

Introduction:

- *"She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them."* (Luke 2:7, NLT)
- Ie. Growing up I had opportunity to be in several school plays. Tom Sawyer - with a sore toe and painting a fence. Oliver Twist - one of the street rats, part of the choir. What I remember today as look back is the teacher saying, "Everyone has a part." No one is left out. Sometimes I think we forget that as we approach the holidays and focus of Christ's birth. We read it as an outsider looking in and not a character in the story. I want you to put yourself into the story this year.
 - I.E. William Shakespeare's poem - All The World's A Stage. We are all important to the story of life. Each plays a part.
 - I will take it one step further...you are the main character in your life story. There is no Christmas story without you. You are the whole reason the Protagonist acts. The whole reason the story takes place is because of you...and for you.
 - Everyone is has a lead part in the Christmas story, after all you are the reason that God acted.

I. Why A Manger?

- A. All the details.
 1. Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth. It was important that Jesus be born in Bethlehem according to the prophecies of Micah. There are some things written in heaven about your life that God would move heaven and earth to make happen all for your sake and for others.
 2. How could this be made to happen that an unknown carpenter and an unknown maiden would be forced to prove their lineage. And of those who keep registers, who cares about these unknown people? Yet we know that Messiah must come from the lineage of David so this is important.
 3. Mary being pregnant in Nazareth is not about to go on a long mule ride (90 miles) to Bethlehem. Nothing could compel a pregnant woman to make such a journey...unless God wants the Roman government to put its signature on your birth certificate to certify it true. Certifying you are of the lineage of David and born in Bethlehem. We learn that God uses adverse circumstances that make no sense at the time in order to accomplish his purposes in the future.
 4. It was Caesar Augustus' dislike of Herod that prompted this sudden incursion of a census into the lives of so many. Since everyone is forced to return to their town of heritage a crowd of people head to Bethlehem, all for the same reason...the census, taxation. And you are traveling with a pregnant woman who must stop to use the ladies room every two miles. Chances are you are going to arrive late and not get the best accommodations.
- B. Jesus is born and laid in a manger, why? (A manger is a feeding trough for animals or beasts of the field.)
 1. It connects Him to the humility that He has chose to put on himself.

- a) *"There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him..."* Is 53:2 a root out of dry ground. Would it have been better for Him to have been born in a palace and then die on a cross or humbly come in and humbly go out?
 - b) The manger and the cross are the two extremes of Jesus earthly life.
 - c) In life He wore Walmart clothes, hung out with fishermen, associated with the lowly and had no where for His own head. *"But Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head.""* (Matthew 8:20, NLT)
 - d) If you are going to lay aside all your glory and take on the form of a servant then it is only fitting/perfect that you be born in a barn and laid in a manger. The manger keeps Jesus connected to the heart of humility.
2. It connects him with 99% of the people. IE. Have you heard of the 1%'ers? In 2017 82% of the worlds wealth was in the hands of the 1%. 1% make on average 3.7 million per year. Jesus being laid in a manger and no in cedar gold overlay crib identified with the poor immediately.
 - a) The Shepherds were poor but they were sure excited that 'one of them' would soon be king! In their eyes a king who remembers the feel of the manger will not forget the poor.
 - b) IE. Commanders and leaders that identify with they followers earn their respect. This king lying in a manger was a leader of the people.
 3. It connects the people with Him. We might be afraid to approach a king in a place but King in a barn is very approachable.
 - a) The manger makes him approachable.
 - b) There were no rough guards pushed poor people away.
 - c) A broken hearted father could come to him. A rejected woman of the night could come to him. A diseased woman could touch His garment. He was accessible to the public who were sick, oppressed, and cast out.
 - d) He received sinners and ate with them.
 - e) By being laid in a manger he proved himself a priest taken from among men.
 - f) The throne of Solomon will awe you but the manger of the Son of David will invite you! **Jesus puts himself into that manger that you may approach him.**
 4. The stable was free to all. The inn was full but the stable was open. The stable reminds us that who so ever will may come.

