

Making Room for Christ by Dr. J.B. Buffington

Open your Bibles to Luke the second chapter, please. I preached this message two years ago, and I feel impressed to preach it today. It won't be the same in every detail, but Luke the second chapter. And let's read now, stand for the reading of the Word. Let's read the first seven verses responsively. Luke 2:1-7: *And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:.) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 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.*

Our Father, this morning, open the eyes of our understanding. Give us a new glimpse of what it cost Thee to save our souls, the cost of the incarnation, and The Son, thine only begotten Son that left Heaven and came to this earth. The Spirit of the Living God, set out all of the gifts of receiving and giving. Set out all, Heavenly Father, the feasting. And dear Lord, take us to a stinking manger scene and help us to behold the wonder and grace. Let us see Jesus this morning, in Jesus name Amen. Thank you. You may be seated.

My concern this morning is not the doctrines that we know about Christmas, the virgin birth, the vicarious resurrection, inspiration of the Scriptures, all those things that we say, "Yes we know that." But the message of what I am concerned about is what message children are receiving from parents and the message that comes to them by the actions of mom and dad who believe all these things. That I'm concerned about this morning. Often times the believers have little room at this season for the Lord Jesus, the rush, the hurry, the buying of gifts, the commercialization, the singing of the songs amounts to a tremendous season, but we lose sight of Him in celebrating His birthday.

Here is a little parody of Luke the second chapter, and I hope you listen very carefully to it because it sounds like life in general today. There are exceptions, but I want us to kind of get a hold of this when we think of the Lord's coming to be our Savior. Listen very carefully; this is by Chris Doleson, pastor of the Shreveport Bible Church in Shreveport, Louisiana. And it is called "Joy to the Mall;" please do not laugh at any of this. "It came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from the U.S. Treasury that all of America should go shopping. And this decree was first made when leading economic indicators dipped to their lowest point. And all went out to shop each to his own mall. And a Christian also went up from his suburban home to the city with its many malls because he wanted to prove he was from the household of prosperity. And with him was his wife who was great with economic worry. And so it was that while they were there, they found many expensive presents, pudgy faced dolls, socks that turn into robots, and a various assortment of video games. And the women wrote checks for those they could afford and charged the rest on many different kinds of plastic cards. She wrapped the presents in bright paper and laid them in their garage, for there was no room for them in her closet. And there were in the same county, children keeping watch of their stockings by night; and lo, Santa Clause came upon them and they were sore afraid, expecting to see the special effects they had seen in the movies. And Santa said to them, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people who can afford this holiday. For unto you will be given this day in your suburban home great feasts of turkey, dressing and cake, and many presents. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the presents wrapped in paper lying beneath an artificial tree adorned with tinsel, colored balls, and lights. And suddenly there was with Santa Clause a multitude of relatives and friends praising one another saying, 'Glory to you for getting me this gift; it's just what I wanted.' And it came to pass as the friends and relatives were gone away into their own homes, the parents said one to another, 'I sure am glad that's over; what a mess. I'm too tired to clean it up now. Let's go to bed and pick it up tomorrow.' And when they had said this, they remembered a statement that had been told to them by the storekeepers, 'Christmas comes only once a year.' And they had heard it and wondered at those things that were sold to them by the storekeepers. For the

children treasured all their things in their hearts, hoarding their toys from each other. And their parents after a drink went to bed glorifying and praising each other for all of the bargains they had found in the stores.” That sounds pretty much up to date in America. Now, we are believers, and we are talking about Christmas. And I want to ask God to give us a new glimpse of what it cost Him. There is no way that the human heart or the mind could fathom the cost of just Jesus becoming man. You never could explain it. You never could get hold of it. It would put us prostrate before God in awe, let alone talking about the crucifixion of our Lord. And may the Spirit of God open our hearts to this fact of making room for Jesus. Have you made special room for Him this Christmas season? Have you given to His cause above the normal to get people saved; for after all, that is why He came. Now consider first of all this blessed truth: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

