Stories in which the hero dies are called tragedies. In a tragedy, the hero carries inside him or herself a fatal flaw. The question presented by any real story is – what is the bottom line inside the hero? What is their tipping point, the core and center of who they are beyond which they cannot be moved, but at which they are the most vulnerable?

Adam, God’s first champion, carried inside himself what he perceived to be a flaw in the fabric of his being and person. God had made Adam weak. Adam’s weakness was his glory, the perfect counterpart for God’s strength.

Remember the purpose and intention of God – to have many sons just like Jesus, that God might reveal Himself as He really is to all creation through man. Adam was not that final revelation of God, he was only the beginning. But that beginning has direct bearing on where we stand now and what God is doing through us in the earth today.

Adam lived in God. He knew nothing about an independent self for self. He was breathed upon by God and the breath and being of God was his life. But Adam was not born again; he was not conceived from above. You and I are conceived of the genes of God, an element of God that Adam did not know.

God then placed Adam into the very center of all rebellion and evil as the champion of the great story of God, untaught and untried. God said three things to Adam. First – “Subdue the earth.” This was Adam’s commission for the battle in the form of a commandment from God.

Now, “subdue the earth” seems like overkill. But God was not talking about the garden; He was talking about sin and rebellion, sickness and death, all evil and false accusation. All of this was in the serpent and in the Lie that the serpent offered. The serpent was already in the garden.

There is no correlation to this commission of God in the Old Covenant, but the exact same commission God gave to Adam fills the New Covenant. Here are some references out of many.

If you through the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. — And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb. — And God shall crush Satan under your feet shortly. — For this mortal must put on immortality, and this corruptible must put on incorruption. — These are they who have the victory over the beast.

Then God gave Adam an invitation – “Of all the trees of the garden you may freely eat,” meaning the tree of life. Again, this invitation is found nowhere in the covenant of Moses, but it is the essence of the New Covenant. God did not command Adam to eat of the tree of life, nor did He say much about it. Nevertheless, the invitation to eat freely meant the tree of life. Here are some instances of that same invitation in the New Covenant.

Come to Me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest for your souls. — Whosoever will may come and freely drink. — If any man thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. — He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood shall have eternal life. — Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man opens the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me.

God never commands anyone to partake of Life; He only invites.

Finally, we must understand the prohibition or warning that God gave in light of Adam’s commission. That is the only way we can understand it rightly.

...of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.
We have been given the same prohibition in the New Covenant.

If you (believer in Jesus Christ) live according to the flesh you shall die. — The letter (the written Bible understood by knowledge) kills . . . — For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” — . . . For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. Galatians 3:21

You see how clear it is that the tree of knowledge and the law of the Old Covenant are the same thing. The tree of knowledge was NOT evil, but eating of it will kill you. More than that, most of Christianity and Christian theology approaches the New Covenant with the same mind as the Old, as knowledge.

Adam had a job to do, a task that was huge and seemingly insurmountable. He had been given a commission by God to accomplish God’s purposes through him in the earth. How could Adam fulfill the great responsibility that God had laid upon his shoulders? Adam was created with a “flaw” that proved fatal for him. Adam had no idea what he should do and no ability whatsoever to do it, even if he knew. God had created Adam weak.

Adam was not able to subdue the earth, to win the victory over the serpent. He needed something that God had not yet given him – and Adam knew that he needed that something, that in his present state he was unable to do what God had commanded him to do. He could refrain from doing what God had commanded him not to do, that is not to eat of the tree of knowledge. But the thing God had commanded him to do, subdue the earth, was outside of Adam’s ability.

Let me repeat that. Adam could have obeyed God not to eat of the tree of knowledge, yes. But not eating of knowledge would never have given Adam life. Only if Adam ate of life, could he, now filled with all the fulness of God, actually “subdue the earth” with the river of life flowing out of his belly. That river of life is the only thing that will “subdue the earth.”

The crucial moment of Adam’s choice came AFTER the words in Genesis 3:6 “She also gave to her husband with her . . .” At that moment, man was not fallen, sin had not entered the world, there was no death. One of the most grievous crimes in history is the accusation placed upon the woman for bringing sin into the world. This is not what God says. God says in Romans 5 that sin and death came into the world through Adam. At this moment of Adam’s decision, mankind was still free from sin.

It is here that Adam’s commission by God, “Subdue the earth,” came into full play. Adam was fully aware of the responsibility that now rested upon his shoulders. He wanted to do right.

Solomon was another who faced a similar responsibility and choice.

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask! What shall I give you?” And Solomon said: “You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father..., but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?” 1 Kings 3:5-9

Solomon asked for the wrong thing. Yes, it was better than asking for wealth or power, but Solomon made the same choice Adam did. Solomon did not want to make a mistake; he did not want to be wrong. He wanted the knowledge and wisdom to know what was right and what was wrong every single time.

