

**The Gospel In Gifts – Part 2
The Gift Rejected
(December 22, 2019)**

THE GOSPEL IN GIFTS

Part 2



**The Gift
Rejected**



What do you thank God for?

Jesus, family, Australia, the church.

Those are good things to thank God for.

But do you also thank God for suffering and trials? James tells us to rejoice in our trials and suffering.

In Ephesians 5:20 – Paul gives one of the most challenging commands in Scripture:

Give thanks **always** for **everything** to God.

Always! For everything!

Really?

What about for volcanoes and cancer and fires and wars and poverty?

Are we to thank God for them?

Or how about this – do you thank God for the fall – or do you curse Adam for the fall?

Do you thank God that Adam ate the forbidden fruit?

Honestly – too many times – I am a curse Adam guy.

Cancer strikes – curse you Adam.

Wars hit – curse you Adam.

Seeing children starving – curse you Adam.

I see the results of the fall and ask – **why did he have to take the fruit?**

On so many occasions I have wished that Adam never ate of the forbidden fruit – no sin – no fall – no death – Hallelujah.

So in light of Scripture should we actually thank God that Adam ate?

Think about it this way. As Christians, we know that the history of our world is this:



God gave Adam and Eve a perfect heaven and earth to live in.

Adam sinned – the world was ruined. We now live in a fallen earth.

But Christ came and died – and those who trust in Him are forgiven and become the church.

But even though we live on the other side of the cross – this world is still fallen – groaning – waiting to be redeemed.

Christ will return again and then and only then will sin be eradicated. It is then that we will live in a new heavens and new earth.

But which of us has not sometimes wished the history of the world was a little simpler?

Heaven And Earth
Adam's Obedience

Heaven And Earth
Adam's Sin
Fallen Earth
Christ's Death
Church
Christ's Return
New Heavens And Earth

Who has not wished that when Adam was tempted to take the forbidden fruit he said – are you kidding – I'm not going to give up this amazing world for that – no way!

And because of Adam's obedience, Eve and all of us just live forever in Eden.

Let's face it – Eden and heaven seem pretty similar.

It seems that the best thing would be to cut out the fall and everything that followed and skip right to heaven.

This morning – I want to suggest that as painful, as convoluted, as hard to understand as it is you should:



**Thank God you
live in a
creation where
Adam ate the
forbidden fruit**

Thank God you live in a creation where Adam ate the forbidden fruit.

Thank God you live in a creation where Adam ate the forbidden fruit.

In three days' time – the world stops to remember Christmas.

For most it is a much needed day of rest, family celebration and gift giving.

But in reality – it is a yearly reminder of the offer of the greatest gift possible.

To help us grasp this gift we are working our way through four sermons where we are looking at – **The Gospel In Gifts.**

Last week we looked at – **The Gift Given.**

God gave the gift of a good world to mankind. A world without blemish. A world filled with every good thing.

This morning we will look at – **The Gift Rejected.**

Incredibly – this good world was not enough for Adam and Eve. Mankind wanted the one thing they could not have – and it cost them everything. They rejected the gift.

An act that is almost beyond belief – and still affects every life every day.

On Christmas Eve we will remember – **The Gift Wrapped.**

God could have turned His back on an ungrateful world. But in His love – He offered an even greater gift – His beloved Son Jesus. A gift that would not only restore this fallen world – but make it better than ever – a world that could never fall again.

And to usher in the New Year we will turn our thoughts to – **The Gift Returns.**

When the gift – Jesus – returns – He will undo every effect of the curse – He will make this world new – He will raise us new – and we will enter a new Eden that can never fail.

This story of gifts details the history of our world and God's plan to redeem it.

That is the heart of Christmas in gifts.

So this morning, let's turn our attention to think about:

The Gift Rejected.

To understand the magnitude of this rejection – we need to think back to what the gift was that God offered mankind.

Last week we saw that when God handed this world over to Adam and Eve – He looked and saw that it was **very good**.

Genesis 1:31 says:

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed.

How good? Adam and Eve received:

A good world
A good relationship
A good mandate
A good spouse
And a good life

Everything was theirs to enjoy.

In fact there is only one thing that God said they must not do.

Have a look with me at Genesis 2:16–17:

And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."