Would you consider Heaven’s humility, the incarnation, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ is a death blow at human pride and the matter of our value system. As He came to the manger, He alone could choose the factors of His birth. The rest of us had no choice as to our parents, no choice as to the time, no choice as to the circumstances, no choice as to the country. That is in the hand of a sovereign God. But Jesus Christ the Son of God chose all of the factors that surrounded His birth. And what He chose did violence to our value system and to the matter of our pride. The place where He was born, Bethlehem, a little village of David, not Jerusalem, the city of the king, but Bethlehem, not the palace, but the manger, Jesus Christ chose that. The circumstances, a forced journey of some sixty-five to seventy-five miles on the back of a little donkey. A pagan king had brought about a taxation because of a sovereign God had wanted His Son born down in Bethlehem. And so the circumstances, a barn, not a palace. The parents, his parents were poor. Mary brought the offering of two turtledoves. Now that was the lowest offering; they could bring part of the flock or the herd, but the lowest was two turtledove. And in her offering you find the deep poverty of this couple, raised in Nazareth and grew up under a carpenter, Jesus Christ. That’s the pride of our value system. Then He attacked the pride of our ancestry. Well our family tree, it would pay you not to look to far back in your family tree. There is a film out called “Roots.” I’d suggest that you not look for your roots because you will all go back to Adam. Every last one would go back to Adam, and, *Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin*, and so we are all sinners and we don’t have a thing in the world to look at anybody else; we are all sinners. And our ancestry, we boast of our ancestry. As you see, we couldn’t choose our ancestry; the Lord Jesus Christ did. Matthew the first chapter records and gives the names, David with an adulterer. Yes, I know he was a man after God’s own heart, but he committed adultery and he murdered. Abraham lied about his wife. Judah was immoral. Rahab was a harlot, an Ammorite. Solomon was an idolater. Bathsheba was a Hittite. Ruth was a Moabite. Tamar was a Cananite. Manasseh was a most wicked of kings, and Jekoniah was under a divine curse. And here is this genealogy, who can bring a pure out of impure? The virgin birth, the only answer. Evolution doesn’t have any answers, doesn’t have any solution to the birth of Jesus Christ. Most adverse circumstances and yet the purest of the pure and nobody could point a finger of accusation at Him. Explain that to an evolutionist that we are getting better and better. No, we are getting more wicked. We are learning more, but we are becoming more wicked with our learning. Daniel said: *Knowledge shall be increased*. It doesn’t say wisdom, *Knowledge shall be increased*. And so the pride of our ancestry. Then he does violence to the pride of position. Oh, the Devil came in the garden and said, “Now, you will be as gods knowing good and evil.” And with that, Adam and Eve reached out and took of the forbidden fruit, and they brought sin into the world. In the book of Luke the twenty second chapter, when Jesus Christ was going to the cross, even the disciples were arguing about who was going to be the greatest, who is going to sit on the right hand, who is going to have the number one position. And so this matter of pride, matter of position is a thing that is to our heart of pride. When we think about servants, there are various kinds of servants, but the word that *He took upon Himself the form of a servant*. That word for *servant* is “dulos;” it is a common word. It is designated *one who is born into his condition of slavery; one bound to his master as his slave; one who was in a permanent relationship to his master, which relationship could only be broken by death; one whose will*

