

## MAKING ROOM: BREAKING THE CHRISTMAS PARADOX!

Scriptures used: [Luke 2:7-10 \(NKJV\)](#)

### OVERVIEW

Welcome to the second week of our *Making Room* series. Pastor Hurmon expanded on the theme of making room for Jesus by explaining the Christmas Paradox and why it is so important that we break it. Here is the Christmas Paradox: the holidays should be a time for us to slow down, creating space to contemplate Jesus but instead we pack more activities into our already busy schedules! This is the time of year when we should be most aware of the need for peace and quiet. After all, Jesus was born in a quiet space as we hear so beautifully in the Christmas hymn *Silent Night*. Unfortunately, modern life has never been more hectic. The Christmas Paradox gets worse each year, with social media and news constantly hitting us via our smartphones. Each of us needs to fight to break the Christmas Paradox, removing unnecessary activities so we can spend time in service and contemplation of God. We have the opportunity this month to make room through prayer and focus, which will set us up for a wonderful 2024.

### KEY POINTS

1. **Making room for others in need (“them”) and you actually make room for Jesus.** Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem trying to find a place to stay. The one who made room for them actually also made room for Jesus. In the same way, our awareness of the needs around us, family, friends, neighbors, and even strangers, is important in the Christmas season. When we heed God’s call to make room for others, we often will find that we’ve made room for Jesus in our lives.
2. **Jesus was born in a quiet place, not in the hustle and bustle.** We can’t invite Him into our lives if the calendar is crammed full of activities. Modern life is busy, leaving no room for the Lord. God can’t get into our hearts if He can’t get into our calendars!
3. **Hurrying is a barrier to experiencing God and connecting with others.** The more activities we add to our lives, the busier we get. We get more hurried, losing whatever free time we had. Unfortunately, our constant need to accomplish small tasks is not seen as a problem. Many of us “worship” productivity. Alcoholics are told to get treatment, but workaholics are celebrated!
4. **There is a Grinch trying to steal Christmas.** This Grinch is keeping us so busy that we celebrate the holidays but miss the birth. The Grinch is a smartphone! These devices will do anything to keep us hurried, busy, distracted, frustrated, and isolated. That kind of life leads to the exact opposite of the love that Paul writes about in [1 Corinthians 13:4 \(NIV\)](#).
5. **Acknowledge the Christmas Paradox, slow down, and be more present.** We can’t slow down unless we are intentional about it. [Colossians 3:2 \(NIV\)](#) tells us to fix our minds on what is heavenly by refusing to be consumed by the distractions of a broken world. In other words, make room first. God can then fill the room we’ve created. Of course this isn’t easy and none of us will be able to make all the room that God deserves. We don’t need to be perfect, thankfully. We only need to be faithful!

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What is the current level of “busy-ness” in your life right now? What tends to fill the time that you have? What commitments are fruitful, in line with your priorities, values, and character (and God’s priorities, values, and character)? What things fill your life that are mere distractions?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Luke 2:7-10 \(NKJV\)](#) and [1 Corinthians 13:4 \(NIV\)](#). Christmas is a time where there are a lot of needs, but also the opportunity to respond with great love. Where in our lives might there be an opportunity to make room for others with a genuine need, and so make room for Jesus? Christmas is a time when we tend to add activities to our already busy calendars, but not actually in a way that creates more room to bless others and grow closer to God. Instead of adding haphazardly, though, how can we better prioritize what is truly important? Prayerfully ask yourself the question “What will I do less so I can enjoy and make room for Jesus more?”
- 3) **DO** - Pastor Hurmon gave us two powerful suggestions that can help us make room for Jesus. Remember that we have to be intentional ([Philippians 4:8 \(NIV\)](#)) about changes in our lives. First, set aside 5 minutes a day to practice holy silence. Second, choose one activity each day to practice sacred focus. If we put these habits into practice during the holidays, they will carry us through the new year!