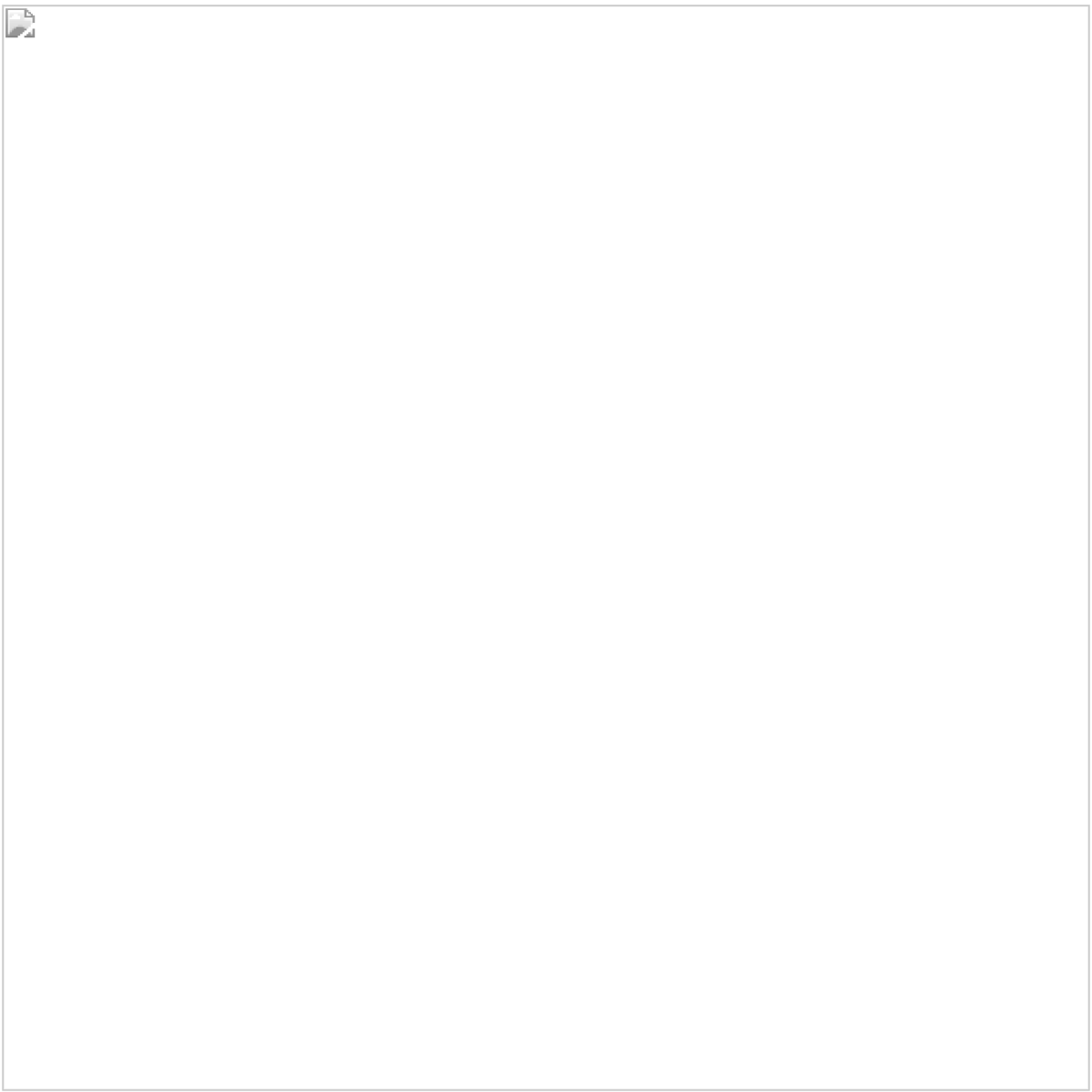
COLORING THE CLASSICS

A Christmas Carol

A Ghost Story of Christmas



"Marley was dead: to begin with." Old Marley had been dead for seven years, and his partner, Ebenezer Scrooge, was all alone in the world.

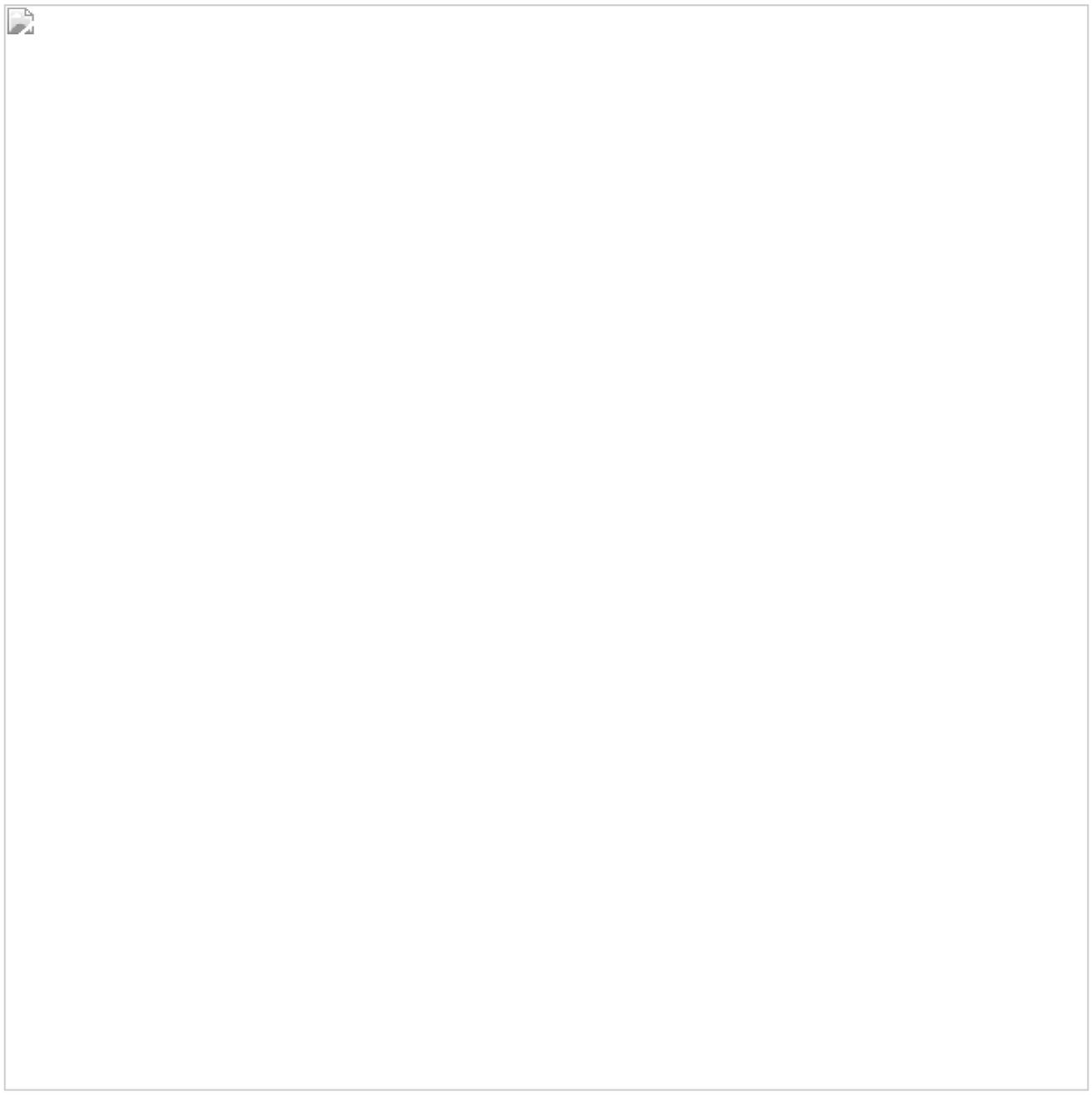
And Scrooge liked it that way.

TALK ABOUT IT

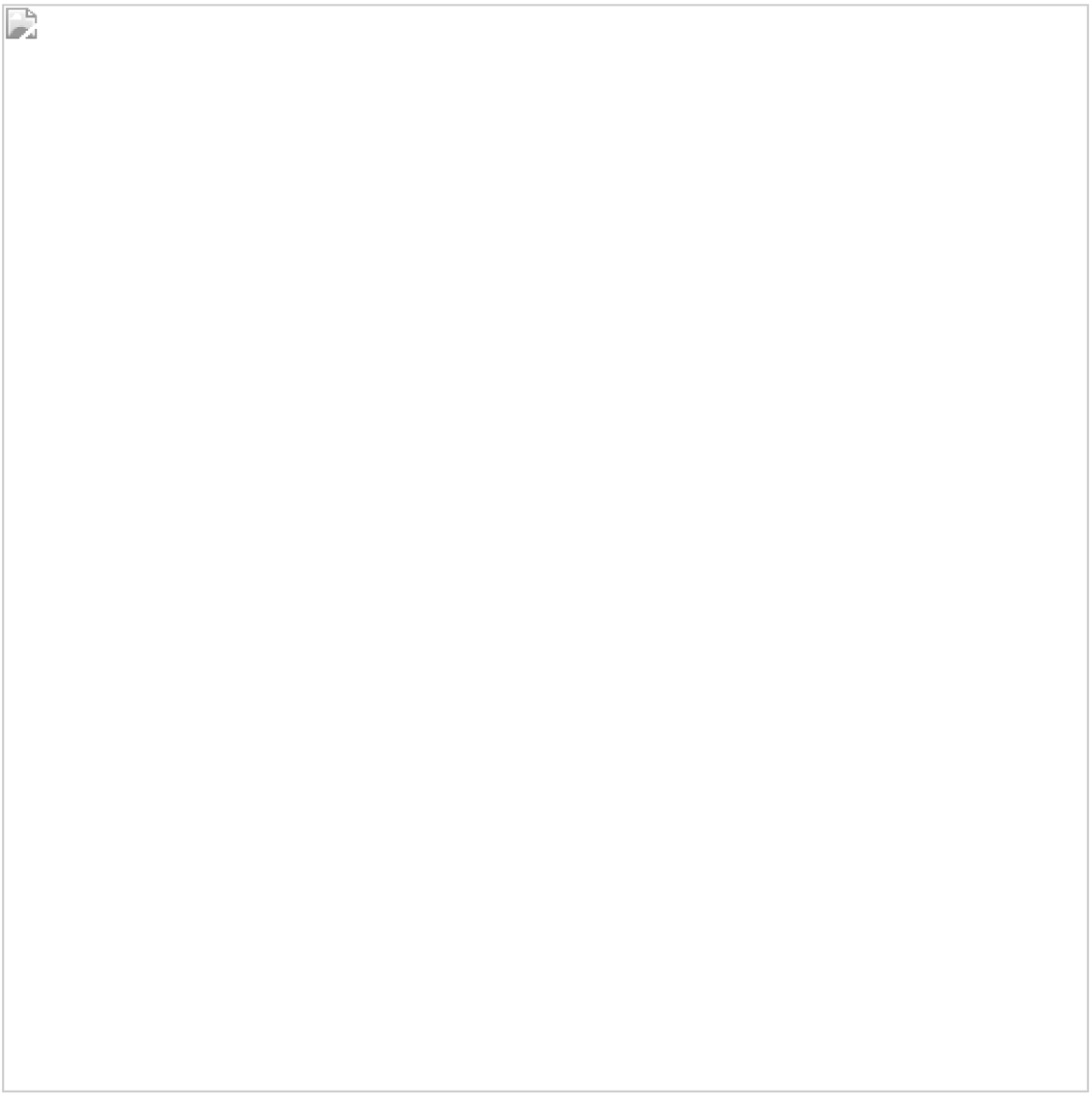
Scrooge liked being alone. Why might someone want to be alone all the time?

This book belongs to _____

A Christmas Carol · another picture



Bah! Humbug!



Scrooge was “a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner!” He was as cold inside as a winter day. Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, “My dear Scrooge, how are you?”

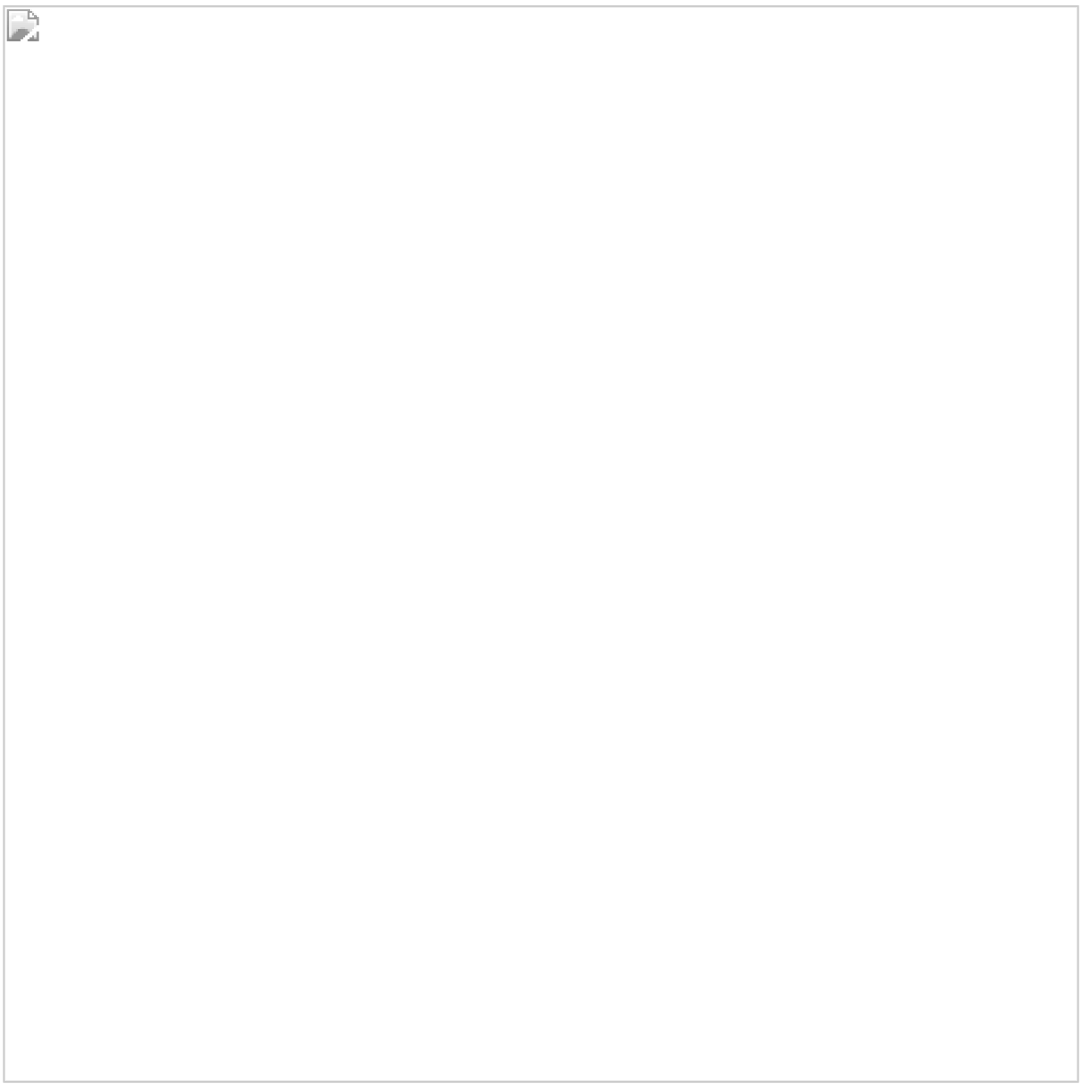
It was Christmas Eve. In his chilly counting-house, his clerk, Bob Cratchit, worked by a fire so small it looked like one coal.

Then Scrooge's nephew Fred burst in, cheerful and glowing. “A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!”

“Bah!” said Scrooge. “Humbug!”

TALK ABOUT IT

Fred was kind to his uncle even when his uncle was grumpy. Why do you think he kept trying?