was swallowed up in the will of his master; one who served his master even to the extent that he has disregarded his own interest. Now that is the word that Jesus Christ used, and He became a servant, and in so doing He undermined this idea of position today. Jesus Christ chose the lowest rung of the social ladder, the shepherds to be recipients of the angelic announcement. He chose the shepherds to be the heralds of his birth. Their status in Israel and Palestine was the same as the tax collectors and the dung sweepers. Jesus chose them. In Kittle's dictionary, listen to what they had to say about shepherds. Jesus chose the shepherds. We would never choose that kind of folks in a social status to be announcing that we were coming to town. In Jeremiah, it said the shepherds were despised in every day life. In general they were considered second class and untrustworthy. The mission will reflect this prejudice referring to shepherds in belittling and demeaning terms. One passage describes them as incompetent. Another says no one should ever feel obligated to rescue a shepherd who has fallen into a pit. Shepherds were deprived of all civil rights. They could not fulfill judicial offices or be admitted in court as witnesses. To buy wool, milk, or a kid from a shepherd was forbidden on the assumption that it would be stolen property. In another work, Jerusalem in the time of Jesus, Jeremias notes, the rabbi asked with amazement, "How in view of the despicable nature of shepherds one can explain why God was called my Shepherd in Psalms 23." Shepherds were officially labeled sinners. Smug religious leaders maintained a strict cast system at the expense of shepherds and other common folk. Into the social context of religious snobbery and class prejudice, God's Son stepped forth. Oh, in a matter of position, He did violence to our pride. Then He did violence to our pride of self-sufficiency. Adam gave us something that we're born self-sufficient. I don't need your help; I can make it on my own. That's got many a young person into trouble as they've gone to the far country because they felt self-sufficient. This God of the universe, who said *all power is given unto me in heaven and earth* became a little baby. Now, there's nothing in the world more helpless than a little baby. The little baby can't talk. The little baby can't walk. The little baby cannot clean himself, or clothe himself, or feed himself, or defend himself. The God of the universe, I cannot comprehend it, became a little baby. A human being held the universe, the Creator of the universe, in her arms, a little tiny baby and helplessness, and he deliberately, you and I had no choice. That's the way human beings are born, and our Lord came into the world the most helpless of creatures. Animals can take care of themselves when they're born. They can walk, and they can find food, and birds can do likewise, but not mankind. He did that when He was born. Our pride of learning. This is a day that says give us more education. We need less education of the education we're getting today. Now, you may not like that. We're better off if we'd close the public schools down for a while and start all over, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Our problem today, we can not solve our problem because we don't know what the problem is. We don't have the answers because of the fact that we don't know the problem. And in this day of ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, He, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid, became a learner in a humble, poor-folk dwelling. In Luke the second chapter, it talks about Him, and again I cannot comprehend this: *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.* That little boy took instruction from a fallen woman, Mary, and a fallen man, Joseph, his stepfather. Here, God knows everything and never said to the parents, "Well, I know that; I know that." He became a humble learner in a little, lowly hut, in a little, lowly place of dwelling. Oh, how low our Savior stooped! Now, that's heaven's humiliation.

Consider secondly, earth's pain. An omniscient God chose time and place for His son to be born, in the fulness of time. Now, when you read the rulers who were in existence that day, it was a wicked time. It was a time of unbelief, when Judaism had departed fire from God, and they were heartless in their religion, and sin was rampant, and idolatry was everywhere. And Jesus chose to come at such a time as this, in the fullness of time. I submit to you there is pain in the Godhead over this thing over this thing of earth's pain. We hear, a lot of soldiers are in Saudi Arabia today because they heard a little ditty, "Be all you can in the United States Army." Now, when they joined up, they were thinking about education. They were thinking about benefits. They were thinking about promotion and travel, but they didn't count on winding up in a position of combat. They would never have done so. Watch now, Jesus Christ came into this world, and He knew all of the conditions and chose those conditions, and it did not happen upon Him and catch Him by surprise. He came. There was pain in the Godhead about the coming of the Lord.

First of all, there's pain of separation. Now, I understand that God is omniscient. I understand that God is above me. I cannot explain God. You can't explain God, and anybody that explains God is an idolater, and his god is an idol. You cannot explain God. You'll always be God's creature; and when you folks die and go to heaven, you'll never become gods; you'll always be His creature, and His redeemed creature, and He'll still be God forever and forever, God. Now, I repeat again, I cannot explain God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, one God manifested in three persons. The Bible declares them, but there's something that happened in the Godhead when Jesus came to this world. I don't comprehend it. The Bible declares it, and I declare it to you this morning. You say, I want to be home for Christmas. Well, that was when Jesus Christ left heaven and came to this earth. He was away from the Father's house. Now, the Father sent Him into this world, a cold, wicked world. All the missionaries who are on the field and spend four years in a foreign field before coming back home, they know the agony of separation, the pain of separation, the pain of being away from their parents. And parents suffer pain as they remember their boy, their girl on the other side of the globe. They understand separation. Now, I want to tell you today that Jesus Christ, the Father, the Son, They made the world together. They planned redemption together. They hung the moon together, the stars together. They made man and the angels and fellowship together, and there was something that God the Son left when He came to this earth. Now, I know He was still omnipresent, but listen to what He says in John chapter 17. Here, He's going to the cross and in Gethsemane's garden, He's in the high priestly prayer. Listen to what He prays: *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* I can't comprehend that. ". . . *glory which I had with thee. . .*" Now, it's something of separation in the Godhead when Jesus Christ came to this earth, and He was gone thirty-three years. Verse 11, listen to Him: *And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. . .* Yes sir, there was a separation that I cannot understand or explain in light of the fact of the deity of the Son of God. I cannot explain it, but the Bible declares it. There's a pain of separation. Our sin affected Heaven, the pain.

