The Inn Keeper’s Dilemma

**Read:** Luke 2:1-7

**Text:** Luke 2:7b “…there was no room for them in the inn.”

**Introduction:** Joseph & Mary had to make an unplanned trip. Joseph & Mary had to pay some unexpected bills. Joseph & Mary stayed in an unexpected place. Joseph & Mary had some unexpected guests. In the Christmas story there are several figures that you and I might like to be. Mary and Joseph are good choices. I think that I would like to be one of the wise men. There is a good ring to that title; don’t you think? Have you ever wondered how it might be to be the inn keeper? How would you like to be the one who tells the pre-born Christ that you have no room for Him? I’d like to look closer at this story. Our text says “…there was no room for them in the inn.” It doesn’t say that there was no room in the inn. If there had actually been no room at all in the inn then it would be easy to put out a: “no vacancy” sign. There is a qualifier in the phrase and the qualifier is the words: “for them.”

**I. Perhaps they didn’t have enough money:** Caesar Augustus had ordered everyone to go back to their family’s home place to pay taxes and suddenly the inn had a long line at the front door. The innkeeper might have seen an opportunity to make extra money and raised his price above the ability of Joseph to pay. They must have intended to stay at the inn or they would not have known that there was not a room available. Joseph was there to pay his taxes and if he paid too much for lodging, he may not be able to pay his taxes.

**II. Perhaps the inn was there for the Romans only:** Maybe it was simple racism and no Jews, at all, were allowed at the inn. (Andy & Audrey & IHOP).

**III. Perhaps it was Mary’s medical condition that caused the rejection:** What if they didn’t want their inn to become a birthing room and subsequently become a nursery for a screaming kid? They had their other guests to think of didn’t they?

**IV. Perhaps there was a more notable person expected at the inn.** Maybe Joseph and Mary were not as distinguished or exquisite as the expected guest.

**Conclude:** Regardless of the reason the innkeeper refused to be inconvenienced on that sacred night. No matter what it costs us we must make room for Jesus in our crowded lives (rich young ruler). No matter who it upsets we must make room for Jesus in our family (coach/evangelist & lost wife). No matter who is inconvenienced we must make room for Jesus in our world (Muslim/Jewish converts). *Are you with the inn crowd or are you with the stable few?*