

How Christmas Stole the Grinch's Heart

In the comic strip *Geech*, the conversation between Artie and Geech goes this way:

Artie: Do you read much *Geech*?

Geech: Yeah, all the time.

Artie: Really? What kind of books are your favorite?

Geech: Medical.

Artie: Medical? Wow! Any particular kind?

Geech: Dr. Seuss.

One reason why Dr. Seuss has become so popular is not only his ability to hit it off with kids but also a quality that enables grown-ups to appreciate them as well.

- Stories are simple, charming child-like tales that suddenly become meaningful in deep ways.
 - Like a Trojan horse or wise cat in an otherwise empty hat, they sneak up on us and they become updated parables of lessons that speak to a modern world suited for our time.
- Kind of like our parents
 - They tell us something and we sometimes don't listen to what they are saying or don't believe what they are saying but if someone else tells us the exact same thing we listen to them.
 - We hear truths in different ways: books, stories, talking animals in movies.
 - Truth is where YOU find it!

How the Grinch Stole Christmas is one of Dr. Seuss' biggest hits. (book and movie that can be seen every year around Christmas).

- We know the Grinch tried to steal Christmas, but it turned out to be a total flop.
- Jesus talked about how people would attempt to steal or rob His Spirit from his followers but Jesus said it couldn't be done.
 - John 16:22 – no one will be able to take that joy.

Spirit of Christmas – spirit of Christ – is unstealable.

- Grinch tried but found out it couldn't be done.
- Spirit of Christmas isn't dependent on circumstances.
 - It goes much deeper than gifts, tags, trees.
- Nothing can steal the Spirit from us
 - Read John 14:27
 - We're to let the world see this gift, this peace, which no one can steal or no circumstance of the world can take from us. And the reason we want the world to see it is not so people will think more highly of us, but because they will want it too – they will want something that they know they don't have and that they can see quite clearly that we do have.

The New Testament is full of advice for Christians about this: (read these passages)

- Jesus: Matthew 5:15-16
- Paul: Philippians 2:14-16
- Peter: 1 Peter 2:12
 - When they see they can't beat us, they will hopefully join us, just like the Grinch at Christmas.
 - He didn't and can't stop Christmas from coming.
 - "He HADN'T stopped Christmas from coming! IT CAME!"
 - "Well...in *Who*-ville they say that the Grinch's small heart grew three sizes that day!"
 - "And he brought back the toys! And the food for the feast...and he...HE HIMSELF...! *The Grinch carved the roast beast!*"
 - Read the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-9)
 - Zacchaeus gave back what he had taken 4 times!

As Christians, we become givers instead of takers.

- Acts 20:35
- We become fellow followers
 - We not only carve the roast beast and serve it ourselves, but then we ourselves also sit down with our fellow followers and enjoy the same meal they enjoy.
 - We need our fellow followers not only so they can give to us but also so we can give to them.
 - We need our Lord Jesus Christ not only so he can give to us but also so we can give ourselves to him.
- The "*Who's*" are us and our fellow followers.
 - Dr. Seuss depicts them in exactly the same way the Bible depicts Christians.
 - Read Isaiah 57:15; 66:12.
- The "*Who's*" are us – the humble, the weak whose weakness leaves plenty of room for God.

So, what is the moral of Dr. Seuss' story – its moral for all of us *Who's* and all of us Grinches?

- Maybe it is this simple:
 - If God's grace enables us to hang on to Christ and to follow him only as our Lord, then no one will ever be able to steal the real Christmas joy from us; "[we] will be joyful, and no one shall rob us of [our] joy."
 - Furthermore, if we get good enough at doing this then:
 - Not only will unstealable joy belong to us *Who's*, but even a few Grinches may come around too!