

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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Make Him Room

PART

2

TITLE

Let Me Do As You Said

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 1:18-25



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Well Merry Christmas, Providence. I don't know about you, but every time I watch that video, it just stresses me out. Every time, but that's the reality of this season, right? In the sense that the days get shorter and the to-do list seems to get longer. But what I love is as a church, we gather each week just to take a moment to slow down, right? Just slow down and just to rest in our savior because that's what we're gonna do today, we're gonna open up God's word. It's the Gospel of Matthew, and we're just gonna rest for a little bit in who He is and what He's done for us.

So if you were here last week, we started this series, Make Him Room, and we looked at the life of Mary, and how Mary made room for Jesus in her life and in her plans. What we're going to do is just do a parallel sermon today and just lay down right beside that one, looking at Joseph's life. As you look at Joseph's life, you'll see the same thing. You'll see sacrifice, you'll see obedience, you'll see a sense of turmoil within, and that's what we're gonna look at.

But through all of this, through the Christmas season, we should have a sense of rest, right? Jesus said, "Come to me all you who are heavy laden and I will give you rest." So hopefully we get a glimpse of that this morning as we read God's Word and as we talk about it. So we're in the Gospel of Matthew. If you don't have a Bible, there should be one provided in one of the chair racks in front of you, to your right or your left, and we'll be on page 807 in that Bible, and we'll start on verse 18 of chapter one of the Gospel of Matthew.

Verse 18 starts, and as we go through this, we're gonna stop a couple times just to see a few things, but in verse 18, it starts and it says this. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way." I'm want to stop there for a second because like we mentioned before, Christ is not Jesus's last name, it's Messiah, that's what Christ means. So this is a picture of the hope that has been longed for since the very beginning, since the garden where sin entered into the world, they had hope for a messiah to come and to fix all that was broken.

Here we have this picture. Now the birth of Jesus, the Messiah took place in this way. "When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit." Now, we need to just clarify this for a moment. This betrothal period is not something like we have in our culture today. It was much deeper than an engagement period because you were considered legally married during this time, but you didn't live together and you didn't sleep together, which is really just odd.

We're married but none of these things happen, but that's the setting right now for the context of Joseph and Mary's life. Now verse 19, "And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly, but as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary to be your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son and shall call his name Jesus for He will save His people from their sins.'

All of this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken to the prophet, 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which means God with us.' When Joseph woke from his sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him. He took his wife, but he knew her not until she had given birth to a son and he called His name Jesus."

Let's pray. Take a moment right now just to ask God to speak to you this morning. Take a moment just to pray for me, that I would communicate God's wonderful truth clearly this morning. Lord, we just have sung that come let us adore you and I pray that we would do that this morning as we look at your birth, as we look at how you came to seek and to save that which was lost. Lord, may we adore that. May adoration flow from our hearts for You because Lord, you are worthy of that.

God, we thank you for the grace and the mercy that you give us through this baby in a manger. Lord, as we go through this Christmas season may we remember these truths, may we remember this glory, may we remember this beautiful fact, that you came to forgive us of our sins and you came to dwell with us. It's in Christ's great name we ask, amen.

Well, common saying not just around Christmas time, but as you see somebody or pass somebody, it's, "Hey, how's it going?" I don't know about you, but we've almost got a stamped response to that now. Everybody I'm like, "Hey, how's it going?" Everybody responds with, "Busy. I'm just busy."

We almost wear that now as a good thing, as a badge of importance. I'm so busy, I've got so much going on so I must be important because of how busy I am. The reality is whether you keep your calendar in your phone or on a physical calendar or if you just keep it in your head because you don't want to see all the stuff you've got going on, most of our calendars look like this if we're honest. It is packed full of all different things.

There's even little notes of things on the side of things that we should do if and when we get time to fit it in the schedule. We are so busy with so many things, but the question we've got to ask today is, is our calendar filled with the right things? Is it full of all of these things that are good, but it's not filled with the things that are best?

That's why we call this series Make Him Room, because He should be the center of our lives and everything should revolve around Him. But the reality of making room for Christ is that it's difficult. It's difficult, right? It's the first thing we need to see from this text and from the life of Joseph, that it can be difficult to make Him room. Just look at the life of Joseph for a moment and what we read in this text.

