

“SLOW OBEDIENCE  
IS STILL  
DISOBEDIENCE!”

# BORN IN A CLOSED SEASON!

LUKE 2:6-7

DR. DARRYL T. CANADY  
RODMAN STREET CHURCH  
12.21.25

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# **BORN IN A CLOSED SEASON!**

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## **Title: Born in a Closed Season: Making Room for Jesus**

**Sermon Summary:** This powerful Christmas sermon explores the birth of Jesus Christ in circumstances of closure and limitation, emphasizing that closed doors do not cancel God's destiny or timing. The pastor draws from Luke 2:6-7 to illustrate how Jesus was born when there was "no room in the inn," demonstrating that God's purposes prevail regardless of external circumstances.

We often think that God only moves when conditions are perfect, when doors swing wide open, and when everything aligns just right. But the Christmas story shatters that assumption. Jesus was born in a closed season—when the city was crowded, the inns were full, and there was no room for Him. When we face tight seasons, budget impasses, and overwhelming circumstances that mirror our own 2025 reality, we need to remember that God's promises still come to pass. The real question isn't whether Jesus can come in—it's whether we've made room for Him.

The message challenges believers to make room for Christ in their lives through four dimensions: the depth of devotion, the height of obedience, the length of sacrifice, and the width of faith. The sermon emphasizes that

closed seasons don't stop God's timing and that believers must maintain faithfulness even when circumstances are difficult, or doors appear shut.

Making room happens in four dimensions: the depth of our devotion, where we open our hearts internally even when external doors slam shut; the height of our obedience, where we move on God's command without waiting for clarity or comfort; the length of our sacrifice, where we stay faithful over time regardless of cost; and the width of our faith, where we trust who God is rather than obsessing over why things happen. Mary and Joseph didn't get better accommodations or advance notice—they got an assignment. And because they obeyed, glory showed up in a manger.

What has taken up the room in our lives that really belongs to God? Deep devotion chooses commitment over convenience, and true faith says 'even if' instead of 'what if.' We may not control the season, but we control our surrender.

## **CHAPTERS:**

### **Chapter 1: Making Room in the Depth of Our Devotion**

We explore how Jesus was born when every door was closed, teaching us that closed doors don't cancel God's destiny and that we must make room for Him in the depth of our devotion.

### **Chapter 2: Making Room in the Height of Our Obedience**

We learn that obedience is faith in motion, positioning us for God's glory even when circumstances are uncomfortable and the path ahead is unclear.

## **Chapter 3: Making Room in the Length of Our Sacrifice**

We discover that sacrifice isn't just a moment but a sustained commitment, proven not by what we give once but by what we keep giving over time.

## **Chapter 4: Making Room in the Width of Our Faith**

We understand that faith expands when we stop asking why and start trusting who, believing that God is bigger than our fears and circumstances.

### **Key Points:**

- Jesus was born in a closed season to show that closed doors do not cancel God's destiny
- Making room for Jesus starts in the heart, not in external circumstances
- Deep devotion chooses commitment over convenience and makes God a priority rather than an option
- Obedience is faith in motion - it moves when God says move, even without clarity or comfort
- True sacrifice is sustained over time, not just a momentary act
- The length of sacrifice is measured by what it costs you over time and your willingness to stay faithful
- Faith expands when we stop asking "why" and start trusting "who" - focusing on God rather than explanations
- God's power, grace, and promises are still sufficient for every situation we face
- Closed seasons don't cancel obedience; they demand it

## **Scripture Reference:**

- Luke 2:6-7 (Primary text): "While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born. And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son, and she wrapped him in clothes and placed him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn."

## **Stories:**

- The three Hebrew boys (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) who refused to bow to the king and maintained their devotion even facing the fiery furnace
- Reference to "The Color Purple" and the character Celie's perseverance through hardship, declaring "I'm still here"
- Personal testimony about the LIFE Male STEAM Academy - working for six years planning to open in 2020, delayed by the pandemic to 2021, now occupying 40,000 square feet at Penn Center East, opening in year 7, in building 7, with the address 777, and this year adding the 7<sup>th</sup> floor
- The pastor's daughter Essence providing perspective during the school's delay, comparing it to the postponement of the Olympics
- Mary and Joseph's obedience in traveling to Bethlehem for the census despite Mary being pregnant, arriving to find no room in the inn
- Personal testimony about receiving a good doctor's report on Friday, emphasizing that prayer changed the doctor's report rather than the report changing their prayers