This was not David’s choice. David’s choice is found in Psalms 27:4.

One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.
David cared nothing about making mistakes. He made more mistakes then all the other men of God put together. Certainly, after he made a mistake, he wept a bit, wrote a psalm, and then went right back to dancing with all his heart before the Lord. David lived in the New Covenant; he knew nothing of the Old.

“My grace is sufficient for you.”

Solomon got the smarts he wanted, but some say that Solomon also wrote the Jewish Cabala, out of which flows Freemasonry, occult ritual, Gnosticism, and all the Satanic symbols proliferating in the world around us today. He received the knowledge of good, and he received the knowledge of evil.

Solomon wanted knowledge; David wanted life. God gives us what we want. and yes, God “was pleased” with Solomon’s choice. But Solomon stood inside the Old Covenant. God gave the law to Moses, but He also said through Paul that there is not one ounce of LIFE inside the keeping of that law.

Let’s come at Adam’s dilemma from another viewpoint. We are as weak as Adam; God has made us so. We face the same pin-point of the story of God Adam faced – our extreme vulnerability in the face of darkness and deception with a church woman offering us the fruit of “getting it right with God” through knowledge and performance.

What do we do? What was the correct response for Adam in his weakness? Let’s enter into his mind as he walked along with Eve through the garden. Adam was 100% innocent. He walked in a bubble of complete bliss. He had zero knowledge of the serpent or anything contrary to God. All that entered his consciousness was ongoing goodness and expectancy of favor and pleasure.

Now, we know that God had created Adam exactly the way God wanted Adam to be; Adam was perfect in his design and makeup. That is, weakness was God’s perfect design for Adam. Adam’s weakness corresponded perfectly with God being Himself revealed through Adam, the image, the visible expression of God.

Second, Adam’s circumstances were perfectly ordered by God. Jeremiah said that it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. That is an absolute for all; no human being chooses his or her ongoing circumstances. That is not “fatalism” or “God wills it.” Rather, we are given the power to choose our response to the circumstances we do not choose and then, through our responses, we direct the future circumstances out of God in relation to His purpose for our lives.

Everything that was Adam, within and without, was created and ordered by God in perfection. What else did God order for Adam — in perfection? Adam walked with a shockingly beautiful, erotically tantalizing, fascinatingly outgoing, and pleasantly talkative woman, the height of God’s creative talent – beauty indescribable and pleasure forevermore. Yet in the midst of his bubbly, dreamy walk through the woods, he heard a call in his heart, an invitation to eat of life. Drawn by that call, the pair moved gradually to the center of the garden.

Yet, God also placed in Adam’s path, for His purposes, out of overwhelming love, out of the deepest wisdom and the purest intent, with full knowledge that Adam would fall, three extraordinary obstacles just in front of the tree of life. Before Adam could reach LIFE, he must pass by the face of these three obstacles designed as the perfect TRAP. Adam had no knowledge or warning of that trap or it’s nature – except that God had said, “Do not eat of the tree of knowledge, for in the day you eat of it, you will die.” Adam had no idea what God was talking about, anymore than you or I know what God means in all the things He says.

The first trap was the law of God, the tree of knowledge about God and about not-God. God designed that tree by observing Himself, and then placing that “definition” of His ways into an outer form. God had formed Adam’s makeup as a perfectly designed counterpart to fit His own Person. Yet this separated definition of God found in knowledge also fit Adam’s weakness. Adam could resolve his weakness with his own doing, strength, and wisdom, his own ordered path.
The second trap was the hostile psychological trickery of the most brilliant creature God had made – the serpent, placed right next to the tree of life by God. Adam’s mental capacity, though ten times the IQ of Einstein, was not even in the ballpark of the serpent’s.

The third trap was this shockingly stunning woman, taken right out of Adam’s side, flesh of his flesh, handing him the fruit of knowledge and the violation of God’s not-understood command. All three traps sprang upon Adam so quickly, as he was walking along in his bubble of bliss, that he had no time to think.

But Adam’s answer was found in his heart. God made Adam weak for this very challenge. Obedience to God’s command, “Do not eat of the tree of knowledge,” was NOT Adam’s answer. That command had two purposes, first, to establish God’s justice, and second, to buy Adam time. If Adam had obeyed that command, his problem would NOT have been solved. But he would have had time to listen to his heart to find the solution to the HUGE problem that had sprung upon him entirely by God’s ordering of his steps.

Adam’s real answer was the way that leads to life, the way of the cross, that would have taken Adam right past his mesmerizing wife, right past the siren’s call of the law of God, right past the unbeatable trickery of a very nasty and fallen angel, right past the difficulty of climbing the tree of life, it’s obscurity, it’s pain, it’s “shamefulness,” all the way to the whole answer for everything, the Life and Person of God Almighty, revealed forever through Adam as rivers of living water.