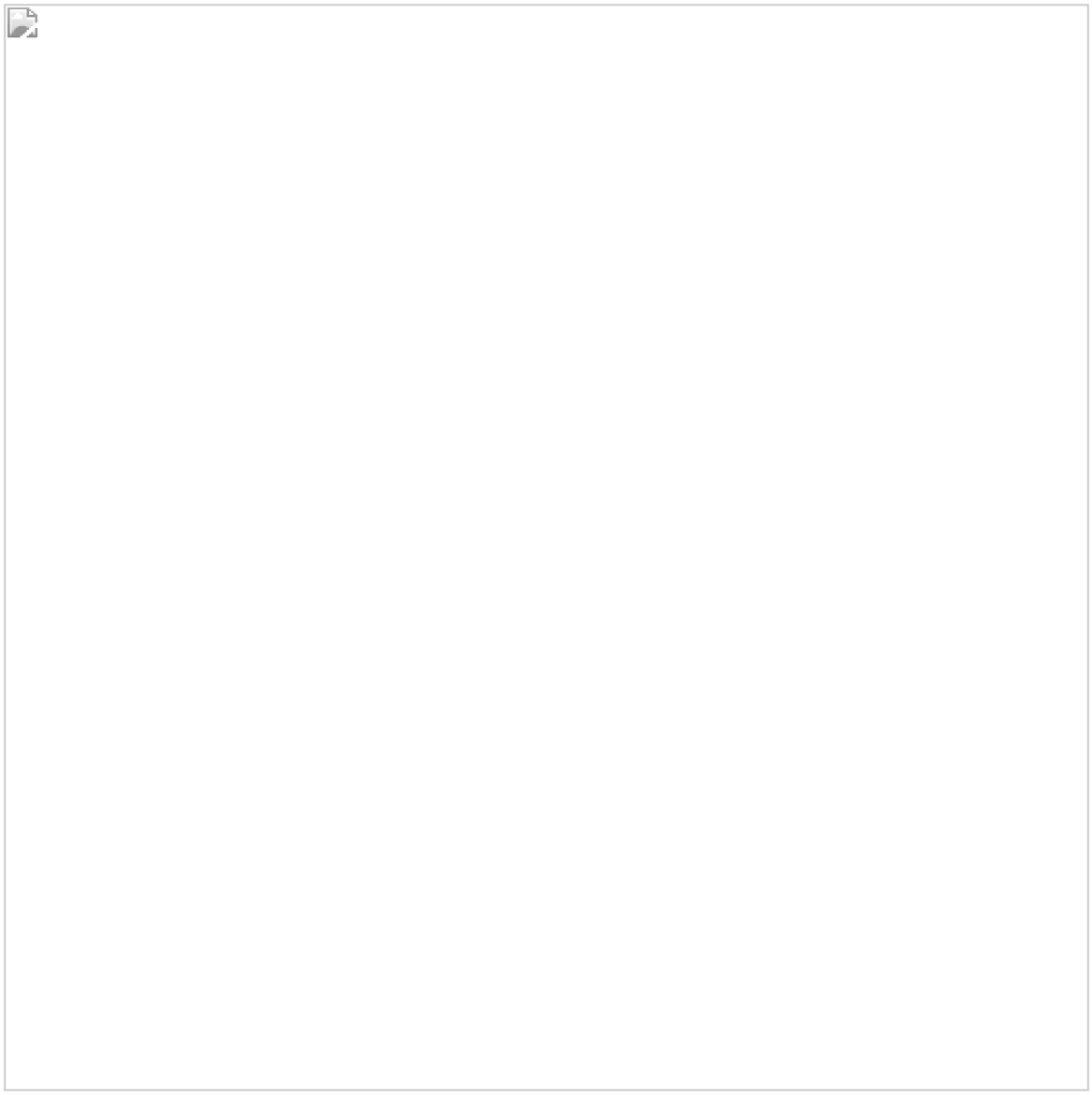


Think about it

1. What did Scrooge say when Fred wished him a merry Christmas?

- ○ “Thank you!”
- ○ “Bah! Humbug!”
- ○ “Come in and sit down.”

No Room in His Heart



Fred asked his uncle to come for Christmas dinner. Scrooge said no.

Two gentlemen came collecting money to buy food and warmth for poor people at Christmas. Scrooge sent them away with nothing.

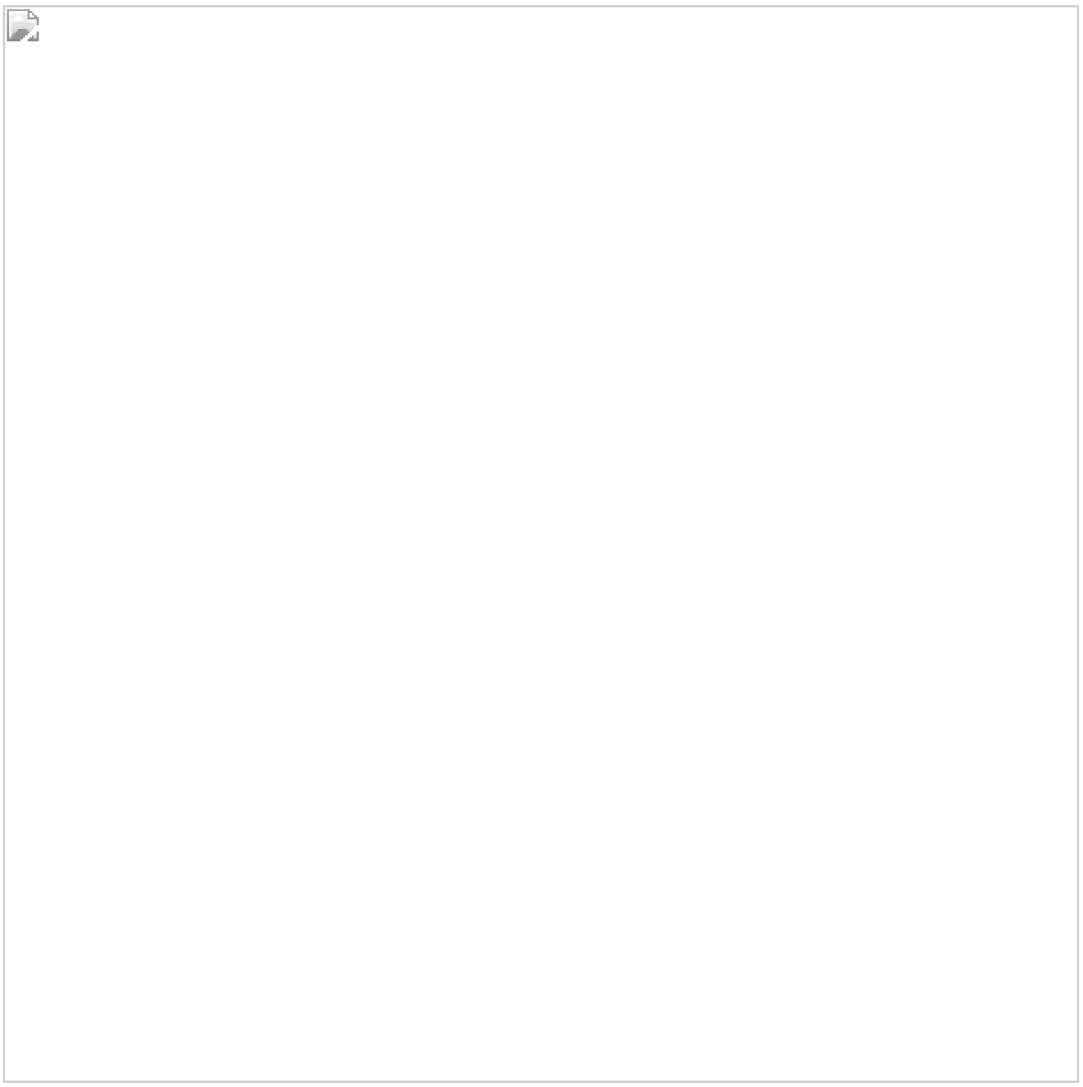
Bob Cratchit asked, very shyly, for Christmas Day off. Scrooge grumbled that it was like picking his pocket. But he let Bob go, so long as he came in "all the earlier next morning."

Then Scrooge went home alone to his dark rooms. "Darkness is cheap, and Scrooge liked it."

TALK ABOUT IT

Scrooge said no three times. Who was hurt when Scrooge said no?

No Room in His Heart · another picture

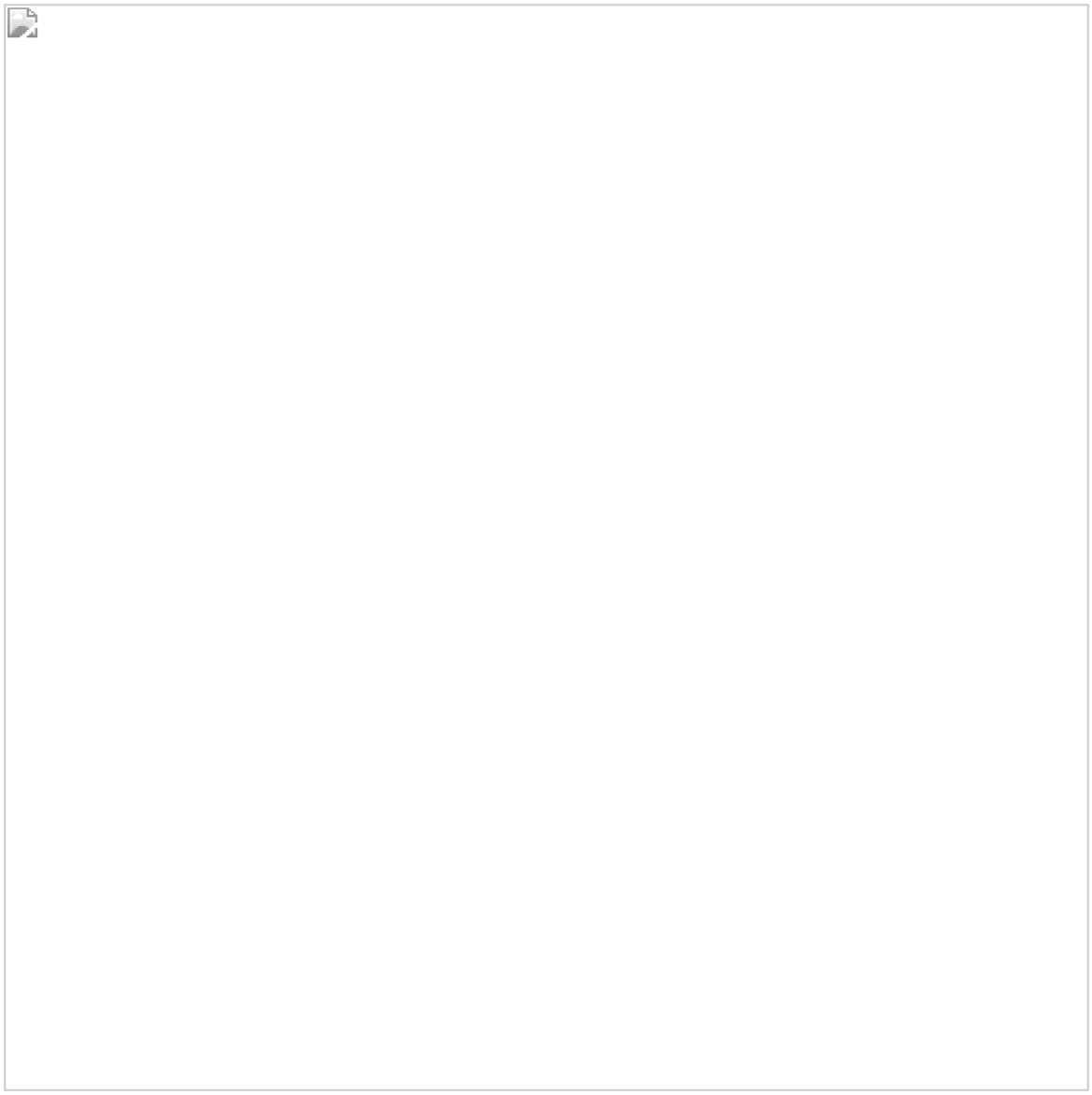


Think about it

1. What did the two gentlemen want?

- ○ To sell Scrooge a hat
- ○ Money to help poor people at Christmas
- ○ Directions to the shop

Marley's Ghost



That night Scrooge's door knocker turned into Marley's face. Bells rang all through the house. Then, clank, clank, up the stairs came Marley's ghost, dragging a long, heavy chain made of cash-boxes, keys and padlocks.

“I wear the chain I forged in life,” said Marley. “I made it link by link, and yard by yard.” Every selfish day had added a link.

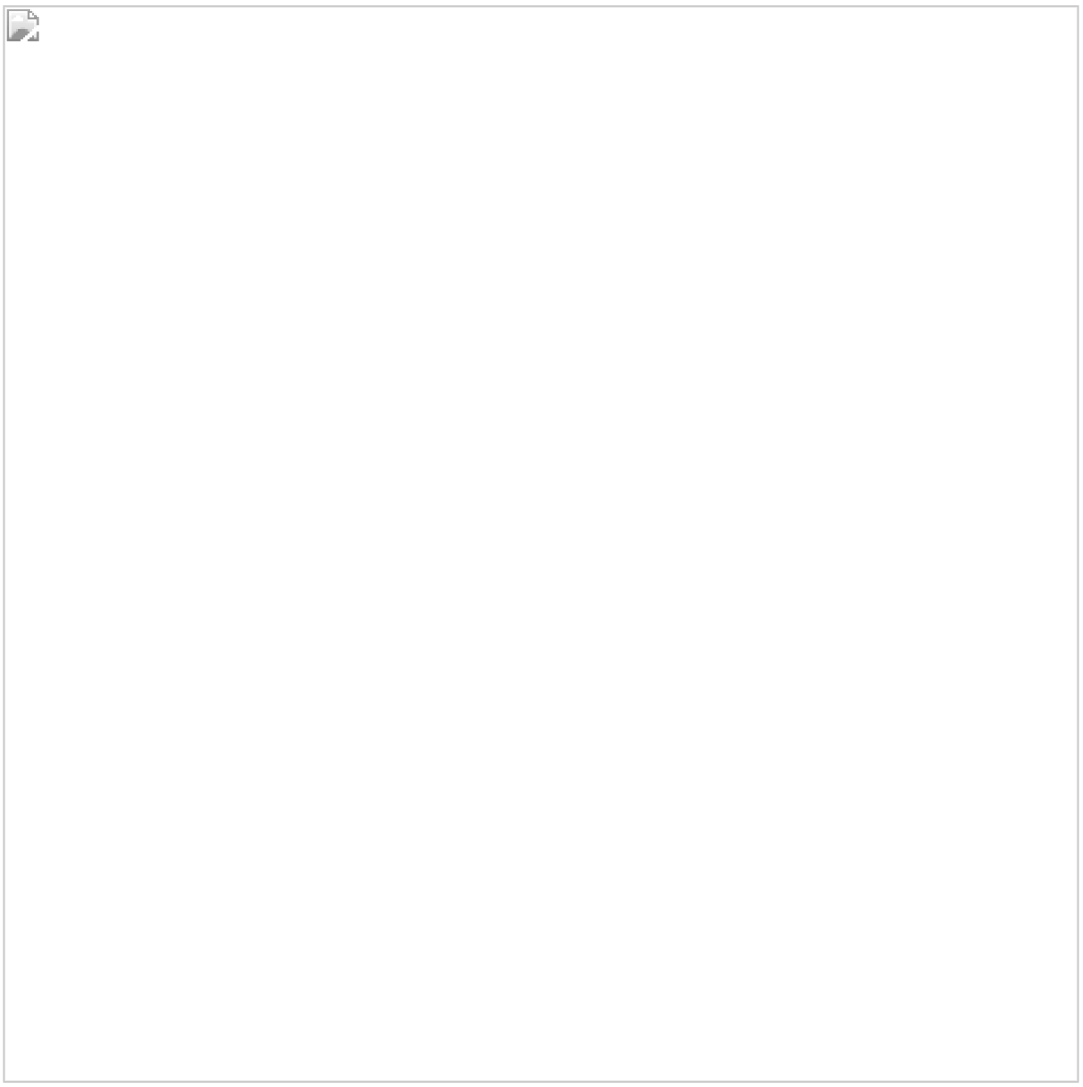
Marley had come to save Scrooge from the same chain. “Mankind was my business,” he cried. Other people should have been his work, not only money.

“You will be haunted,” he said, “by Three Spirits.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Marley said people were his real business. What do you think he meant?

