



New Life Riders

Motorcyclists Serving God and Community

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Dear Friends,

During Advent our calendars frequently get overloaded with many wonderful activities and service projects. It is so easy to become overwhelmed with all the busyness, stress and crowds that accompany the weeks preceding Christmas. Especially at this time of year, I know I need to be intentional about making extra room on my schedule and in my heart to be alone with Jesus.

I would suspect that life was no different two thousand years ago. People were stressed over taxes and all the traffic associated with traveling back to their hometowns in order to pay them. Bethlehem was crowded as Mary and Joseph arrived. Although it is conjecture, Mary is usually visualized riding a donkey with Joseph walking beside her. "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Luke 2:7. We have no idea how many places Mary and Joseph stopped along the road as they sought shelter or how many times they were told, "We have no room at the inn!"

A number of years ago, my wife, Kathy, and I experienced a series of "no vacancy" signs and we caught a diminutive glimpse of how Mary and Joseph must have felt with no place to stay.

Kathy and I were on our way to a motorcycle rally/retreat in Thorold, Ontario, Canada. We left home in Philadelphia on Friday night after work, thinking we would ride for a few hours and then find a place to stay. Foolishly, we had not made reservations. As we stopped at each hotel along the way, we were met with, "Sorry, no room!" We were beginning to think perhaps it was our appearance (leather attire) and our mode of transportation (a motorcycle) that caused the "no room" response. This was the early eighties; bikers weren't as readily received as they are today. Seeing a roadside rest and realizing both of us were getting tired, Kathy suggested that I sleep on the picnic table, telling me that she would waken me if she saw anything unusual. However, I, thinking the idea wasn't very wise, decided to press on and stop at the next filling station. There, we struck up a conversation with a young man who told us his dad, the headmaster of a Christian Academy somewhere in New England, was horrified when he started riding a motorcycle. He had never heard of any Christian biking organizations, but felt sure his father would have a different opinion of his riding once he read the literature we had given him. We felt the Lord wanted us to meet this young man and once we were back on the road, we were positive that we would find a vacancy. However, still no room!

The idea of the picnic table was starting to look good! We finally found a place to stay in Binghamton, New York at two o'clock in the morning! The friendly hotel clerk from South Africa welcomed us with the warmest smile. He told us to park our bike right at the front door where he, like the shepherds, "would keep watch by night."

No room for us to stay as we traveled was somewhat of an inconvenience of our own making and certainly not a tragedy. No room at the inn for the Babe of Bethlehem was a serious situation. However, no room in the heart for the Christ of Calvary is quite another story entirely. As I reflected on making more room for Jesus, I was reminded of a hymn written by Emily Elliott in 1864:

*"Thou didst leave Thy home and Thy Kingly crown,
when Thou camest to earth for me,
But in Bethlehem's home there was found no room,
for Thy Holy Nativity.*

O Come to my heart Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for Thee."

Please pray with me:

Dear Jesus, as you approach our hearts seeking hospitality during this beautiful season, may we open its door to you in wonder and may we open it to those around us with compassion. Amen.

I wish you a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year as we all rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of our salvation!

As always, I look forward to seeing you down the road. Love Jesus, be thankful and keep doing the good stuff.

*Riding with Jesus,
Bob Dillon
Serving God and Community
www.newliferiders.com*



God bless America

Please watch for my emails, prayer requests and updates

***Jesus said, "Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce
the Message of God's good news to one and all."***

Mark 16:15 (The Message)