Then, there was the pain of poverty. Would you turn to 2 Corinthians the eighth chapter? People talking about being poor, never has anybody been so poor as Jesus. And there's somebody that cares for poor people, but poor people must not allow self-pity to eat them up. There's no record in the Word of God of Jesus Christ ever feeling sorry for Himself. And self-pity will kill you, whether you're rich or poor, it will eat you up. Now, look at 2 Corinthians the eighth chapter, Paul urging the believers at Corinth to give, and he pointed to this, verse nine: *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, How rich was he? You couldn't comprehend it. No computer could add it up. You could not behold it. How rich was He? yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* We can go through the city of Lakeland and say these folks are poor, poor, and so forth like this, and by poor we mean lots of things. What did that word *poor* mean, and there are different words in the Greek language for poor. Do you know which word He chose, the Spirit of God chose, a word of utmost desolation, so poor. This word means that he only obtains his food by begging. He's not one who obtains his food by working; he's one who obtains his food by begging. Jesus Christ, listen, was totally dependent on others, poor. You think you're poor? You think you have problems? One young man said: "*Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, A little fox runs underneath the ground; there's a hiding place, a little place called home. and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* Are you going to follow me? I tell you tonight, I don't have any place to stay. I don't have a motel. I don't have a home. I don't have a lodging place. I read in John, listen to these two passages of Scripture. John, the seventh chapter, the last verse, says: *And every man went unto his own house.* And we must understand that the chapter divisions are not inspired. They're put there by man to help us locate verses of Scripture. Now, read the first verse of the eighth chapter, the last verse of the seventh chapter, watch: *And every man went unto his own house, Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives.* You don't understand. He who was rich became poor. A lot of folks are talking about poverty, who don't know anything about poverty compared to Jesus Christ. I think about it, and poverty is no fun. I think about going to school. I think about my family. I think about the days when I couldn't, I'd walk by the meat counter and a lump would come up in my throat because I couldn't buy meat. I remember days when I didn't have money to buy a cup of coffee. I remember days I walked into the restaurant and walked out, the menu I couldn't afford it. I remember it wasn't funny! But that is nothing

compared to Jesus Christ, nothing to be compared at all. Poverty is not funny, Jesus Christ, the pain of poverty.