Marley's Ghost · another picture



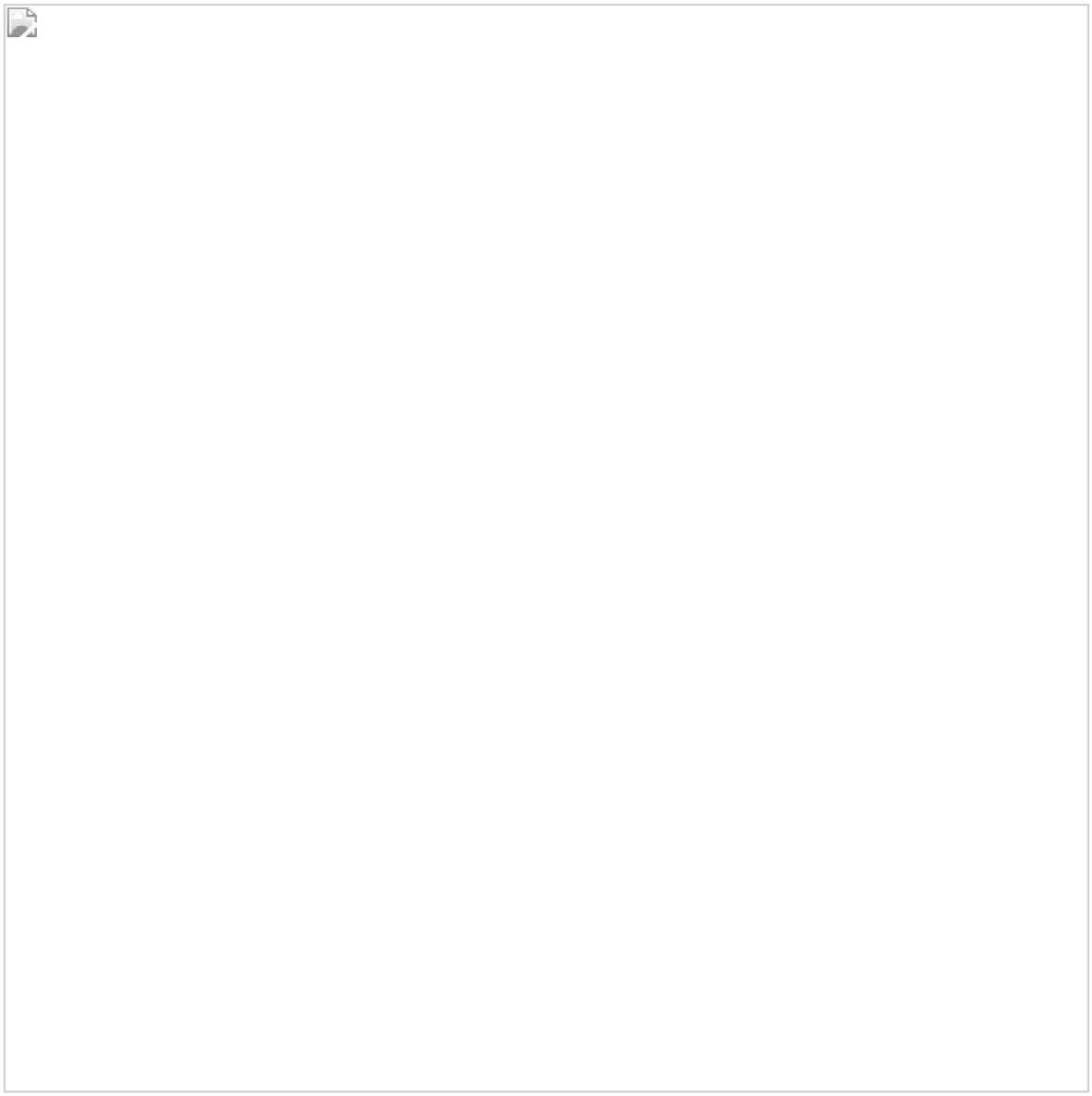
Think about it

1. What was Marley's chain made of?

- ○ Flowers and ribbons
- ○ Cash-boxes, keys and padlocks
- ○ Christmas lights

2. Marley made his chain "link by link." How could someone make a chain like that? How could someone stop making it?

The Ghost of Christmas Past



At one o'clock the first Spirit came. It was strange: like a child and like an old man at the same time, with a bright, clear light shining from its head.

“I am the Ghost of Christmas Past,” it said. “Your past.” It took Scrooge's hand, and they flew out over the snowy fields to the place where Scrooge was a boy.

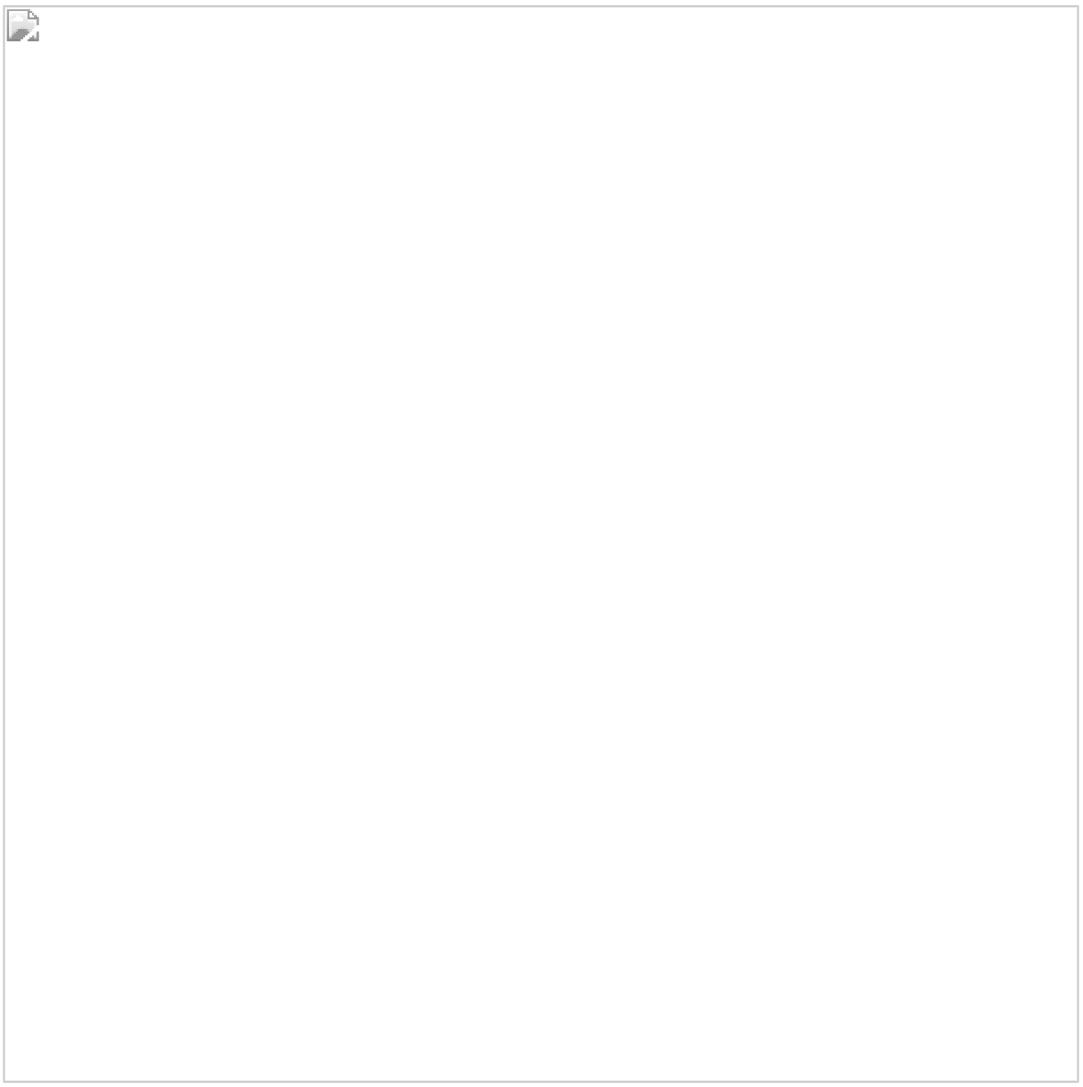
There was a lonely school, and a lonely boy reading by a weak fire, left behind when the other boys went home. It was young Scrooge.

Old Scrooge sat down and cried for the boy he used to be.

TALK ABOUT IT

Scrooge cried when he saw himself as a lonely boy. Why do you think seeing it again made him cry?

The Ghost of Christmas Past · another picture

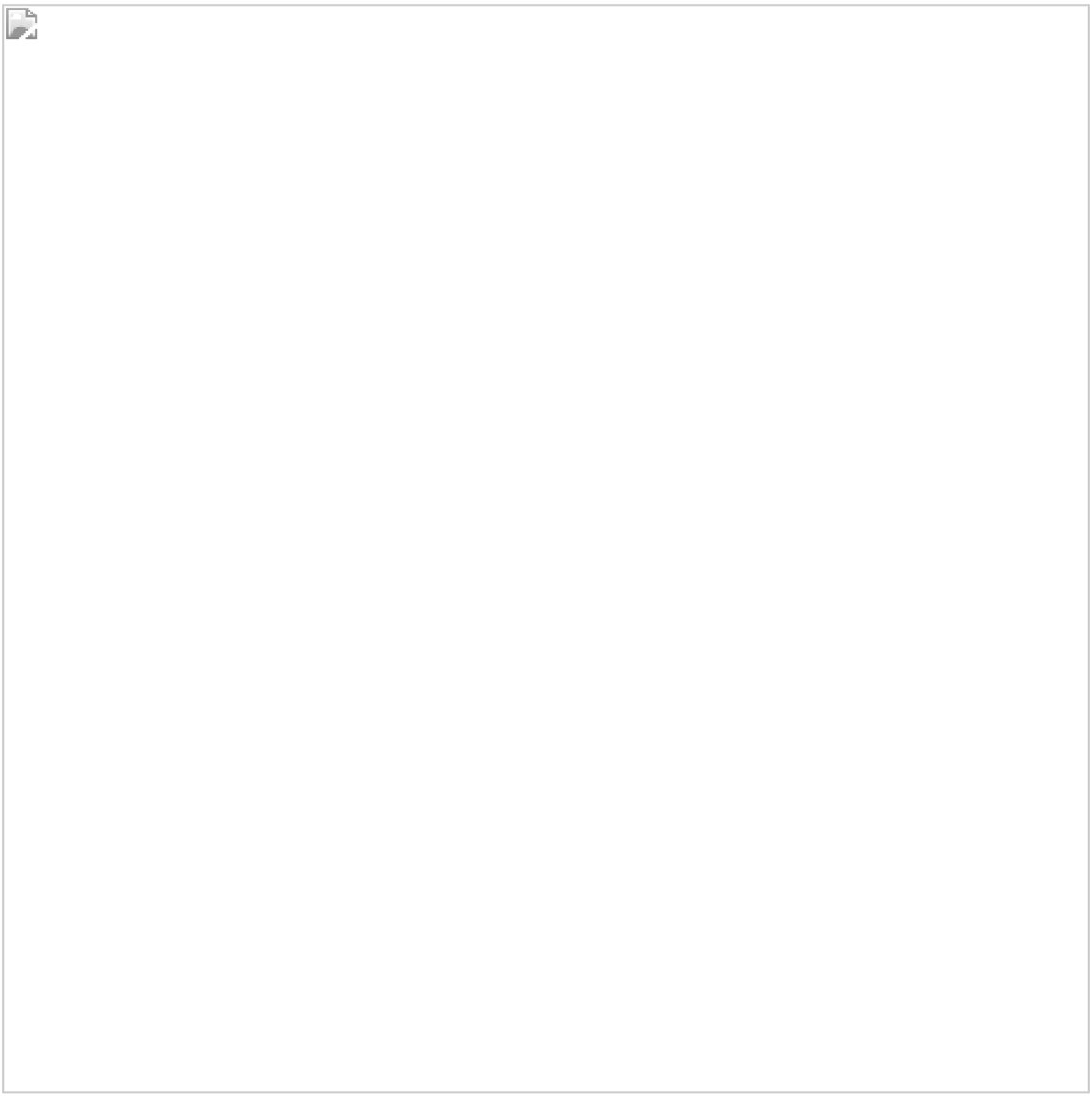


Think about it

1. Who was the lonely boy at the school?

- ○ Bob Cratchit
- ○ Young Scrooge
- ○ Fred

Little Fan and Old Fezziwig



Then a little girl ran in and hugged the boy. It was his sister, Fan. “I have come to bring you home, dear brother!” Fan grew up to be Fred's mother.

Next the Spirit showed Scrooge as a young man working for kind old Mr. Fezziwig. On Christmas Eve, Fezziwig cleared the floor, lit the fire, and threw a party with a fiddler, dancing, cake and laughter for everyone.

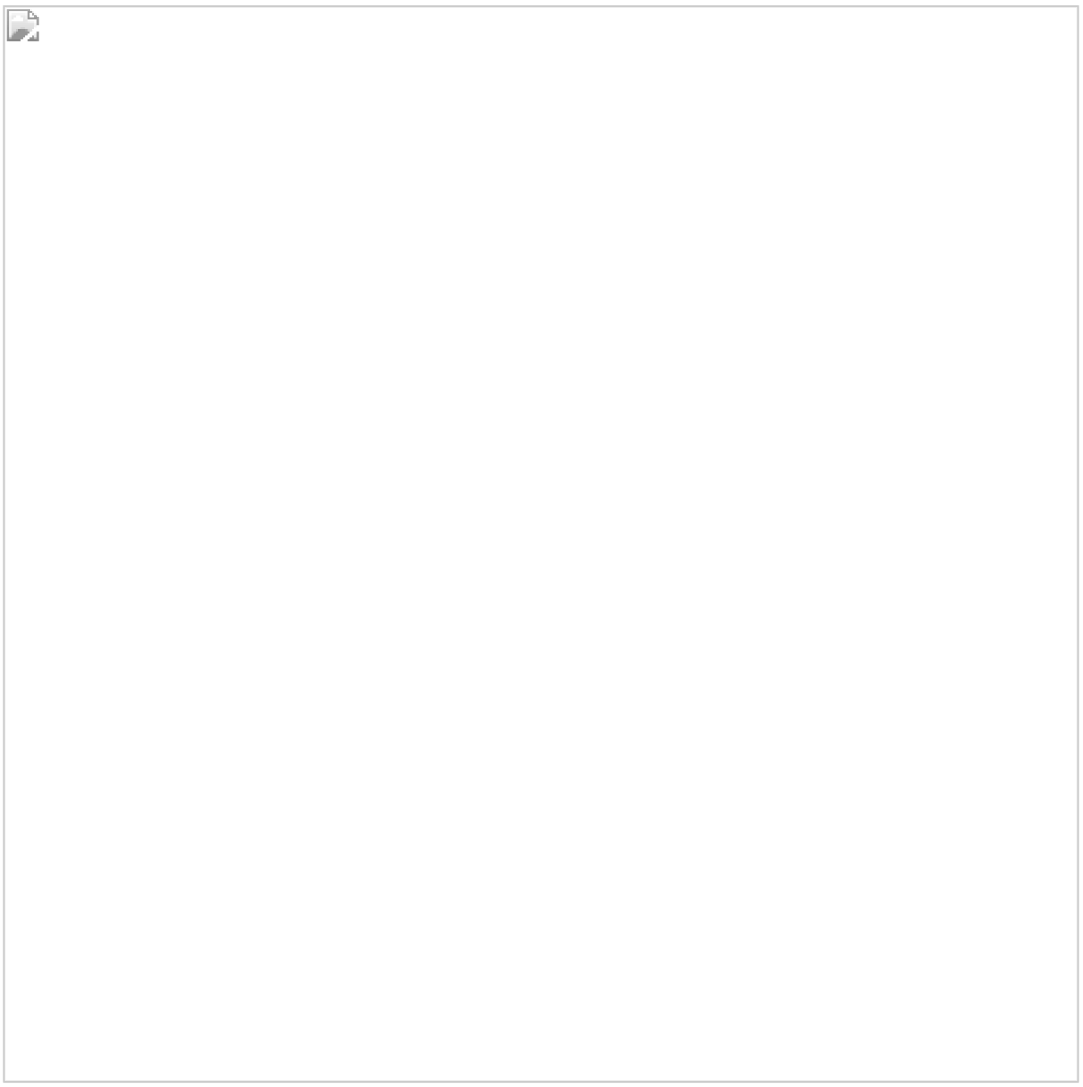
“He has the power to render us happy or unhappy,” young Scrooge said. Fezziwig's happiness was worth more than money.

Old Scrooge grew quiet. He was thinking of his own clerk, Bob Cratchit.

TALK ABOUT IT

Mr. Fezziwig did not spend much, but he made everyone happy. How can someone make others happy without spending a lot?

