

ChristMYTH BUSTERS: The Innkeeper

1. MYTH: There was an _____.

TRUTH: They wasn't an _____ because there wasn't an _____.

APP: We can't _____ at _____.

2. MYTH: A _____ world _____ Jesus to the _____.

TRUTH: A _____ world _____ Jesus what they _____.

APP: Make _____ for _____.

Today, in week 2 of our ChristMYTH BUSTERS series, I need some help
I need 3 people who love Sweet Sixteen donuts to eat some while I teach. I need you to stuff yourselves full of sweet, powdery goodness.

While they're doing that, let's look at one of the more famous characters of the Christmas story, and see if we can bust some myths that have grown over the years.

Today, let's examine the Innkeeper...

1. MYTH: There was an innkeeper

TRUTH: They wasn't an innkeeper because there wasn't an inn

- This Christmas season - like all previous ones - will have no end of sermons and plays built around a man saying there's no room in the inn.
- The stories are heartwarming and sometimes hilarious
 - a. One boy wanted to play Joseph because he liked the girl playing Mary
 - b. Instead he was given the role of the innkeeper
 - c. When the Holy Couple knocked on his door, he elbowed Joseph aside, grabbed Mary's wrist and pulled her inside
 - d. "You can come in," he said, "but there's no room for you."
 - e. And he slammed the door in Joseph's face.
- Like I said, hilarious. But none of them are true.
- So, how did the innkeeper get into the Christmas story?
- It's all based on Luke 2:7, which says that there was no room in the inn
 - a. For years, people have read that word "inn" and assumed, because Mary and Joseph were weary travelers, that it must have been a Holiday Inn Express
 - b. Only problem is that there was a Greek word for that kind of inn, and Luke used it in 10:34. The word is "pandocheion" and it means a public lodging-place.
 - c. That's why the parable of the Good Samaritan actually mention an innkeeper in v. 35
 - d. But in Luke 2, the same author uses a different word
 - e. Here the word is "kataluma" and it refers simply to a guest room in a private home
 - f. In fact, Luke uses the same word in Luke 22:11 to describe a guest room the Lord used for the last supper
 - g. So the truth is that there wasn't an innkeeper in the Christmas story because there wasn't an inn
- So, what's the point? How do we apply this truth to our lives today?
- Let me suggest something to think about. Because there wasn't a jerk for an innkeeper who said "no" to Mary and Joseph...

APP: We can't point at someone else.

- a. If we're honest, having an innkeeper in the story has been good for us
- b. It keeps the attention off of us, and let's us play hypothetical games where we convince ourselves that we would never have done what he did
- c. Jeremiah 17:9 and Romans 3:10-12 don't offer us a lot of confidence that we would have been much different than the mythical scapegoat we've created
- d. And so, with the mean innkeeper out of the way, we're forced to start examining our hearts, and asking ourselves questions about what we would have really done - and what we really are doing - with Jesus

2. MYTH: A cold world shoved Jesus to the back.

TRUTH: A crowded world showed Jesus what they had.

- a. So, where was this guest room, anyway?
- b. Well, since they were traveling to Joseph's hometown, they had more than likely gone to a family member's home, and arriving late after everyone else, the guest room would have been taken already
- c. Since Mary was so close to giving birth, they would have put her in the stable, which was typically a room at the back of the house where the animals were kept
- d. Sometimes, it was actually a cave that the house was attached to
- e. Given all the laws about uncleanliness (see the whole book of Leviticus!), it would make sense to put here in a room that was already messy, especially since - according to verse 8 - the flocks were most likely out at the time
- f. So the question is: what kind of family looks at a "great with child" daughter-in-law and doesn't give up the guest room but instead puts her in the barn?
- g. A crowded one.
- h. [FAMILY PICTURE VIDEO]
- i. Before we start hating on the family for sticking Mary in the stable, let's state the obvious: a very crowded family gave Mary (and Jesus) what they had. The application for us today is hauntingly simple:

APP: Make room for Jesus.

- a. So often we give nothing because we feel we can't give everything
- b. "We can't give you the best room, so we'll give you no room."
- c. Instead, they made room for Jesus by giving what they had, and eventually the King Who was born in the little room they made available took over.
- d. His presence changed that house, that town, and eventually our world!
- e. Amazing things happen when we give what we can
 - i. A boy with a little bread and a few fish fed thousands (John 6)
 - ii. 2 disciples with no money healed a lifelong beggar (Acts 3)
- f. The question is, do you want Jesus enough to make room for Him?
- g. We've had these people eating donuts the whole time I've been teaching, and my guess is they're full, right?
- h. Ever heard the expression "there's always room for Jell-O?" We're gonna wrap today up by proving whether or not that's true or a myth.
 - i. I've got \$5 for each of you if you can get down a bowl of Jell-O on top of the donuts
 - j. Remember, we always make room for what we want, and if you want Jesus to take over your life, it starts by making room for Him now
 - k. Once you've allowed Him in, He can take care of the rest