None of this seems to make sense. He's just found out that his betrothed wife is pregnant. That moment is, it doesn't matter if you're married or not, hearing that your wife is pregnant in this moment, it's shocking. It's even more shocking for Joseph because she's not just pregnant, but she's pregnant from the Holy Spirit. How do you deal with that? If you're Joseph and you hear that do you respond to Mary and do you say, "Well, did the Holy Spirit bring you a unicorn as well?"

What do you do with that? That's heavy to think about. It's inconvenient for Joseph in this time. It can be inconvenient for us to make room for Him. Think about it, Joseph had these plans in place. They were betrothed. They're about to be married and to live together and to start a family together. Then we have this huge wrench thrown in the plan where now there's a baby before all of that should happen, was supposed to happen.

Joseph's like, "Wait. Mary is already with a child and now you're asking me my opinion on this?" Like wait a second God, if I'm going to make room for you you've got to give me more leeway, right? I've got to be able to plan. My calendar's pretty full already. You've got to give me six, eight months. I'll wrestle through that and then I'll decide if this is what I want to do, if I want to make room for you.

But that's not what Joseph gets in this moment. What he gets is the reality that his betrothed wife is pregnant with Jesus. No matter what route that Joseph's going to take here, all of them are inconvenient to him, right? Even if he's like, "Okay," he thinks here I'm going to go ahead and divorce her. At that time he could legally divorce her and bring shame on her. He could bring her into the courts and publicly show everybody, "This is not my child and I'm going to be done with this."

But that's inconvenient, right? That's a lot of emotional effort and financial effort to make all this stuff happen. So he decides the second option, what he's thinking he's going to do is okay, I'm going to divorce her quietly, but even that wasn't convenient. You had to get a couple people together, you had to have a document that showed that you were legally divorcing her. Let's be honest, he loved Mary. He's betrothed to her.

He doesn't want to do this anyway. Even that is not convenient for him. This is where Joseph sits in all of this inconvenience and the question lies before him, are you going to make room for Jesus? Are you going to make room for Him? Even Joseph's description that we see in verse 19, he's called a just man. Even his reputation would have brought about inconveniences in his life. He was a good law abiding citizen. He had a good reputation before everybody else and so people would look for him to come in to work on their house, to build things for them because he was a carpenter, because he was a just man.

Now that even seems to be up in the air. Is he really just? Can he even get out of this without people questioning whether he was a just and good man? All of these things are just inconveniences for him. How much would he have liked to have just said, “I want to wash my hands of all of this and just move on. I’ve got different plans and I would love to just have a wife that would love me and I would love her and we can have kids and leave all this drama behind.”

But that’s not the case. It’s not the case for us oftentimes when we make room for Christ as well. It wasn’t just that it was inconvenient for Joseph. We see in this text that Joseph had a sense of fear and it can be fearful for us to make Him room. Look at what the angel says to him in verse 20. Angel comes to him in a dream and says, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife.”

Now this is really humorous because as you turn the pages of Scripture, whenever an angel shows up there’s a sense of fear on people, but most of the time it’s about the angel. Like whoa, wait a second. Even the shepherds feared the angels when they saw them. But here in this text, the angel doesn’t say, “Hey, don’t fear me.” What does he say? “Do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

So the question we ask is okay, what is Joseph fearful of? What is he fearful of in this? There’s so many things and we can only imagine some of them, but there’s so many things he could be fearful of in this scene. The reality is he’s got to be fearful of what are his parents going to think about this? Are his parents going to just disown him and cut him out of the will? There’s a sense of fear that would come that maybe I’ll be forsaken by my friends.

Joseph is called a just man, right? You are the company that you speak so most of the time his friends are probably going to be just men, just women who would look at Joseph and be like, “Oh, you messed up big time, buddy. We can’t be friends. I can’t be known with a person like this because you broke the rules, you broke the law. You haven’t done what you were supposed to do.”

There’s a sense of fear of loneliness in this as well. Joseph has a sense of fear. Is my family going to leave me? Are my friends going to leave me? Am I going to sit here all alone with this if I make room for Christ? There’s so many fears that are going through Joseph’s mind in this moment. The angel looks at him and says, “Do not fear. Do not fear to take Mary because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

Can you imagine the looks that Joseph would have gotten from others when he tried to explain this story to them? People would have looked at Joseph and thought you’re either extremely gullible or you’re crazy. All of these things are just speaking to inconveniences when we try to make room for Him in our lives.