Little Fan and Old Fezziwig · another picture

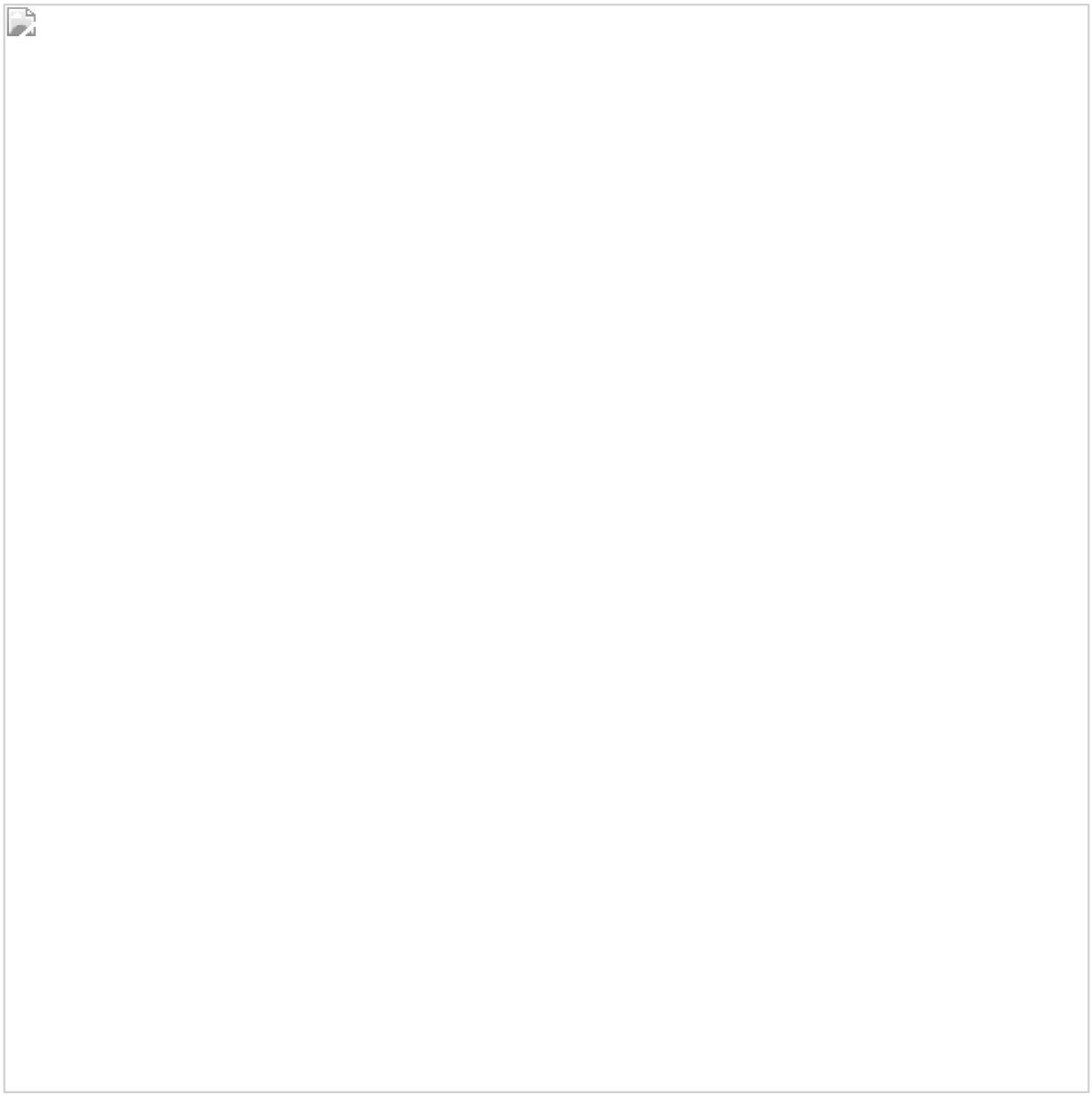


Think about it

1. What did Mr. Fezziwig do on Christmas Eve?

- ○ He made everyone work late
- ○ He threw a party with dancing for everyone
- ○ He went to bed early

Belle



The Spirit showed one more Christmas. A young woman named Belle sat beside young Scrooge, with tears in her eyes. They had promised to marry.

But Scrooge had begun to love money more than anything. “Another idol has displaced me,” Belle said gently. “A golden one.” And she said goodbye.

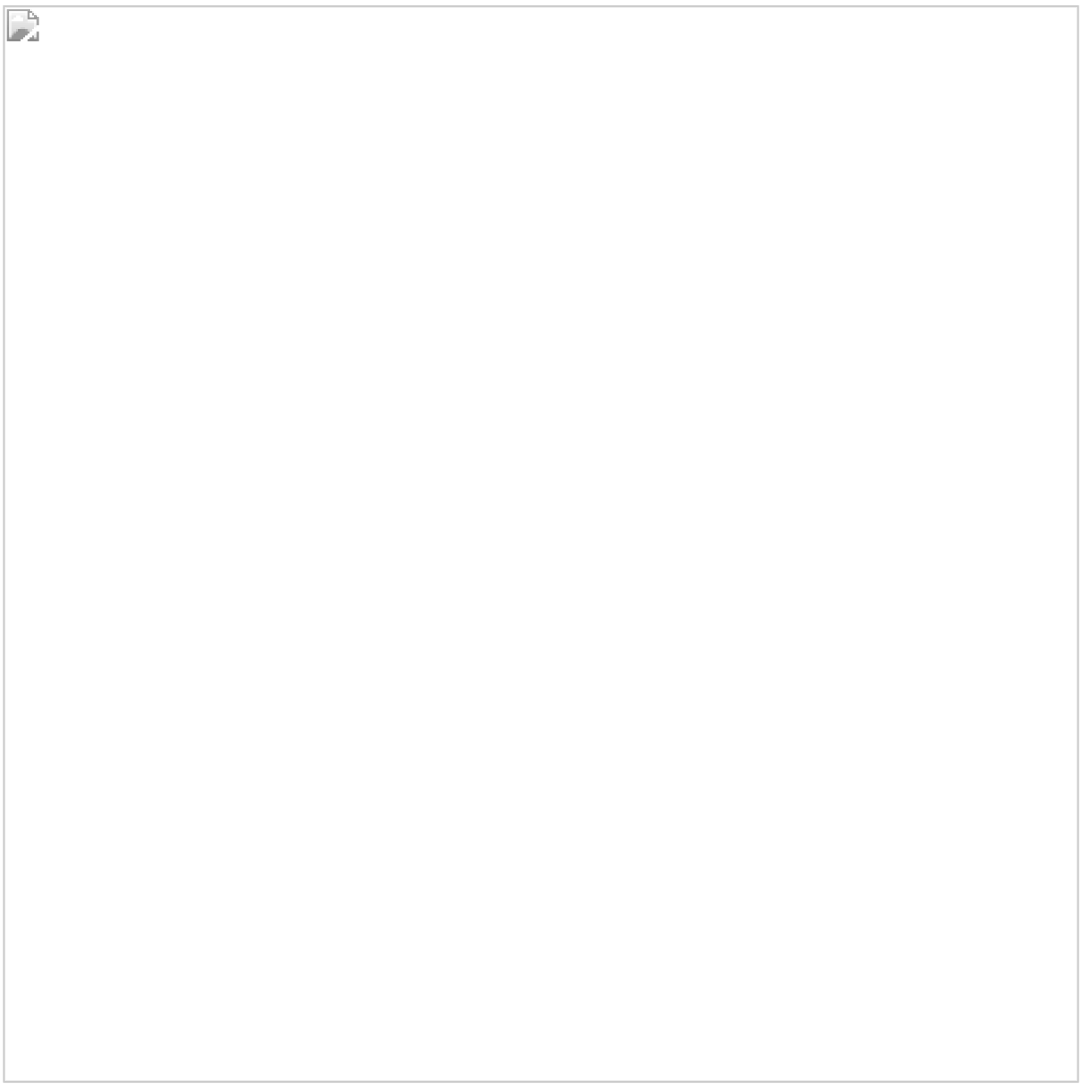
Then Scrooge saw Belle years later, happy in a warm, noisy home full of children, laughing as they climbed all over their father.

“Remove me!” Scrooge cried. “I cannot bear it!”

TALK ABOUT IT

Belle said a golden idol took her place. What did Scrooge lose because he loved money most?

Belle · another picture

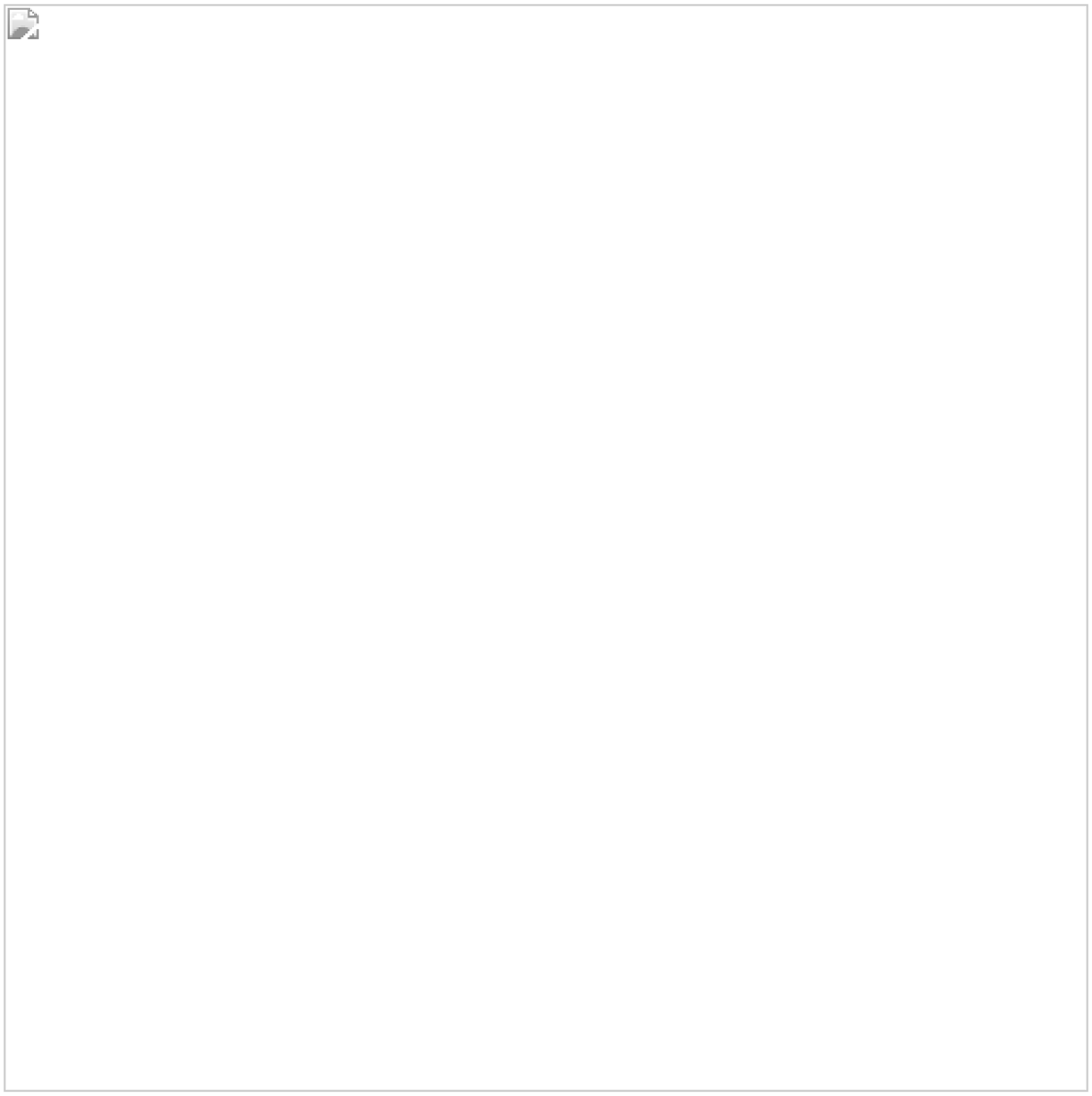


Think about it

1. What did Belle say had taken her place in Scrooge's heart?

- ○ A golden idol: money
- ○ A dog
- ○ His job at Fezziwig's

The Ghost of Christmas Present



Scrooge woke in his own room, but it was changed. Green leaves and holly covered the walls. A great fire roared. Turkeys, puddings, oranges and cakes were piled up like a throne.

On the throne sat a jolly Giant in a green robe, holding a glowing torch. “I am the Ghost of Christmas Present,” he said. “Look upon me!”

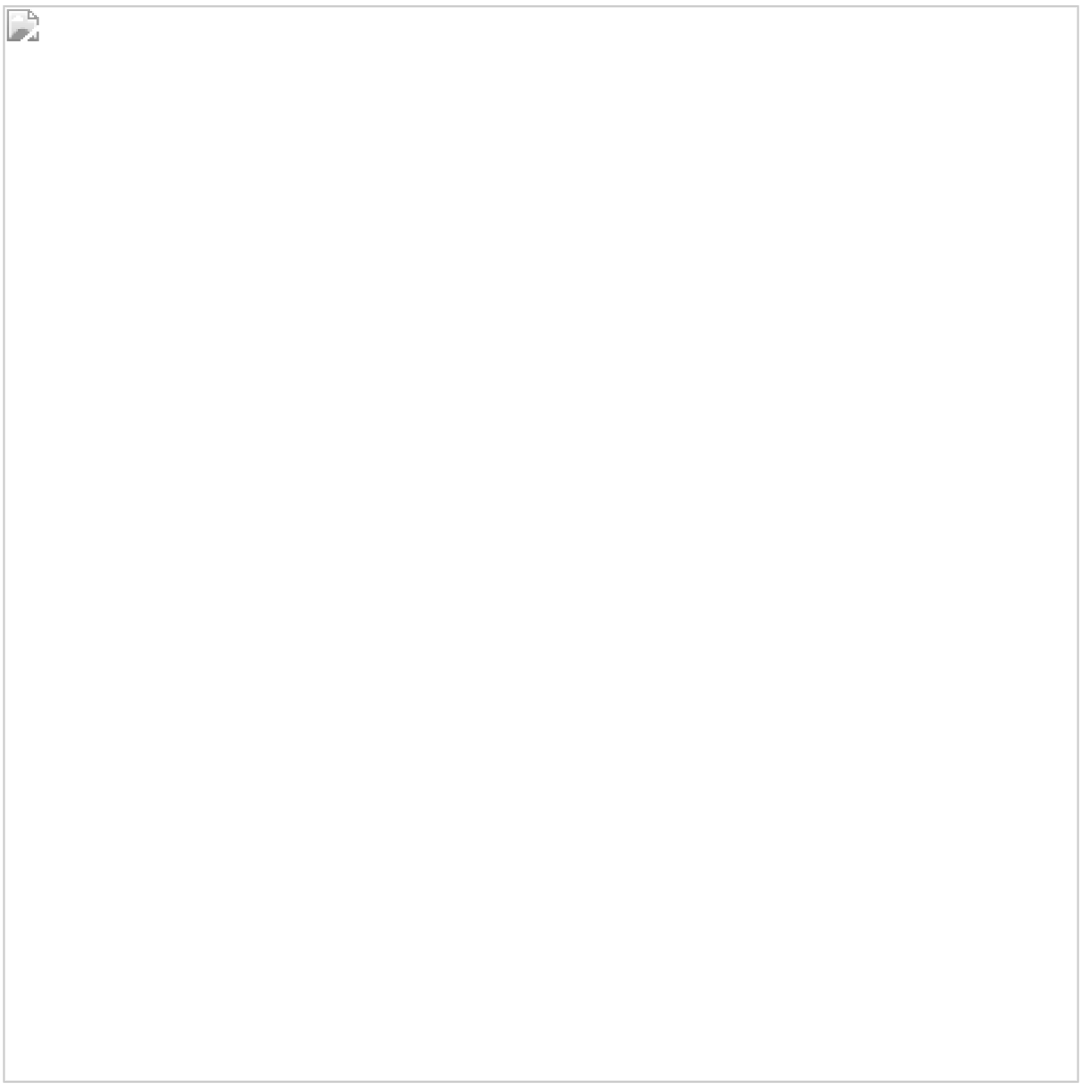
“Spirit,” said Scrooge humbly, “conduct me where you will.” This time he wanted to learn.

They went out into the Christmas morning streets, and wherever the Spirit sprinkled his torch, people stopped quarreling and grew kind.

