

'A Christmas Carol' By Charles Dickens

Chapter 1 - Marley's Ghost

'A Christmas Carol' is an allegory - a story where the characters and events represent particular ideas. Thus, Scrooge represents greed, Bob Cratchit represents the poor and Fred represents the spirit of Christmas.

MARLEY AND SCROOGE

Marley was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. . . Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade.

Scrooge was his **sole** executor, his **sole** administrator, his **sole** assign, his **sole** residuary legatee, his **sole** friend, and **sole** mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event . . .

Scrooge never painted out Old Marley's name. . . The firm was known as Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley, but **he answered to both names**. It was all the same to him.

DESCRIPTION OF SCROOGE

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! **Hard and sharp as flint**, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; **secret**, and **self-contained**, and solitary as an oyster. . .

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. **No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him.**

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you. When will you come to see me." No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blindmen's dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, "**No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!**"

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF BOB CRATCHIT

The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open that he might **keep his eye upon his clerk**, who in a **dismal little cell** beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like **one coal**. But he couldn't replenish it, for Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room; and so surely as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter, and **tried to warm himself at the candle**; in which effort, not being a man of a strong imagination, he failed.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF FRED, SCROOGE'S NEPHEW

"A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!" cried a **cheerful** voice. . .

"Bah!" said Scrooge, "Humbug!"

He had so **heated** himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge's, that he was all in a **glow**; his face was **ruddy** and handsome; his eyes **sparkled**, and his breath **smoked** again.

Marley and Scrooge

The first sentence of the story, informing us of Marley's death is blunt, short and matter of fact. Marley's death is not a sad event. The narrator even makes a joke about the expression 'as dead as a door-nail'. Worse still, Marley's only friend, Scrooge, is not upset by Marley's death.

We learn that no-one cared about Marley - the repetition of the word 'sole' emphasises how friendless he was (the word may also hint that Marley's soul is represented by Scrooge) We also see just how similar Scrooge and Marley are.

Description of Scrooge

Dickens uses a long list of synonyms (words that mean the same) to emphasise how greedy, cold and selfish Scrooge is. Scrooge is a 'sinner', as he does nothing to help others - indeed, he deliberately tries to avoid people. When Scrooge walks the streets everyone avoids him, as emphasised through repetition and, like Marley, unloved. Dickens even suggests that it is better to be blind than like Scrooge.

Impressions of Bob Cratchit

Bob represents the poor who often worked in terrible conditions. Scrooge closely watches Bob - not to check that he is alright, but to make sure that he is always working. Scrooge's refusal to allow Bob to have a decent fire is appalling, although it should be noted that Scrooge's own fire is not much larger!

First impressions of Fred

Fred represents the spirit, joy and generosity of Christmas. His voice is 'cheerful', and he is associated with the colour red ('ruddy') warmth and heat, in contrast to his cold, selfish uncle.

"What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money?"

"I [*Scrooge's nephew*] have always thought of Christmas time . . . as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were **fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures** bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!"

The clerk in the tank **involuntarily applauded**.

"Why did you get married?" said Scrooge.

"Because I fell in love."

"Because you fell in love!" growled Scrooge, as if that were the only one thing in the world more ridiculous than a merry Christmas. "Good afternoon!"

His nephew left the room **without an angry word**, notwithstanding. He stopped at the outer door to bestow the greeting of the season on the clerk, who, cold as he was, **was warmer than Scrooge**; for he returned them cordially.

TWO GENTLEMEN ASK SCROOGE TO GIVE MONEY TO THE POOR

"Are there no prisons?" asked Scrooge.

"And the Union workhouses?" demanded Scrooge.

"The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?" said Scrooge. . .

"I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course," said Scrooge. "I'm very glad to hear it."

On being asked for money, and told that the poor would rather die than go to the workhouses. . . "If they would rather die," said Scrooge, "they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides . . . **It's not my business**," Scrooge returned. "It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen!"

BOB AND SCROOGE

"You'll want all day tomorrow, I suppose?" said Scrooge.

The clerk observed that it was only once a year. . . and Scrooge walked out with a growl. The office was closed in a twinkling, and the clerk, with the long ends of his white comforter dangling below his waist (for he boasted no great-coat), **went down a slide** on Cornhill, at the end of a lane of boys, twenty times, in honour of its being Christmas Eve, and then ran home to Camden Town as hard as he could pelt, to play at blindman's buff.

SCROOGE GOES HOME

Scrooge took his **melancholy** dinner in his usual **melancholy** tavern; and, went home to bed. He lived in chambers which had once belonged to his deceased partner. They were a gloomy suite of rooms . . . **nobody lived in it but Scrooge**, the other rooms being all let out as **offices**.

After Scrooge sees Marley's face in the door knocker and a horse-drawn hearse drive up the stairs beside him. . . he closed his door, and locked himself in; double-locked himself in, which was not his custom. Thus secured against surprise, he took off his cravat; put on his dressing-gown and slippers, and his night-cap; and sat down before the fire to take his gruel.

Fred delivers the novella's main moral messages about the importance of Christmas. He explains that Christmas is to be valued because it is the one time of year when people see themselves as equals, help each other and focus on their spiritual lives rather than money: Christmas is good for the soul! Scrooge only appreciates money: he cannot understand matters of the soul such as marrying for love, rather than wealth, or being cheerful just because it is Christmas. Scrooge seems to have no human feeling, warmth or love for his fellow man. We can see just how generous Fred is, because he doesn't become angry or frustrated with his uncle.

