

# A christmas carol

Literature



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Charles Dickens' novella, *A Christmas Carol* was published in 1843 exemplifying to the reader that the vital element to redemption is having the ability to bond with family, friends and the community. This classic fable establishes an range of moral lessons that each individual should encompass. Dickens demonstrates this through mainly the protagonist character, Ebenezer Scrooge, who was a "tight-fisted, squeezing, wrenching, grasping, clutching, covetous old sinner" as the novella begins but transforms into "as good a man as the old city knew."

However, the only way Ebenezer Scrooge had a chance to be redeemed to avoid his inevitable fate, is through his relationships with those surrounding him. Perfect examples to validate the importance of family and community are The Cratchit family, Fred, the Portly Gentlemen and those who were thrilled about Scrooge's death. The Cratchit family does not concentrate on the materialistic side of things, for them everything revolves around one another, which contrast with Scrooge. Fred, Scrooge's nephew, displays the attitude and outlook on life that is needed for Scrooge to be redeemed.

The Portly Gentlemen and the rest of the community show no mourning for Scrooge's death and this confirms Scrooge's need to connect with the community. For Scrooge to be redeemed he must change his view on everything, from himself to Christmas and others. Dickens created all characters to contrast Scrooge's personality and demonstrate the ways in which he needs to redeem himself. Dickens shows the reader that Ebenezer Scrooge has not had an easy life, but contrasts him with The Cratchit family to prove that there are more important things in life than money and work.

Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim are the two members in this family that prove Scrooge's need for redemption. Tiny Tim is the youngest of the Cratchit family and is also handicapped, but no matter what life throws his way, he maintains his optimistic outlook, this is revealed when he responds to their Christmas Day meal-time prayer with " God bless us, everyone! " Dickens repeats Tiny Tim's significant words to end his novella, which displays Scrooge's intense and allegorical transformation that has completely changed his outlook on life, himself and those surrounding him.

Bob is Scrooge's loyal clerk, even though he is paid next to nothing for his devoted work ethic, " he pocketed on Saturday but fifteen copies of his Christian name", he remains grateful for all he is given. Dickens shows Scrooge's journey to redemption through the connections with a family like The Cratchits. Uniting with family is a tremendously important stage when referring to one's redemption because families are one of the countless ways in which Scrooge redeems himself. Fred is Scrooge's cheerful and good-natured nephew.

Dickens shows the difference between Scrooge and Fred's attitude outlook on life at the beginning of the novella to illustrate to the reader how important redemption is for Scrooge. Fred invites his uncle to Christmas lunch but every year Scrooge refuses because Christmas is " a time for paying bills without money, finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer". Scrooge believes this tradition is completely pointless and makes his opinion quite strong to Fred, " What right do you have to be merry?

You're poor enough. " Although Scrooge is vulgar, malicious and sarcastic towards Fred, he continues to " give him (Scrooge) the same chance every

year, whether he likes it or not”, but only does this because he “pities” his nephew. Dickens purposefully uses the community of both the Victorian and modern day population that being a part of a society is a vital element to succeeding redemption. Scrooge is shown by one of the three spirits that visited him, how no one actually liked him therefore did not mourn his death. Instead, there were some people who began selling his personal belongings and there were others who were overjoyed about his passing because they owed him money. ‘ Nobody ever stopped him in the street... even the blind men’s dogs... when they saw him coming on, they would tug their owners into doorways...” It evident to the reader how necessary this transformation for Scrooge is through the way he is seen by his community; Dickens uses this novella to uphold the important message that all individuals have a duty of care to those surrounding them and not be so selfish, this is something that takes a major part in Scrooge’s redemption journey.

At the beginning, Scrooge was obnoxious, egotistic and oblivious towards his deprived society members, “ Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses? ” He refused to donate any money for the poor, as he believed that “ if they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population”. Dickens symbolically creates two significant children, Ignorance and Want to clarify society’s constant need for change that assist Scrooge in his journey and create his charitable character at the end of the novella.

These children appear in Stave Three with the Ghost of Christmas Present to transfer a message to both Scrooge and the Victorian readers that they must support those in Want but be cautious of the Ignorance in one another. Dickens shows how much the wealthy community, like Scrooge, must change

their ways before spell out “ doom” on everyone. Dickens also conveys that society must change to have that duty of care and social responsibility are key elements to the redemptive journey that Scrooge is a part of.

Ebenezer Scrooge’s need for redemption is metaphorical for the urgency for society to transform the ethics in which everyone is living by. In stave one, everyone was afraid to address Scrooge due to his cantankerous, avaricious and cynical personality and therefore if he did not change his ways, he would remain as “ solitary as an oyster” and showed no sympathy for the poor, he transformed himself into “ as merry as a school-boy”, “ jovial” and “ glorious”. Family and community are crucial elements for one to redeem themselves.