Everything in this unbelievable world is yours. Enjoy it, rule it, be satisfied in it – just one exception – don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now, this verse leads us into an area where most of us would like to have some more detailed answers.

Could God have created a world where there was no tree that could lead to the fall? – For sure.

Could God have created an impenetrable wall around that tree to stop Adam and Eve from partaking? – Absolutely.

Could God have created Adam and Eve without an ability to choose to eat from the tree? – I would think so.

So why didn't He?

Surely a world with no fall is a better world?

You know what – I would love detailed answers to these and about 20 other questions I have on this passage.

The fact is that while we have some answers we don't have all of them.

Why not?

I suspect God's ways are beyond our ability to understand – like an ant trying to understand an iPhone – and as well – for His own sovereign purposes – God has chosen not to reveal in detail every last motivation and reason behind His plan.

However, there is much we **do** know. Here is what we know that cannot be disputed.

- **Everything God does is good.** He is in no way the author of evil.
- **Everything God does is for His glory.** He is ultimate – we are not.
- **Everything God does is perfect.** Whether we can understand it or not.

We look at this and in our head we know this is right – yet in reality most of us struggle with it in our heart.

We instinctively know God decides everything – so somehow that implies that evil has to be His fault. If the world was really good – where did evil come from?

More than that – everything inside us whispers that man is ultimate not God. If God does something that affects man – and in particular us – in a way we think is wrong – we want to say He is running the universe poorly. We really think we know better than God what should and should not happen in our lives.

Also, we want to think we should be able to understand why God does something and if it seems wrong to us – we are happy to judge and say God is unjust.

But this morning – I want to suggest we **let God be God.**

I don't know for certain why God put the tree there and why Adam ate. But I do know it was for good, for His glory and according to His perfect plan.

However, knowing these truths – and seeing how the plan of God in history works out – does allow us some latitude to speculate about what might be going on.

This can get a bit theological – but it seems that if God’s primary purpose in creation and redemption is His glory, then it seems reasonable to infer that God created the world, Adam and Eve and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – such that the fall and the redemption in Christ that followed – would display His glory in its fullness, power and grace – in a way that is greater than if the world never fell.

In other words – a world with a fall is greater than a world without a fall.

A world where there is a Redeemer is greater than a world with no Redeemer.

The cost of the fall is great – but a Redeemer is greater.

If God didn’t create the world in this way – then there would be no *fallen* creation.

If there is no *fallen* creation – then there would be no *Redeemer*. No Jesus – no incarnation, atonement, resurrection and eternal life.

No Jesus – then God’s full glory would not be displayed for angels and men to marvel at for all eternity.

Don’t get me wrong – God would still be fully love and mercy and grace – but it would never be expressed and displayed.

I know that is getting pretty theological this close to Christmas and I know for many it might not sound right.

I know many of us would say – if we were God and created the world we would make sure that it could never fall. We think a world that never knows sin is better than the car-crash fallen world we have lived in for millennia.

My point this morning is that God clearly thinks otherwise – and I believe we should as well.

Since His glory is ultimate – the fall and redemption – are necessary for His glory.

Or maybe I can put it this way – while the fall was a truly a great evil, it made possible an even greater good – Jesus.

And in light of all eternity that is far more glorious and wonderful.

I know that might be hard to get our heads around – but I am convinced it is the heart of Christmas.

Jesus coming to undo the fall and bring glory to God for all eternity is what Christmas is truly about.

There are some speculations here – and I freely admit I don’t know for sure – but I think Scripture is with me.

Here is what I **do** know for sure.

Adam and Eve had the world and rejected it.

Look with me at Genesis 3:1–7:

Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You can’t eat from any tree in the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, ‘You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.’ ” “No! You will not die,” the serpent said to the woman. “In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

These seven verses really deserve several sermons to unpack.

I can’t do that – but let me say that in 1 Timothy 2:14 – Paul says – what happened here was that Eve was deceived – and in contrast – Adam simply chose to sin.

I’m not saying Eve was innocent – but she was deceived.

But Adam – has nowhere to hide – no excuse. That is why the fall is put on him.

Think about these verses from Adam’s viewpoint.

Adam is having a good day.

King Adam.

He lives in this beyond amazing world. Perfect beaches, mountains, waterfalls, sunsets.

No viruses that cause illness, no war or death.

