

**12/8/19 Prepare Him Room Christmas Series...** The lyrics of the hymn "**Joy to the World**" were written in 1917 by English writer Isaac Watts, and they are inspired by Psalm 98, 96:11-12 and Genesis 3:17-18. The song is really a paraphrase of Watts' theological interpretation of those scripture passages.

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King! **Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room**, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.*

lets take a step back and get the big picture... The God who created everything, created the earth to have room for him to live with his creation... the whole earth...

[Isaiah 45:](#)<sup>18</sup> *For the LORD is God, and he created the heavens and earth and put everything in place.*

- **it is His Place!**

*Psalm 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.*

- **He made the world to be lived in by him with us..... he prepared room in the heavens and the earth to live with his creation....**

*John 1:10 He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him.*

<sup>11</sup> *He came to his own people, and even they rejected him.*

- **People did not recognize him...as belonging in the world he created..there is not room for him**
- **His on ethnic group took it a step farther and rejected him... made no room for him...**
- **Yet if anyone makes room for him...**

*John 1:12 But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. <sup>13</sup> They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. <sup>14</sup> So the Word became human and made his home among us.*

- **not only will he be with us on the earth... we will also have a room in his father's home...heaven..**

John 14 “Don’t let **your hearts** be troubled. Trust **in God**, and trust also **in me**. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would **I** have told **you** that **I** am going to prepare a place for **you**? When everything is ready, **I** will come and get **you**, so that **you** will always be with me where **I** am. ...

- but even more than that ...he will make his home in us...

John 17:21 I pray that they will all be one, just as **you and I** are one—as **you** are in **me**, Father, and **I** am in **you**. And may they be in us so that the world will believe **you** sent **me**.

Verse 23 I am in them and **you** are in **me**. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that **you** sent **me** and that **you** love them as much as **you** love **me**.

- That is incredible...did you get it...one of the chief ways God prepares the world to make room for him is through making it apparent to others that He inhabits that house.....

So this Christmas we want you to remember ...that if you belong to God he has made his home with you and in you ... But we need to understand what it means to make Room for Him...

When you make room for Jesus...you are not just making a space for Jesus to live in your heart...you are giving Him the keys to your house!!

- and the deed to your home...you are giving him permission to demo what he wants to demolish... remodel what he wants to remodel...move in what he wants to add to your home...remove what he wants to take out of your home...he gets to replace your furniture with better furniture..
- He gets rid of our worthless idols replacing them with worth while things...
- He is going to go in every room...clean them up or clean them out...add to them subtract from them...
- He will go in the room of pain...the room where we hide our shame...our secret rooms...
- Basically he makes our home functional ...room by room...
- he makes us a home worth living in...and a home that is a blessing for others to enter....

- There is always the cost involved to expand a home or to remodel rebuild refurbish it...and of course there is the continuing work of keeping it up...repairing what breaks...and dealing with unexpected expenses...
- Today we have a great example of this in the Christmas story of Mary...and there are some truths we can learn...when we make room for Jesus

**Luke 1:26-38 (NLT)** <sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David.

<sup>28</sup> Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup> Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean.

- 1) In those times an **Engagement** was often made when the couple were only children... It was usually made by the parents or a professional match maker... Marriage was considered far too important to be left to the dictates of the human heart...immaturity or lack of judgment
- **The Pledge or betrothal**...was when the ratification of the engagement became official...the girl could call it off...but at this time they were considered in a legally binding marriage...although they would not be wed for one year...the year was spent in preparing for the marriage...home etc. but no living together or marital relations were allowed
- During this time a man and woman would be considered a husband and wife
- To break the pledge would require an official divorce...
- The third stage was the **"Marriage Proper"** which took place at the end of the year of betrothal or pledge

**2: she was confused and disturbed or baffled and anxious...it just doesn't make sense...she is 16 or so...what is going on? if you are confused and disturbed you will be fearful as were told in verse 30 she is..**