II. Sorry Jesus, No Room

- A. Jesus in humility will not force Himself into our lives. If He ever enters into a man's life it is because the man has opened the door and made room for Jesus there. Rev 3:20 *"Behold I stand at the door and knock."* He waits to be asked in.
 1. There are those who have never heard of Him so they do not make room for Him. They are ignorant. They just do not know Him.
 2. There are those who have heard yet they choose not make room for Him.
 3. There are those who know Him but refuse to make room for Him. Rev 3:20

- B. Four reasons that people do not make room for Jesus in their life.
1. They compartmentalize Him. Rev 2:4 *Lost their first love*. In other words, they move Jesus to a lesser place in their life. If you think you can separate Jesus from being Lord of every area of your life, then you are telling Him "there's NO ROOM for you in my life." He will not settle for anything less than being Lord...of every area. This is not a popular message these days.
 - a) Post moderns have radically done this and accepted it.
 - b) Everything is considered "spiritual," but nothing is considered absolute.
 - c) Every viewpoint is considered equal, and no values are considered universal.
 - d) But the most dangerous post-modern contribution has been humanism: The idea that you are in charge of your own life...completely...just you. Therefore, God isn't supposed to "interfere" with any part of your life other than the "spiritual" areas you might allow Him.
 - e) So, there's no room, no right of Jesus to be involved in your finances, your sex life, your marriage, who your friends are, your voting record, and He should have no real say in your life beyond Sunday mornings. When you compartmentalize Jesus, you have no room.
 2. Their lives have too much Clutter. "...let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us." (Hebrews 12:1, NLT) Mark 4. Parable of soils. Weeds choke the life out of the seed. Deceitfulness of riches and lust of other things.
 - a) If our lives are so busy...even doing "good" things...that we don't take / make time to give proper attention and priority to our relationship with the Lord...then we are MUCH TOO BUSY...much busier than we were created to be.
 - b) We need to lay aside all the activities that are clutter, activities that are keeping us from being who God created us to be. We need to get rid of them in order to MAKE ROOM and give priority to the Lord. IE. 12 days of Christmas movie. The man's life was full of everything but that which was most important.
 3. They live Compromised - Rev 2:12-17 Pergamum the compromising church. It tolerated food offered to idols and sexual sin. Rev 3:16 Laodicea compromised so bad it made Jesus sick. Luke warm will be spit out of my mouth. When we choose to compromise we choose to take away room for Jesus in our lives.
 4. They love Comfort - Comfort - Lk 12:19 (*you have enough...eat, drink and be merry*); "*So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.*" (Galatians 6:9, NLT)
 - a) But it's also overheard around here sometimes..."Oh, I'd be willing to help ... every week if it just didn't mean having to get up so early in the morning!" or "I'd be willing to help with 'children' if it didn't mean I'd miss out being in "big church." I enjoy that too much to serve.
 - b) If serving Jesus 'cramps' your style, you do not have room for Him.

III. Make Room For The Son Of God

- A. IE. Remember what it was like when your first fell in love?
1. You wanted to spend every waking moment with her or him. You wanted to know everything about her or him, you talked about everything, shared everything. You couldn't imagine any other person being more important in your life than that person.
 2. You see, that's where God wants us to be and stay in our relationship with Him....totally devoted, completely surrendered. However, many people have relegated Jesus to some hidden room, some back closet, some outside stable in their lives.
- B. Those who know Him make room for Him. How do you do that>
1. John 1:10 The World did not recognize him. The first thing you have to do is recognize Him.
 2. John 1:11 His own rejected Him. Therefore when you recognize Him, accept Him.
 3. John 1:12 When you recognize and accept Him, believe in Him. To accept the King is to accept the Kingdom. To make room for the King is to make room for the Kingdom in your life.
- C. IE 2 Kings 4:8-14
1. She recognized the Word
 2. She accepted the Word
 3. She honored the Word. As believers we are called to honor the Word of God. to esteem, to give great respect, to have high estimation of. When we esteem the Word of God in our lives we seek it. We treasure it. We give it place in our hearts and minds.
 4. Honoring the Word is not something that just happens. It happens because we value the Word. We seek its/His worth. We have the revelation of its power and influence in our lives.
 5. The Word saved me when I trusted it.
 - a) *"The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to every-one."* (John 1:4, NLT)
 - b) When you honor the Word the Word will honor you! vs. 13 *"What can we do for you?"*

Conclusion:

- Though the world has no room for Jesus...He still has room for you. Jn 14..In my Father house are many rooms...I go to prepare a place for you...so that where I am you also might be.
- Maybe yours is not a question of salvation today but of Lord ship. Have you squeezed him out of your life, compartmentalized Him. Maybe compromise or clutter has your. Make Him Lord today.