

A Storybook Christmas

Week 2: How to Tell if You're a Grinch

Objective: To help us drop our defenses and let Jesus transform our hearts.

1. Buddy, Clark, Scrooge, or Grinch?

On the “Buddy the Elf → Clark Griswold → Scrooge → Grinch” scale, where do you honestly tend to land when it comes to Christmas?

- What does that reveal about your heart, not just your holiday preferences?

2. Read Matthew 2:1–3.

Herod was “*disturbed*” when he heard about Jesus. He felt his territory and control were threatened.

- Where in your life do you feel “disturbed” when Jesus starts to press in or challenge you?
- Are there any “No Trespassing” zones in your heart (areas you don’t really want Him to rule)?

3. Pretending vs. Being Real

Herod pretended he wanted to *worship* Jesus, but in reality he wanted to protect his throne (Matthew 2:7–8).

- In what ways do people “pretend” spiritually—especially around Christmas?
- Where are you most tempted to look good rather than be honest about the condition of your heart?

4. Read Matthew 2:9–11.

The Magi were **overjoyed** and bowed down to worship. Herod, just two miles away, missed that joy completely.

- Why do you think some people are surrounded by opportunities for joy but can’t seem to join in?
- When has it been hard for you to be genuinely happy for someone else’s blessing or success?

5. When Plans Fall Apart

Herod reacted with rage when his plan didn’t work (Matthew 2:16).

- How do you typically respond when your plans get interrupted, delayed, or changed?
- What does your reaction to “changed plans” reveal about how much you trust (or don’t trust) God?

6. Heart Change: Grinch vs. Herod

The Grinch’s heart “grew three sizes” when he finally understood what Christmas really was. Herod’s heart never changed.

- How would you describe the difference between “doing Christmas” and having a truly **changed heart**?
- Where have you actually seen Jesus change your heart over the years? (Attitudes, habits, relationships, priorities, etc.)

7. Letting Jesus In

If “**you can’t truly celebrate Christmas until Jesus transforms your heart,**” what is one specific area where you sense Him asking for deeper surrender this season?

- What practical step could you take this week to open that area to Him?

Final Thought

You can celebrate the **holiday** without ever letting Jesus touch your heart. Herod was close to the manger story but missed the meaning completely. The real miracle of Christmas isn’t just that Jesus came to earth—it’s that He came to live and rule in human hearts. The question isn’t just, “*Do you believe the Christmas story?*” but “*Will you let the Christ of Christmas actually change you?*”

This Week's Challenge

Three simple steps:

- 1. Pray Psalm 139:23–24 once a day**
“Search me, God, and know my heart...”
Ask the Holy Spirit to show you one “Grinch-like” area—control, pretending, bitterness, or anger over your plans.
- 2. Surrender one specific area.**
Name it clearly (a relationship, a habit, a secret, an attitude).
Tell Jesus, “*You can have this. Be King here too.*”
- 3. Choose joy with someone else.**
Intentionally celebrate with someone this week—rejoice with them, encourage them, or bless them—even if their joy doesn’t line up with your plans or feelings.

Then next week, share with someone in the group what God began to do in your heart.