Two gentlemen talk to Scrooge

As a child, Dickens had first-hand experience of poverty and workhouses. His early experiences influenced his writing, and his novels are often concerned with describing the terrible conditions suffered by the poor. Here, Scrooge's lack of pity for the poor is shocking and cruel. Scrooge's argument that the poor are 'not my business' show just how selfish and unchristian he is.

Bob and Scrooge.

We see further evidence of Scrooge's appalling meanness and lack of Christian feeling when he complains about Bob having a day off. Note that Bob doesn't have a coat, just a scarf (comforter) and yet, despite his poverty, still manages to be cheerful and playful.

Scrooge goes home

Everything about Scrooge's life is miserable - his money has not brought him happiness. Rather than enjoying dinner with his warm-hearted nephew, Scrooge prefers a depressing meal in a pub. Also, Scrooge lives surrounded not by people, but by business, as the other rooms in his area are let out as offices.

However, following some spooky events, it seems Scrooge's life is about to change - despite his attempts to double-lock out the world!

It was a very low fire indeed; nothing on such a bitter night. He was obliged to sit close to it, and brood over it, before he could extract the least sensation of warmth from such a handful of fuel.

Scrooge then sees Marley's face in the fireplace tiles, hears the bells in the house ringing and a 'booming' clanking noise

"It's humbug still!" said Scrooge. "I won't believe it."

MARLEY'S GHOST

The chain. . . was long, and wound about him **like a tail**; and it was made (for Scrooge observed it closely) of **cash-boxes**, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel. . .

There was something very awful, too, in the spectre's being provided with an **infernal atmosphere** of its own. Scrooge could not feel it himself, but this was clearly the case; for though the Ghost sat perfectly motionless, its hair, and skirts, and tassels, were still agitated as by the **hot vapour from an oven**.

When Scrooge refuses to believe in Marley. . . the spirit raised a frightful cry, and shook its chain with such a dismal and appalling noise, that Scrooge held on tight to his chair, to save himself from falling in a swoon. But how much greater was his horror, when the phantom taking off the bandage round its head, as if it were too warm to wear in-doors, **its lower jaw dropped down upon its breast!**

"It is required of every man," the Ghost returned, "that the spirit within him **should walk abroad among his fellow-men**, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world -- oh, woe is me! -- and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness! . . . I wear the chain I forged in life . . . I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. . . **My spirit never walked beyond our counting-house** -- mark me! -- in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me!"

"But you were always a good man of business, Jacob," faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.

"Business!" cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. "Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. . . At this time of the rolling year . . . I suffer most. **Why did I walk through crowds of fellow-beings with my eyes turned down**, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode? Were there no **poor homes** to which its light would have conducted me!"

"You will be haunted," resumed the Ghost, "by Three Spirits."

"**I -- I think I'd rather not**," said Scrooge.

The air was filled with phantoms . . . Every one of them wore chains like Marley's Ghost . . . Many had been personally known to Scrooge in their lives. He had been quite familiar with one old ghost, in a white waistcoat, with a monstrous iron safe attached to its ankle, who cried **piteously** at being unable to assist a **wretched** woman with an infant, whom it saw below, upon a door-step. The **misery** with them all was, clearly, that they sought to interfere, for good, in human matters, and had lost the power for ever. . .

Scrooge closed the window . . . **He tried to say "Humbug!" but stopped at the first syllable.**

Despite a number of signs that supernatural forces are at work, Scrooge at this point refuses to believe the evidence of his own eyes and ears. Scrooge simply dismisses both Christmas and the ghostly happenings as 'humbug'

Marley's Ghost

Marley's ghost's appearance is very shocking. The chain that he wears is compared to a tail, almost snake-like (the devil was described as a snake in the Bible) and is made-up with symbols of money and greed, such as the cash-boxes. It is clear that Marley's greed has resulted in him being sent to hell after his death - the infernal atmosphere which surrounds the ghost is the hot vapour from the fires of hell. Marley's horrific appearance reminds us of death and is literally jaw-dropping!

We discover that Marley's sin was that he did not pay enough attention to his fellow man.

Like Scrooge, he ignored other people's suffering, he never thought about anything other than money. In life, Marley had failed to understand what is important - not material wealth but spiritual wealth; he hadn't realised that 'mankind was his business'.

Like Scrooge, Marley was not a good Christian - he did not celebrate Christmas because he did not think about its meaning. Too late, Marley realises that he should have shared his wealth, and visited 'poor homes' just as the 'Wise Men' did when they found Christ in his 'poor abode'.

Scrooge then sees many ghosts, whose suffering reveals what happens when people fail to be caring. Dickens uses emotive language, associated with suffering, to remind the reader that they too will end up in hell if they ignore the poor! Indeed, the misery of the ghosts seems even worse than that of the poor.

Scrooge is clearly affected by what he has seen: he is afraid of being haunted by three spirits and would rather not see them. He is also no longer able to ignore what he has seen and dismiss it as mere 'humbug'.

Chapter 2 - The First of the Three Spirits

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

The curtains of his bed were drawn aside, I tell you, by a hand. Not the curtains at his feet, nor the curtains at his back, but those to which his face was addressed. The curtains of his bed were drawn aside; and Scrooge, starting up into a half-recumbent attitude, **found himself face to face** with the unearthly visitor who drew them: as close to it as I am now to you, and I am standing in the spirit at your elbow.

