

## No Room

**Luke 2:7** And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Most folks view Christmas as a time of tranquil, falling snow, bright colored presents under a tree and soothing voices singing “all is calm, all is bright.” But Christmas can be a time of incredible stress and strain. Sometimes we get Christmas reversed, like the first-grader in the Christmas pageant that was given the role of an angel. He had only one line, which he rehearsed over and over again, “It is I ... do not be afraid.” But the night of the pageant, he nervously stepped out on the stage, saw the crowd and blurted out, “It is me, and I am scared to death!”

Even at Christmastime, a well-dressed gentleman appears on the evening news with a big smile and tells us how messed up our world is. They don't call him an “anchorman” for nothing. But regardless of his apparent confidence, our world is in trouble. I even got an email from a friend this week that said, “The anchor holds, but the sail is a mess!”

The stresses of modern life are probably the most important reason for us to refocus our perspective at Christmas. Put aside the images of Santa and decorated pines. This day celebrates a powerful, turbulent mystery ... a child — born in the equivalent of a low-income shed — crushed the strongest, most vicious and potent evil of all. A child that was shut out of the world's system became the world's Saviour!

Did you know that Hell can do nothing aside from God's permission? God allowed Satan to temporarily have the upper hand – it looked like he was winning! Only God could pull this off – a little baby boy turning Satan's most wicked schemes into advertisements for the glory of God!

It happens all through the Bible's pages. In the Old Testament, Satan attempted to destroy Moses. Hell and its hoards partied the day the prince of Egypt was run out of town. They thought they won by taking out one of God's key players. But the wilderness, where Moses fled, became God's training ground to destroy hell's darkest dreams.

Satan attempted to destroy Paul. He desperately hoped prison would silence Paul's preaching. But although it may have stopped his tongue, his pen began to flow. Paul then wrote most of the New Testament letters while in prison. Don't you think Satan cusses a red streak every time you read one of Paul's prison epistles? If hell hadn't put Paul in prison, he probably wouldn't have slowed down long enough to write as much as he did. Satan again was the unwilling servant of God!

The list of Satan's failures continues. Every time he tries to shut the door on God, God just makes a bigger and better door for a miracle. Instead of Simon Peter being an example of how far a person can fall from grace, Peter became a stirring picture of how far God's grace reaches for a hurting heart. It seems every time the enemy scores a goal, he looks up and realizes he scored it on the wrong end of the playing field!

**1 Corinthians 2:7-9** <sup>7</sup> But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: <sup>8</sup> Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup> But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

The little baby in the manger was not the end; even the cross was not the end. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the final evidence that hell has lost. On the day Christ died, Satan's strategy appeared to have worked at last. Finally, the devil scored at the right end of the playing field. He even took out the Captain of Heaven's team himself.

As Paul tells us, hell's false victory played right into God's hands once again. God wanted to declare His power over sin and death — and Satan helped Him do it! Another bright idea from hell became a foul-up. This time, it was for all time. Satan lost the whole ballgame because he didn't suspect that God's plan was a child born in the stench of manure.

As you see the various depictions of the Christ child this Christmas, look past the sentimentalism. Realize that this little baby Jesus became hell's worst nightmare! **The joy of Christmas is not that suddenly things turn out better than expected — it is that God's light is more real than hell's darkness, even in the worst of situations.** And if you ever wonder if the devil has the final word in your life, just look at the manger.

Our world today says NO ROOM for Christianity. And sometimes even in our personal lives we feel “shut out” by someone or something. But God is in control. **Bethlehem proves that the world doesn't have to let God 'in' for His prophecy to come to pass!**

**Hebrews 13:12-14** <sup>12</sup> Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. <sup>13</sup> Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. <sup>14</sup> For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

**God put Himself where we could reach Him!** He came into our world so we could someday go to His world! The world says “NO ROOM” but we declare “THERE IS ROOM IN MY HEART FOR YOU!”