

December 16, 2018 -

Luke 2:1-14 -

"No Room in the Inn"

Introduction

A Louisiana school district will not allow grade schoolers to attend a Christmas play that mentions Jesus during school hours because it might violate a federal court order barring the district from promoting religion at school. For the past several years the Minden Junior Service League has performed a free Christmas production during school hours at the local high school. This year's half-hour production featured a "Toy Story" theme along with a brief reference to the Baby Jesus.

After the first performance, the Webster Parish School District reached out to the service organization and basically told them there was no room Jesus. The ladies in the Junior Service League flat-out rejected the request — even though it meant that their own children would not be permitted to see the performance. "When this request was rejected, the school district had no other alternative than to withdraw from participation in the event or otherwise face contempt of court," the district said in a statement. The American Civil Liberties Union and the federal court are the culprit here. Do we obey our laws or not? What happened to the Minden Junior Service League should appall and disgust every freedom-loving American.

It is appalling that in the season of Christmas there is no room for Jesus. "If Christmas time is not the appropriate setting to share the message of Jesus Christ and offer His love and forgiveness to the world, I don't know when is," "Federal law proclaims "Christmas Day, December 25." 5 U.S.C. § 6103. We do not censor the names of Washington's Birthday, on the third Monday in February and Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday the third Monday in January. But we are told it is not appropriate to mention Jesus Christ on His birthday. Folks, 90 percent of Americans celebrate Christmas; 90 percent of Americans recognize Christmas as the birthday of Jesus Christ (Gallup, 2000). Is there no room in America to celebrate the truth...

It must have been heart breaking for Mary and Joseph when they arrived in Bethlehem with a baby on the way. There were people looking for rooms, people waiting a place to stay to sign up for Rome's new taxes. When it came to Mary and Joseph there were no rooms available! I can imagine Joseph pleading with the manager of the inn, telling him of Mary's condition and their desperate need for a place where she could give birth to her child. But "there was no room for them in the inn.

Today, 2,000 years later, millions of people have no room for Jesus. Although they participate whole heartily in the festivities of the Christmas season, they keep Him out of their lives. They have a NO VACANCY sign in their hearts. That seems to be the cultural climate today. What was the climate of the world like when Jesus was about to be born? Let's consider it's

I Significant History vv. 1-5

1. The then known world wasn't thinking about preparing for the king of kings. This virgin born son of God but rather a human Emperor named "Caesar Augustus". He was the great

nephew of Julius Caesar. His name was really Octavia. In Julius' Caesar's will Octavia was to succeed him in leading the Roman Empire.

2. He was actually the First Roman Emperor of the World Empire and usually the first is the greatest like "Washington" etc. Many historians believe that he was the greatest of all Roman emperors. He brought Rome to a period of peace uniting the empire together. However, to do that you need money and lots of it. So the people of that time were being heavily taxed, and faced every prospect of a sharp increase to cover expanding military expenses. To do this Caesar Augustus called for a census "that all the world should be taxed". "

3. History confirms this taxation and the timing in history. (The Works of Josephus) Scripture confirms this taxation and history reaffirms this. (Acts 5:33-37) It was a busy time in the Judean village, but the excitement had nothing to do with the upcoming birth of Christ. The crowds had gathered to take part in this unwanted census. They didn't know that Mary was about to deliver the Savior of the world.

In such a time, and amid such a people, a child was born to a migrant couple who had just signed up for a fresh round of taxation, and who could not find a room anywhere.

Joke: Zig Ziglar tells about his brother who was traveling & came to a hotel & asked for a room. The manager told him that they were fully booked & there were no rooms available. Ziglar's brother said, "Now be honest with me. If the President of the United States walked through that door just now & requested a room, would you have a place for Him to stay?" The manager replied, "Well, if the President needed a room, we'd find one for him." Ziglar's brother said, "That's great. I know for a fact that he's not coming, so I'll take his room."

4. Is not the God of the universe able to provide a place for His own Son? God gave it all to man and man could not find a place for Him. Certainly the God who created it all could of. Let me suggest to you in the second point... that God used this situation for a very signification ...

