

A Storybook Christmas

Week 3: Start to Finish

Objective: To challenge us to surrender our whole lives; past, present and future to Jesus' lordship.

1. Scrooge, Christmas, and Us

In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge is haunted by his past, empty in the present, and terrified of the future.

- In what ways do you relate to Scrooge's struggle with **past, present, and future**?
- Which one (past, present, or future) feels most heavy for you right now, and why?

2. Jesus, the Alpha and Omega (Revelation 22:13)

Read Revelation 22:13.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

- What does it mean to you that Jesus stands over *all* of time—your past, present, and future?
- How might believing this more deeply change the way you see your own story?

3. Redeeming Our Past (Matthew 1:1–7, 17)

Matthew starts Jesus' story with a genealogy full of messy people—Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, David, Bathsheba, and more.

- Why do you think God chose to include so many broken stories in Jesus' family line?
- How does it encourage you (or challenge you) to know that **God can redeem even the worst parts of a story**?

4. When Your Past Feels Like "Damaged Goods"

The sermon said: "*In Jesus, your past may shape you, but it doesn't need to define you.*"

- What are some ways people let their past define them—either by shame, regret, or pride?
- If you're comfortable: is there a part of your own past that still feels like it has too much power over how you see yourself?

5. Meaning in the Present – "God With Us" (Matthew 1:22–23; 2 Corinthians 5:19–20)

Read Matthew 1:22–23 and 2 Corinthians 5:19–20.

- What does it mean that Jesus is "*God with us*" in everyday life—not just in church or at Christmas?
- How does seeing yourself as **Christ's ambassador** give meaning to your ordinary routines (work, family, errands, etc.)?

6. Hope for the Future – "Resurrection and Life" (John 11:25–26)

Read John 11:25–26.

- How does Jesus being "*the resurrection and the life*" change the way we see suffering, aging, or even death?
- Can you think of a time when Jesus gave you hope when your circumstances looked hopeless?

7. Living in the Whole Story

If Jesus truly **redeems our past, gives meaning to our present, and offers hope for our future**:

- What is **one specific step** you sense Him asking you to take:
 - About your past?
 - In your present everyday life?
 - In how you think about your future?

Final Thought

Christmas is not just the story of a baby in a manger; it's the story of a King who claims the entire timeline of your life. In Jesus, your past is not beyond redemption, your present is not meaningless, and your future is not hopeless. The question is not whether He *can* rewrite your story—but whether you will surrender the pen.

This Week's Challenge

1. PAST – Confess and Release

Sometime this week, name **one thing from your past** that still feels heavy—sin, regret, or hurt.

- Write it down and pray: *“Jesus, I give this to You. Redeem what I cannot fix.”*

2. PRESENT – Represent Jesus Intentionally

Choose **one ordinary place** (work, home, school, a store you visit) where you will intentionally act as Christ's ambassador this week—through kindness, encouragement, generosity, or a listening ear.

3. FUTURE – Anchor Your Hope

Read John 11:25–26 or Revelation 21:1–5 one day this week and thank Jesus specifically for the hope He gives beyond this life. Ask Him to replace anxiety about the future with trust in His resurrection power.

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