Then number three, the pain of rejection. The highest insult there probably could ever be is this matter of rejection. *He came unto His own and His own received Him not.* Bethlehem was in rejection. Bethlehem was indifferent. There was just no room. Somebody else had all of the rooms filled up, crowded out, the priorities of rooms for officials and the rich and the soldiers. But there is no room for this peasant and this pregnant woman. And I repeat again, it wasn't a matter of rejection in Bethlehem. It was a matter of simply indifference, we're busy. It was indifference when the wise men came from the east some two years later seeking him that was born King of the Jews, and Herod got angry and he asked the Scribes, "Where was the King to be born." They could tell him over the hill in a little town called Bethlehem, and they quoted Micah the fifth chapter and verse two. But they were indifferent. They knew where he was to be born. They had no heart to go and worship him; that's indifference. A lot of people are indifferent to the Lord Jesus Christ, but here it is not only indifference, but the matter of rejection. Rejection is a deliberate no. *He came unto his own and his own received him not.* No! We will not have this man to reign over me. I ask if you are not saved today, you are either for Him or against Him. You are either gathered with Him or scattered abroad, and there is no middle ground that you can get on this matter of rejection. I am afraid about Saudi Arabia. This is a powerful nation; that's a little thing. In my eyes some of them talk about and say, "We can take care of Saudi Arabia in five days." Yes sir, humanly speaking, but wait just a minute. We've thumbed our nose at God. We've thumbed our nose at God and said, "You get out of our classroom." And the Supreme Court lied about American History and tried separation of the church and state. That is not so; that never happened. In the science lab, we want evolution. We don't want to give You the credit for anything that happened. This just blew up, and they called that science. The Bible says that's a fool. *The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.* And hear this, man used to attribute that God did all of this, and we've gotten too smart now. We don't want Your morals. Take Your ten commandments and go. We don't want You in our studies. Get out of the classroom, and get out of the science lab, and get out of the military. That's against the law in the military. That's a law over in Saudi Arabia today. And there is more religious freedom in Russia today than there is in the United States. And that is the reason I am afraid. Listen to this, *Madison, Wisconsin - In a move to expunge all religious references to Christ at Christmas, the public school system in Madison this year will observe the holiday with only Jack Frost and snow men, banning all crosses or creatures are not appropriate for decorations. School students have had their Christmas vacation renamed Winter break. And all Christmas trees and parties have been banned as well.* I don't know what is going to happen in Saudi Arabia. But I tell you this, if God comes to our aid and brings victory, I want to tell you it is sovereign mercy and grace; we sure do not deserve it as a nation because we are like Israel. And I just want to say: *Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.* A jack ass, God says knows. Those are my people. That is sad. A little donkey knows who feeds him. A dog knows who feeds him. If God didn't have anything to do with our country, God didn't have anything to do with daily bread; yes He does. He feeds the birds. You can't eat or find it without God. And tell me with confidence, "Yes sir, we will take it." I don't know. You say, "That is a negative." Yes sir, I know it is negative, but sin is negative and our rebellion against God is pretty negative too. Smug, a generation of smart alecks, it's our rights; and we will tell God how we are going to Heaven. No, you can't do that. God chose to send the baby of a virgin, a son, a Jew, in Bethlehem, called a king yet born an impoverished carpenter's son. This is from Joseph Folem, "Think of what these words mean to relevance to blacks; he's a white man. I believe Mohammed Ali rejected Christianity on the basis of white man and became a Muslim. He will find out in the day of Judgment, he sure made a mistake. Not because of the white issue but because of Jesus Christ. Relevance to the feminists, he's a man. They don't want Him. The materialists, He's poor; we don't want Him. The Arabs, He's a Jew; we don't want Him. The well lit values, credentials, He brings none; we don't want Him. Christ doesn't quickly change from philosophical moods of rationalism, existentialism, and humanism and secularism. In our scientific society, the virgin birth seems so mythical, impossible in fact Jesus has often discredited Israel, 'illegitimate son of a Roman soldier.'" He's not

relevant to me. Yes, He is relevant to everybody. You're a sinner, and He is the Savior. He is relevant. And everybody, the rich and the poor, the blacks and the whites, the red and the yellow. And the cultured and the illiterate, O He's a Savior. And when He was born, an educator was not born; a Savior was born. His name is Jesus, pain. And there is the thing of crucifixion.

I can't comprehend, I cannot comprehend. You just think about the physical agony. You think about in the hand encompasses, the body, the anatomy and this part is called the hand, not just here, where the nails went through here the center of the nervous system, the center of all the nervous system, driven through there and driven through his feet. And the muscle spasm, you think about the agony; I can't comprehend agony. We see the cruelty of the man, mental suffering, physical suffering, emotional suffering. How He suffered. The New Testament does not major on how He suffered; it majors on the cruelty of man. And you want to see what man is? Look what he did to Jesus Christ. There's what man is. O we are becoming leisurely, we are becoming more and more humanitarian. No, we are becoming more beastly. Watch, I'll prove it. Jesus said there is going to be things in the green tree. What will we do in the dry? We are a wicked society. God loves us. Pain, and the pain you see, the first part you see what man did to Jesus Christ. God won't allow you to look to see what He did to His Son. He pulled the curtain; He turned out the sun. When the High Priest took the offering for sin, he went back into the Holy of Holies, and nobody ever went there except the High Priest alone. When Jesus Christ took His blood, His sacrifice, and went into the Holy of Holies with God, He became our sin offering. And out of that darkness came a cry, My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me? And the most terrible, awful feeling in all the world is to be found forsaken of God. There is no other feeling so comparable. His wasn't a feeling; it was reality. When a holy God laid the sins of the world upon Him and punished Him instead of us and turned His back on His own Son, I cannot understand that. That's the pain of the crucifixion.