Everything that we look at through the life of Joseph and everything we think about in our lives as we think about how difficult it can be to make room for Christ, all of those that we mentioned so far is looking solely at us. It's looking at our life and our problems and what we need to do is we need to take a step back and look at God in the midst of all of these things. In a Christmas devotional that I'm reading it talked about this subject, this idea of making room for God in the midst of our lives.

He says one of the ways we know that we have not made room for God is by preferring ourselves over Him. He says in this book, he says we have preferred living for ourselves as opposed to living for something bigger than ourselves. We have lived for ourselves and our marriages and in our parenting and in our jobs and in our friendships. Even the church at times we have made about us. He says I can prove this by asking this question, and this is the question that he asks.

He says, "How much of your anger in the last two months had anything whatsoever to do with God's Kingdom, His call and His glory?" Think about that for a moment. Over the last two months what have you been angry about? Has any of it had to do with God's call, God's Kingdom and God's glory? He says if we're honest we're not angry because people around us are breaking God's law. We're angry because they're breaking our law.

They've got in the way of our plans. They've brought inconveniences on our life and all of that is showing that we're looking to us instead of looking up to God. What's amazing about this is we read this story and we can talk about how Joseph made room for God, but what's more impressive to me in this text is how God made room for us, how God has made room for us. It's the second thing we have to see and probably the most important thing for us to grasp from this text, God has made room for us.

The way we see this is through the name Jesus and the name Emmanuel. Look in verse 21 where it says His name again. "He shall be called Jesus." Why? "For He will save His people from their sins." He will save the people from their sins. The name Jesus literally means God saves, so they name Him this because that's what Jesus is going to do. He's going to save us from our sins.

This is huge because all our core existence and reason for being is held up in God and we are divorced from Him right now because of our sins. What Jesus does is He comes and He saves us from our sins. The entire mission of Jesus was to bridge this gap that we could be connected with Him again and understand our identity and understand our purpose, understand our focus in life because it's all found through Him. Our sins have made all that cloudy and foggy.

It's important to see in this text that it's Jesus and Jesus alone that saves us from our sins. He came to save us from our sins. God didn't contract out His work to try to save us with a lesser being. No, He saw our great need and He knew He was the only way we could be saved. So Jesus comes to earth as a baby in a manger to save us from our sins.

Now, this should stir our hearts. This should make us excited. At times it just doesn't, right? I think the real reason why it doesn't stir our hearts and get us excited and to worship and praise Him is because we have a really high view of ourselves and a really low view of sin. We have a really high view of ourselves and a really low view of sin, and so I just really need to be cleaned up. I don't need to be forgiven.

I just need to be cleaned up. I don't need to be really saved. That's us thinking highly of ourselves and lowly of our sin, but God realized the depth of our sin and so He came to seek and to save us. If there's any other way that we could be saved than Christ coming as a baby in a manger and dying on a cross, it would have been the biggest blunder in all of history. It would have been, but Christmastime and in this text we see His coming with intentionality to seek and to save us, to forgive us of all of our sins.

Imagine whatever your favorite hero story is, your action story. The hero is important because he's come to save people or he's come to save someone, right? Like if the prince has come to save the people from the dragon. There's a big battle that's got to happen. It's important because there's this dragon in the way that the people need to be saved from. That's what makes the story so important.

Only the prince can save. Only the prince can save these people, but if we change that story and we're like well, the dragon's really just a big fluffy teddy bear and the prince has got to come and rescue the people from the fluffy teddy bear, it just doesn't have that same weight, right? But that's what we do with our sin when we talk it down. We're like, Christ came to save us from our sins, yeah, but that's just, sins aren't that big of a deal and so it's not that big of a deal that Christ came.

Oh, it absolutely is. Let me just paint a picture of this from the Scriptures as it talks about sin like this. We need to realize is that the Bible teaches on sin, it teaches that sin is the basic cause, if not the immediate cause of all of the brokenness that we see, of all the brokenness that we see. It is caused by our sinfulness.

When you turn the pages of Scripture this is the hope that we see in the salvation of Christ. Jesus came to save us from all the physical effects of our sin, death and decay, deformation, Christ came to fix and repair all of those. Christ came to save us from all the psychological effects that we see of brokenness in our world, from mental illnesses to eating disorders, from narcissism. Christ came to break those chains that we would live in freedom and we would find rest.

