

Seeing Ourselves Through A Christmas Carol

All of us are familiar with the character of Ebenezer Scrooge depicted in Charles Dickens famous novel, A Christmas Carol. Mr. Scrooge is completely self-absorbed and spurns those that are poor and less fortunate. Scrooge is visited by three spirits: the spirit of Christmas past, the spirit of Christmas present and the spirit of Christmas future. His dramatic journey brings about his repentance. He becomes aware of his past coldness and cruelty and is moved to be more generous and benevolent toward those he had been mistreating in the past. Through a profound transformation, Ebenezer Scrooge learned how **to live for others and not only for himself**. He had allowed the light of God to enter into his soul and change him into a new man filled with joy and understanding the value of a person. This lesson is started by the ghost of Scrooge's former business partner, Jacob Marley. He explains to Scrooge referring to the shackles, lock, keys, ledgers and deeds that hang on him quite profoundly, "I wear the chain I forged in life, I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it." Scrooge replied by saying, "But you were always a good man of business, Jacob." The ghost of Jacob cried out, "Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence were all my business." This conversation between man and specter is a shining example of the unity of humanity and what makes us accountable to each other and to God. We can't help but see in this ghostly dialogue, the golden rule: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and 'Love your neighbor as yourself' (Luke 10:27). Mankind matters and so do the personal relationships that emerge. How we treat one another matters. As the story progresses, Ebenezer feels sorrow and remorse for having treated people badly. In short, he humbles himself. The same thing happens to us, when we see ourselves for who we really are. We are able and willing to allow God to help us. Whether it is the big decision to follow God or the little day-to-day decisions to live more like Jesus, change needs to be the hallmark of our lives. But He forces no one to choose His ways. Instead, He lets us decide. We all have wonderful memories of how we have celebrated Christmas in the past. It is my most humble wish that you and your family on this Christmas will relive those memories and create magnificent new ones for the Christmases to come. -*Sherrie Clutts DRE*