



The best stories are about redemption. The message of Christmas reminds us that every story can end better than it starts. This series uses Charles Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol* as a platform to rehear the greatest redemption story of all.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Begin by asking everyone to share what their favorite Christmas movie is and have them elaborate on why they resonate with it so much. How do some of these movies help us appreciate the greatest story of all?

2 ABOUT THE STORY... "Can I get past my past?" Redemption is not an easy journey. It often requires that we go backward before we can go forward. Why is that true? Share some examples of how the past can either be a wonderful classroom or a terrible prison.

3 Read Luke 2:8-12. Why do you think God chose to announce the birth of His Son to shepherds, some of the lowliest members of society?

4 CHRISTMAS IS >... my past sins. Rick reminded us that everybody could use a few "do-overs." If we did not need a Savior, God would not have gone to such trouble to send one. **Read Matthew 1:21.** How is Jesus the perfect answer for every imperfect moment in your life (see **Psalm 130:3-4** and **103:12**)?

5 CHRISTMAS IS >... my past chains. God does not bring up the past, but He will open up the possibility of a new future. Christmas announces the delivery of a deliverer. **Read Romans 8:1-2** and **6:10-11.** What encouragement do these verses give you regarding

Jesus's power to not only erase sin's record but to eradicate sin's power? Share an example of how you've seen the truth of "*Your past does not have to determine your future*" from your own experience.

6 CHRISTMAS IS >... my past pains. All of us have done wrong, and all of us have been done wrong. In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge allowed the pains of his past to rob his present of meaning and joy. How does the story of Christmas remind us that our bad memories can be overwhelmed by good news? **Read Matthew 6:12.** How does this part of the Lord's prayer help us get past our past?

7 Jesus can heal what time can't. Rick closed by reminding us that "*you cannot rewrite the past, but you don't have to let the past author your future*". **Read Isaiah 43:18-19.** What is one practical thing you can do to remember this truth as you journey through life?