Now, let's move on. The pain of identification. Mary and Joseph entered into the pain of the Godhead, the pain and Mary and Joseph, the pain of mystery. How would you like, young men, to be engaged to a girl, and you loved her dearly and all of the sudden you discover she is pregnant. Then you marry her and everybody talks and says, "Well that's not his child." He married her, and you never get over that. I mean it followed him the rest of his life. And Joseph was minded to put her away, and the angel of the Lord said, "No, No, this thing that has been conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost; you need not fear." And the mystery of identification with him, the pain of mystery. Mary, what would a young girl that came up pregnant say; well, just stop and think today. Some girl came up and said, "Yes Sir, but I have not known any man. I'm impregnated by the third person of the Godhead." Who would believe? Rationalists laugh today about Jesus being born of a blond German soldier. Mystery, paint a mystery. Paint a Bethlehem. When I think of Bethlehem, I've watched my wife in child birth. I've watched my daughter in childbirth, but when I did that though, I had leprosy. You see they shut us out. These young sprouts they go in with their wife. I mean, I had leprosy, and they said you stay outside. But I saw enough outside to tell me some things. Mary didn't have a La maze class. Mary had no sedative. Mary had no midwife, no doctor, no clean sheets, no privacy. Pain of Bethlehem. And then put the little boy in a manger. In his book *When Iron Gates Yield*, Geoffrey Bull tells of spending Christmas Eve in a Tibetan Inn en route to a communist prison camp as he walked into the stable to feed the horses and mules he says, "My boots squashed in the manure and straw. The horrible smell of the animals was nauseating and I thought, to think Christ came all the way from Heaven to some wretched Eastern stable, and what is more He came for me." Merson's painting *No Room* depicts the scene of deep shadows, cold stars, a lonely street and howling dogs as the hard hearted innkeeper closes the door and turns to Mary saying, "No room here." Yes sir, pain on earth. That's Heaven's humiliation, pain on earth.

Number three quickly, Calvary's explanation. What does all this mean? Well, we are wrapped up with the wall of Berlin, how it came down. While the world is talking about that wall, it shuts people in. When Adam sinned in the Garden, two walls were erected. There was a wall outside the Garden of Eden. A holy God can no longer fellowship with man. And a holy God shut man out of that Garden of Eden lest he eat of the Tree of Life and live forever in an unfallen state in a fallen state and no way possible for a Redeemer, and a Holy God erected a wall because of man's sin. And in Adam and Eve's heart there was another wall that went up and said, "No room for God here. Keep out." Outside that Garden said, "Keep out at the risk of your life." Inside

the human heart, a wall. Ephesians the fourth chapter talks about the unsaved are alienated from the life of God, shut off from the life of God. There is a wall in the unsaved heart. No room for Jesus, keep out, God. What is Calvary about? Pain in the heart of God drove Him to this earth to come into Bethlehem's manger, live a life you couldn't live, and went to the cross and died in your place instead and satisfied the holiness of God. God's wrath against sin is satisfied; and bless God, when the veil rent in twain, the walls came tumbling down between God and man. And there is no wall between God and man today. But wait a minute, you go soul winning. Man, everywhere you go you find a wall. Knock on doors, a wall. Pass out tracts, a wall. Preach, a wall. Well, we want religion, but we don't want Jesus Christ. And there is a wall there. And Christmas means, listen, God is satisfied. Christmas means that Calvary answers it all. Christmas means God is love, and He has come to knock on the door of the wall of your heart. God won't ever tear that wall down. And if the good news of the Gospel does not make you take that wall down and say, "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I gladly receive you." There is nothing else in the world that will destroy the enmity of man and God, and also man with man. When Adam sinned he erected a wall between him and his wife. And every man, woman, boy, and girl has a wall against anybody else intruding and a wall against God, "Keep out!" Jesus broke that little wall down. And I want to tell you today, He came to earth and He comes personally. *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* And you will never go to Heaven unless you open the door and the latch is on the inside. He won't tear it down. And you can't rest in any predestination or any other doctrines and be all right. No sir. *He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* The wall is not on God's side; it's down. The wall is on your side. And you think it keeps God out; no, it keeps you in.