He came to save us from those sins. Jesus, when He came as a baby in the manger, He came to save us from all the relational effects of sin, all the conflict and loneliness that we would bear, all the exclusion from others, fixed. He invited us to come into His family where we will be fully known and fully loved.

Jesus also came to stop all the national and ethical strife that we see caused by sin. Racism and wars would all cease. See, the prince has come. He's come to save us from all this. It's the Prince of Peace.

Now Christ saves us from all of these things, but most importantly all these things are a domino effect from the main thing, that we were separated from God. We're separated from God and because of that we see all this brokenness in the world. We have a broken relationship and so we see a broken world.

What God does in this moment when He sees how separated we are, He sees our spiritual estrangement from Him, He comes to us. Look at that second title for Jesus here. In verse 21, or in verse 23 rather, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which means God with us." Now as a kid when I would read this I would be really confused. I don't know if some of you are here today, but in two verses you see Jesus, His name shall be called Jesus and His name shall be called Emmanuel.

So it's kind of like, what's going on here? Is this like Hey, my name's Jesus, but my friends call me Emmanuel, but you can call me Lord. What is going on here, right? There's a lot of confusion. Well, the clarity is this, that Jesus is showing, His name is showing what He would do. He would save us from our sins. Emmanuel is showing us how He would do it, He would come from Heaven to earth and to dwell as a baby in a manger.

Now as we look or think about this cute baby, I've got a four month old right now and so I looked at him this morning and I'm thinking about this. This cute small child. At the same time we cannot forget who this child is. We should stand in awe of this because this is the Creator of all the universe. This is the one that spoke and flung galaxies into existence.

Our galaxy alone, the one we live in, the Milky Way is 100,000 light years wide. I didn't know how long a light year was, but I had to look it up. It's close to six trillion miles. Let that settle in for a second, six trillion miles times 100,000 miles. That's how big our galaxy is. Our galaxy is small compared to others. Yet God, this baby, spoke and created it all.

How in the world can this grand God fit in this small of a body? It should blow our minds when we see that. This is the God in whom we worship. This is the God in whom we sing to, the one who would humble Himself and come to earth to save us from our sins. What's so beautiful about this, as we think about Emmanuel, God with us, this has been God's plan from the beginning. This has been God's desire from the beginning.

That He would dwell with us. You go all the way back to the book of Genesis and what you'll see is that God is walking in the garden with Adam and Eve. He's dwelling with them. Then rebellion happens and there's trees [inaudible 00:24:14] in the world and so now there's this separation that's there. So what does God do? He sets up something called the tabernacle, which would be set up in the midst of His people and literally His presence would come down and dwell in the holiness, the Holy of Holies.

Tabernacle literally means to dwell. God dwelling with His people. He didn't stop there. Then we get here to Matthew and we see that here it is again, Emmanuel, God with us. He came to dwell with us. Matthew's gospel opens up with God with us and then he ends in chapter 28 the very last sentence of the gospel of Matthew says, "And I am with you even until the end of age."

What God is doing right here is He's showing us how big He is and how merciful and loving He is to come and to dwell with us. It could have stopped right here. God could have lived and died and saved us and that had been the end of His dwelling with us, but it doesn't stop here in gospel of Matthew. Even in the book of Revelation at the very end of the book it says this in chapter 21, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men. He will dwell with them. He will dwell with them and they will be His people and God Himself will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning or crying nor pain, for all the former things have passed away."

Church, Christmas is so much more than we realize. It's so much more than we grasp and we need to see this. We need to see the greatness of God to humble Himself and to come as a baby in a manger to save us from our sins. My kids this year have come to love the story of How the Grinch Stole Christmas. I read that story sometimes five times a day, no joke. They just love that story. So we read this story, and if you're familiar with it, Grinch starts, his heart is two sizes too small, right?

At the end it blows up and it's three times, it grew three sizes that day. At the end he makes this statement, and I'm reading it to my daughter for the first time. It makes me laugh, but he makes this statement. The Grinch says, "Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas perhaps means something a little bit more." When I read that my daughter cuts me off. She said, "Yeah, it means Jesus."

I said, "You're right, babe. You're right." We miss out on that so much because we get caught up in some much of the busyness of life and what we need to grasp is as we think about the difficulties of making room for Jesus, we need to remember that Christ jumped great obstacles to make room for us, that He left Heaven, His gated community, and He came down to earth to save us. That should lead us to worship.