## Scripture References from the Sermon

### Directly Cited or Read:

1. **Luke 2:6-7** - The primary text about Jesus' birth in the manger (read and discussed extensively)

### Mentioned or Alluded to:

2. **Proverbs 23:7** - "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"
3. **Matthew 6:33** - "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you"
4. **Hebrews 13:5** - God's promise to never leave or forsake us
5. **Daniel 3** - The three Hebrew boys (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) refusing to bow down
6. **John 10:10** - Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly

### Relevant Verses Aligned with Main Themes:

#### Theme: Making Room for Jesus

- **Revelation 3:20** - "Behold, I stand at the door and knock"
- **Romans 12:1-2** - Present your bodies as living sacrifices

## **Theme: Obedience in Difficult Seasons**

- **1 Samuel 15:22** - "To obey is better than sacrifice"
- **James 1:22** - "Be doers of the word, not hearers only"

## **Theme: Faith and Trust**

- **Proverbs 3:5-6** - "Trust in the Lord with all your heart"
- **Hebrews 11:1** - "Faith is the substance of things hoped for"
- **2 Corinthians 5:7** - "We walk by faith, not by sight"

## **Theme: God's Sufficiency**

- **2 Corinthians 12:9** - "My grace is sufficient for you"
- **Philippians 4:19** - "My God shall supply all your needs"

## **Theme: Sacrifice and Commitment**

- **Luke 9:23** - "Take up your cross daily and follow me"
- **Romans 12:1** - Living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God

## **QUOTES:**

1. Jesus was born in a closed season to tell us that closed doors does not cancel God's destiny. Tight seasons don't stop the timing. An inconvenience does not intimidate our God.

2. The problem was not that Jesus couldn't come in. The problem was that everything else was already in the way.
3. Shallow devotion wants convenience. But deep devotion chooses commitment.
4. Obedience does not wait for clarity, it moves on command. Disobedience blocks the flow that God wants to place in your life. Obedience keeps the line open.
5. Sacrifice isn't proven by what you give once. It's proven by what you keep on giving.
6. Faith doesn't always answer questions, but faith would give you confidence that no matter what it looks like, no matter what it sounds like, if God said do it, Baby, go on and do it.
7. There has never been a situation in your life that has ever caught God by surprise. And God is able to take care of you.

## **BORN IN A CLOSED SEASON!**

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**5-Day Devotional: Making Room for God in Every Season**

**Day 1: The Depth of Our Devotion**

**Reading: Luke 2:1-7**

**Devotional:** Jesus entered the world during a closed season—when doors were shut and hearts were unavailable. The inn had space, but no one made Jesus a priority. Today, examine your heart: Have you made room for God, or is He crowded out by busyness, worry, and lesser priorities? Devotion isn't about proximity to Jesus; it's about priority. Deep devotion doesn't wait for convenient seasons—it chooses commitment over comfort. What needs to be removed from your life so God can have first place? Stop negotiating your obedience and postponing your praise. Make room for Him today, not when life slows down, but right now in the midst of your chaos.

**Reflection Question:** What is taking up room in your heart that belongs to God?

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## Day 2: The Height of Our Obedience

### Reading: Genesis 22:1-14

**Devotional:** Mary and Joseph were in the right place at the right time because they obeyed God. Obedience doesn't wait for clarity—it moves on command. Closed seasons don't cancel your assignment; they demand your obedience. Like Abraham ascending Mount Moriah, obedience is faith with legs. It means releasing control, comfort, and certainty. God doesn't always give advance notice or backup plans—He gives assignments. When you obey on earth, heaven responds. Slow obedience is still disobedience. What has God told you to do that you keep praying about instead of walking into? The next step is open—God is waiting for you to move.

**Reflection Question:** What step of obedience have you been postponing?

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### **Day 3: The Length of Our Sacrifice**

#### **Reading: Luke 9:23-25**

**Devotional:** Sacrifice isn't a moment—it's a lifestyle. Mary didn't sacrifice for one night; she carried the weight of God's promise through uncertainty, danger, and misunderstanding. True sacrifice costs you comfort, convenience, and control over time. Nobody applauded Mary's discomfort or Joseph's faithfulness, but heaven took note. Sacrifice means staying where God placed you even when you'd rather be somewhere else. It means choosing purpose over preference. God rarely tells you how long, but He asks if you're willing to stay faithful. As long as it takes—that's the length of sacrifice. What are you willing to endure for God's purpose in your life?

