

The Redemption Journey

December 9-13, 2025

Daily Devotional for Dec. 9: When Good Things Twist Our Hearts

Reading: Philippians 3:4-11

Paul had every reason to boast—perfect religious pedigree, impeccable credentials, zealous dedication. Yet he called it all "scubala" (rubbish) compared to knowing Christ. Like Scrooge, whose financial gifts became an obsession, we often allow good things to twist into idols. Our careers, accomplishments, even our religious activities can distort into something that distances us from God. Today, take inventory of what you value most. Are your gifts serving God's purposes, or have they become ends in themselves? The ghost of Christmas past reminds us that transformation begins with honest reflection. What started well in your life may need realignment with Christ's priorities.

Reflection Question: What "good thing" in your life might be twisting into something that competes with your devotion to Christ?

Daily Devotional for Dec. 10: Remembering Your First Love

Reading: Revelation 2:1-7

The church at Ephesus had sound doctrine and perseverance, but they had abandoned their first love. Scrooge once danced with joy, courted love, and lived with vitality before his heart grew cold. Advent calls us to remember—not just Christ's first coming, but our own spiritual beginnings. When did you feel most alive in your faith? When was worship not a duty but a delight? God doesn't condemn us for losing our way; He invites us back. The ghost of Christmas past shows us we weren't always this way. There was warmth, connection, and joy. This Advent season is your invitation to return to your first love, to rediscover the Christ who first captured your heart.

Reflection Question: What did your relationship with God look like when it was most vibrant? What one step can you take to return there?

Daily Devotional for Dec. 11: The Danger of Self-Righteousness

Reading: Luke 18:9-14

The Pharisee had impressive credentials—fasting, tithing, moral living. Yet he left the temple unjustified while the humble tax collector found mercy. Paul, once a Pharisee himself, learned that all his accomplishments meant nothing compared to Christ's righteousness. We live in a culture that celebrates self-sufficiency and personal achievement. We naturally want to brag about our skills, knowledge, and contributions. But Advent confronts our self-reliance. Salvation isn't about what we bring to God; it's about what God brings to us. Like Scrooge facing his past, we must acknowledge that our best efforts, when compared to Christ's sacrifice, fall desperately short. Only then can we receive the gift of grace.

Reflection Question: In what areas of your life are you still trying to earn God's approval rather than receive His grace?

Daily Devotional for Dec. 12: Preparing for Christ's Return

Reading: *Matthew 25:1-13*

Advent means "coming"—celebrating Christ's birth while anticipating His return. The parable of the ten virgins warns us to stay ready, to keep our lamps filled. Scrooge received warning through Marley and three ghosts before it was too late. We too receive warnings through Scripture, circumstances, and the Holy Spirit's conviction. If Christ returned today, would He find you twisted by worldly pursuits or growing in love and service? This isn't about fear but faithful preparation. The oil in our lamps represents sustained devotion, daily disciplines, and authentic relationship with God. Advent isn't just nostalgic remembrance; it's urgent preparation. Christ is coming again to judge the living and the dead. Are you ready?

Reflection Question: If Christ returned today, what in your life would you wish you had changed? What's stopping you from changing it now?

Daily Devotional for Dec. 13: From Scrooge to Servant

Reading: *2 Corinthians 5:14-21*

Paul declares that if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation—the old has gone, the new has come. This is Scrooge's story and ours. Transformation isn't about self-improvement but Christ-formation. When we truly encounter Jesus—His suffering, death, and resurrection—everything changes. What we once valued becomes scubala. What we once ignored becomes precious. God doesn't just want to adjust our behavior; He wants to recreate our hearts. This Advent, allow the Spirit to show you where you've become twisted, where good things have become ultimate things. Then surrender them to Christ. Like Scrooge awakening Christmas morning, you can become who you were always meant to be—not through striving, but through surrendering to the One who came to redeem us all.

Reflection Question: What would your life look like if you truly believed that knowing Christ surpasses all other achievements? What one change would you make today?

Advent Prayer: *Lord Jesus, as we prepare for Christmas, prepare our hearts. Show us where we've become like Scrooge—twisted by things that started good but became idols. Help us value what You value, love what You love, and live as those awaiting Your return. Transform us from the inside out. In Your name, Amen.*