It was a strange figure -- like a child: **yet not so like a child as like an old man** . . . Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if its hold were of **uncommon strength**. Its legs and feet, most delicately formed, were, like those upper members, bare. It wore a tunic of the **purest white** and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of **fresh green holly** in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with **summer flowers**. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprung a **bright clear jet of light**, by which all this was visible; and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm.

. . . **the figure itself fluctuated** in its distinctness: being now a thing with one arm, now with one leg, now with twenty legs, now a pair of legs without a head, now a head without a body: of which dissolving parts, no outline would be visible in the dense gloom wherein they melted away. And in the very wonder of this, it would be itself again; distinct and clear as ever.

Perhaps, Scrooge could not have told anybody why, if anybody could have asked him; but he had a special desire to see the Spirit in his cap; and **begged him to be covered**.

"What!" exclaimed the Ghost, "**would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give?** Is it not enough that you are one of those whose passions made this cap, and force me through whole trains of years to wear it low upon my brow!"

It put out its **strong hand** as it spoke, and clasped him gently by the arm. . . The grasp, though gentle as a woman's hand, was **not to be resisted**.

SCROOGE'S CHILDHOOD

The city had entirely vanished. . . The darkness and the mist had vanished with it, for it was a clear, cold, winter day, with snow upon the ground. . .

The Spirit gazed upon him mildly. . . "**Your lip is trembling,**" said the Ghost. "And what is that upon your cheek?"

Scrooge muttered, with an unusual catching in his voice, that it was a **pimple**;

They walked along the road . . . The jocund travellers came on; and as they came, Scrooge knew and named them every one. . . Why was he filled with gladness when he heard them give each other Merry Christmas . . . What was merry Christmas to Scrooge? Out upon merry Christmas! **What good had it ever done to him?**

"The school is not quite deserted," said the Ghost. "A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still."

. . . a lonely boy was reading near a feeble fire; and Scrooge sat down upon a form, and wept to see his poor forgotten self as he used to be.

The Ghost of Christmas Past

The first ghost that visits Scrooge makes it impossible for him to ignore its presence. Scrooge is literally forced to look into its face.

The Ghost is described symbolically as it represents:

- youth, as seen its child-like appearance and the summer flowers it wears,
- innocence as suggested by the 'purest white' of its tunic (dress)
- the different ages of man as seen by its aged appearance and the fact that it moves though time
- knowledge as represented by the bright clear jet of light which springs from its head
- memories as seen by its shape which, like memories, at times is vague and changes and fluctuates.

At first Scrooge is reluctant to be in the ghost's presence. When he asks that the Ghost cover its light, this suggests that Scrooge does not want his mind to be illuminated; that is, he does not want to learn.

He also does not want to go with the Ghost. However, the ghost has an 'uncommon strength' and it is clear that Scrooge will not be able to avoid going with it, or learning its lessons . . .

The Ghost then takes Scrooge on a tour through his childhood and earlier life, so that Scrooge is able to see his former self, and see how he changes.

Scrooge's childhood

There is a hint that Scrooge will now be looking at himself clearly as 'the darkness and mist had vanished'. Scrooge is beginning to soften - he is emotionally affected by the trip back to his childhood as a tear appears on his cheek (he pretends it's a pimple). We also see a very different side to Scrooge - as we realise that once he did appreciate Christmas.

Scrooge's earlier comments to Fred about the point of Christmas are repeated here suggest that Scrooge is beginning to realise what good Christmas can do.

Then, with a rapidity of transition very foreign to his usual character, he said, in pity for his former self, "Poor boy!" and cried again.

"I wish," Scrooge muttered, putting his hand in his pocket, and looking about him, after drying his eyes with his cuff . . . "There was a boy singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all."

SCROOGE'S SISTER, FANNY, AND FRED

. . . a little girl, much younger than the boy, came darting in, and putting her arms about his neck, and **often kissing him**, addressed him as her "Dear, dear brother."

"I have come to bring you home, **dear brother!**" said the child, clapping her tiny hands, and bending down to laugh. "To bring you home, home, home! . . . Father is so much kinder than he used to be, that home's like Heaven! . . . **we're to be together** all the Christmas long, and have the merriest time in all the world."

"Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered," said the Ghost. "But **she had a large heart!** . . . She died a woman," said the Ghost, "and had, as I think, children."

"One child," Scrooge returned.

"True," said the Ghost. "Your nephew!"

Scrooge seemed **uneasy in his mind**; and answered briefly, "Yes."

SCROOGE'S EARLY EMPLOYMENT: FEZZIWIG

"Why, it's old Fezziwig! **Bless his heart**; it's Fezziwig alive again!"

Old Fezziwig laid down his pen, and looked up at the clock, which pointed to the hour of seven. He rubbed his hands; adjusted his **capacious waistcoat**; laughed all over himself, from his shows to his organ of benevolence; and called out in a **comfortable, oily, rich, fat, jovial voice**: . . . No more work to-night. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let's have the shutters up," . . .

People who came to the Fezziwigs' ball: a fiddler, Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile, three Miss Fezziwigs, six young followers, all the young men and women employed in the business, the housemaid, with her cousin, the baker, the cook, the milkman, the boy from over the way, the girl from next door but one . . .

There were more dances, and there were forfeits, and more dances, and there was cake, and there was negus, and there was a great piece of Cold Roast, and there was a great piece of Cold Boiled, and there were mince-pies, and plenty of beer. . .