He has a relationship with the Creator that is not affected by sin.

It seems likely that God walked in the garden with him.

He rules over every animal, bird and fish. He named them and claimed them.

He has a humdinger of a spouse – one flesh – great relationship.

He is living the good life.

I have no idea how long it was between day seven of creation and the fall.

I suspect not too long. I suspect Eve would have fallen pregnant reasonably quickly if they were in Eden for a long time – but again that is speculation.

So one day – one year – whatever it is – a day comes when Adam looks up.

Eve is coming toward him. She always makes his heart skip a beat. She is so stunning, so kind, so perfect. He is the luckiest man in creation.

He loves this woman with all his soul – bone of my bones – flesh of my flesh.

But, his smile turns to horror when he sees it.

She is carrying *fruit*.

That fruit! Tree of the knowledge of good and evil *fruit*.

And if that is not bad enough one of them is partly eaten.

She has done the one thing she must never do. She is going to die. This woman he loves with all his soul is already a walking corpse.

Then she holds out her hand. Another piece of fruit from the forbidden tree.

And she says – Adam – my love – take – eat.

What does he do?

I might have hoped that Adam would be utterly revolted, disgusted and horrified. How could I sin against my good Creator who has given me everything!?

I might hope that he would turn and run.

But ... he didn't.

He wasn't deceived. He didn't say – tell me why you did this? – O – a talking snake said trust him not the God who gave us everything – Of course we should eat!

O – we can be like God – why didn't you lead with that? – I agree with your choice Eve – give me some of that fruit.

Adam was far smarter than me. To this point he was morally perfect – which I have never been – and yet he **still** took and ate.

Why?

I don't know for sure. I still struggle to comprehend this choice.

Something inside him weighed it up and he chose fruit, death, loss – over God.

There has been endless speculation.

- **Love blinded him.**

He was so infatuated, so in love with Eve – he could not bear the possibility of losing her. The love of his life was already a dead woman walking. So he chose the romantic Romeo and Juliette thing – if you have taken poison my beloved I will join you.

If you die, I die.

- **Pride destroyed him.**

Who is God to limit me? I want to be like God – I deserve it – hand over the fruit.

- **Faith deserted him.**

God said – the day you eat from the fruit you die. But, Eve isn't dead – maybe God didn't tell us the full story.

- **Envy overcame him.**

What if Eve gets wisdom and he doesn't – he was the man – he was created first – he better eat.

I don't know.

Ultimately – what we **do** know is that he chose sin over God.

Love for a woman, love for himself – ultimately Adam loved the gift more than the gift giver. He loved a creature more than his Creator (Rom. 1:25). Something was more precious to him than God.

Exactly what it was – we aren't told.

I have enough trouble analysing the root of my own sin – I struggle to unpack the lies I tell myself that lead me into my sin. What hope to understand Adam's sin?

All I know is this – Adam took the forbidden fruit and ate.

He committed the most outrageous sin possible. He chose sin over God.

He learned the truth of the saying:

What does it profit a man to gain the world and lose his soul?

Adam gained the world – **literally**.

And in his choice to sin – he lost the world – **literally**.

Everything he gained he lost.

Everything good – was ruined.

A ruined world.

Verses 17-19:

And God said to the man, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘Do not eat from it’: The ground is cursed because of you. You will eat from it by means of painful labor all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. You will eat bread by the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground, since you were taken from it. For you are dust, and you will return to dust.”

The ground is cursed – because of you.

Thorns and thistles instead of fruit and plenty. Work that was a privilege now becomes a necessity.

Famine and loss are part of life.

Viruses and bacteria now cause illness.

And finally – instead of eating from the tree of life and living – men and women will die and turn to dust.

Earthquakes, tsunamis, plague, famine, war – whatever blight affects our world – it entered the moment Adam ate.

And remember, in a sense we confirm Adam’s sinful choice every day of our lives.

God gave us a pristine world – Adam and every one of us drove it into a wall and ruined it.

A ruined relationship.

Verse 8 – Adam and Eve hear God and hide. Knowing Him was once the greatest joy of life.

Now they are afraid of God – hiding from Him and the judgment for their sin.

They cannot stand before a holy God.

They cannot walk with a holy God.

They can only hide from the presence of a holy God.

The most precious relationship of all – ruined.