TALK ABOUT IT

This time Scrooge asked to learn. What has changed in Scrooge since the first Spirit?

The Ghost of Christmas Present · another picture

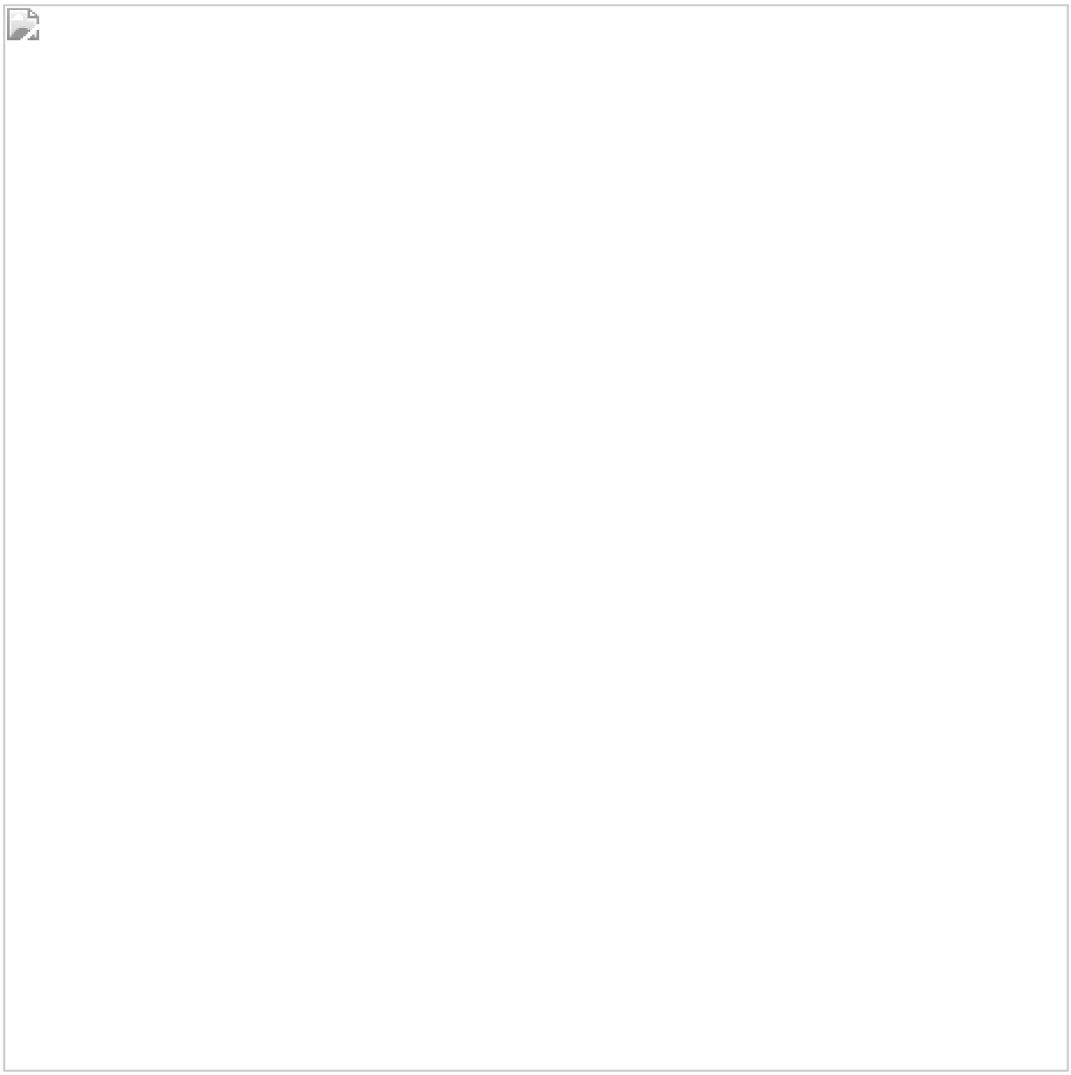


Think about it

1. What happened when the Spirit sprinkled his torch on people?

- ○ They fell asleep
- ○ They grew kind and stopped quarreling
- ○ They ran away

The Cratchits' Christmas



The Spirit took Scrooge to Bob Cratchit's tiny house. Mrs. Cratchit wore a dress turned twice and made bright with ribbons. The children were dancing around the goose.

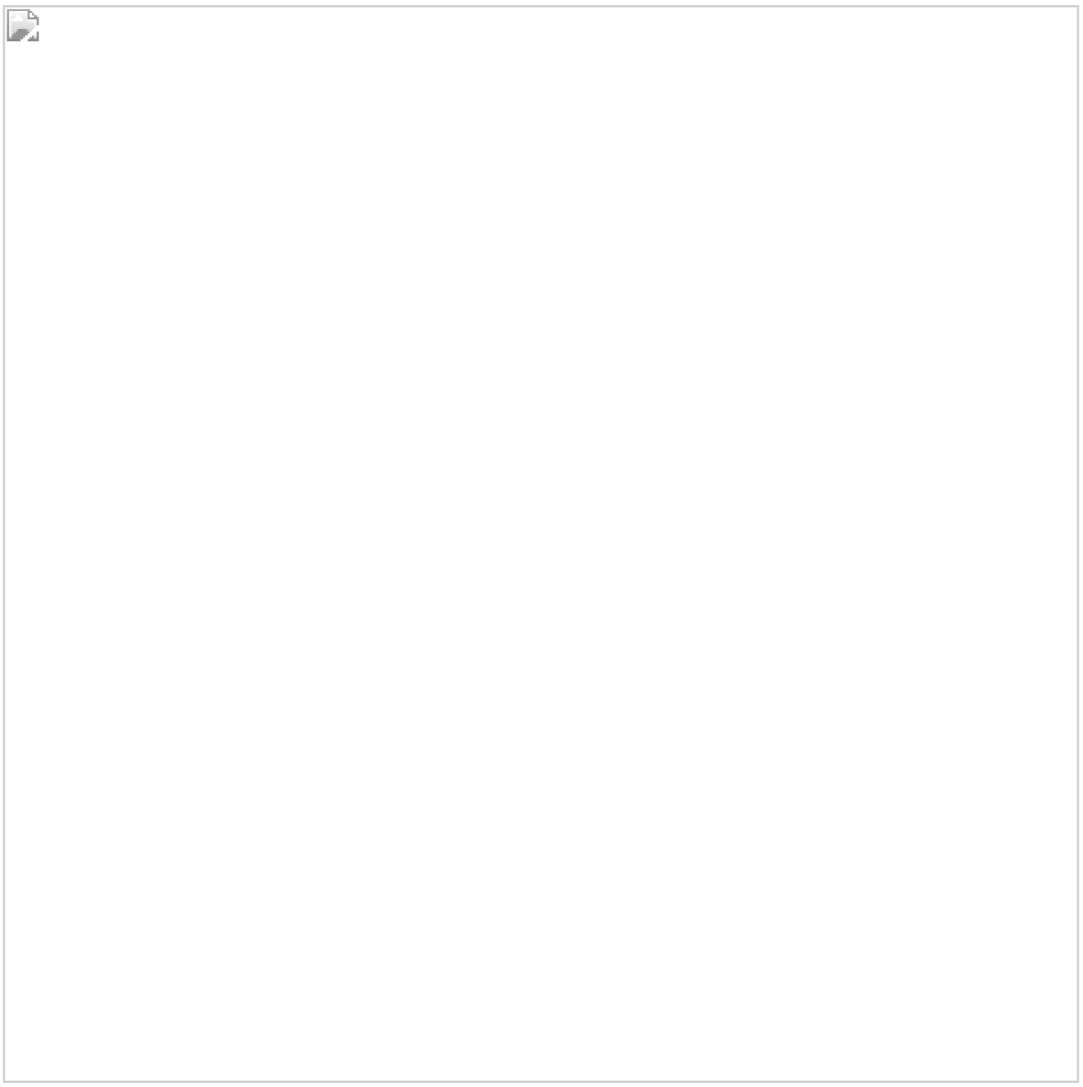
Then Bob came home with Tiny Tim on his shoulder. Tiny Tim had a little crutch, and his legs were held up by an iron frame. He was very weak, but very happy.

Tim hoped people at church saw him, Bob said, because it might help them remember “who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.”

Their dinner was small, but they all said it was the best goose ever. Then Tiny Tim said, “God bless us every one!”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Cratchits had very little, but they were very glad. What made their Christmas so happy?

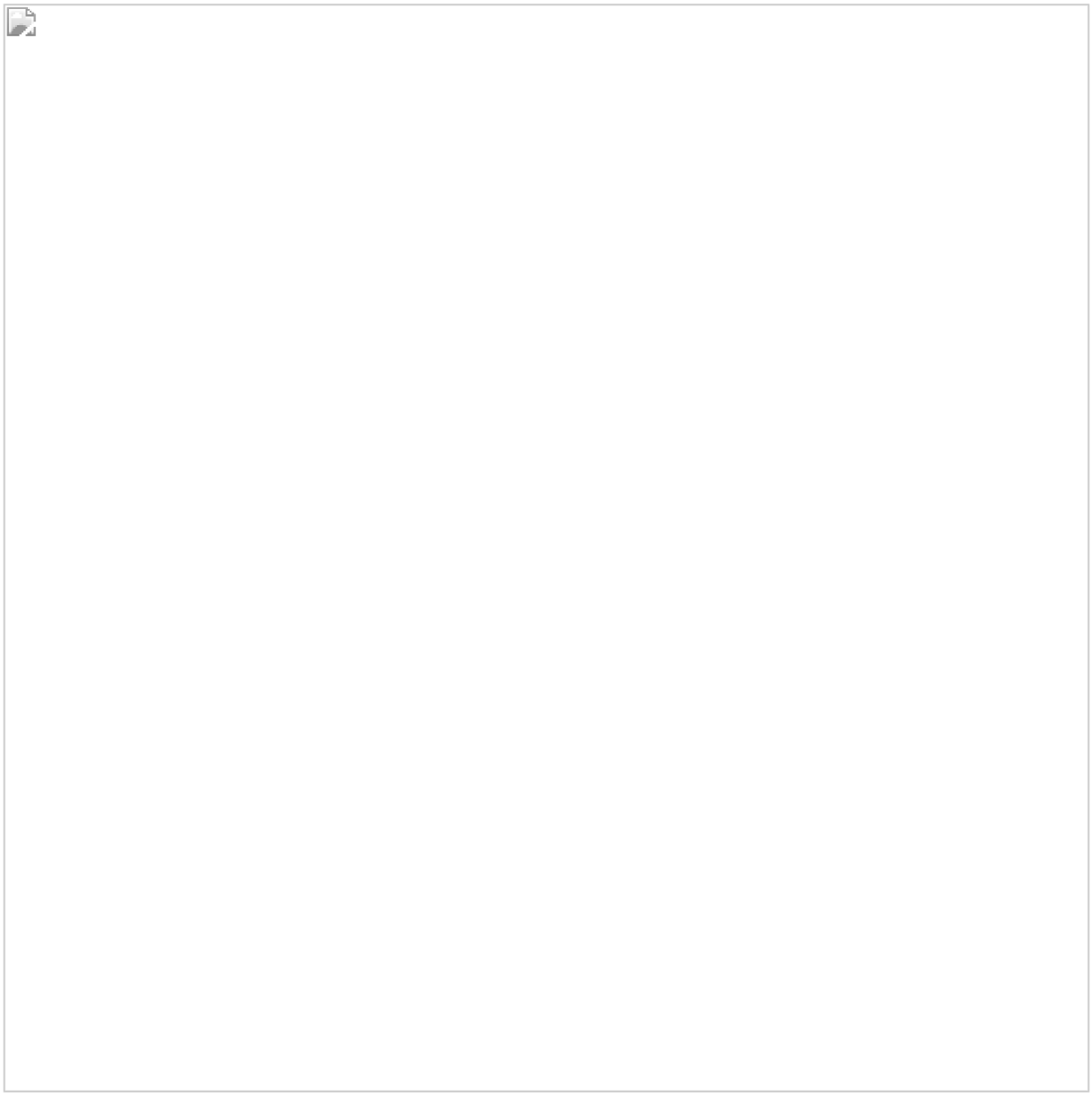


Think about it

1. Whom did Tiny Tim want people at church to remember?

- ○ Scrooge
- ○ Jesus, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see
- ○ Mr. Fezziwig

Will Tiny Tim Live?



“Spirit,” said Scrooge, “tell me if Tiny Tim will live.”

“I see a vacant seat,” said the Ghost, “and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die.”

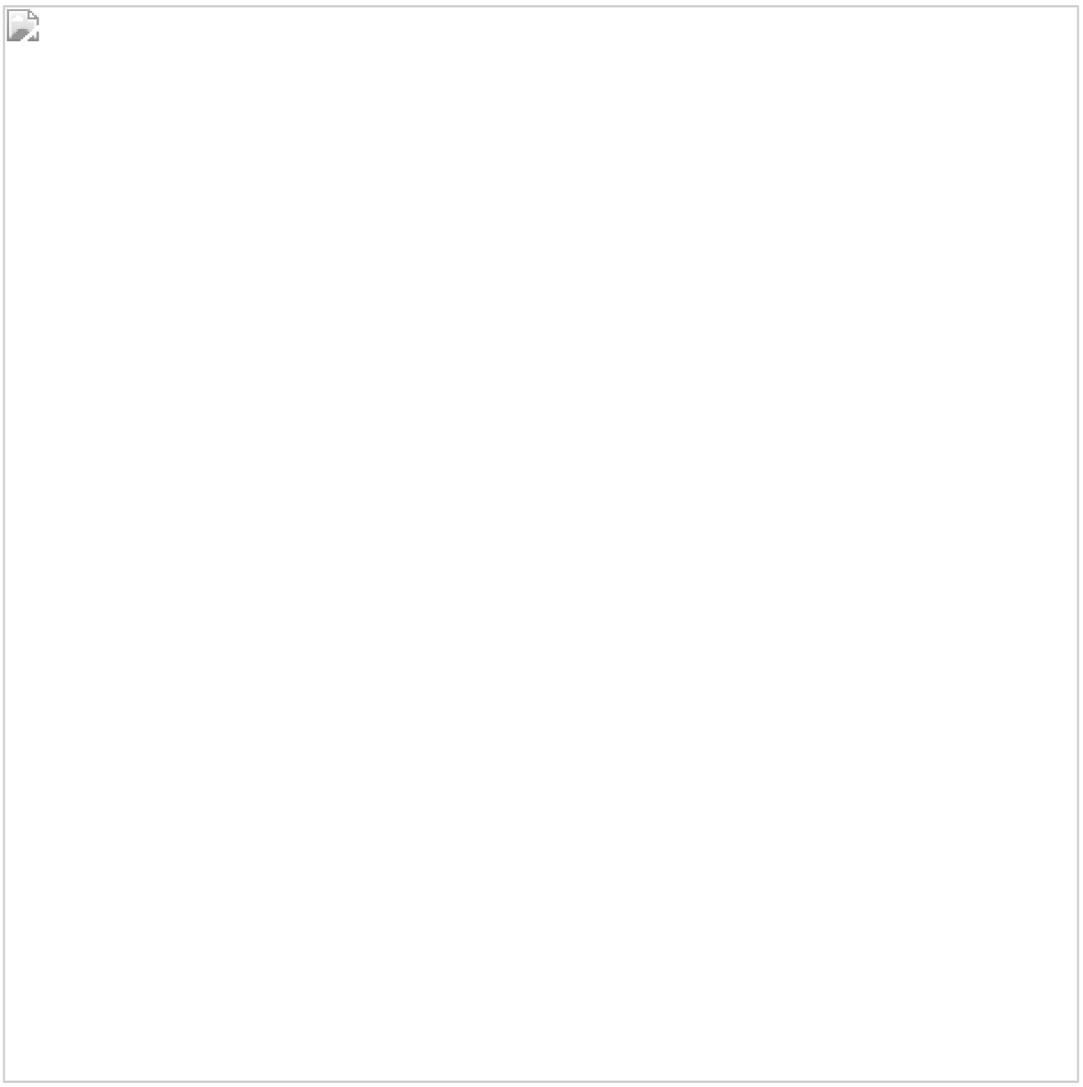
“No, no,” said Scrooge. “Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared.”

Then Bob raised his glass to Scrooge, “the Founder of the Feast.” Mrs. Cratchit did not want to. But Bob said gently, “My dear, the children! Christmas Day.” So she drank to him for Bob's sake, and for the day's.