When the clock struck eleven, this domestic ball broke up. Mr and Mrs Fezziwig took their stations, one on either side of the door, and **shaking hands with every person individually** as he or she went out, wished him or her a Merry Christmas.

Scrooge, thinking about Fezziwig. . . Scrooge . . . speaking unconsciously like his former, not his latter, self. "He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. . . . **The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune.**" . . . He felt the Spirit's glance, and stopped. . . . "**I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk** just now! That's all."

The ghosts help Scrooge to feel pity and compassion for people in stages: first he feels sorry for the people closest to him, and eventually he comes to have warmth and feeling for the whole of mankind.

Scrooge firstly feels 'pity for his former self.' This leads him to feel sorry for the 'boy singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night' as he reminds Scrooge of himself as a young boy.

Scrooge's sister

The second person Scrooge is made to think about is Fred. Scrooge is reminded by the ghost that his sister, Fanny, was a very loving young woman. Scrooge was very fond of his sister and is probably 'uneasy in his mind when he thinks about Fred because he realises that he should have been a better uncle to Fanny's son.

Scrooge and Fezziwig

The third person Scrooge is being made to think about is Bob, as Scrooge compares himself to Fezziwig as a boss.

Fezziwig represents the spirit of Christmas. He uses his wealth to spread joy and happiness. Even Fezziwig's appearance suggests generosity, abundance, and feasting. Fezziwig is very generous - his dance is open to everyone it seems wealth, and Dickens uses lists to show how much food and entertainment was laid on. The Fezziwigs also make the effort to show their appreciation to every person who attends their dance. As a young man, Scrooge was obviously very happy in his employment, and his affection for his employer is shown in his delighted exclamation 'Bless his heart'.

As Scrooge remembers what it was like to work for Fezziwig and the importance of making people happy, he begins to think about what a terrible employer he has been to Bob Cratchit by comparison.

SCROOGE AND BELLE, HIS FIANCEE

He was older now; a man in the prime of life. His face had not the harsh and rigid lines of later years; but it **had begun to wear the signs of care and avarice**. There was an **eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye**, which showed the passion that had taken root, and where the shadow of the growing tree would fall.

He was not alone, but sat by the side of a **fair young girl** in a mourning-dress: in whose eyes there were tears, which sparkled in the light that shone out of the Ghost of Christmas Past.

"It matters little," she said, softly. "To you, very little. **Another idol has displaced me**; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve."

"What Idol has displaced you?" he rejoined.

"**A golden one**. . . You fear the world too much . . . You are changed."

She left him, and they parted.

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, "show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?"

"One shadow more!" exclaimed the Ghost.

"No more!" cried Scrooge. "No more. I don't wish to see it. Show me no more!"

The ghost shows Scrooge his former fiancée, now older, married and with children . . . They were in another scene and place; a room, not very large or handsome, but **full of comfort**. Near to the winter fire sat a **beautiful young girl**, so like that last that Scrooge believed it was the same, until he saw her, now a comely matron, sitting opposite her daughter. The noise in this room was perfectly tumultuous, for there were more children there, than Scrooge in his agitated state of mind could count . . . but no one seemed to care . . . when the master of the house, having **his daughter leaning fondly on him**, sat down with her and her mother at his own fireside; and when **he thought that such another creature, quite as graceful and as full of promise, might have called him father, and been a spring-time in the haggard winter of his life, his sight grew very dim indeed.**

Chapter 3 - The Second of the Three Spirits

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT

On seeing light surround his bed . . . he began to think that the source and secret of this ghostly light might be in the adjoining room, from whence, on further tracing it, it seemed to shine. This idea taking full possession of his mind, **he got up softly and shuffled in his slippers to the door.**

It was his own room. There was no doubt about that. But it had undergone a **surprising transformation**. The walls and ceiling were so hung with **living green**, that it looked a **perfect grove**; from every part of which, bright gleaming berries glistened. The crisp leaves of holly, mistletoe, and ivy reflected back the light, as if so many little mirrors had been scattered there; and such a **mighty blaze** went roaring up the chimney, as that dull petrification of a hearth had never known in Scrooge's time . . . Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince-pies, plum-puddings, barrels of oysters, red-hot chesnuts, **cherry-cheeked** apples, **juicy oranges, luscious pears**, immense twelfth-cakes, and seething

Scrooge and Belle, his fiancée

Belle is French for beautiful and the young woman that Scrooge was engaged to certainly was beautiful in mind and body.

Here we see Scrooge a few years older. Greed had begun to take hold of him, and he is no longer the cheerful, happy man he was. As Belle notes, Scrooge has another Idol - 'a golden one' ie. money. Belle is referring to the gold calf of the Bible, which was worshipped as a false god. Scrooge has become a sinner because he is no longer a good Christian who worships the true God. As Belle is poor, she realises that Scrooge would rather not marry her, so she breaks off their engagement. Scrooge does not fight to keep her - he would indeed rather remain single than marry a poor woman. We are reminded of his earlier words to Fred 'Why did you marry?' and his lack of appreciation of love. When Scrooge sees Belle as an older woman, surrounded by her family, he knows that he has made a terrible mistake. The family are not wealthy but they are comfortable and happy. Scrooge begins to weep, his sight grows dim, as he regrets the fact that he could have had a beautiful daughter to comfort him in his old age.

