

Is There Room in Your Inn?

No holiday on our calendar gets as much advertising time as Christmas. This month, you can't turn on your television, open up a website or check your e-mail without hearing the word "Christmas." You see beautifully decorated trees everywhere you turn. You'll notice lots of chubby guys with white beards in red-and-white suits.

You simply can't miss Christmas as a cultural phenomenon.

But you can miss the birth of Jesus.

You can miss the very point of Christmas.

That dilemma isn't just a product of our time. Even people who were alive during that very first Christmas—right around the corner from Jesus himself—missed the point of Christmas. And they missed it for the very same reasons we do today.

Take the innkeeper, for example.

You know the story. In the last week of her pregnancy, Mary and Joseph have to go to their home town of Bethlehem. They live in a city called Nazareth and need to be involved in a census with the Roman government.

As they get to Bethlehem, Mary goes into labor. Her water breaks. She's ready to deliver. And Joseph tries to check her into the local Holiday Inn. The innkeeper comes out and says, "Sorry, no vacancies. There's no room in the inn."

Luke 2:7 tells it like this: "And she gave birth to her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in strips of cloth, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

Think about this from the innkeeper's perspective. If he has no more room in his inn, that's good. It means business is

booming. If you own a motel, you want it to be sold out. A lot of out-of-town guests have come back to town for the census. They're looking for a place to stay. And he's all booked up.

The innkeeper has no use for this little baby or this pregnant woman. He doesn't know whom he's snubbing.

The Son of God could have been born in that inn. Imagine the public relations power in that. You could put up a sign: "Son of God born here." Your inn would have been sold out for the rest of your life.

God was coming to Earth in human form. The innkeeper could have been a part of it. But he missed the greatest opportunity imaginable because he was busy. He missed it because business was booming.

Are you too busy with your work to make room for Jesus this Christmas? Is your schedule, your plan or your budget too tight to let Jesus in this Christmas?

Just like that innkeeper, you could be missing out on the biggest opportunity of your life this Christmas. God is right here. He wants to be a part of your life. God coming into the lives of ordinary people like you and me is the point of Christmas.

Getting to know God is the opportunity of a lifetime. You don't want to miss it.

Talk It Over

- Why do successful people like the innkeeper in this story tend to miss God in their lives?
- What keeps you from freeing your schedule so you can focus more on what God wants in your life?
- What are some things you can take out of your schedule this Christmas season so you can more fully experience what God wants for you? {eoa}

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