A ruined mandate.

Verse 24:

He drove the man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life.

The garden where God walked with them – off limits.

The garden where they served God – off limits.

Cast out into a fallen world – King of a ruined world.

His descendants will fight, pollute, bomb and destroy this world.

A ruined spouse.

Eve was the most amazing created thing Adam had ever laid eyes on – thank you God.

How was it now?

Verse 12 – Adam why did you eat from the tree? Glad you asked Lord:

The woman **you** gave to be with me—**she** gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate.

It wasn't my fault – it was **Your** fault **God** and this wretched 'woman-thing' You gave me.

Wow! Instead of manning up – Against You and only You have I sinned – I did it – Adam sets the tone for all of us.

Why is my life a mess? – glad you asked. It is Your fault God and my spouse's fault. I'm the victim here.

And if that isn't bad enough – verse 16:

He said to the woman: I will intensify your labor pains; you will bear children with painful effort. Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will rule over you.

Eve usurped Adam's headship – so as part of the curse – that desire to fight the created order will remain. Women will chaff under the headship of men – they will desire the rule for themselves – **but** Adam – men – will retain the rule.

Awesome – setting us up for conflict.

Before the fall – the plan of God – sacrificial, loving male leadership – joyous, obedient female partnership – was to be one of the greatest joys of creation.

Now, in the fall – the battle of the sexes becomes one of the most painful aspects of this life.

Men lord it over women. Women look for satisfaction elsewhere. Marriage becomes a hotbed of anguish.

A ruined life.

I have tried to imagine what went through Adam's mind as he walked out of Eden.

Walking from perfection out into a ruined world.

He had everything – he lost everything – and not just him – every man and woman ever born will suffer because of what he did.

As Adam walked from Eden a ruined King looked on a ruined world with Genesis 3:17 ringing in his ears:

The ground is cursed because of **you**.

The good world was ruined because of his sin.

Now he laboured just to provide.

He had two sons. But one – Cain killed the other – Able.

Imagine standing over the body of your son and realising – your sin did this. You brought enmity and death into your family.

I don't know who died first Adam or Eve – but if Eve died first – imagine Adam sitting by his beloved Eve – realising his sin was the cause.

Adam lived for 930 years. Imagine watching sons, daughters, grand-children – get ill, die, murder.

By the days of Noah – here was the world. Genesis 6:5–6:

When the LORD saw that human wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every inclination of the human mind was nothing but evil all the time, the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and he was deeply grieved.

Psalm 14:2-3:

The LORD looks down from heaven on the human race to see if there is one who is wise, one who seeks God. All have turned away; all alike have become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one.

Adam saw this.

Paradise lost. 930 years and every day thinking:

The ground is cursed because of **you**.

One of the great descriptions of what happened to Adam and you and me at the fall is found in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*:

We are wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of the soul and body – we are all utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil.

I don't know exactly what caused Adam to choose sin over God.

How could he make such a choice?

A ruined world in place of Paradise.

Walking with God to hiding from God.

Life for death.

This choice is almost incomprehensible.

Why? Love for Eve – love for self – pride?

All I know is that ultimately, he chose sin over the gift God offered.

Adam turned down the world.

The gift was rejected!

BUT – as stunning as that is – there is something I find far, far more stunning.

I am absolutely flabbergasted that there is a Genesis 4.

Imagine being an angel watching the fall unfold.

Satan turns up and whispers to Eve – Did God really say? ... You will not die. ... You will be like God.

I'm sure this angel would have thought – yeah – as if that would work?

But Eve took and ate. What!!!

Then she comes to Adam and says – take – eat.

I'm sure this angel would have thought – Adam will never eat.

Yet Adam took and ate and as his teeth sunk into the fruit – I picture that angel shutting their eyes and putting their hands over their ears.

They were waiting for a very big bang. A cosmic explosion that would signal the end of that universe. For the king of the creation – Adam – to rebel – warps the very fabric of the creation.

I would think that angel and every holy angel would expect God to end this universe there and then and to banish Adam and Eve to hell forever.

This ends the failed story of creation.

But – no bang. The world continued.

There were consequences. Sin has consequences.

A ruined world
A ruined relationship
A ruined mandate
A ruined spouse
And a ruined life

But what is so stunning is that right in the midst of the curse – God said something so amazing – every angel and every Christian can still barely believe it.