The Ghost of Christmas Present

Scrooge is no longer reluctant to see the ghosts - he wants to see them and learn their lessons, as we see when he leaves his bed to find the second Ghost.

The second ghost is associated with celebration, plenty and joy. It is attractive, and surrounded by living things - holly, ivy, etc - feasts, abundance, light and warmth. Dickens uses lists to emphasise how much food there is and the descriptions are mouth-watering and appealing. The Ghost sits in Scrooge's 'own room' to show Scrooge what his home should - and could - be like! Also, like his room, Scrooge himself goes through a 'surprising transformation'.

bowls of punch, that made the chamber dim with their delicious steam. In easy state upon this couch, there sat a jolly Giant, glorious to see: who bore a glowing torch, in shape not unlike Plenty's horn, and held it up, high up, to shed its light on Scrooge, as he came peeping round the door.

. . .the Spirit's eyes were clear and kind . . . It was clothed in one simple green robe, or mantle, bordered with white fur. This garment hung so loosely on the figure, that its capacious breast was bare, as if disdaining to be warded or concealed by any artifice. Its feet, observable beneath the ample folds of the garment, were also bare; and on its head it wore no other covering than a holly wreath, set here and there with shining icicles. Its dark brown curls were long and free: free as its genial face, its sparkling eye, its open hand, its cheery voice, its unconstrained demeanour, and its joyful air. Girded round its middle was an antique scabbard; but no sword was in it, and the ancient sheath was eaten up with rust. . .

"Spirit," said Scrooge submissively, ``conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learnt a lesson which is working now. To-night, if you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it."

The Spirit shows Scrooge the spirit of Christmas the city and the people's good spirits. They move among the people and the Spirit sprinkles incense from his torch to increase everyone's spirits, especially those of the poor family. . . "Because it needs it most."

It was a remarkable quality of the Ghost (which Scrooge had observed at the baker's), that notwithstanding his gigantic size, he could accommodate himself to any place with ease; and that he stood beneath a low roof quite as gracefully and like a supernatural creature, as it was possible he could have done in any lofty hall.

BOB CRATCHIT AND HIS FAMILY

. . . the Ghost of Christmas Present blessed his four-roomed house!

Then up rose Mrs Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, **dressed out but poorly** in a twice-turned gown, but **brave in ribbons**, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence;

in came little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter exclusive of the fringe, hanging down before him; and his **threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable**; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!

"And how did little Tim behave?" asked Mrs Cratchit, when she had rallied Bob on his credulity and **Bob had hugged his daughter** to his heart's content.

"**As good as gold**," said Bob, "and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that **he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple**, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see."

Mrs Cratchit made the gravy (ready beforehand in a little saucepan) hissing hot; Master Peter mashed the potatoes with incredible vigour; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce; Martha dusted the hot plates; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves,

Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody said or thought it was at all a small pudding for a large family.

Like the Ghost of Christmas Past, this Ghost also has its own light, but here the light has a different function, as it seems to represent celebration and good spirits. The Ghost's is very cheerful. However, it is also very simply dressed - there are no expensive, showy decorations and its chest and feet are bare. This suggests that its message is simple, and plain for all to see - Christmas is a time for joy. However, its lack of shoes also makes us think of the common man - perhaps the Ghost is reminding us to also remember the poor at Christmas. The Ghost also has no sword, showing that it represents peace and good will towards man.

The Ghost is concerned with all men - rich and poor, and it visits a wide range of homes. However, as it says, it is most concerned with the poor, because they are in most need. Dickens gives a clear message to his rich readers about the difficulties and sufferings faced by the poor.

Bob Cratchit and his family

This family are presented very sympathetically to make Dickens' wealthy readers think about their prejudices and attitudes towards the poor. The family are shown to be worthy of our respect because:

- *despite their poverty, they try to make the best of what they have. Mrs Cratchit has pride in her appearance and wears ribbons so that her shoddy dress looks more presentable*
- *they care about each other - and are affectionate*
- *Tiny Tim has a very generous spirit - he is concerned for the spiritual well-being of others and doesn't complain about his own disabilities. Indeed, he sees being a cripple in a positive light, because it might make others think about Jesus.*
- *the family work together as a team and are very polite and supportive of each other*

"God bless us every one!" said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

"Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."

"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, ". . . What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."

Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.

. . . said the Ghost, "Oh God! to hear the Insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!"

"Mr Scrooge!" said Bob; "I'll give you Mr Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"

. . . they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when they faded, and looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting, Scrooge had his eye upon them, and especially on Tiny Tim, until the last

EXAMPLES OF CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Scrooge and the Ghost travel to desolate places. . . they stood upon a bleak and desert moor, where monstrous masses of rude stone were cast about, as though it were the burial-place of giants; and water spread itself wheresoever it listed; or would have done so, but for the frost that held it prisoner; and nothing grew but moss and furze, and coarse, rank grass. Down in the west the setting sun had left a streak of fiery red, which glared upon the desolation for an instant, like a sullen eye, and frowning lower, lower, lower yet, was lost in the thick gloom of darkest night.

"What place is this?" asked Scrooge.

"A place where Miners live, who labour in the bowels of the earth," returned the Spirit. "But they know me. See!"

. . . they found a cheerful company assembled round a glowing fire.

Built upon a dismal reef of sunken rocks, some league or so from shore, on which the waters chafed and dashed, the wild year through, there stood a solitary lighthouse. . . But even here, two men who watched the light had made a fire, that through the loophole in the thick stone wall shed out a ray of brightness on the awful sea.