**The angel says to her..** <sup>30</sup> "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" <sup>34</sup> Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

- **How will I be pregnant and a virgin at the same time?...our how questions?**

<sup>35</sup> *The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God.*

- Remember Miracles are common place with God...we can think they are uncommon....**Mary’s pregnancy would be a miracle...from the Holy Spirit of God..His God DNA would be combined with His Human DNA...thus fully God and Fully man**
- *then he tells her this...*

<sup>36</sup> *What’s more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month.* <sup>37</sup> *For the word of God will never fail.*

- *Why would He bring this up? 1) she obviously did not know as Elizabeth had gone into seclusion 2) when God is moving around everything in the home you live in...you need human support and wisdom and help!*
- **God is going to fulfill...this great thing he is doing...He is word will not fail...**
- **but you most certainly have times of failure...you need help!**
- **then Mary replied...**

<sup>38</sup> *Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then the angel left her.*

- **Mary’s response to her future, Even though her whole life was just turned upside down,...and will continue to be...much more than she can now understand or handle.. was one of Acceptance and Resolve... I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true**
- **What could be better or harder than to parent the Son of God... that is the crazy thing about serving God...there is nothing better and there is nothing harder**

**God has always been comfortable with making people uncomfortable** When Christ enters a life, His presence does NOT make all your hardship go away. In fact, the change Christ brings often presents its own set of challenges!

*Luke 22:31 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. <sup>32</sup> But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail....."*

**lets put ourselves in her shoes for just a bit...Her life would be forever changed. She was carrying Heaven in her belly. The salvation of the world would be living in her womb!**

**Now before you get all spiritual on me and say "Wow, that would have been awesome to be Mary!"**

**Know this if you received and accepted Jesus you are also carrying God around in you? the salvation of God is also being revealed to the world as he lives in you!**

**so what Mary went through you and I will in our own lives go through will be somewhat similar yet different ...**

*let's walk through what you would have been going through and what Mary probably pondered.*

**A. It put their marriage on the line (imagine Joseph's response to Mary's claim!) . 1. The apparent infidelity 2. The absurd (even INSANE) explanation 3. It would put a severe emotional strain on them 4. It sacrificed BOTH of their reputations (imagine the "market gossip"!) 5. It put her future at risk (Her plans were sacrificed on the altar of GOD'S WILL!)**

*"This is not what I had planned...my wedding is ruined..."*

**But if this is God's will then I accept it even though I don't understand it...because He knows what He's doing.**

*It can feel so legit to keep God out of the room we did not ask for...but that is how the world responds...what speaks to them loudly is when we have God in the room with us...because it shows.... He has a plan...*

**\*\*\*Times of overwhelming change and challenge Are Opportunities to receive ministry ...Bring in Elizabeth**

**Elizabeth was seasoned in serving God while disappointed, challenged and overwhelmed.....so she is able to help others in their time of trouble**

- **Elizabeth was the perfect person on the human level to help Mary navigate the waters Mary must now navigate...**
- **Elizabeth is a seasoned veteran in the cost of serving God...She served God for many years bearing the burden of carrying shame and disgrace...  
God took away her disgrace...but she served him even when inside she felt disgraced...**
- **She learned that The right time to serve God is all the time...while living in the disappointment of being childless and suffering the shame that comes from being judged as less than...**
- **while learning that Timing of God's ways and His plans are up to him and in his control....and in the time we have use it well...**
- **all of this prepared her to minister to Mary**

**Luke 1:**<sup>39</sup> *A few days later Mary hurried to the hill country of Judea, to the town*<sup>40</sup> *where Zechariah lived. She entered the house and greeted Elizabeth.*<sup>41</sup> *At the sound of Mary's greeting, Elizabeth's child leaped within her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.*<sup>42</sup> *Elizabeth gave a glad cry and exclaimed to Mary, "God has blessed you above all women, and your child is blessed.*<sup>43</sup> *Why am I so honored, that the mother of my Lord should visit me?"*<sup>44</sup> *When I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy.*<sup>45</sup> *You are blessed because you believed that the Lord would do what he said."*<sup>24</sup> *After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in **seclusion**. (quiet reflection time)*<sup>25</sup> *"The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days (present time) he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people." (cleansing time)*

**God took away her disgrace...but she served him even when inside she was disgraced... she went to visit her cousin because she was experiencing something similar.** Elizabeth's pregnancy was also a miraculous event.

