

Year of Prayer

Make Room, Come Aside, Come Together

In chapter 25 of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus provides three compelling pictures that relate to the end of time. His words in respect to the final judgement confronted his listeners and also confront us with what it means to be counted righteous. Those who feed the hungry, satisfy the needs of the thirsty and give hospitality to the stranger were seen to have done this as if to Christ himself.

It takes both attentiveness and effort to respond in the way that Christ describes. The busyness of life and the relentless pursuit of simply keeping on top of things often consumes all we have to give in time, resources and energy. The effort of accommodating yet another something can simply seem too hard. Indeed it was like that when Christ was born—remember how most of the world was preoccupied with other things, and missed the magnificence of the whole event?

That's why the first call of the 2021 Year of Prayer is to 'Make Room'. Will we host Jesus who comes to us perpetually in the form of others who seek solace and help? Will we be open to the disruption of our own plans, so as to make room for welcoming Christ's presence and sit at his feet as Mary did? (Luke 10:38–42)

It could be argued that the pace of life in Jesus' time was markedly different than today. The question is whether the frenetic pace is serving us well deep in our souls. We are constantly presented with choices, and in choosing many good things we actually miss out on the best.

As with the church at Laodicea, Christ says: 'Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me' (Revelation 3:20).

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