

## SPECIAL DAYS - CHRISTMAS

Title: **“THE CROWDED-OUT CHRIST”**  
Scripture: **Luke 2:1-7**

Text: ***“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)

At a resort area on the East Coast, a small community was having a Town Hall meeting because of major financial problems that they were facing. Among those who had gathered was one man no one seemed to know. He was visiting in that area and, having heard of the town's problems dropped in on the meeting.

At one point he stood and began to speak. He said, “I came to help you out of your ... ,” and that is as far as he got. The moderator interrupted him and said, “Sir, please be seated; you are out of order. You are just a visitor here.” The visitor quietly left. Just as he went out the door, someone arriving late came in, and said breathlessly, “Why is he leaving? I met him at the harbor. His yacht is in our harbor. Did you get his help?”

Several of the attendees spoke up saying, “Who are you talking about? Who was that man?” The person who had just arrived said, “You mean you don't know who that was? That was John D. Rockefeller. “No, we didn't get his help; we didn't know who he was!”

Just over 2000 years ago a visitor came to Bethlehem to give relief to a vastly more serious problem. But they had no room for Him. If only they would have realized who He was! Instead, Isaiah's prophecy says of Him: *“He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”* (Isaiah 53:3-4)

I do not berate the Inn Keeper, as I have heard some do. The Roman census was being taken and the town was crowded with visitors who were there to comply with Roman law. The Inn was filled with guests and so Mary and Joseph went to the place where the guest's animals were kept. I do not believe the Inn Keeper, with malice aforethought, purposefully turned them away. However, many since then have deliberately rejected Jesus Christ. Let us look at some of the instances when there was no room for the Creator among His creatures:

**THERE WAS NO ROOM IN HIS OWN HOME.** John 7:3,5

*“ His brothers therefore said to Him, “Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does any thing in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.” For even His brothers did not believe in Him.”*

This derision probably arose from jealousy on the part of the brothers, as is so often the case among siblings. It is very doubtful that Mary and Joseph were aware of the brothers cutting sarcasm. There is no evidence that, up to this point in time, any of His brothers had been witnesses to any of the miracles Jesus had performed. At any rate, at this date, they were

among the unbelievers. However, after the resurrection, it to their credit that they were numbered among those gathered in the Upper Room when Christ appeared. (Acts 1:14)

*“Depart from here”* they said. Those are biting and hurtful words indeed. The Crowded-Out Christ was crowded out of His own home. He is not wanted in most homes today. Some homes have a plaque on the wall with these words: *“Christ is the head of this home; the unseen Guest at every meal, the silent listener to every conversation.”* Yet, by the conversation and conduct in that home, one would never know that the inhabitants of that home know Who Christ is.

If over 50 years in the Christian ministry qualifies me to comment upon the condition of homes today, I would venture to say that there are many homes that have no room for Jesus. Even in some professing Christian homes, He is the Crowded-Out Christ. There is a very interesting question asked by Isaiah of King Hezekiah, when messengers from Babylon came to him. Isaiah asked, *“What have they seen in your house?”* (II Kings 20:14,15)

There may be room for a crèche at Christmas, but no room for the Christ, Who is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to rule and reign over all the affairs of the home.

**THERE WAS NO ROOM IN HIS HOME CHURCH.** Luke 4:16-20

*“So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah.”*

Jesus stood up to read in the town in which He was brought up. Every eye was upon the Son of Mary and the carpenter, Joseph. They knew Him well. He was a native Son. Every ear was attentive as He began to read: *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.” Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down.”*

He was not finished addressing the attendees in His home-town synagogue for He continued speaking: *“Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing” . . . . “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself!’*” (Luke 4:21-23) He announced that He was the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy.

Then Luke 4:28-30 records, *“When they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.”*

I have been to Nazareth and have seen the precipice on the outskirts of the town. It is many feet in height, not far from the old synagogue, traces of which are still seen in the western part of the town. These religious people did not simply intend to run Jesus out of town or roll him down a gently sloping hill. The rocky cliff over which they planned to cast Him was a high outcropping over which, had He been thrown, would have resulted in His death!