SCROOGE'S NEPHEW

"Ha, ha!" laughed Scrooge's nephew. "Ha, ha, ha!"

If you should happen, by any unlikely chance, to know a man more blest in a laugh than Scrooge's nephew, all I can say is, I should like to know him too. . . Scrooge's niece, by marriage, laughed as heartily as he. And their assembled friends being not a bit behindhand, roared out lustily.

[Scrooge's niece] was very pretty: exceedingly pretty. With a dimpled, surprised-looking, capital face; a ripe little mouth, that seemed made to be kissed -- as no doubt it was; all kinds of good little dots about her chin, that melted into one another when she laughed; and the sunniest pair of eyes you ever saw in any little creature's head.

"[Scrooge]'s a comical old fellow," said Scrooge's nephew, "that's the truth: and not so pleasant as he might be. However, his offences carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him. . . His wealth is of no

- Despite Scrooge's meanness, Bob is still grateful to Scrooge.

Tiny Tim has a very important effect on Scrooge. Tiny Tim is a pure-hearted representative of Christmas spirit, and as a result Scrooge is moved by him and becomes attached to him. When we see that Scrooge is ashamed to hear his own harsh words again, and visibly distressed to learn that Tiny Tim will die, it seems that Scrooge is beginning to understand that mankind is his business after all. The reader may now think that Scrooge has a chance to be saved, and avoid Marley's fate. When Scrooge keeps his eye on the family, we get the impression that he is really concerned with their welfare and that he will change.

Examples of Christmas Spirit

The Ghost takes Scrooge to a number of terrible places, where ordinary people suffer, such as the mines, a lighthouse and out on a ship on the sea. The purpose is to show the bravery of ordinary people, and their generous spirit in even the most dire circumstances. Again, Dickens shows his wealthy upper class audience the courage of ordinary people.

Scrooge's Nephew

Earlier Scrooge told Fred that he would see him in hell ('in that extremity') before he'd come to dine with him. Now that Scrooge is in Fred's house he can see what he has been missing! Fred is a very generous and cheerful man. His laugh seems almost infectious, as everyone around him also laughs a great deal. It is possible that Fred has never met Fred's wife before, but we can immediately see why he married her - Fred married out of love and given how attractive and pleasant Fred's wife is it seems that Fred made a wise decision, unlike Scrooge who turned down his chance of happiness with a wife. We see how kind, forgiving and thoughtful Fred is here, and it is

use to him. He don't do any good with it. He don't make himself comfortable with it. . . I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us, and he won't come and dine with us. What's the consequence? He don't lose much of a dinner. . . **Fred then says he'll keep wishing Scrooge a Merry Christmas in the hope. . .** If it only puts him in the vein to leave his poor clerk fifty pounds, that's something"

The group go on to play more games. Scrooge gets caught up in the atmosphere and begs the Spirit to be allowed to stay. . . "Here is a new game," said Scrooge. "One half hour, Spirit, only one!"

THE SPIRIT, SUFFERING AND MAN'S 'CHILDREN'

The Spirit stood beside sick beds, and they were cheerful; on foreign lands, and they were close at home; by struggling men, and they were patient in their greater hope; by poverty, and it was rich. In almshouse, hospital, and jail, in misery's every refuge . . . he left his blessing, and taught Scrooge his precepts.

"Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask," said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, "but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. **Is it a foot or a claw!**"

"It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it," was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. "Look here."

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; **wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. . .** They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, **wolfish**; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, **devils lurked**, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has **monsters** half so horrible and dread.

"Spirit! are they yours?" Scrooge could say no more.

"They are Man's," said the Spirit, looking down upon them. "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. **This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want.** Beware them both, and all of their degree, but **most of all beware this boy**, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased."

"**Have they no refuge or resource?**" cried Scrooge.

"Are there no prisons?" said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. "Are there no workhouses?"

Chapter 4 - The Last of the Spirits

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME

The Phantom slowly, **gravely, silently** approached. When it came, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter **gloom** and **mystery**.

It was **shrouded** in a **deep black** garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the **darkness** by which it was surrounded.

difficult to understand Scrooge's attitude towards his nephew. Unlike his guests who openly dislike Scrooge, Fred actually feels pity for Scrooge. He also shows more concern for Bob Cratchit than Scrooge has ever shown.

We can really see the change in Scrooge when he begs the Ghost to allow him to stay!

Man's Children

The Ghost is aging fast, as Christmas comes to an end. Before the Ghost goes, it shows Scrooge 'man's children'. The children - 'Want' and 'Ignorance' are repulsive. The lack of flesh on their bones is a horrible image of poverty, but it also makes them seem devilish and animal-like. They are the appalling result of people not caring for each other:

- 'Want', meaning poverty, is the result of people's selfishness in not helping those in need.
- 'Ignorance', seen as more dangerous, is the result of a lack of education: without education, people are unable to aim for a better way of life or escape their poverty. It may also refer to ignorant, or misguided ideas, about the poor.: those people who support the workhouses and Debtors' prisons, have significantly increased the suffering of the poor.
- In *Stave Two*, Scrooge was only able to feel pity for those closest to himself. Now he feels pity for the whole of mankind - for 'mankind's children'.

Ghost of Christmas yet to come

The Ghost represents fear of death, as suggested by its grim-reaper like appearance and its 'shrouded' garments (a shroud is the cloth used to wrap a dead body in, before burial)

Despite the fact that the Ghost is so terrifying, Scrooge willingly goes with it - he realises that if he is to be saved from hell he must learn from the Ghosts.