Genesis 3:15:

I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.

It doesn't sound like much – but it is a HUGE deal.

God will fix Adam's mess.

A Seed – an offspring would come.

And ultimately – finally – He will crush the serpent – Satan – and undo the fall.

Someone will come who is a man – a Seed from Adam.

Luke 3 tells us this Seed came – Jesus – son of Adam – son of God – came into the world.

Christmas is the celebration that this Seed – this Saviour – this deliverer – **did** come.

When He came – He was a second Adam – who was tempted.

Satan offered him the world.

Luke 4:5–7:

So [Satan] took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. The devil said to him, “I will give you their splendor and all this authority, because it has been given over to me, and I can give it to anyone I want. If you, then, will worship me, all will be yours.”

He was not tempted in a Paradise with everything.

He was in a wilderness – hungry, weak.

But, Jesus did **not** succumb. Luke 4:8:

And He answered him, “It is written: **Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.**”

At the point Adam failed – the second Adam succeeded.

Adam had the world and was offered something else.

Christ has nothing and was offered the world.

He chose God.

He lived a life without sin.

He is the only one who did not deserve death.

But He died.

Why? To undo Adam’s curse?

Romans 5:12–17:

Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned. ... But the gift is not like the trespass. For if by the one man’s trespass the many died, how much more have the grace of God and the gift which comes through the grace of the one man Jesus Christ overflowed to the many. And the gift is not like the one man’s sin, because from one sin came the judgment, resulting in condemnation, but from many trespasses came the gift, resulting in justification. Since by the one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive the overflow of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Adam brought death.

Jesus brought life.

How do we put all of this together?

Scripture doesn't tell us precisely why God permitted sin to enter the world. But I want to say in very strong terms that it does tell us that a world with grace is greater.

Imagine these **two worlds**.

World One.

Heaven And Earth

Adam's Obedience

God creates a world in which Adam and Eve can't sin. There is no forbidden fruit or they can't get to it or God stops them from sinning.

They and their seed never sin and go on to enjoy this perfect world forever.

Sounds pretty good – and in a sense it is.

World Two.



Adam and Eve **do** sin. They chose to reject the gift God gives.

They and their seed then live in a fallen earth. Inhumanity, poverty, illness, war, death.

Sounds bad – and it is evil.

But, finally, in the fullness of time – an even greater gift enters this fallen world. A Redeemer who pays the penalty through His death.

Time passes. Millions accept this gift and enter the church. They still live in a fallen world – but they know the power of the cross and that the creation *will* be redeemed.

At the time of God's choosing – the gift returns. Every vestige of sin is destroyed. And the seed of the second Adam will live forever in a perfect world without sin – the new heavens and new earth.

Superficially – the end result looks the same.

Descendants of Adam living in a paradise forever.

But here is the crucial question. Which world is greater?

From a selfish perspective we might say – give me **world one** any day. If the end result is the same – perfect world without sin – give me the world without the millennia lost in sin and pain and suffering.

This morning – I want to suggest that God says **world two** is greater – and you and I should say **world two** is greater.

Why?

In **world one** – we would spend all eternity praising God for His glory in creation.

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Heaven And Earth | Heaven And Earth |
| Adam's Obedience | Adam's Sin |
| | Fallen Earth |
| | Christ's Death |
| | Church |
| | Christ's Return |
| | New Heavens And Earth |
| Our Lord and God, you are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because you have created all things, and by your will they exist and were created. Revelation 4:11 | |

Revelation 4 is a song of praise for the Creator. Verse 11 says:

Our Lord and God, you are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because you have created all things, and by your will they exist and were created.

That is not a bad thing to spend all eternity praising God as *Creator*.

But, in **world two** – the saints have far more to praise God about. They spend all eternity praising God for His glory as *Creator* **and** as *Redeemer*.

Revelation 5 is an eternal song of redemption.

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| <p>Heaven And Earth</p> <p>Adam's Obedience</p> <p>Our Lord and God, you are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because you have created all things, and by your will they exist and were created. Revelation 4:11</p> | <p>Heaven And Earth</p> <p>Adam's Sin</p> <p>Fallen Earth</p> <p>Christ's Death</p> <p>Church</p> <p>Christ's Return</p> <p>New Heavens And Earth</p> <p>They said with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing! Revelation 5:12</p> |
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Revelation 5:12 says:

They said with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!