There are many religious gatherings, calling themselves by various names, that do not want Jesus in their midst speaking truth. It was the truth which Jesus spoke to the people in Nazareth that caused their vehement reaction. These are those who have a form of godliness but deny its power. (II Tim.3:5)

In the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, chapter three, we see the age-ending posture of the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church. He is seen standing outside the church seeking entrance. He said, *“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.”* (v.20) Having read Jesus’ appeal, now weep!

The Lord Jesus is crowded out of many churches today. In some churches programs, personalities and parties get more attention than He does. Some purposefully crowd Him out, some ignorantly crowd Him out. Christ is excluded when He is not exalted in worship; when He is not proclaimed as the *“way, the truth and the life”* (John 14:6); when His cause of world-wide evangelism is ignored; when His imminent return is not emphasized, etc. It is no wonder then that Jesus asked, *“when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”* (Luke 18:8) Christless churches. John wrote of such, *“I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”* (Rev.3:1)

A little girl summarized the situation very well after attending her first Sunday School Christmas party. Arriving home she told her mother, “It was a nice party; but, Mother, I never did see Jesus. He must have gotten lost among all the decorations and presents!”

### **THERE WAS NO ROOM IN THE COUNTRY-SIDE.** Matthew 8:28-34

In Matthew chapter 8 there is the account of Jesus going across the Sea Of Galilee to Gadara. There he was confronted by two demon possessed men. Jesus cast the demons out of them and the demons entered a herd of pigs and ran over a precipice into the Sea of Galilee and drowned.

Notice what happened next: *“Those tending the pigs ran off, went into the town and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region.”* (Matt.8:33-34)

Never mind that two tormented souls who had terrorized the citizens, had been delivered from demonic control and set free to threaten their community no more. The people were more interested in keeping their pigs, the basis of their economy, than they were in having the miracle-working Son of God in their midst. Jesus left and there is no record that He ever went back to Gadara.

They preferred their swine to the Savior! You would think that people who live away from the hustle and bustle of the busy city, out where the handiwork of God is so evident, would have time for Jesus. However, sadly, that is not the case, even today. Well did Isaiah write, *“He is despised and rejected by men.”* (Isaiah 53:3)

**THERE WAS NO ROOM IN THE CITY.** Luke 13:31

*"At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else."*

This occurred in Jerusalem. Jerusalem, the city of peace, had no room for the Prince of Peace. Jerusalem, Capital of the King but no room for the King of Kings. How ironic! Listen to Jesus' lament over Jerusalem: *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, your house is left to you desolate."* (Luke 13:34,35)

Our cities are decorated at Christmas time but not dedicated to the Christ of Christmas. It is tragically true that the Lord Jesus is not given His proper recognition by the majority of those who profit from the season during which His birth is celebrated. Public Address Systems play the song, *"City side-walks, busy sidewalks, dressed in holiday style – and on every street corner you hear: silver bells, silver bells, its Christmas time in the city."*

The same persons who promote the season, strenuously object to reminders of the reason for the season and object to the traditional songs of the church being sung in public places or manger scenes prominently displayed. Some who apparently love the commerce of Christmas want nothing to do with the Christ of Christmas.

**THERE WAS NO ROOM IN THE GOVERNMENT.** Matthew 2:16

*"Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under."*

Herod was protecting his position and power and therefore sought to destroy any who would be a threat to his throne. He did not want Jesus to rule and reign. He wanted to be in control. Today, the Republicans do not want Jesus to rule and the Democrats do not want Him to rule. The United Nations does not want Him in control.