``Ghost of the Future!'' he exclaimed, ``I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as **I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart.** Will you not speak to me?''

It gave him no reply. The hand was pointed straight before them.

``Lead on!'' said Scrooge. ``Lead on! The night is waning fast, and **it is precious time to me,** I know. Lead on, Spirit!''

A little knot of business men discuss Scrooge's death. . . . said a great fat man with a **monstrous** chin, "I don't know much about it, either way. I only know he's dead."

"When did he die?" inquired another.

"God knows," said the first, **with a yawn.**

"Well!" said the first. "**Old Scratch** has got his own at last, hey?"

SCROOGE'S POSSESSIONS

They left the busy scene, and went into an obscure part of the town, where Scrooge had never penetrated before, although he recognised its situation, and its bad repute. The ways were **foul** and narrow; the shops and houses **wretched**; the people **half-naked, drunken, slipshod, ugly.** Alleys and archways, like so many cesspools, disgorged their offences of smell, and dirt, and life, upon the stragglng streets; and the whole quarter reeked with **crime, with filth, and misery.**

The charwoman presents a bundle of Scrooge's possessions that she took from his room after his death . . . "If he wanted to keep 'em after he was dead, a wicked old screw," pursued the woman, "why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with Death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, **alone by himself.**"

"It's the truest word that ever was spoke," said Mrs Dilber. "**It's a judgment on him.**"

Mrs Dilber was next. Sheets and towels, a little wearing apparel, two old-fashioned silver teaspoons, a pair of sugar-tongs, and a few boots. Her account was stated on the wall in the same manner. **Mrs Dilber also took Scrooge's bed-curtains and even the good linen shirt he was to be buried in!**

Scrooge listened to this dialogue in horror. As they sat grouped about their spoil, in the scanty light afforded by the old man's lamp, he viewed them with a detestation and disgust, which could hardly have been greater, though they had been **obscene demons, marketing the corpse itself.**

SCROOGE SEES HIS OWN BODY AND MORE REACTIONS TO HIS DEATH

He recoiled in terror, for the scene had changed, and now he almost touched a bed: a bare, uncurtained bed: on which, beneath a ragged sheet, there lay a something covered up, which, though it was dumb, announced itself in awful language. . . .

He thought, if this man could be raised up now, what would be his foremost thoughts? Avarice, hard-dealing, griping cares? **They have brought him to a rich end,** truly!

He lay, in the **dark empty** house, with not a man, a woman, or a child, to say that he was kind to me in this or that, and for the memory of one kind word I will be kind to him. **A cat was tearing at the door,** and there was a sound

The transformation in Scrooge is remarkable. We really sense how anxious Scrooge is to change himself.

Although Scrooge doesn't realise it at this point, we see the consequences of his death.

The business men who knew Scrooge are clearly unaffected by his death. They are disrespectful about him, calling him 'Old Scratch' and one even says they'll only go to the funeral if there's free food!

Scrooge's possessions

We see a part of town that Scrooge has never seen before: this is an extremely poor and squalid neighbourhood, the result of want and ignorance!

We learn that Scrooge's death was lonely, and that he had no-one to make sure that his body and possessions were treated with respect. Mrs Dilber - who actually removed the good shirt from Scrooge's corpse and replaced it with a cheap calico one - says 'it's a judgement on him'. Now, we see the awful consequences of Scrooge's mean-spirited life: in death he falls victim to cruel, ugly people - 'obscene demons' - who have no respect for him whatsoever.

Scrooge sees his own body

Scrooge understands that the man who has died was greedy and avaricious, although he still doesn't realise that he's actually seeing his own body. Scrooge also now realises that money is not as important as friends and family and he comments ironically 'They have brought him to a rich end'. Scrooge has great pity for the man, and is disturbed by the miserable end the man has come to. He also notes, with horror, the sounds of animals presumably eager to feast on the corpse.

of **gnawing rats** beneath the hearth-stone. What they wanted in the room of death, and why they were so restless and disturbed, Scrooge did not dare to think.

"If there is any person in the town, who feels emotion caused by this man's death," said Scrooge quite agonised, "show that person to me, Spirit, I beseech you!"

Scrooge sees a poor family who owe him money. . . "it would be a bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a creditor in his successor. We may sleep to-night with light hearts, Caroline!"

Yes. Soften it as they would, **their hearts were lighter**. The children's faces, hushed and clustered round to hear what they so little understood, were brighter; and it was a happier house for this man's death! The only emotion that the Ghost could show him, caused by the event, was one of pleasure.

TINY TIM'S DEATH

"Let me see some tenderness connected with a death," said Scrooge; "or that dark chamber, Spirit, which we left just now, will be for ever present to me."

They entered poor Bob Cratchit's house . . . **Quiet. Very quiet**. The noisy little Cratchits were as still as statues in one corner, and sat looking up at Peter, who had a book before him. The mother and her daughters were engaged in sewing. But surely they were **very quiet!**

Bob talks about visiting Tiny Tim's grave. . . "I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how **green a place it is**. But you'll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on a Sunday. **My little, little child!**" cried Bob. "**My little child!**"

He broke down all at once. He couldn't help it. If he could have helped it, he and his child would have been farther apart perhaps than they were.

