

# Because of Christmas, It's Not Always Going to be This Way

Message 01 in the series "The Weary World Rejoices"

## A. We live in a fallen world.

1. Human beings were originally created by God to live in perfect fellowship with Him in paradise.

"God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'" Genesis 1:27-28 (NIV)

2. Sin ruined everything.

"The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, 'Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?' 'Of course, we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,' the woman replied. 'It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, "You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'" 'You won't die!' the serpent replied to the woman. 'God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.' The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees." Genesis 3:1-8 (NLT)

*Note:* The freedom to choose that made sin possible is also what makes true love possible.

**Rejoice!** God is love, and He values love freely given.

- a. Choosing sin (going our own way instead of God's way) always has painful consequences.

"When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned." Romans 5:12 (NLT)

"Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse." Romans 8:20 (NLT)

Along with sin came guilt, shame, separation from God and others, pain and sorrow, frustration and hardship, and death and banishment from Eden and the tree of life. (Genesis 3:10-24)

- b. The one ray of hope for Adam and Eve was God's promise that one of their offspring would crush the devil and restore things. "And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." Genesis 3:15 (NLT)

**Rejoice!** God gives hope to sinners who don't deserve it when we need it most.

## B. Because of Christmas, it's not always going to be this way.

1. Jesus was the child promised to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel, whose origins are in the distant past, will come from you on my behalf." Micah 5:2 (NLT)

**Rejoice!** God is always working in ways that are too wonderful for us to even imagine!

2. Jesus came to defeat the devil and free us from the penalty and power of sin. "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work." 1 John 3:8b (NIV)

"Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying." Hebrews 2:14-15 (NLT)

**Rejoice!** Jesus paid the penalty for our sins and removed our guilt and shame. (1 John 1:9, Acts 3:19)

**Rejoice!** Jesus made it possible for us to have right relationships with God and others. (Romans 5:6-11, Ephesians 2:11-17)

**Rejoice!** Jesus made it possible for us to have abundant life today. (John 10:10, Matthew 11:28-30)

**Rejoice!** Jesus has given us victory over the devil. (1 John 4:4, Romans 16:20, James 4:7, Rev. 20:10)

3. Jesus came to make a way possible for us to go to heaven where things are restored to the way they were in Eden.

“...’Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” Revelation 21:3-4 (NLT)

“Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. No longer will there be a curse upon anything.” Revelation 22:1-3a (NLT)

**Rejoice!** Jesus came to reverse the curse.

**Life Application:** We must each choose whether or not we will surrender control of our lives to Jesus and accept His marvelous gift of salvation.

“Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life.”

Revelation 22:17b (NLT)

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### Connect Group Questions

1. How do you feel about celebrating Christmas this year? What will be different? What will stay the same?
2. Read Genesis 3:1-8. Why didn't God just chop down the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Why do you think God wanted them to have a choice? Why do you think God allows us to choose whether or not we will obey Him?
3. Read Genesis 3:10-24, Romans 5:12 & 8:20. Then discuss the following list of consequences brought about by Adam & Eve's sin:
  - guilt
  - shame
  - separation from God and others
  - pain and sorrow
  - frustration and hardship
  - death and banishment from Eden and the tree of life

How have you experienced these consequences in your life?

4. How does it make you feel to read that Jesus came into our world to defeat the devil and rescue us? (Genesis 3:15, Hebrews 2:14-15, 1 John 3:8)
5. How does it make you feel to read that Satan will one day be pitched into hell headfirst? (Revelation 20:10)
6. How does it make you feel to read that God had our rescue already planned in the garden of Eden? (Genesis 3:15, Micah 5:2, Luke 2:10-11)
7. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus came to reverse the curse, and even though we live in a fallen world, things won't always be this way? (Revelation 21:1-4 & 22:1-3)
8. Spend some time as a group praying:
  - For protection from Covid-19 and that vaccines will be effective and distributed rapidly and efficiently
  - For healing and comfort for those who already have Covid-19
  - That the good news of Jesus would be proclaimed this Christmas
  - That we would be ambassadors of hope