



Christmas at the Movies: Grinch

Genesis 1–2

November 12, 2023

DAILY DEVOTION

Find a rhythm in God's word this week! Follow this 5-day plan on your own or with your group!

<https://my.bible.com/reading-plans/29941>

INSPIRATION

Lord, I need to talk to you, there's so much on my heart.
So many burdens makes it hard to know just where to start.
Thank you for your family, your mercy, and your love,
Now on to more important things, I'll give my magic lamp a rub!
—Larry & Lesa Bryant, "Never-Ending Shopping List"

ICE BREAKER

- Here's a link to the Larry Bryant version of the song "Never-Ending Shopping List": [Never-Ending Shopping List -- Larry Bryant - YouTube](#)
 - The song pokes fun at a materialistic view of prayer, but is appropriate for this season as well. How has your own perception of the meaning or purpose of Christmas changed throughout your life?
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DEEP DIVE

The First Christmas Day

Read Luke 2:8–16

How did God choose to celebrate the birth of his son on earth? Why do you think he chose to reveal this to shepherds rather than to the rulers of Rome and Judea? If God had revealed his son's birth to rulers and kings, what do you think their response might have been? (Hint: consider how Herod responded.)



The Original Gift Givers

Read Matthew 2:9–12.

The Magi (or Wise Men) were probably prominent leaders or priests from a group of Jews who wound up settling somewhere between Judea (modern-day Israel) and Babylon after the exile. This would explain why they knew so much about the prophecy of a Messiah. Why were these Magi so motivated to shower such lavish gifts on a newborn and his earthly family? What is the significance of each gift, and how might those gifts have been helpful for the young family?

Letting Go

Read Matthew 19:16-22.

What is the rich young man's conception of "goodness" based on? Why do you think the rich man asked Jesus which commandments he had to keep? Was he trying to get out of keeping some of the Ten Commandments, or was he trying to sort through the "noise" of the 600-plus legalistic commands the religious leaders ascribed to? How did Jesus shatter the rich man's perception of what it took to inherit eternal life?

Repentance Overrules Rules

Read Colossians 3:5 and Ephesians 4:22–24.

What is the difference between what the apostle Paul teaches in these two passages and the rich man's perspective from the previous passage? How does Jesus's answer to the rich man compare to what Paul teaches here? If you had to sum up Jesus's and Paul's teachings from these three passages (Matthew, Colossians, and Ephesians) in one sentence, what would you say?

De-Grinching Ourselves

Read Acts 2:38 and 2 Corinthians 5:17

What is the response God wants from you? Which do you think might be the easier path: keeping a bunch of rules, or living your life in such a way that keeping the rules becomes "second nature" for you? If you've been baptized, that is, immersed into Christ, how has that made a difference in your spiritual walk? If you've not made your own decision to be baptized, what are your expectations if you do choose to make that choice? If you have any questions, your leaders or the church staff would be glad to talk with you more.

Additional Study

If you have time during your Small Group or you want to study more about the message topic, read and consider the following passages:



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- Luke 6:37–38; Acts 20:32–37
 - Isaiah 60:1–7 (Traditional Old Testament prophecy of the star and the Magi)
 - Isaiah 1:16–20; 43:14–28
 - Isaiah 61:1–11 (Traditional passage associated with the third Sunday of Advent)
 - Romans 6:1–14; Galatians 3:26–28 (Paul’s explanations of baptism/immersion)
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NEXT STEPS

1. How are you going to apply the lessons learned in the message this week?
 2. What can you do to encourage someone in your group to take their next step?
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PRAYER

1. After sharing prayer requests, pray for the person on your right. Pray for that person throughout the week.
 2. Is there someone in your group that could use a prayerful reminder that God is present in their lives?
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SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY

Establish a regular rhythm of serving together! Below are some service opportunities.

- BENSON - Local Mission Partner is ABIDE. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- MILLARD - Local Mission Partner is Heartland Hope. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- FREMONT - Local Mission Partner is LifeHouse. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- OMAHA - Local Mission Partner is Open Door Mission. Contact Lyndsey Deyoe for more information.
- Or get to know your community! Seek out service opportunities in your area.