

## THE DANGER OF SHUTTING JESUS OUT

Luke 2:7; John 1:11-12

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** It's not hard to be critical of the innkeeper in Bethlehem because he turned away Joseph and Mary and they were forced to find shelter in a stable. Then there are some who are sympathetic with the innkeeper because he didn't get the credit/privilege of providing a place for the birth of the Christ child. *"...There was no room for them in the inn..."*

Ever give the thought that the innkeeper hasn't been the only one who didn't have room for Christ? In *John 1:11* he states that *"...Christ came to His own, and His own received Him not..."*

- Jesus' own people, the Jews, rejected Him as the Messiah and by doing that, they excluded themselves from the great redemptive activity of God and therefore the Church became the chosen means by which God would make His love and will known to the world.
- *Revelation 2-3* - describes seven Churches representing centuries of Churches including our own time with a sad picture of Jesus standing on the outside of a door and knocking and asking to be let in.
- Have YOU shut Jesus Christ out of your life? Have YOU shut Jesus Christ out of your Church? It happens and so quietly that it isn't even noticed.

### I. JESUS CAN BE SHUT OUT BY A LACK OF FAITH IN HIS PROMISES

1. *"...Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.." "...For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them..." (Matthew 28:20; 18:20)*
2. When you come to the house of God for prayer, praise and message, do you come expecting to experience and to respond to the living Jesus Christ?
  - If you do not come expecting Him, then you will probably miss Him.
  - By being preoccupied with your own thoughts, affairs, you will miss having an experience with Him, the one who conquered death and the grave.

### II. JESUS CAN BE SHUT OUT BY DEVELOPING A CRITICAL SPIRIT TOWARD OTHERS

1. Christian fellowship is priceless. Many people prefer to attend a small church where they can know and be known by all who attend - they don't like "big" churches.
2. We can miss God however, if or primary reason for attending worship is to meet people and visit.
  - Knowing everyone does indeed make one feel comfortable but if we develop a negative/critical attitude toward the weaknesses and shortcomings of others to dominate our thoughts, then we won't have much of a worship experience.
3. The moment we begin to think in a negative, critical way about others, we cease to worship and isolate ourselves from the Lord Jesus who wants to fellowship with us.

### **III. JESUS CAN BE SHUT OUT BY IRREVERENCE**

1. Focusing the mind and heart on the Lord and His will for our lives is essential for worship.
  - It is impossible to whisper to others and at the same time try to listen to what the Lord might be trying to say to us.
2. Worship, whether in a large congregation or small congregation is a very private, personal thing.
  - Only as we focus on reverence, and have a trusting, responsive heart can we ever expect to enter the throne room of God or can we expect that Jesus Christ will come into our heart with all of His fullness.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. During this Christmas season, let each of us try our very best to make certain that we have allowed Jesus Christ to have the place in our lives that rightly belongs to Him.
2. Let's not follow in the footsteps of the innkeeper who had no room for Jesus.