TALK ABOUT IT

Bob was kind even to Scrooge, his grumpy boss. Why do you think Bob chose to bless him?

Will Tiny Tim Live? · another picture

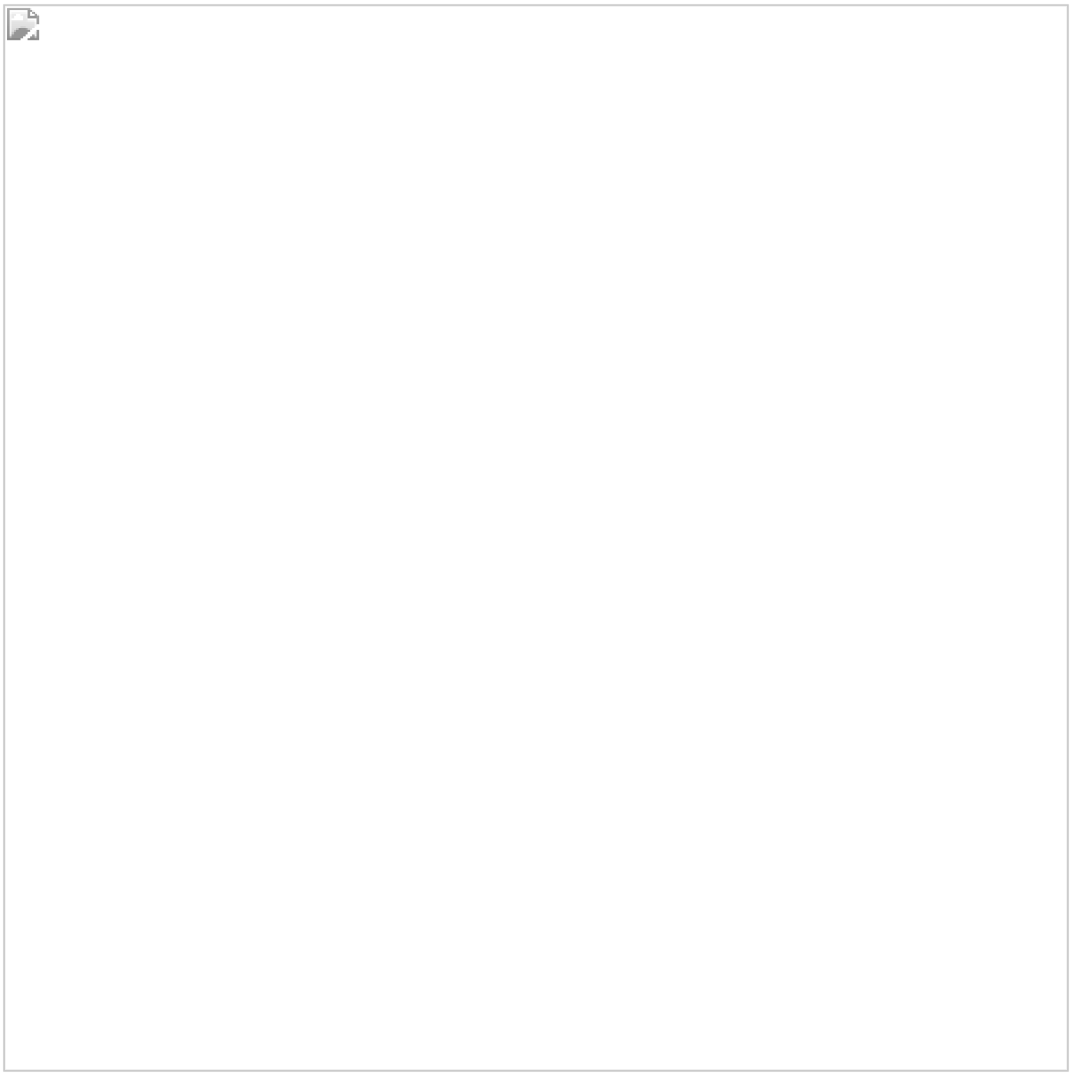


Think about it

1. What did Scrooge ask the Spirit about Tiny Tim?

- ○ If he liked goose
- ○ If he would live
- ○ How old he was

Fred's Party



Next the Spirit took Scrooge to Fred's house, full of laughter. Fred said he felt sorry for his uncle, not angry. “Who suffers by his ill whims! Himself, always.” He would keep asking Scrooge every year.

They played games, and Scrooge, unseen, played along and shouted out the answers.

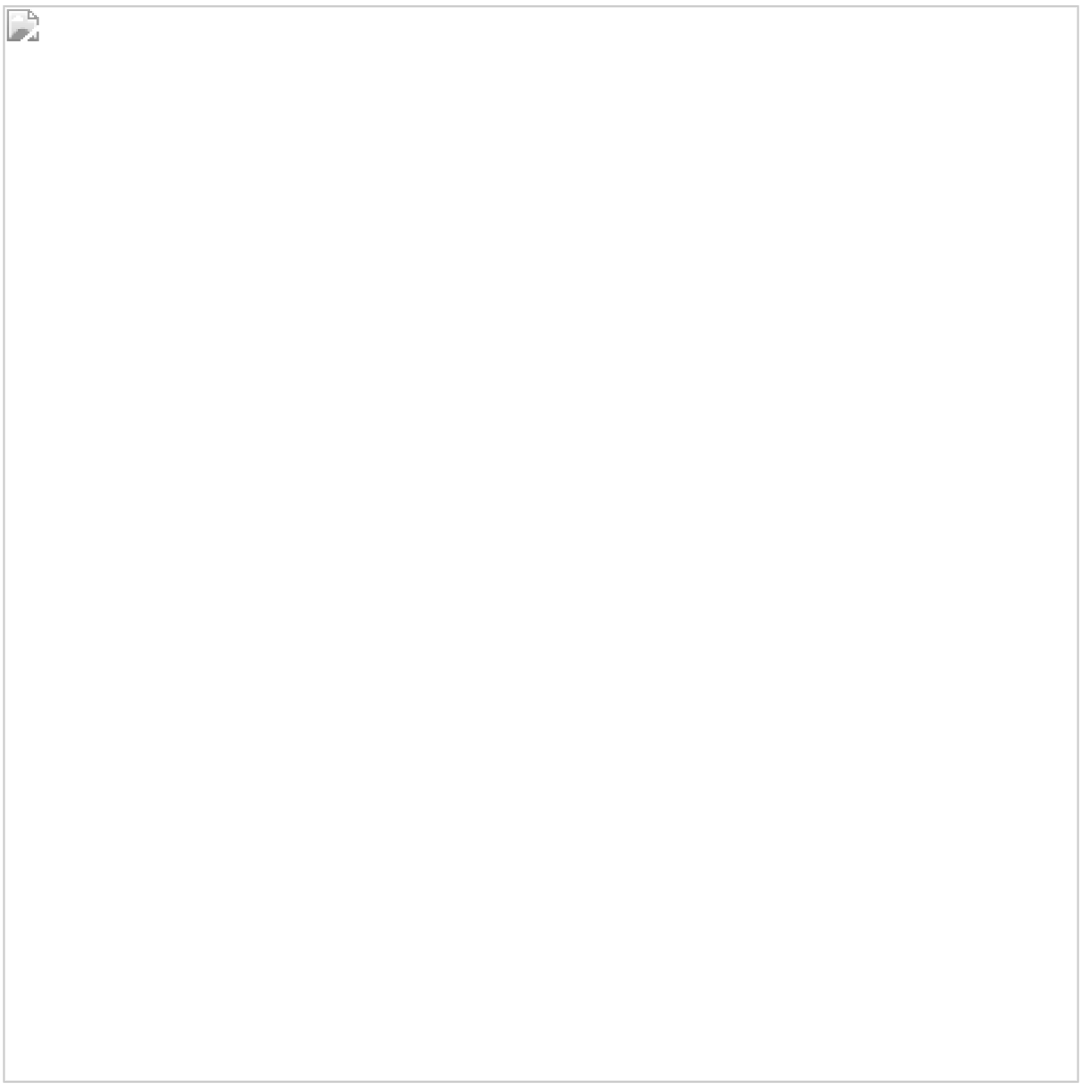
Then the Spirit grew older. From under his robe came two thin, hungry children, a boy and a girl. “This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want,” said the Spirit. They were Man's children, and they belonged to everyone.

“Have they no refuge or resource?” cried Scrooge. The Spirit answered with Scrooge's own hard words from the day before.

TALK ABOUT IT

Fred felt sorry for his uncle instead of being angry. How is that different from being angry?

Fred's Party · another picture

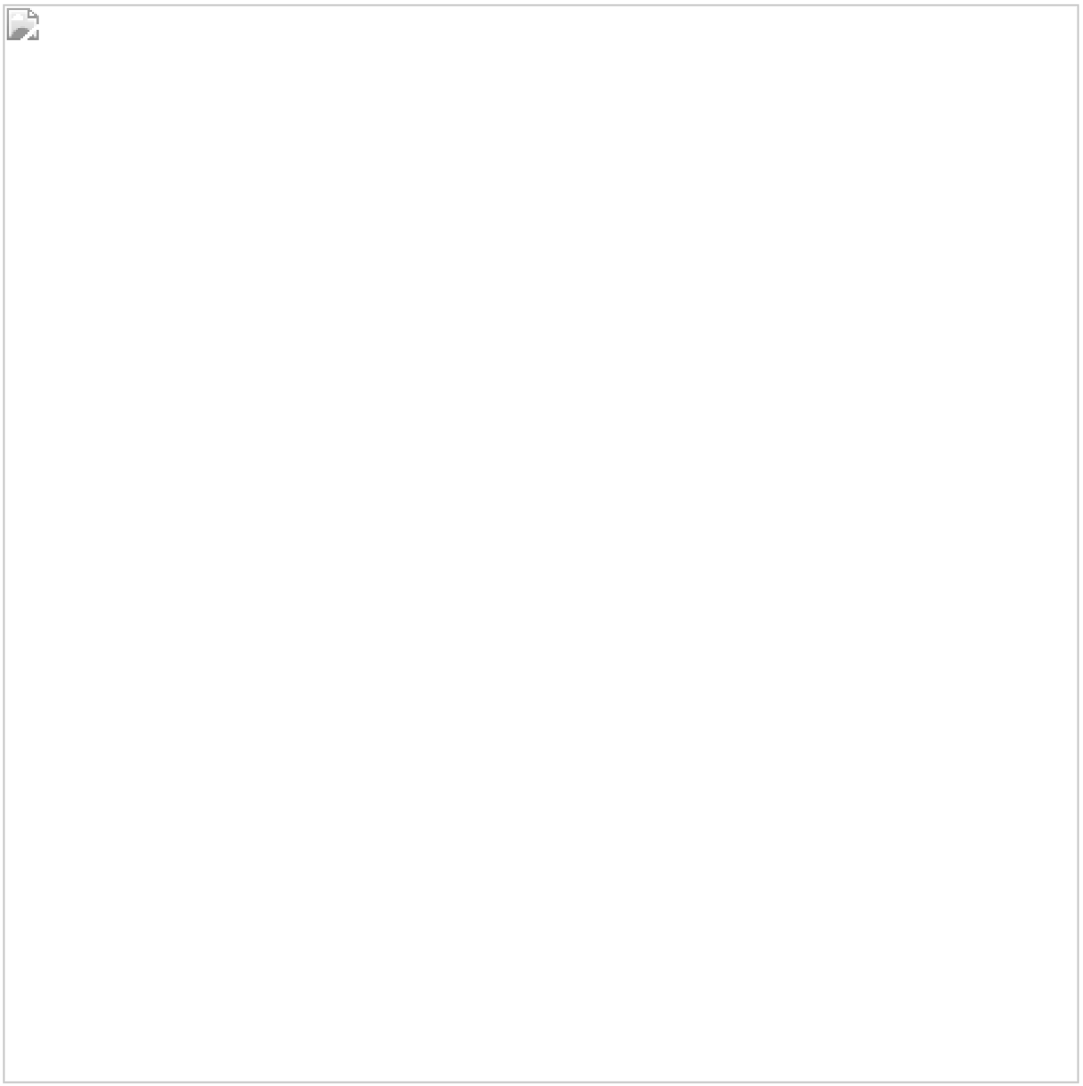


Think about it

1. What did Fred plan to do next Christmas?

- ○ Forget his uncle
- ○ Invite his uncle again
- ○ Move far away

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come



The last Spirit came like a mist, wrapped in black. It never spoke. It only pointed.

It showed Scrooge the days to come. A rich man had died, and nobody was sad or came to say goodbye.

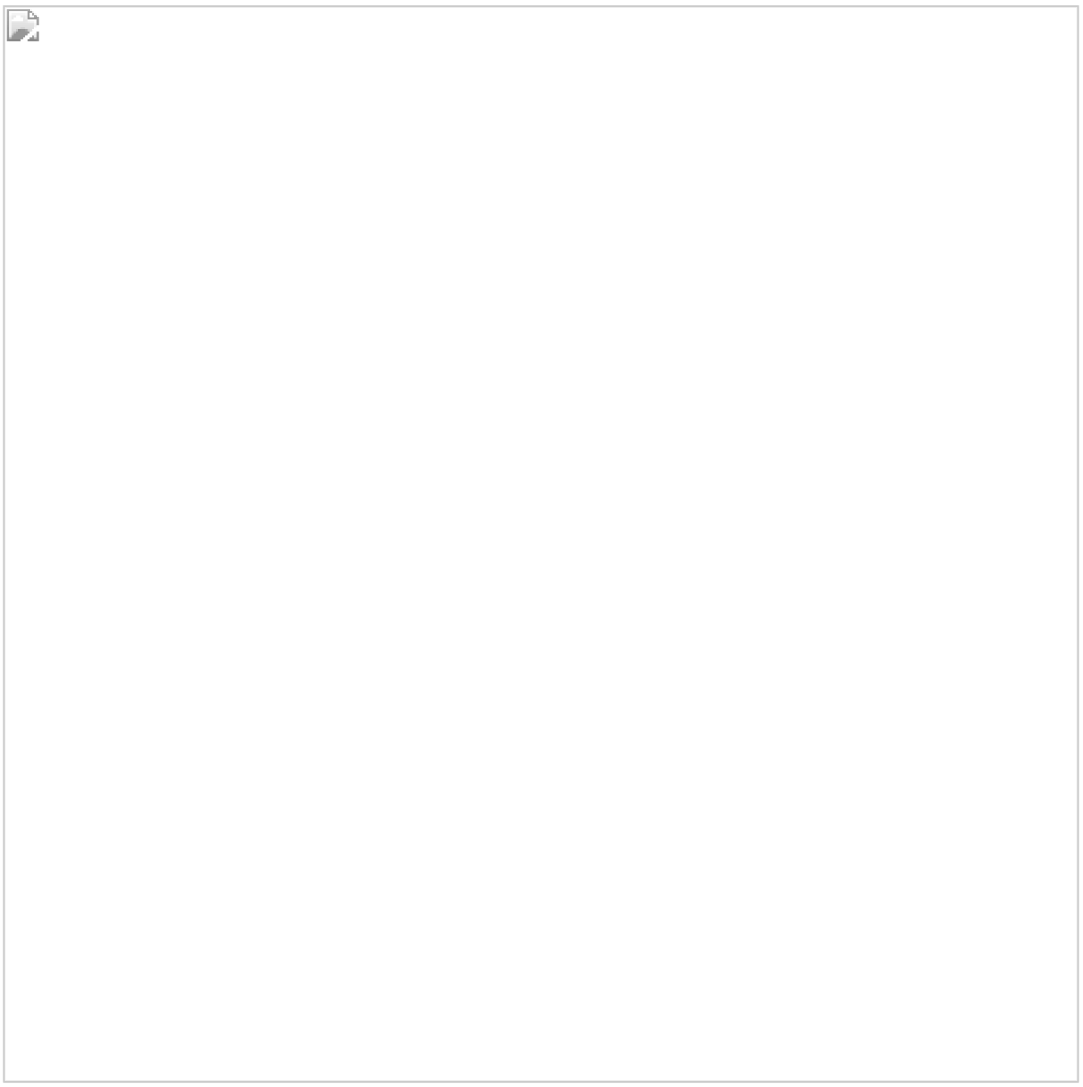
Then it showed the Cratchits' quiet house, and Tiny Tim's little stool, empty by the fire. “I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim,” said Bob. They promised to be kind, because Tim was so patient and mild.

Last of all, the Spirit pointed at a lonely grave. The name on the stone was EBENEZER SCROOGE.