Bob told them of the extraordinary kindness of Mr Scrooge's nephew, whom he had scarcely seen but once, and who, meeting him in the street that day, and seeing that he looked a little -- "just a little down you know," said Bob, inquired what had happened to distress him. "On which," said Bob, "for he is the **pleasantest-spoken gentleman you ever heard**, I told him. "I am heartily sorry for it, Mr Cratchit," he said, "and **heartily sorry** for your good wife. . . . If I can be of service to you in any way," he said, giving me his card, "that's where I live. Pray come to me."

Mrs Cratchit kissed him, his daughters kissed him, the two young Cratchits kissed him, and Peter and himself shook hands. Spirit of Tiny Tim, **thy childish essence was from God!**

SCROOGE'S GRAVE

A churchyard. Here, then, the wretched man whose name he had now to learn, lay underneath the ground. It was a worthy place. Walled in by houses; **overrun by grass and weeds**, the growth of vegetation's death, not life; choked up with too much burying; fat with repleted appetite. A worthy place!

Scrooge realises that he has witnessed the consequences of and reactions to his own death . . . "Spirit!" he cried, tight clutching at its robe, "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. I will not shut

Scrooge is very distressed by the loneliness of the man's death. When he asks to see someone who 'feels emotion' at the man's death he is shown 'pleasure' - a poor family who owed Scrooge money are quietly pleased by his death. Whoever the family end up owing money to, they are unlikely to be as hear-hearted as Scrooge, who had presumably threatened them with prison unless they paid off their debts quickly.

Tiny Tim's death

Scrooge seems to have lost faith in humanity and asks to be shown 'tenderness connected with a death'. Thus, he is shown the consequences of Tiny Tim's death. Whereas before the family were loud, chaotic and joyful, now the whole family is quiet and subdued. The silence is unusual and emphasised by repetition. Bob is obviously devastated by his son's death, as shown by the simply heartfelt cry 'My little child! and his struggle to keep control of his emotions. Bob has also promised to regularly visit Tim's grave and although Tim's grave isn't described in detail, we get the impression that it is well cared for. We also learn of Fred's kindness, who on learning of Tim's death says he is 'heartily sorry' and offer to help in any way he can. Finally, we are told that Tim's essence was from God, reminding us again that Tim is a symbol of the just and deserving poor and of Christmas spirit.

Scrooge's grave

Scrooge asks to know the identity of the man he has seen lying dead. Finally we see where Scrooge is buried and Scrooge learns that the man upon the bed was indeed himself. Unlike that of Tiny Tim's, the grave is uncared for, and forgotten. Scrooge's final resting place is indeed grim. By the end of the final Ghost's visit, Scrooge has come to fully appreciate the value of Christmas and to live by these ideals 'all the year'.

out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone!"

Chapter 5 - The End of it

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect Laocoön of himself with his stockings. "I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a school-boy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to every-body! A happy New Year to all the world!"

Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh. **The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs!**

Scrooge's first act of kindness is to arrange for a huge turkey to be sent to Bob Cratchit's house. . .

He dressed himself all in his best, and at last got out into the streets. . . walking with his hands behind him, Scrooge regarded every one with a **delighted smile**. He looked so **irresistibly pleasant**, in a word, that three or four good-humoured fellows said, "Good morning, sir! A merry Christmas to you!"

After giving a large sum of money to the men that he had asked him for a donation to charity the previous day Scrooge walks among the people. . . He went to church, and walked about the streets, and **watched the people** hurrying to and fro, and **patted children** on the head, and **questioned beggars**, and looked down into the kitchens of houses, and up to the windows: and found that everything could yield him pleasure. He had never dreamed that any walk -- that anything -- could give him so much happiness.

Scrooge then goes to visit his nephew. . . "It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?"

Let him in! It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off. He was at home in five minutes. Nothing could be heartier. His niece looked just the same. So did Topper when he came. So did the plump sister when she came. So did every one when they came. Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, **won-der-ful happiness!**

Scrooge and Bob Cratchit. . . "A merry Christmas, Bob!" said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. "A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit."

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**, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh. . . **His own heart laughed**: and that was quite enough for him.

And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!

The end of it

This short Stave provides an optimistic and upbeat conclusion to the story, showing Scrooge starting off his new life with a comic display of happiness and Christmas cheer.

It also finishes off the novella well, by revisiting many of the ideas of Stave One, and giving the story a symmetrical structure. Scrooge encounters the same people he treated with cruelty in Stave One, only this time, Scrooge sets things right:

He sends a turkey to the Cratchits and gives Bob a raise, to make up for years of poor pay. Scrooge also asks Bob to order more coals where previously, in Stave One, he forced Bob to suffer in the cold.

He goes out into the streets and, rather than avoiding people, he walks 'abroad among his fellow-men' -he shows an interest in mankind. He also goes to church, suggesting that he is, once more, a good Christian.

He apologises to the portly gentleman he meets on the street and promises large contributions for his charity - in Stave One he threw him out of his counting-house.

Scrooge also happily attends Fred's party, where, before the ghostly visits, he had told Fred that he would see him in hell before coming to the party. The last comment is significant, as Scrooge has quite literally escaped hell by going to the party: if Scrooge had continued in his cold, cruel ways he would indeed have ended up in hell!

Scrooge is a saved man who discovers tremendous joy and laughter. It is appropriate that the novella ends with Tiny Tim's words, as Tim had such an effect on Scrooge. The words also communicate the love for our fellow man and good cheer which Scrooge comes to embrace.