**Reflection Question:** Where is God asking you to remain faithful even when it's uncomfortable?

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### **Day 4: The Width of Our Faith**

#### **Reading: Hebrews 11:1-6, 8-12**

**Devotional:** Mary saw a closed door, a manger, and uncertainty—but faith helped her see promise, purpose, and plan. Faith expands when you stop asking "why" and start trusting "who." Closed seasons shrink your vision, but faith widens it by remembering who called you and who walks

with you. Fear says "what if?" but faith says "even if." Faith doesn't wait for open doors; it walks in believing God is already on the other side. God is bigger than your circumstances, working behind the scenes while you only see what's in front of you. Even when everything looks closed, God can do something wide, wonderful, and unexpected in your life.

**Reflection Question:** Where do you need to shift from "what if" to "even if" faith?

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## Day 5: God's Sufficiency in Every Season

### Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

**Devotional:** There has never been a battle God couldn't win, a burden He couldn't lift, or a problem He couldn't solve. Your hunger isn't too large for God to satisfy. Your burdens aren't too heavy for Him to carry. God's power is sufficient to keep you, His grace is sufficient to forgive you, His blood is sufficient to cleanse you. When you feel overwhelmed, remember there has never been a circumstance that caught God by surprise. He is still God, still on the throne, still making ways where there seem to be none. Jesus was born in a closed season to prove that closed doors don't cancel God's destiny. What was closed then is open for you now. Trust His sufficiency today.

**Reflection Question:** In what area of your life do you need to trust God's sufficiency more fully?

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**Closing Prayer:** Lord God, thank You for being sufficient in every season of my life. Help me make room for You in the depth of my devotion, the height of my obedience, the length of my sacrifice, and the width of my faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **BORN IN A CLOSED SEASON!**

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**Small Group Discussion Guide**

**"Born in a Closed Season"**

**Based on Luke 2:6-7**

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### **Opening Prayer**

Begin your group time by asking God to open hearts and minds to receive His Word and apply it to your lives, even in closed seasons.

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### **Ice Breaker**

Share a time when a "closed door" in your life turned out to be a blessing in disguise. How did you see God working through that situation?

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## Key Scripture

**Luke 2:6-7** - "While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

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## Main Points Recap

### 1. The Depth of Our Devotion

Jesus was born when doors were closed, teaching us that closed doors don't cancel God's destiny.

### 2. The Height of Our Obedience

Mary and Joseph obeyed God despite uncomfortable circumstances, showing that obedience is faith with legs.

### 3. The Length of Our Sacrifice

True sacrifice isn't measured by one moment but by sustained faithfulness over time.

### 4. The Width of Our Faith

Faith expands when we stop asking "why" and start trusting "who" - remembering God is bigger than our circumstances.

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## Discussion Questions

### Section 1: Making Room for Jesus

1. **Personal Inventory:** The sermon asks, "What has God told you to do that you keep postponing?" How would you answer this question honestly?
2. **Crowded Lives:** What are the "guests" currently occupying room in your life that should belong to God? (Examples: worry, ambition, entertainment, relationships, etc.)
3. **Shallow vs. Deep Devotion:** The pastor said, "Shallow devotion wants convenience, but deep devotion chooses commitment." Where do you see yourself on this spectrum right now? What would help you move toward deeper devotion?

### Section 2: Obedience in Closed Seasons

4. **Delayed Obedience:** Discuss the statement: "Slow obedience is still disobedience." Do you agree or disagree? Why? Share an example from your life.
5. **Obedience Without Clarity:** Mary and Joseph didn't have a backup plan or advance notice—just an assignment. When has God asked you to obey without having all the answers? How did you respond?
6. **Faith with Legs:** What does "obedience is faith with legs" mean practically in your current situation? What would it look like to put legs on your faith this week?

## Section 3: The Cost of Following Jesus

7. **Sustained Sacrifice:** The sermon emphasizes that sacrifice isn't a one-time event but an ongoing commitment. What sacrifices has following Jesus required of you over the long haul?
8. **Choosing Purpose Over Preference:** Share about a time when you had to stay where God placed you even though you wanted to be somewhere else. What did you learn?
9. **"Even If" Faith:** The three Hebrew boys said, "Even if He doesn't deliver us, we still won't bow down." What situation in your life requires this kind of "even if" faith right now?