TALK ABOUT IT

How did this part of the story feel to you? Why do you think the Spirit showed Scrooge these hard things?

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come · another picture



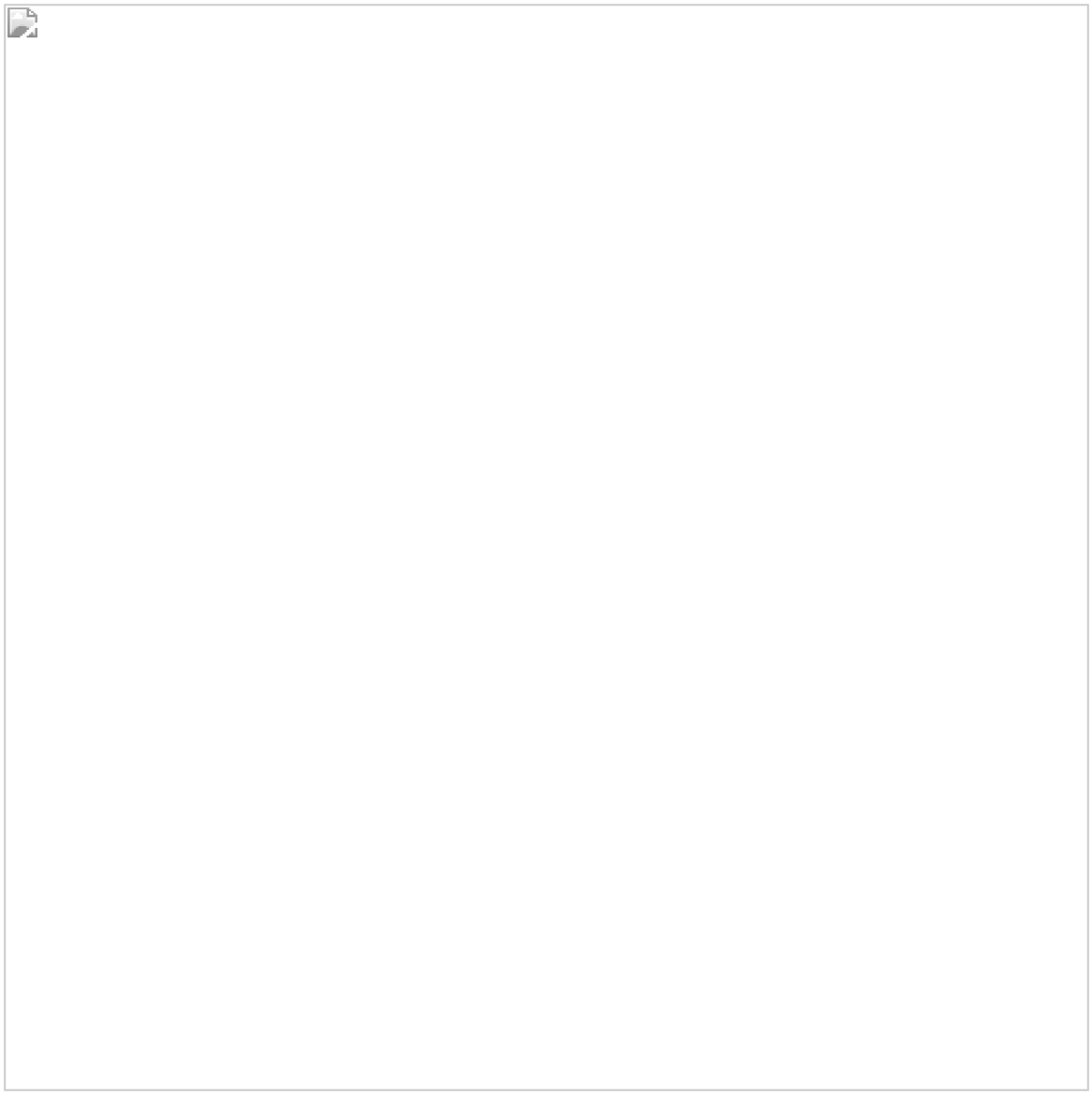
Think about it

1. Why was nobody sad when the rich man died?

- ○ He had never loved or helped anyone
- ○ Everyone was asleep
- ○ He moved away

2. The Spirit showed what might happen. Do you think Scrooge can still change it? How?

I Will Honour Christmas



Scrooge fell on his knees. “Spirit!” he cried, “hear me! I am not the man I was.”

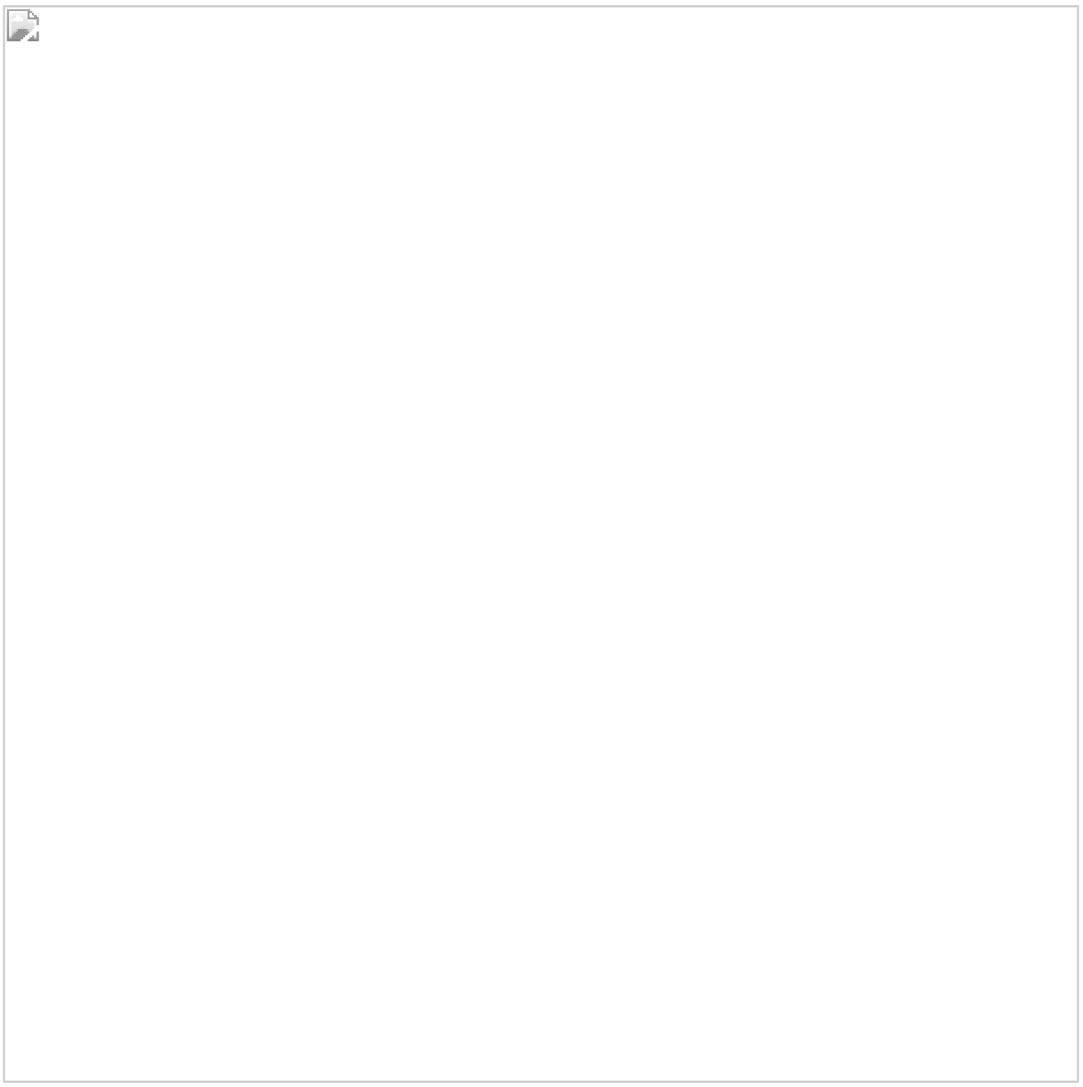
“I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me.”

He held up his hands to pray. And the Spirit shrank and fell and turned into… his own bedpost!

Scrooge was home in his own bed, and the time to make things right was still his.

TALK ABOUT IT

Scrooge made a promise. What did he promise to do?

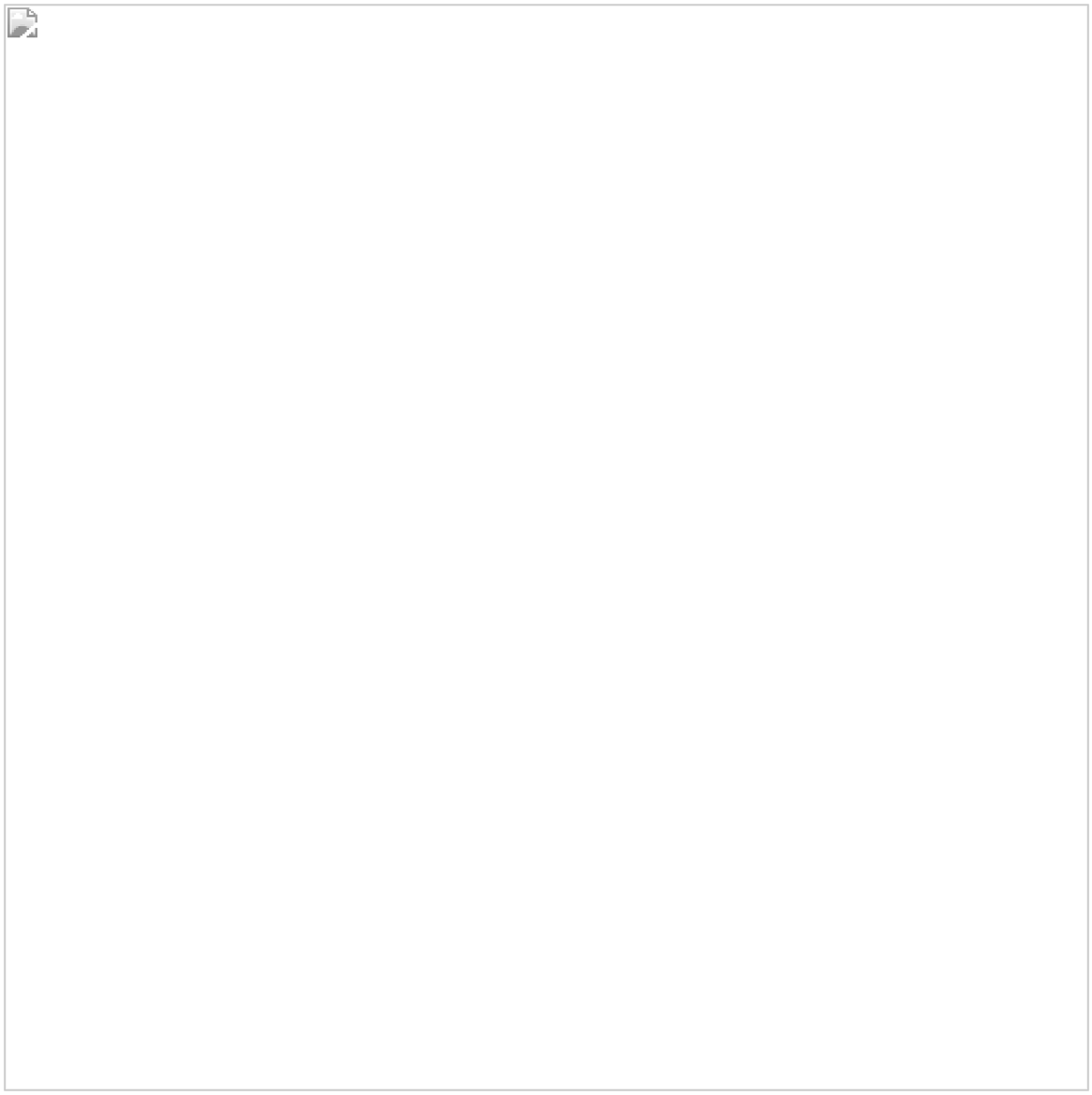


Think about it

1. What did the last Spirit turn into?

- ○ A cat
- ○ Scrooge's bedpost
- ○ A snowman

Christmas Morning!



“I don't know what to do!” cried Scrooge, laughing and crying at once. “I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy.”

He threw open the window. Church bells were ringing. “What's to-day?” he called to a boy below. “To-day!” said the boy. “Why, CHRISTMAS DAY.”

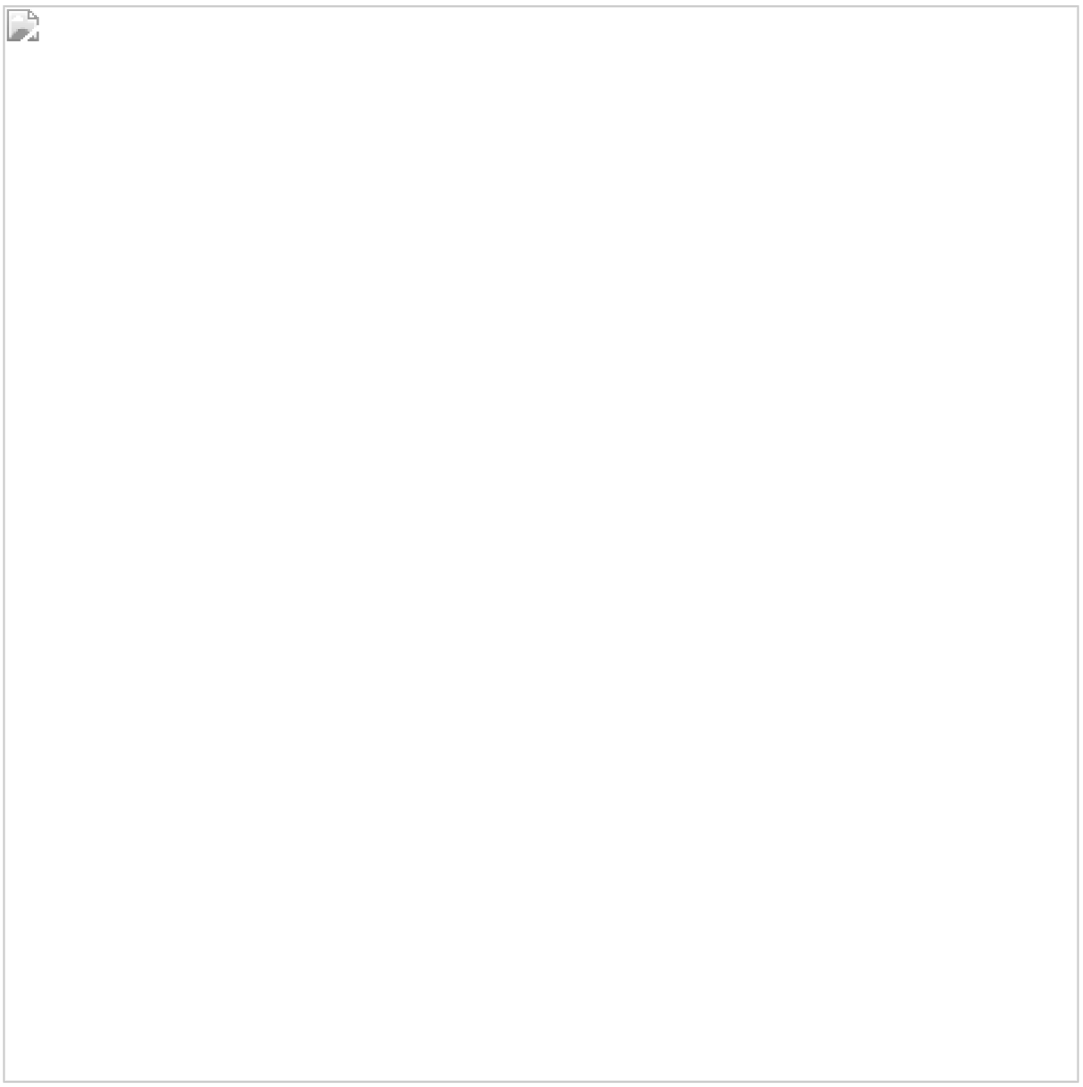
“I haven't missed it,” said Scrooge. He sent the boy to buy the prize turkey, the one as big as the boy himself, and sent it to Bob Cratchit's without saying who it was from.

Then he put on his best clothes and walked out, smiling at everyone he met.

