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Make Room

Joseph Khabbaz

And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7, NKJV)

There was no space for Jesus in the inn, so that He could provide a place for you with Him. You may have come across the TV show "Hoarders" which highlights the quirks and inconveniences of collecting too much stuff. The show follows people who have an unhealthy relationship with collecting things that they no longer have any room for anything else in their homes - and sometimes that includes family and friends. The title of one of the episodes is "Everyday is Christmas." In it, a spouse talks about her love for Christmas and how she enjoys hosting people in her home. But there is one problem, their immediate family can no longer celebrate the holidays with them because her husband has not been able to take down the Christmas decorations for eight years. The reason is, he cannot get to the decorations because all the other stuff is in the way. The clutter has become such an issue that during Christmas, they had no room for what was truly important: their friends and family members who wanted to visit them.

We might be tempted to judge this couple, but could it be that we hoard things as well? Is it possible that we have things hidden in our hearts that take up space and prevent us from making room for Jesus?

In the Gospel of Luke, we find a unique detail about the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus that is not mentioned in any other Gospel accounts. Luke highlights that even after traveling more than 100 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph had nowhere to stay when she was in labor. Not only is the journey Mary had to take while pregnant astounding to read, but what is even more shocking is the fact there was no room at the inn for Jesus to be born. Some scholars believe that this account by Luke was a foreshadowing of Jesus' rejection by the world. Hence, Jesus' irreverent rejection provided humanity with the gift of complete redemption.

It can feel like there are not enough hours in the day for college students, faculty, and staff on campus since they have a lot on their plates. Between classes, homework, family responsibilities, and socializing, there never seems to be enough time. Sometimes, making room for Jesus can feel too difficult and it becomes easy for Him to get crowded out. Like the crowded inn, our lives can become so filled with "stuff" that we find there is no room for Jesus. However, Jesus promises to always have space for us when he said, "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?" (John 14:2, ESV). Even though there was no space for Jesus in the inn, He still promises to provide a place for you with Him.

One of the ways we can make room for others this holiday season is through the gift of hospitality. Hospitality has the power to make people feel a sense of belonging through a shared experience. Christmas is a time when we can reach out to those who are alone or need help. By being hospitable and loving others, we allow God to work through us by reminding them of their value and worth. The story of Christ's birth highlights the importance of making room for God and others which enables us to spread the message of "tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people." (Luke 2:10, KJV). As we "make room" this holiday season, may it be good news to everyone we encounter.

RELECT

1. Have you ever experienced a time when there was no room for you? How did that feel?
2. Have there been times in your life when you had no room for Jesus? What happened?
3. When you consider that God has room for you, what reassurance does that give you?
4. How can you "make room" for others this holiday season?

5. Jesus says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” (Revelation 3:20, NKJV). If you believe that Jesus is knocking on your heart today, is it your desire to make room for Him?

NEWS & RESOURCES

- Join us for a special Vespers this Friday evening at 7:30 pm in the University Church.
- Contact [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you would like to lead an employee LifeGroup next semester.
- If you are feeling anxious or have recently experienced loss or grief, call 423.236.2782 to talk to a counselor on campus! (This is a free service for Southern students.)
- **Talk** with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.