But Adam did not want to make a mistake. He knew the responsibility that lay upon his shoulders; he knew clearly that this was the moment of his task given to him by God. He knew he needed something he did not have to fulfill that task, to cover and nourish the woman, to subdue the earth, to defeat the serpent. Adam did not want to make a mistake. But Adam was pressed, and he had to decide quickly. In the midst of battle you don’t get the chance to think things through.

Let’s look at his options – knowledge versus life. Knowledge was within easy reach; Life was at the top of the tree. Knowledge appeared sumptuous and filled with strength; Life looked scrawny and deficient.

Knowledge gave Adam control; Life didn’t make any sense, what could Life do for me right now? Knowledge cost nothing; Life required climbing through thorns. He would pierce his hands and his feet to get Life; his brow would be bloody.

Knowledge made him independent, he could be proud of his accomplishments, he could attain, he could achieve, he could triumph; Life meant that all that he was would belong to another, Life would never be his own.

With knowledge he could know what to do; with Life he would never know what was next. With knowledge he could build his own world, he could count, he could reason, he could make things; with Life, he could only reveal another.

Life is ambiguous; Life is undefined; you just can’t sink your teeth into Life. With Life you utterly cast yourself into another, without fear of making a mistake, without worrying about yourself one way or another. With Life you are not your own, another takes full responsibility for you.

The thing Adam needed to fulfill his commission was not inside of him. God placed what Adam needed in two trees before him. He could have what he lacked by eating from either of those trees. That is, one tree had what Adam really needed, life, and the other tree appeared to offer Adam his own knowledge and ability to fulfill his purpose separately from God.

God created the tree of knowledge and placed it in the garden. It was holy and pure. But by Adam choosing knowledge as his “means” to subdue the earth, contrary to God, we now live on a planet ruined by human folly calling itself “science,” that is, the human application of knowledge “subduing” the earth.
The law that God gave the children of Israel through Moses was also that same tree of knowledge; it came out of God and it was holy and pure. But Paul says in Galatians 3 that no law given can impart life. That is why Moses shattered that law upon the mountainside. The law is death; it is the ministry of death.

Adam chose knowledge, and so Adam died. God knew that he would; God had set the stage for the tearing open of His own heart for all to see.

We are different from Adam. We have already tasted of the tree of life. But being born again does not prevent us from living out of the tree of knowledge in our minds. The tree of knowledge and the law are the same thing. You hear what God says and do it; you get knowledge and implement it. You see yourself as a “self” separate from Christ.

A Christian desires not to make mistakes. We want to be pleasing to God. But the effort not to make a mistake is not of faith. Faith cares nothing about “mistakes.” Faith presumes that God fills me as I am right now. Faith presumes that I belong to another and that there is no “myself” to belong to.

As believers in Jesus, you and I stand today in a similar place to where Adam stood. All the ingredients are the same. The serpent, accusing God of lying, the church woman, having already embraced the lie and demanding that we also eat of it, the commission of God to us to “subdue the earth” and to cover and nourish the woman. It’s all there.

Here is one difference. You and I have already tasted the tree of life. How do we “subdue the earth?” We do not know. All of the Christian experience we have known is only the tree of knowledge. It can teach us nothing.

But we don’t have to know. We have never lived before out of the tree of life, but here is the joy of the tree of life; a million years from now we still won’t know what to do. We don’t need to know. We just need to give thanks for the “shame” of our weakness and inability and to rejoice with all joy of confidence in the absolute certainty of the victory of Christ through us. “Making mistakes” means absolutely nothing; we have no thought of “missing God.” We walk in no consciousness of sin or any shadow of separation from God.

And I will give to my two witnesses and they shall prophecy — In that day you shall know that I am in the Father and you in Me and I in you.

You may wonder why I keep repeating John 14:20. Some may recognize what it is, though it takes a miracle from God to see it. It is the Tree of Life. We don’t get there by “knowledge;” we are there already by grace. Open your eyes and “know” the intimate union of that Life.

We don’t need to know anything about sin or how “I” am going to defeat it. We know Jesus and nothing else. He is our life; there is nothing else.

But Jesus is about to defeat SIN through us; and His victory will pierce our heart to the core and lay it wide open for all the universe to see. When they see what is in our heart, they will fall upon their faces and worship God and they will honor the Lamb seated upon the THRONE of God – our broken heart.

They will know and we will know that our heart and God’s heart are one.

And we will stand there in wonder feeling like overlooked and wounded Frodo and bumbling Sam and left-behind Merry and silly Pippin as Lords and Kings and the great ones of the earth and of all the realms of heaven bow upon their knees in wonder and adoration before the One who fills our heart.

This story is not about man; it is not about Adam, it’s not even about us. The story is about God. And God fulfills His story in us.