TALK ABOUT IT

Scrooge said he felt as light as a feather. Why do you think changing made him feel so light?

Christmas Morning! · another picture

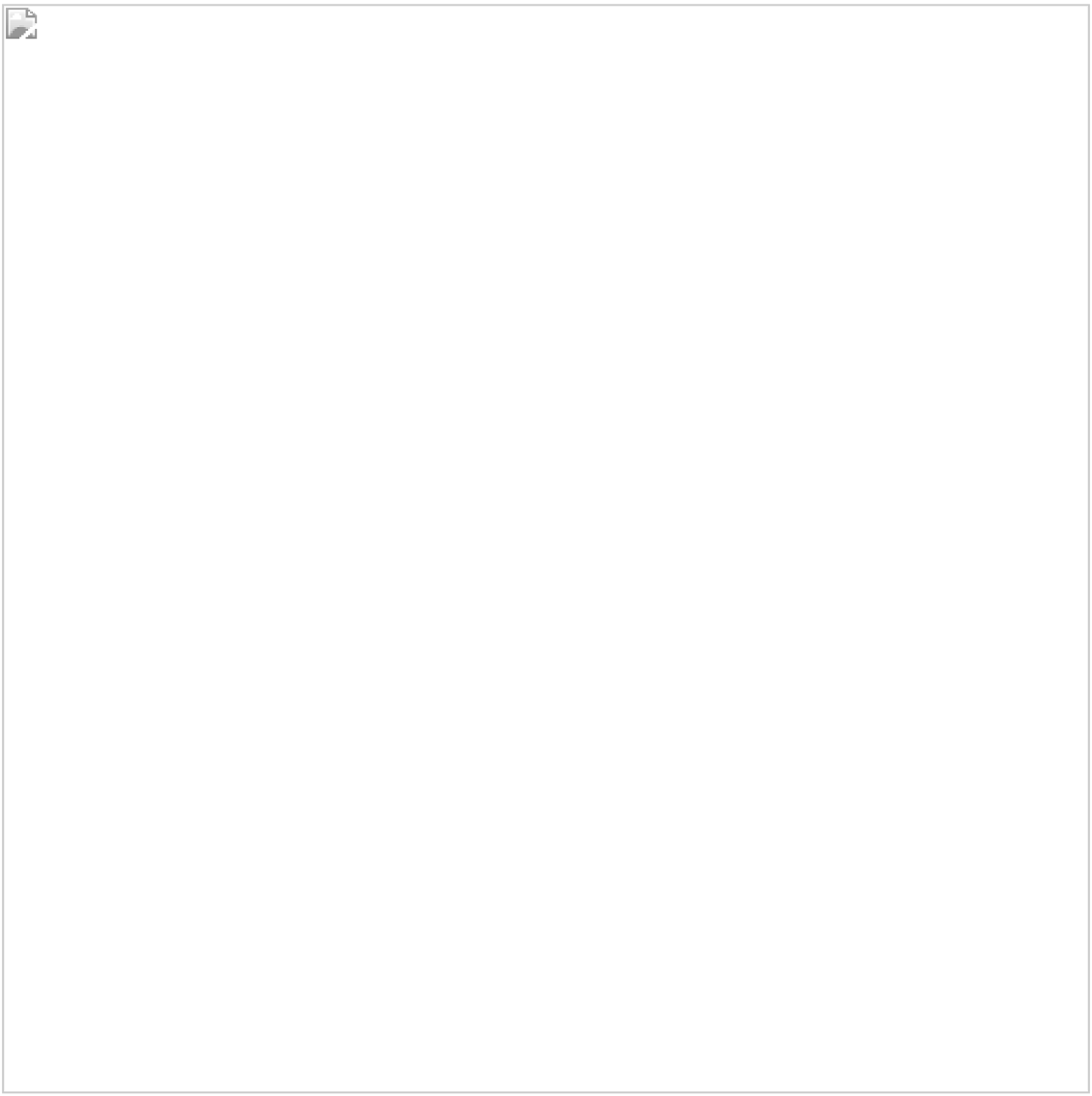


Think about it

1. What did Scrooge send to the Cratchits?

- ○ A letter
- ○ The prize turkey
- ○ A new crutch

Will You Let Me In, Fred?



Scrooge met one of the gentlemen collecting for the poor and whispered a big gift in his ear. The gentleman could hardly believe it.

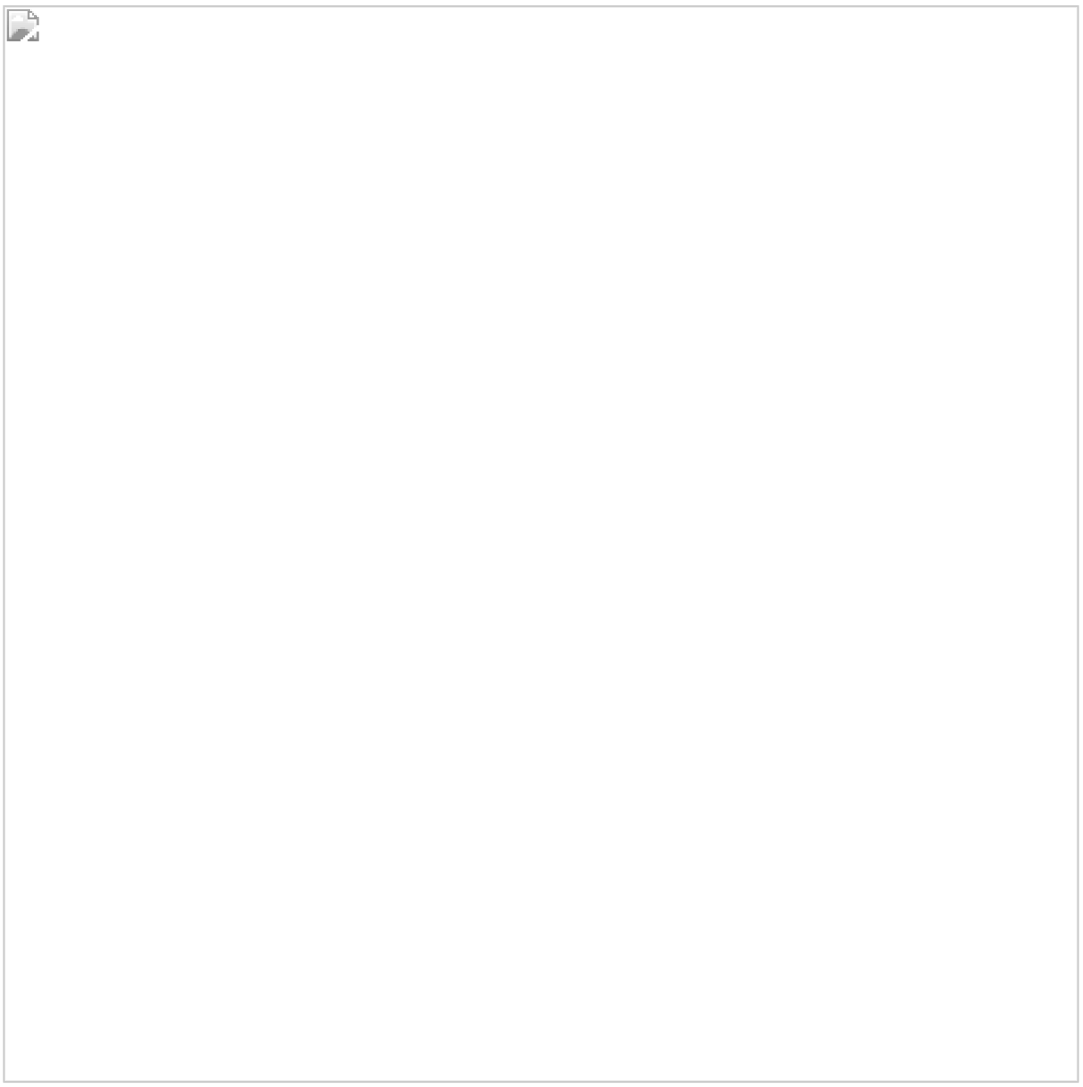
Then Scrooge walked past Fred's door a dozen times before he dared to knock. “Fred!” he said. “It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?”

Let him in! Fred nearly shook his arm off. Everyone was so glad to see him.

“Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, won-der-ful happiness!”

TALK ABOUT IT

Scrooge was nervous to knock on Fred's door. Why might it be hard to say sorry or to come back?

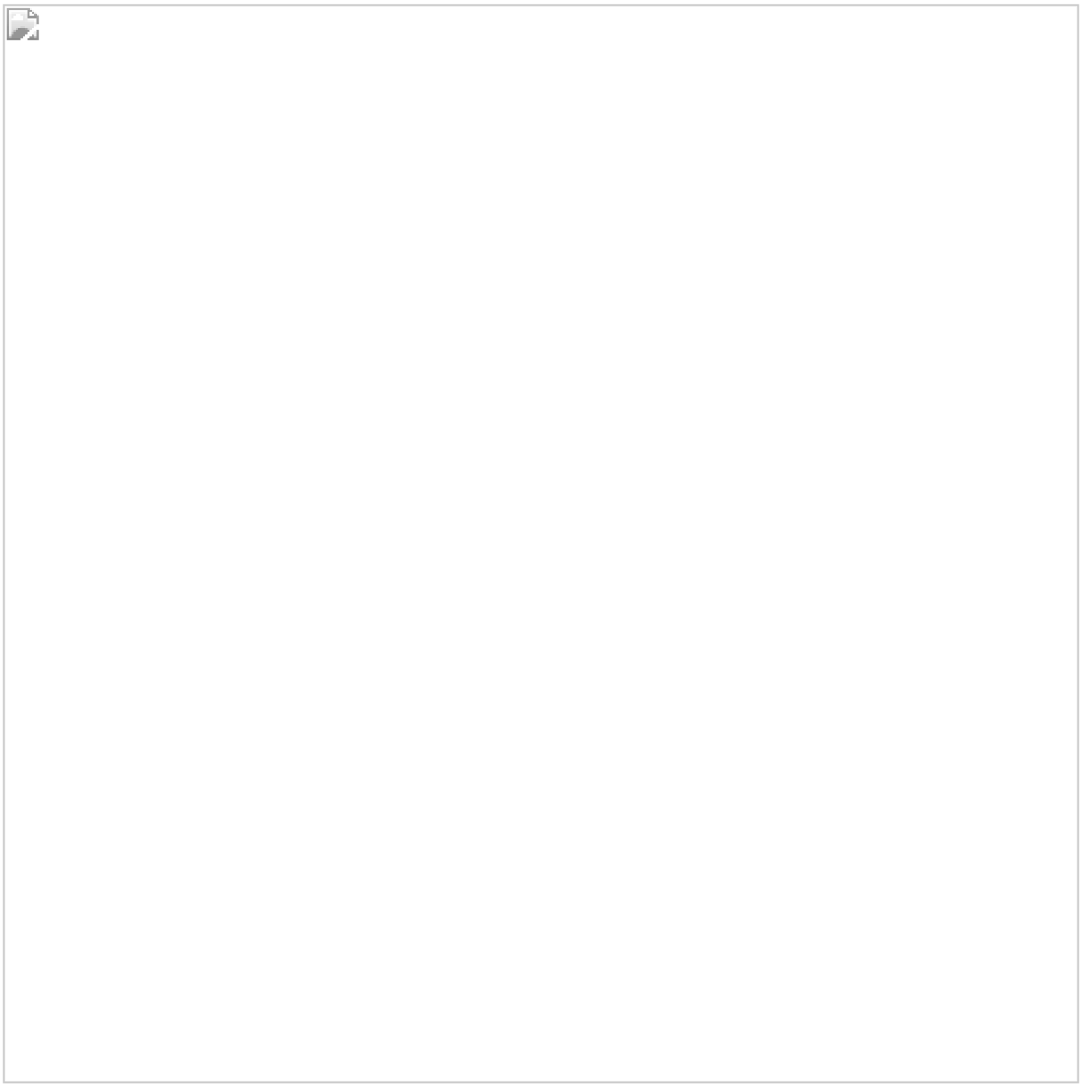


Think about it

1. How did Fred welcome his uncle?

- ○ He shut the door
- ○ He nearly shook his arm off, he was so glad
- ○ He asked him to leave

God Bless Us, Every One!



The next morning Bob came in late, and Scrooge pretended to growl. Then he said, “I am about to raise your salary!” He promised to help Bob's family, and to buy more coal right away.

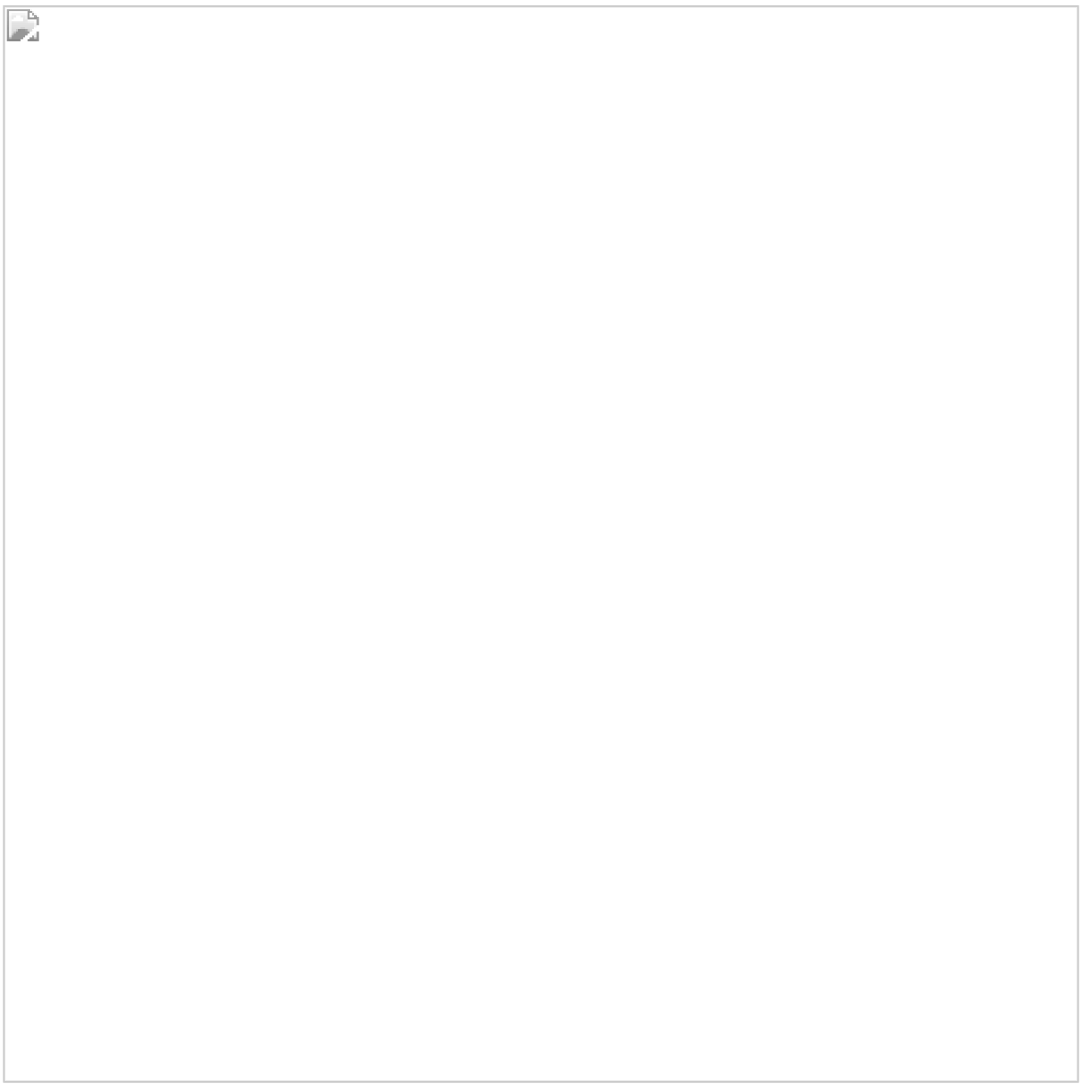
“Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did NOT die, he was a second father.”

He became “as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew.” And “it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well.”

“And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless Us, Every One!”

TALK ABOUT IT

Scrooge kept Christmas in his heart all year. What could keeping Christmas all year look like for you?



Think about it

1. What did Scrooge become to Tiny Tim?

- ○ A stranger
- ○ A second father
- ○ A teacher

2. Scrooge changed because he started to care about other people. Who is someone you could be kind to this week?

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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