiling. January and February went by and now it seemed there was another complication, she got sick.

They tried all kinds of tests but couldn't find the source of the problem. One doctor jokingly said, "Well, maybe she's pregnant." They check it out...and...she was pregnant.

But, there was no room in her body for a baby. Her sick body supporting one life now had to support two lives.

Abortion was one option. When suggested to Mary and her husband-abortion was not an option.

So doctor and his staff just tried to keep her comfortable.

But then the doctor discovered some amazing things; the hole in her lung stopped growing, she'd gained some weight and her color was a bit better. And of course she continued to smile.

In the next two months the numbers after each exam showed that the hole was continuing to get smaller and she was gaining weight.

It was also obvious that her color had significantly improved and that she could breathe better.

It was obvious the baby within was saving Mary's life.
The "child within" was and did save Mary's life.

After the baby was born and released from the hospital,
Doc put Mary and the baby in the car, waved,
and as they drove away saw Mary's sweet little smile.

Each year after that Doc got a special Christmas Card from Mary reminding him of the "child within."

God's promise to you and I that once in, the child within,
the Christ then within will bring wholeness, healing, and help to our lives,
"He who began this good work in us will bring it to completion in Christ Jesus."

Our responsibility-we're to accept Jesus' invitation into our lives,
welcome him in our lives, and make a little room for him in our lives.

Jesus' promise to those that do make room in their hearts for him
He has gone ahead and made a room in his Father's house for them.

Let's pray:

**O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend on us pray,
cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.**

**"We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell,
O come to us , abide in us, our Lord Emmanuel."**

Let's stand and sing Hark the Herald Angels Sing.