

Today's Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

by — Steve Martin, the Grace Dude

God didn't panic when Adam and Eve fell. He didn't say, "Well, that backfired." The tree was *always* part of the plan.

He planted it right there in the middle of the garden. Beautiful. Desirable. Loaded with consequences. And He knew exactly what would happen. He set them up – not to trap them, but to teach them.

Because without contrast, you can't really see anything clearly. If all you've ever known is good, you don't know it's good. You just exist in it.

So, God let them fall. On purpose. Not to condemn them – but to grow them. To show them. To teach them something that innocence alone never could: the difference between life with Him – and life without.

It's the same for us. Every one of us has our own version of that tree – something that looks like it'll fix everything, fill the gap, make us feel whole. We bite. We fall. And then we learn.

Romans 11:32 says it straight: "*God locked us all up in stubbornness so He could have mercy on all.*" Not some. *All*.

That's the whole story right there. God sets us up to fall, so He can pick us up with mercy.

Romans 8 says He subjected the whole creation to futility – but in hope. Hope that we'd hit bottom, realize nothing else works, and come running home.

It's not a mistake when we blow it. It's not a detour when we chase the wrong thing. It's all part of how He's teaching us what freedom really means.

We've all eaten from the tree. We've all been fooled by something that looked good. But that doesn't disqualify us – it makes us candidates for mercy.

That's the plan. Always has been.

And in the end, it doesn't land in guilt – it lands in grace. Not in failure, but freedom. Not in shame, but love.

God knew what He was doing.

He still does.

And it's all going somewhere beautiful.