World one does not need a Redeemer. While we might think that is good – it is not.

There is no song of the Lamb in **world one** – and that would be an unimaginable tragedy.

God's mercy and love and compassion and forgiveness and longsuffering would not be seen, sung about and rejoiced over throughout the ages in **world one**.

God's ultimate love as seen in Christ and the cross is absent from **world one**.

Eternity there would never get to marvel in the full majesty of God.

We would never get to thank God for Christ.

To know fellowship with and praise God forever as a creature made in His image is a great blessing.

To know fellowship with and praise God forever as a redeemed sinner restored in his Son's image is immeasurably greater.

Basically – no fall – no Jesus.

So thank God for the fall *and* thank God for Jesus.

Non-Christians ask me – if God can do anything – why didn't He create a world with no sin and no suffering?

The answer is – because a world with a Redeemer brings God more glory and allows us to worship Him more fully.

To a non-Christian this sounds utterly selfish, mean and arrogant. To them it only says that God allows paedophiles and genocides so He can receive more glory. This does not sound like a God they want to worship.

But to us – it should lead us to endless praise.

Yes the cost was great – but the gain was greater.

The glory of Jesus is worth the great cost of the fall.

We live in **world two**.

Adam was offered a choice.

Eve held out the fruit of disobedience and said – take, eat – and he ate. He lost the world.

But, on the last night of His life – Jesus gathered with the disciples in the Upper Room and in the midst of the Passover celebration:

Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take and eat it; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them and said, “Drink from it, all of you. For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” Matthew 26:26–28.

Jesus offers a choice – take, eat and receive the world – this world and ultimately the world to come.

Jesus will undo the fall and restore Paradise.

Every one of us has a choice. Sin or God.

It is not literally the fruit in the garden or the bread of communion that is the point. It is the choice behind them.

Do we choose sin or God?

Do we choose to love God or to love something more than God?

Do we follow in the footsteps of the first Adam and take the Satan-inspired forbidden fruit of rejecting God?

Or do we accept the greater gift – the gift of life in Christ?

In this Christmas series – **The Gospel in Gifts** – what we have seen is that:

God's gift of 'the good life' is only found in loving Him.

God's gift of 'the good life' is only found in loving Him.

Loving God more than the world, the creation, ourselves – this and this alone is what brings life.

Do that – and Jesus says – you will have life and have it to the full.

To refuse that offer is a huge mistake.

What is the biggest mistake you have ever made?

Some of us have made some doozies I bet.

You might think that someone worth around US\$115 Billion won't have made too many mistakes.

Well earlier this year Bill Gates, currently the richest man in the world, discussed the biggest mistake of his career and says it still eats away at him.

In the early 2000's Microsoft had the opportunity to develop or acquire a mobile phone operating system to challenge Apple.

Gates says he mismanaged this and didn't pursue it. Google seized on the opportunity and bought Android – and when Microsoft finally realised their mistake – they spent huge sums trying to catch up – finally they gave up in 2017.

He estimates this as being at least a US\$400 Billion mistake.

This morning I want to suggest that is far, far from the biggest mistake Bill Gates – or for that matter any of us can make.

I want to suggest that each of us has been offered not just billions – but the world – and the world to come. Jesus offers life – take and eat.

Accept the sacrifice of my body to pay for your sins.

Accept life now and the world to come.

The offer of life is there.

And yet – many of us have said – no thank you.

I can't tell you for sure why Adam sinned – love, pride, ambition.

I can't tell you why you might choose sin over Christ? Greed, lust, ambition.

What I can tell you is that to not accept the offer of Christ – is a mistake those who make it will regret for all eternity.

If you are not a Christian – you need to know – the good news is that this mess of a world will not last forever.

There is a reason it is messed up – sin.

There is a plan to fix it – Christ.

And a day will come when Jesus will return – and only those who accepted His offer will enter.

And if you know Jesus – rejoice. Thank God for the fall and suffering because it is the reason that the second Adam came. Today, the power of the curse is defeated – and the day of full redemption draws near.

We will spend eternity praising God as Creator and Redeemer – so praise Him now and rejoice in His gift.