That should lead us to want to make room for Him. Don't miss this, church. Don't miss this, that all of these things, these names of the Messiah, of Jesus and Emmanuel, all of these are speaking to the difficulties in our lives to make Him room. Every one of them. Think about this, Jesus changes our inconveniences for opportunities. What Joseph first looked at here as an inconvenience later in his life he would see as a great joy and an opportunity.

We see our missionary friends on the screen lighting the candle this morning and what they probably perceived in the past as an inconvenience to go and step away from family and to travel overseas to share the gospel with those that don't know, maybe it was an inconvenience for them at first, but now, they see as an opportunity to share the love of Christ, to display Christ's reconciliation to the world.

Jesus also replaces our fears for faith. We can sit here and say, "Will God forgive me?" Like, I've sinned a lot and I've done a lot of things wrong. We look at the name of Jesus. He came to save His people from their sins. Yes, Christ will forgive you. Absolutely. Yeah, but I've sinned a lot. I've sinned last night. I'm even thinking about what I'm going to do this afternoon to sin. Yes, Christ will forgive you because Jesus came to save His people from their sins.

He also replaces our loneliness with relationship. It's one of the biggest struggles in our hearts. A popular American journalist Hunter Thompson, pinned these words sadly. He said, "We are all alone. We are born alone and we die alone and in the spite of true romance magazines we shall all one day look back and see our lives. We're alone. In spite of our company, we were alone the whole way."

That is a sad picture. What Christ does is He comes as a baby in the manger, He says, "You'll never be alone. I've come to dwell with you. I will never leave you nor forsake you." This is what Christ does. This is the joy of Christmas. This is why we should be making room for Him, because He's already made room for us. So lastly I want us to see from this that let us make room for Him. Last week when we looked at Mary's life we saw how she was blessed because she made room for God and yes, there's sense of truth that I want to affirm that as you make room for Him even through difficulties, blessing comes with that.

It does. We talked about Mary's life, how she was able to be the mother of Christ. You look at Joseph, he would always be known as the adoptive father of Jesus. That's one of the blessings he received. Another one that's really interesting is for all of time in the pages of Scripture he would be known as Joseph, the just man. The thing he might have been fearful of losing in Christ now is solidified.

He was blessed because he got to teach the Creator of all things how to sand a table, how to eat food. He got to spend his whole life with Jesus and would always been known as his father. But I want to take it a step further because we can say let us make room for Him because He'll bless us, but let's give teeth to that. What does it practically look like for you and I to make room for Him in our lives?

I think it looks like two things. First is it looks like obedience. It looks like obedience. To make room for Christ looks like obedience. Look at Joseph's life here. In verse 24, "He awoke from his sleep and he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him." He did it. Think about this just for a moment. Joseph has just woke up from a dream, right? If I have a dream like this I'm pretty sure I'm like, "What did I have for dinner last night? Maybe that really messed up my dreams.

So in order to agree to this I have got to have some clarity, so I'm going to go to sleep tonight and if there's more clarity then, then maybe I'll make this decision." Right? But he doesn't. What does he do? It says he took his wife. Now this is what's amazing, nowhere in the pages of the Bible do we have any word recorded from Joseph. He doesn't speak anywhere that we have recorded in our Bible. That doesn't mean he didn't speak, I'm just saying we don't have anything recorded. It's because he was a man of obedience.

He didn't get up and ask questions. What he did is he got up and said, "Let it be so. Let it be as you say." The same is true for us. If we would just be obedient to Him and obey Him, we would save so much time and we would receive so much joy. I think about when I was in college, every bit of my furniture that I had at that point in college was all some assembly required. It's basically all assembly required.

Me being the man I was going into college, I was like really prideful and so I'm going to do this myself. I don't need directions. I don't need rules, and so I'm going to put together this IKEA furniture by myself. So I look at the picture on the front of the box and I'm like, "This is what I'm going to do. I'm going to build that." So I start building it, putting the pieces together and then I start realizing wait, some pieces are missing because I've already used them earlier, so I can't make that shelf fit like it's supposed to.

I get done at the end of it and I look and I see that one of the boards that's supposed to be back, is supposed to be turned backwards is forward and so I have an unfinished board right on the front of my cabinet. I'm just like I'm just going to embrace this as a college student. I'm not going to worry about it, just move on. But how much easier would it have been if I'd had just stopped for a moment and just looked at those directions and made decisions based upon those directions?