- **The right time to serve God is all the time...let him deal with every thing else...**

- **Timing is in God's hand time is what we deal with...This is your time use it well...and leave the timing of things up to God....**

*Mary visiting with Elizabeth became a source of encouragement to both of them. Elizabeth felt her baby leaping in her womb which indicated a significant moment. And that helped to confirm what Mary had indeed heard from the angel.*

- *Similar experiences can often unite even those who are very different from each other.*
- **When we can relate with someone in love, having had similar experiences, we can encourage them. We can become a point of healing for other people, which can ultimately lead them to God too.**

**God never wastes a hurt .....He Will Redeem All That He Allows**

*<sup>2 Cor 1:3</sup> All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. <sup>4</sup> He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.*

***So Marys responseafter being with Elizabeth...she is strengthened and can sing a song of Praise....***

***Luke 1:<sup>46</sup> Mary responded, "Oh, how my soul praises the Lord. <sup>47</sup> How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior! <sup>48</sup> For he took notice of his lowly servant girl, and from now on all generations will call me blessed. <sup>49</sup> For the Mighty One is holy, and he has done great things for me***

**Understand that God has a strategy and He does all things well. then you can turn Hardship into worship end**

end

**How does he do that? Well lets use the example given to us by scripture of a room...a room in a home...and there are many rooms in the home of God.**

**Just as there are many rooms in the home of you? by that I mean...we have the room of Joy, we have the room of Blessing...and often we have no problem with that room having a place for Jesus. But what about all the others rooms of our life...do we have a place prepared for Jesus? in the room of pain, of loss of disappointment , of rejection, of sickness? and the answer is no unless we have already made a place for Jesus previously in those rooms...and we welcome him into that place again, when we have to enter it again...**

**and that is what it is like for many at Christmas...once more to enter into that room....**

***The good news is, you aren't alone. In fact, the very first Christmas story was filled with disappointments. It seemed every person touched by the events of Jesus' birth had to deal with hardship and disappointment in their own way. Yet, on the other side of that difficulty, a great miracle happened.***

***The miracle happened because of this: **Make Room For God in whatever room we must enter...*****

***Hardship offers a chance to get closer to God. To learn about Him and to discover His plans for us and for the world.***

***King David is probably one of the greatest examples for all of us on dealing with difficulty and disappointment and how to make room for God in the midst of it all.***

**What's both interesting and encouraging to me** is that almost every time David expressed complaints toward God, he ended up praising God.

### **Psalm 13:1-6 (ESV)**

***1*** How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?

*How long will you hide your face from me?*

***2*** How long must I take counsel in my soul

*and have sorrow in my heart all the day?*

*How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?*

***3*** Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;

*light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,*

***4*** lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"

*lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.*

***5*** ***But I have trusted in your steadfast love;***

***my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.***

***6*** ***I will sing to the Lord,***

***because he has dealt bountifully with me.***

### **Psalm 42:9-11 (ESV)**

***9*** I say to God, my rock:

*"Why have you forgotten me?*

*Why do I go mourning*

*because of the oppression of the enemy?"*

***10*** *As with a deadly wound in my bones,*

*my adversaries taunt me,*

while they say to me all the day long,

“Where is your God?”

<sup>11</sup> Why are you cast down, O my soul,

and why are you in turmoil within me?

***Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,***

***my salvation and my God.***

So just like David and just like Mary, we must live in the reality and truth that Times of Difficulty and Disappointment are Opportunities to Worship...the other part of this first Christmas story is this:

### **Times of Difficulty and Disappointment Are Opportunities to Trust**

#### **Matthew 1:18-25 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ 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. <sup>19</sup> ***And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.*** <sup>20</sup> 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 as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). <sup>24</sup> ***When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup> but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.***

Joseph discovered his fiancé was pregnant. ***The only rational explanation*** was that she had dishonored their promise to be married and been with another man. But as Joseph would soon find out and what you and I need to understand about God is this:

**You can't put God in a box of your own rationality and natural way of looking at things. He is extraordinary and supernatural. Above and Beyond human thought and rationale...that's what makes Him God.**

*(Expound on this)*

Joseph had lived a godly, pure life up to that point. **From what we read from Scripture he was an honest and upright man.**

**Despite all that, news came along that seemed to derail all of his hard work.** It would have been natural to take the easy way out and break the engagement. That was his right. Or someone else might have just decided, since purity didn't seem like it was on the table anymore, he could just give up on the "righteous marriage" he had dreamt about.

This is a huge point too: **Even when the angel appeared to Joseph and told him this was God's plan, it didn't change the reality of what those outside the situation would think.**

**All progress in his life seemed lost. Yet he chose to trust.** Joseph might have felt like all his progress toward a godly marriage was gone. From an outsider's perspective, it probably looked this way...But it wasn't.

We need to trust God's plan for our life. If we've bought into outside pressure of what our lives are supposed to look like, we have to stop doing that. **We can choose to submit our lives to God's plan and fully trust in a Sovereign God who knows what He is doing.**

**Then, even if it feels like we're losing progress, we can trust that God is moving us forward regardless of appearances.**

So times of difficulty and disappointment can be opportunities to worship and to trust...and finally today what we see through this first Christmas story is this:

T. D. Jakes, was asked to preach on CBS's *Face the Nation*, and he responded with a simple sermon that went like this: ***“When you’re born, you’re like a key with no cuts in it. As you go through life, each wound, failure, hurt . . . cuts into that strip of metal. And one day there is a clear click—your pain has formed the key that slips into the lock and opens your future”***

It has been said and it is worthy of repeating... ***“Never trust a leader who doesn’t walk with a limp”***

***Without question, Jesus “walked with a limp.”*** Beaten and bruised, scourged and crucified, even the resurrected body of our Lord bore the marks of His earthly torture (John 20:27).

Since God allowed Jesus to endure a crown of thorns, why should we expect a crown of roses?

## **2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (ESV)**

***16*** So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ***17*** For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ***18*** as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

***Sometimes it’s only in the “dark night of the soul” that we turn to the light of Jesus Christ.***

Personal Confession: My tendency is to try to get out of a painful situation before I get what God might be trying to teach me from that painful situation. This is why Paul reminded Timothy, “You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:3).

***When in pain, some people are prone to walk around with a chip on their shoulder looking to pick a fight. Others will run and hide at the first sign of trouble. One seeks pain. The other avoids it.***

Both are illegitimate paths to pain management. *The first option lets pain consume you, and the second option lets the fear of pain destroy you.*

A better option is this (But oh so hard): *to walk the path of Christ and allow the journey of peaks and valleys, sunny days and downpours shape us into conformity with Christ.*

So how do I exercise faith in those moments of difficulty and disappointment in life that seem just too hard to bear?

### Trust God That He Will Redeem All That He Allows

Paul made it very clear in all of his writings to the churches that the believer's pursuit of God doesn't stop with salvation; it continues as each of us is sanctified—made holy—*as we persist in following Him*. Paul, in his encouragement to the Christians in Rome said this...

### Romans 8:18, 26-28,31-32, 35, 37-39 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup>For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

<sup>26</sup>Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup>And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup>And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

<sup>31</sup>What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

<sup>35</sup>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Close

**often time we enter it unexpectedly. Though perhaps we have been there before.**