However, the day is coming when He will reign over the whole earth! Isaiah's prophecy will be fulfilled: *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end."* (Isa.9:6)

**THERE WAS NO ROOM IN THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM.** John 8:58-59

*"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds."*

The Temple was the center of religious activity – the place for the worship of God – yet they ran God out! If there was ever a place where Jesus should have been received it was the Temple. Why? It was, and is to this day, the center of Jewish worship. However, when God, in the Person of Jesus Christ came, He disturbed the status quo and they stoned Him, running Him out! They had their traditional system of worship set up as they wanted it; they had their religious machinery well oiled and humming with activity; they had their rules and

regulations that were strictly observed and they would not tolerate any interruption, even by a heaven-sent Worker of miracles and Teacher of truth. He did not fit into their scheme of things.

The religious leaders, the scribes, High Priest, Pharisees and Sadducees, opposed Jesus at every turn. They are the ones who instigated His crucifixion. Things have not changed a great deal since Jesus came the first time. The largest group of religious leaders today, the World Council of Churches, does not want Jesus.

**THERE WAS NO ROOM IN HIS OWN NATION.** John 1:11

*“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”*

In that statement are several essential facts:

- A historical fact: *“He was in the world”*;
- A cosmological fact: *“and the world was made by him”*;
- A universal fact: *“the world knew him not”*;
- A national fact: *“He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”*

The Apostle Paul says of the nation of Israel: *“Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.”* (Rom, 9:5) They should have known after all the Old Testament announcements about His coming. Yet when He arrived they rejected Him.

Stephen, in his last sermon before the Jews killed him, said: *“You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers.”* (Acts 7:51,52)

*“Hear the Sanhedrin in derision  
Casting its infamous decision;  
They spat on Him, sneered,  
Him, the Judge of all creation  
Whom with humble veneration  
Father Abraham revered.”*

*“Away with Him. Crucify Him! crucify Him!”* (Mark 15:13) This is the cry that has ever since characterized the attitude of Jesus’ own countrymen toward Him.

In order to accommodate the increasing sectarianism in America and appease the false religions that are growing at a rapid rate, there are those who are saying again, *“Away with Him!” “No manger scenes in public places”; “No crosses on public property”; “No prayers in Jesus’ name”; “No preaching that Jesus is the only way to heaven.”* History is repeating itself.

No room! No room for Jesus in His home, His hometown synagogue, the city, the countryside, the government, the religious system, even His own nation. That is like saying, “No

room for the sun in the solar system” or “No room for the Doctor in the sick-room.” Since that night long ago when the Inn Keeper hung out the “No Vacancy” sign to the Lord Jesus, there have been millions who have followed his example and their lives remain a closed door to Him.

Is there any room anywhere for Jesus? Where does He want to reside today? John, in his gospel, gives us the answer: *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”* (John 1:12)

He wants to reside in the lives of those who welcome Him. Has Jesus found room in your life? Look beyond the manger to the cross where He died for our sins and beyond the cross to His return – are you truly ready to meet Him?

***“Have You Any Room For Jesus?”***

*“Have you any room for Jesus,  
He who bore your load of sin;  
As He knocks and asks admission,  
Sinner, will you let Him in?”*

*Room for pleasure, room for business,  
But for Christ the crucified,  
Not a place that He can enter,  
In the heart for which He died?*

*Room for Jesus, King of glory!  
Hasten now His word obey;  
Swing the heart’s door widely open,  
Bid Him enter while you may.”*

- C. C. Williams

In 1947 Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh were married. The streets and parks of London were crowded with people including Royalty from all over the world. At that time, Iraq had a boy King. He was King Faisal II – only 12 years old!

As the procession passed along the street near Buckingham Palace, the 12 year old King from Iraq was more interested in the beautiful horses than in the beautiful Princess in the carriage. He pushed his way through the police barricade to see more clearly and the policemen handled him rather roughly. How dare this boy interrupt stiff British protocol! The next day the newspapers apologized. One headline read, “King Faisal, we didn’t know who you were!”

There is a far greater offense, with eternal consequences, and that is to know Who the King of Kings is and reject Him! Open your heart to Jesus Christ and some day He will open the door of heaven to you!

**JdonJ**