The same is true for us. God's Word, this is not recommendations that He's given us. These are His commands and His directions. We sit in our lives and we're confused about our identities and we're confused about our direction, we're confused about our purpose. Yet we don't take the time to make room for Him to study and to read His Word and to see what the Creator would say to the creation.

So, my challenge that I would say to you or the question I would ask is what is God directing you to do today? What is He calling you to do? How is He calling you to make room for Him? Maybe He's calling you to make room in your life for the very first time. Maybe you know you've never trusted Christ. You've heard about your sins before, but you haven't really understood that. Maybe today you need to make room for the first time and say, "Christ you own my plans and my life and my heart. It's all yours. I'm going to make room for you in my life."

Or maybe it's to make room for Him in your calendar. Your calendar's packed full of all these different things, but you haven't looked at having Christ be the center of all of that and so your calendar continues to spin out of control. Christ is directing you today, "No, make room in your calendar for me. Make room for church, this community that I've called you to. It's the direction that I've given you. That you could be built up and see the love of God not just through your life, but other's lives."

Maybe you need to make room in your mind and in your thoughts for Him. God's Word talks about meditating on His Word and yet, most of the time my mind is filled up with so many things, the next task that I have to do, what I'm going to have for lunch. Some of you all are thinking about that right now. What am I going to do this week for Christmas? All these different tasks continue to roll through our mind and we're not thinking and making room for Him in our thoughts.

Maybe you would take one passage like this Emmanuel, God with us, and you would think about that at night before you go to bed. You would make Him room in your thoughts. Or maybe you make Him room in your wallet or in your bank account. God has called us to be generous people, not just to the church, but to others, that we should be generous to one another. We tend to guard that and not make room in that area for God to move.

There's almost a sense of fear we let dictate that when we should be trusting and following Him. So how is God speaking to you today? Whatever God is calling you to do, however God is directing you, my prayer is that your response would be like Joseph's in this, that he awoke and he did as the Lord commanded him, that you would do as God has commanded you.

This Christmas I decided to try to culture myself a little bit in Christmas, and so I decided to read Charles Dickens' book A Christmas Carol. If you haven't read it before it's a great story. I'd always seen the cartoons, right? The Muppet's or the Disney Christmas Carol. I've seen that kind of stuff, but there's much more weight and impact to this story if you read it. If you're not familiar with the story, there's a man named Ebenezer Scrooge, you know, ba-humbug. We hear that around Christmastime sometimes. It's from this story.

Ebenezer Scrooge, who's living a terrible life of selfishness is visited by his old past away partner Jacob Marley, and then the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come. As I sat down to read this book, one of these scenes stood out to me more than any other. It's when Marley, his coworker comes to talk to him about the wrong ways he has lived his life and how it's echoing into eternity.

Marley is really getting into despair in this moment, and so Scrooge wants to encourage him in the midst of this despair, so Scrooge looks at Marley and says, "But we worked together, Marley. You were a great employee. You worked really hard. You were a good businessman." Marley stops him and this is what he says in the book. He says, "Business? Business? Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business and charity and mercy, forbearance, benevolence were all my business. The dealing of my work was but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business."

He says, "At this time of year, Christmas, I suffer most." Then he says this question, "Why did I walk through crowds of fellow beings with my eyes turned down and never raised to that blessed star which led the wise men to the poor abode?" What Marley is saying in this is that his biggest regret in life is he only looked down at himself and his own path and he never looked up to make room for Christ.

He never looked to that star that pointed to that baby in a manger. Instead he only thought about himself. It was the biggest regret he ever had in all of his life. I would challenge us today to not come to the end of our lives and regret not having made room for Him. Let's pray.

Lord, there is so much goodness we see in this passage, so much goodness to see that you came to forgive us, that you came to love us, that you came to free us. God, that you're never going to leave us nor forsake us because at Christmastime we remember Emmanuel, God with us. As we look at that baby in a manger what we remember is our Savior who will never leave us. God, I pray that in the midst of this Christmas season we would not miss out on Christ, but that you would help us, strengthen us to go through any difficulties looking to you first, the One that made room for us. God, I pray that you would help us to make room for you. It's in your great name we pray, amen.



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