



# Ghost of Christmas Past

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<sup>18</sup> “Come now, let’s settle this,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make them as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, I will make them as white as wool.”  
Isaiah 1:18 NLT

## 1. Struggling with the ghosts of our past sins

- Try to bury and forget them
- Beat ourselves up or blame others

*My guilt overwhelms me - it is a burden too heavy to bear.*  
Psalm 38:4 NLT

## 2. We can’t earn our forgiveness, it is a gift

<sup>12</sup> I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength to do his work. He considered me trustworthy and appointed me to serve him, <sup>13</sup> even though I used to blaspheme the name of Christ. In my insolence, I persecuted his people. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. <sup>14</sup> Oh, how generous and gracious our Lord was! He filled me with the faith and love that come from Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” - and I am the worst of them all. 1 Timothy 1:12-15 NLT

## 3. Mary had ghosts from her past

- Pregnant before she was married
- Mary wasn’t the sinner at Christmas

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. <sup>28</sup> Gabriel appeared to her and said, “Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!” <sup>29</sup> Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. <sup>30</sup> “Don’t be afraid, Mary,” the angel told her, “for you have found favor with God!” <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!” <sup>34</sup> Mary asked the angel, “But how can this happen? I am a virgin...” <sup>38</sup> Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then the angel left her. Luke 1:26-34,38 NLT

## 4. We fight the ghosts of our past with the truth of Jesus’ love and forgiveness

- God has already forgiven you, you just have to believe it and receive it
- God wants to turn it around for good

### Next Steps:

- I believe that Jesus lived and died to take away my sins. I receive God’s forgiveness for all of my sins.
- Let go of the ghosts from my past and focus on God’s amazing grace and forgiveness to me
- Trust in God that he will turn the hard things from my past into something good
- Read Mary’s part of the Christmas story (Luke 1)
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