## Section 4: Expanding Your Faith

10. **Fear vs. Faith:** The pastor contrasted "What if?" (fear) with "Even if" (faith). Which phrase better describes your current mindset? What would help you shift toward faith?
11. **God's Sufficiency:** The sermon lists many things God is sufficient for (keeping you, forgiving you, cleansing you, etc.). Which aspect of God's sufficiency do you need to embrace more fully right now?

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### Key Takeaways

- ✓ Closed doors don't cancel God's destiny - Jesus came anyway, despite no room in the inn
- ✓ Devotion is about priority, not proximity - Make room in your heart first

- ✓ Obedience doesn't wait for clarity - Move when God says move
  - ✓ Sacrifice is proven over time - Keep giving, keep trusting, keep obeying
  - ✓ Faith says "even if," not "what if" - Trust who God is, not just what you see
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## **Practical Applications**

### **This Week's Challenge (Choose One or More):**

#### **DEPTH - Create space for God daily**

- Remove one distraction this week that crowds out time with God
- Establish a non-negotiable daily devotion time (even 10 minutes)
- Ask: "What needs to be removed for God to have first place?"

#### **HEIGHT - Take one step of obedience**

- Identify one thing God has been telling you to do—and do it this week
- Stop praying about something you already know God wants you to do
- Move from "I feel Him" to "I trust Him" in a specific area

#### **LENGTH - Commit to sustained faithfulness**

- Identify one area where you've been tempted to quit—recommit to it
- Choose to stay where God has placed you, even if you'd rather be elsewhere

- Practice "as long as it takes" faith in a current trial

## **WIDTH - Expand your faith perspective**

- Replace one "what if" fear with an "even if" faith declaration
  - Memorize and speak God's promises over your closed season
  - Remind yourself daily: "God is bigger than what I'm going through"
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## **Group Activity: "Making Room" Exercise**

### **Materials needed: Paper, pens**

1. Draw a simple floor plan of an "inn" (your heart/life)
  2. Label the rooms with what currently occupies your time, energy, and focus
  3. Mark which room(s) God currently occupies
  4. Discuss: What needs to be removed or reduced to give God more room?
  5. Pray over your floor plans, asking God to help you make the necessary changes
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## **Prayer Focus**

### **Pray for each other in these areas:**

- For those facing "closed seasons" - that they would see God's purpose in the waiting
- For deeper devotion - that God would have first place in every heart
- For courage to obey - especially when the path isn't clear

- For sustained faithfulness - to not quit when the journey gets long
- For expanded faith - to trust God's sufficiency in every circumstance

Specific Prayer Needs: (Allow time for group members to share)

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## Closing Reflection

**Quote to Remember:** "If Jesus was born in a closed season, then closed doors don't cancel God's destiny. Tight seasons don't stop the timing. Inconvenience doesn't intimidate our God."

**Final Question:** What is one specific way you will make room for Jesus this Christmas season?

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## For Next Week

- Read Luke 2:8-20 (the rest of the Christmas story)
  - Journal about how you made room for Jesus this week
  - Be prepared to share one testimony of God's faithfulness in your "closed season"
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## Additional Resources

- **Memorize: Proverbs 3:5-6** - "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does the concept of Jesus being born in a closed season challenge our understanding of God's timing and our expectations for how He should work in our lives?
2. What areas of your life have you allowed to take up room that really belongs to God, and what would it look like to create space for Him there?
3. The sermon distinguishes between shallow devotion that seeks convenience and deep devotion that chooses commitment. Which type of devotion characterizes your current relationship with God?
4. How does the difference between delayed obedience and immediate obedience reveal the true depth of our trust in God?
5. Mary and Joseph obeyed God without applause or explanation. In what ways do we sometimes make our obedience conditional on receiving recognition or understanding?
6. The pastor emphasizes that sacrifice is not a one-time act but sustained faithfulness over time. What sacrifices has God called you to maintain even when the season stays difficult?
7. How does fear asking “what if” differ from faith saying “even if”, and which perspective currently dominates your approach to challenges?
8. The sermon states that closed doors do not cancel God's destiny. What closed doors in your life might actually be redirecting you toward God's greater purpose?
9. In what ways do we treat God as an elective rather than a required course in our lives, and what needs to change for Him to have first place?
10. How does understanding that God works both in your life and beyond your life simultaneously expand your faith when you cannot see what He is doing behind the scenes?