II A Very Signification Connection vv.4-7

1. Christ was born in Bethlehem, in Hebrew this means "The House of Bread" the literal meaning of the city's name. Bread is one of life's most common things. God wanted to identify with the common man. God wanted His Son available to all. Jesus was not born in the house of royalty, nor in the house of riches, nor in the house of celebrity. Jesus was not born in Jerusalem, or in Rome or in Athens or Alexandria. Jesus was not born in any political, commercial, cultural, educational, or socially significant city of the day.

2. When Micah, the Old Testament prophet, foretold the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, he emphasized its lack of significance to the world.

"But thou, Bethlehem, Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting." (Micah 5:2)

3. His cradle was a manger, an animal's feeding trough in a lowly stable. There is no human so low that he or she is outside the reach of the love of God! Christ was born in Bethlehem to

satisfy our spiritual hungry.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger." (John 6:35) (John 3:16)

II A Very Signification Purpose vv. 8 -11

1. A signification purpose we see in these verses "Shepherd" in the same country watching over their flocks. His birth was announced to shepherds, the common man, but not to King Herod. The simple men were the humblest and meekest. Note these were first to hear the greatest news! Shepherd cares for "Sheep" and the Lambs"
2. Many of the "shepherds of Bethlehem raised the sheep or lambs for the temple sacrifices at "Jerusalem". They were preparing the most precious spotless lamb for the coming sacrifices. This was where "David" was tending sheep when "Samuel was told by God to go to "Jesse, the Bethlehemite for I have provided me a King among his sons (I SAM 16:1) Remember God called for the "Passover Lamb Exodus 12:5 "Without spot or blemish a male of the first year. God was depicting his son born on the fields of the "Passover Lambs" as His Lamb His own precious son. Remember "John the Baptist declare Behold.
3. I believe it was significant in the fulfilling of the messianic prophecy. The Lamb "Jesus Christ" God's own son was born in the confines of the Passover lambs. The Lamb prepared before the foundation of the world and declared by God's marvelous messengers (read v10)
4. Jesus was born to die. He became the supreme sacrifice to pay the penalty for the sins of mankind. It was all in Gods' timing for He would sent His son to redeem the world. And the child who was born was called, among other things, Emanuel God with us. Mark 10:[45] For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Conclusion: vv 12-16

I'm not sure whether the Inn keeper was a hero or a villain... I know that his response was the response of preoccupation. He was a busy guy. Never had his inn been so full. Never had the demands on his time been so pressing. And he wanted to take care of all the guests who had come. He wanted to be a good innkeeper that night. It was a time of making money for him. That is similar to what happens today, isn't it? In many of our cities the malls opened up at 8:00 this morning, & chances are that more people are in the malls right now than are in all the churches, because Christmas is such a busy time.

It's so easy to fall into the trap of the innkeeper, where we're so busy & so out of focus that other things take first place, & God takes last place in our lives. So I challenge you this morning to refocus, & put first things first in your life. How about you? Is their room in your life for Christ?

Invitation:

We all struggle to give a gift that has staying power. We want to give something that will be useful or memorable for many years to come. It seems that we receive only a few of these kinds of gifts. Let me remind you this morning that God has given you such a gift. There ought to be in every Christian a deep, settled fullness of the joy of Christ that no circumstance of life can dispel. Don't deny yourself that which is your birthright as a child of God.

Salvation is a gift from God and he will never de-gift you. That's what grace is: God's free gift to us. We have a hard time believing this, though. Certainly there must be a catch, right? There is not! It is an eternal gift. One you cannot lose. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. We are given so much more!

It cannot be lost and comes with future benefits. You have an inheritance ...To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. Jesus was born to die. He became the supreme sacrifice to pay the penalty for the sins of mankind. It was all in Gods' timing for He would sent His son to redeem the world. And the child who was born was called, among other things, Emanuel, God with us.

Christmas is the season for giving and to give is more blessed than to receive. However, we have some very special folks at Dover First Baptist who give in the spirit of Christmas all year long. Tonight we want to thank them for their labor of love in giving of their time and energy so that Dover First Baptist can be the ministry that God has blessed it to be.