

# Sermon Note: Jesus, the Redeemer of Our Past

## Second Sunday of Advent

### Introduction

As we continue our Advent series, *The Redemption of Scrooge*, we explore how Christ redeems even the most painful parts of our lives. Just as Ebenezer Scrooge is forced to confront his past, we, too, are invited to examine the moments that have shaped us.

In this week's text, we see Jesus calling his first disciples—ordinary fishermen with imperfect pasts. He invites them not because they are perfect, but because he sees their potential. In the same way, Christ redeems us, transforming even our brokenness into purpose and calling us to follow him.

### Illustration Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zxp5uySmAU>

In this clip from Jim Carrey's *A Christmas Carol* (2009), Scrooge journeys with the Ghost of Christmas Past to the town where he grew up, sparking memories of his childhood.

### Why This Video?

This scene introduces the Ghost of Christmas Past and begins Scrooge's journey into his earlier years. Scrooge recognizes his childhood town and recalls familiar places and faces, revealing the emotional imprint of his past. The anticipation builds as the Ghost gestures toward the school, hinting at a moment of loneliness that still lingers in Scrooge's heart. This clip draws us into the power of memory, showing how past experiences shape us and inviting us to explore how Christ redeems even the most painful parts of our story.

### Video Discussion Questions

1. What does Scrooge's reaction to seeing his childhood town tell us about how his past continues to affect him?
2. Why might the Ghost start this journey with scenes that stir both familiarity and sadness in Scrooge?
3. How do unacknowledged moments of loneliness or pain linger in our hearts over time?
4. What do you think Scrooge is beginning to realize about himself as he sees children playing and approaches the school?
5. How does this scene invite us to examine how Jesus addresses the wounds we carry from our own pasts?

### Matthew 4:18-23 (CEB)

<sup>18</sup>As Jesus walked alongside the Galilee Sea, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, because they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup>“Come, follow me,” he said, “and I’ll show

you how to fish for people.”<sup>20</sup> Right away, they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup>Continuing on, he saw another set of brothers, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father repairing their nets. Jesus called them and <sup>22</sup>immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

<sup>23</sup>Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues. He announced the good news of the kingdom and healed every disease and sickness among the people.

### **Scripture Discussion Questions**

1. What stands out to you about Jesus’ call to the disciples in Matthew 4:18-23?
2. Why do you think Jesus chose ordinary fishermen with imperfect pasts to be the first disciples?
3. Do you think Jesus sees potential in you? If so, how does this feel? If not, how does this feel? Either way, are there areas where you feel unworthy?
4. What parts of your past are you hesitant to confront? How might Jesus be inviting you to offer those to him for healing?
5. How does Jesus’ invitation to “follow me” challenge your current way of living?
6. James and John left their own father in the fishing boat. They not only left behind their jobs—their means of support—but they also left a family member. What are you willing to leave behind to walk in the way of Christ?
7. How can embracing the redemption of your past help you share God’s love with others?

### **Weekly Action**

This week, take time to name one part of your past—whether a memory, mistake, or loss—that you find difficult to revisit. Offer it to Jesus in prayer. Ask him to bring healing and redemption. Consider writing it down and symbolically releasing it, perhaps by shredding the paper or placing it in a box labeled “Redeemed.”

### **Prayer**

Redeeming God, you know our pasts—our joys, our wounds, our regrets—and yet you love us completely. As you called fishermen to leave their nets behind, you call us to leave behind the burdens we carry. Help us to trust you with the broken pieces of our lives, knowing that you are always working to heal and restore. May we find peace in the knowledge that you have redeemed us. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who redeems all things. Amen.