Let me use this illustration. An evangelist by the name of Brown, he's dead now, but he told this story. He had been in a meeting in a town in Wisconsin. And he left that meeting, and a little later on he got a letter from an old man by the name of Stewart. He told him his boy had left home, didn't know where he was, but the boy said, "I'll be back." And he said, "I don't know when he is coming back. He hasn't come back." And he said, "Preacher, you travel a good bit. If you ever see my boy, tell him his father loves him, and mother is dying to have him come home. He said two years later he went back to the same town to hold a meeting. The first man that he saw as he stepped off of the train was this dear old brother, Mr. Stewart. It was a cold and rainy day and he said, "Why Mr. Stewart, what are you doing down here at the depot?" He said, "My boy." He said, "Why, he hasn't come yet?" "No, he hasn't come. I am sure he will, I have met every train since he left." Eleven years later, Evangelist Brown went back to the same town. As he stepped on the platform, the first person he met was an old James Stewart. His hair was now white like snow, and his brow wrinkled and his form bent. Mr. Brown said, "Good morning Mr. Stewart." But the old man had forgotten. He said, "Who are you?" And then Brother Brown made himself known and asked him why he was there. The old man said, "I'm waiting for my boy." "Why, hasn't he come yet?" "No," said the old man. We haven't heard anything. I am sure he is coming, and I thought he might be here this morning." Just then, the evangelist said, "I lifted my eyes and I saw a stalwart young man coming down the steps of the car and I said to myself, 'If I didn't know better, than that's the boy that this man is looking for.'" As our eyes saw him off, the old man started and dropped his cane and ran as fast as his tottering limbs could let him. In less time than it would take to tell it, the boy was in his father's arm. The old man sobbed, white headed, and he sobbed out. He said, "O, thank God, my son, my son. Thank God you've come." Then he turned to Evangelist Brown and said, "Brother Brown, I would have waited until I died." Did you know that God has been waiting on some of you a long time? I mean He has waited and waited. And time has come and gone. And He has waited, and Calvary and the matter of the incarnation. And I don't understand, I don't understand how in the world a God that made all of that wants to fellowship with me. I don't understand how a God that did all of that wants me, needs me, longs for me; I don't understand that. But, Luke the fifteenth chapter, the prodigal son, the father is God illustrating His love for sinners who have gone astray. He has waited on you and waited on you and come after you and come after you and waited on you and waited on you. It's time, it's time! Yes, you come; yes, you come.

Christian, let me say this; this is Christmas. Wise men as they came to the house where the young child was,

they brought their gold, that's their substance; they brought their frankincense; that's their worship; and they brought their myrrh, that's willingness to suffer. And this Christmas season we ought to identify Him, willingly bare His shame. And our worship and our substance, a special gift for him.

Does Christmas mean anything to you? You've celebrated it and celebrated it, yes sir. But have you understood the message that God so loved you that He gave His only begotten Son. And the wall is in your heart; there's no wall shutting you out from God. There's no wall that a holy God erects and says, "You can't come." There's nobody on His list that He says, "This one I will not save." *Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* And the walls are down on God's side, and Calvary made that possible where *he bore your sins in his own body on the tree.* And the ball is in your corner of the court. What will you do with Jesus? He came, was born, lived, He suffered, He bled, He died, He rose again, and now He's coming to say, "Hey, there's a barrier between you and me. It's not on My side. The holiness of God is satisfied. I can fellowship with you. I long to fellowship with you. I long to have you come home with me. That's the reason I've come, to knock at your heart's door today." And I ask you, what will you do with Jesus? John 1:11-12: *He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:* I ask you one simple question, will you today as a sinner turn from sin to receive Jesus Christ as personal Savior? Will you throw open the door of your heart, "Come in, Lord Jesus. Yes, come in every part of my life, come in! I gladly receive you today. There's room in my heart. I'll make room for you."