

Beware of spoilers

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive (I Corinthians 15:22 ESV)

September 22 1955 saw the launch of commercial television in the UK. Since 1936, the BBC had been the only source of television programmes, but now a new kid on the block had arrived and something was needed counter the impact.

In the run up to the launch of the new TV service, the BBC's long-running radio 'soap' *The Archers* was being aired. At the end of that particular programme, a fire was discovered in stables where Grace, daughter-in-law of the main characters, Dan and Doris Archer, was tending a horse. The fire was so intense that Grace was killed. Such was the outpouring of listeners' grief that the BBC switchboard was jammed for 48 hours.

Headlines in the newspapers the next morning centred on the tragedy, leaving the launch of the new television service to take second place.

Spoilers like that can happen in real life, too. Take Adam and Eve, for example. They were also, quite literally, the new kids on the block. And they had every opportunity for a dazzling future. But Satan didn't want them to succeed. And he set about creating a situation that would distract them from accomplishment.

By placing doubts in their minds about what they had been told concerning which trees to eat and which one to avoid, he moved the emphasis from God to themselves. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). If there had been headlines the next day, they would have emphasised the 'fall' of man, rather than the success that could have been enjoyed.

But fast forward around 4000 years and we have a similar situation. Satan was once again on the scene – trying to act as a spoiler for the launch of the very best service available to mankind - that of redemption. Satan placed temptation after temptation before Jesus, yet in all cases he defeated the best efforts of the Adversary (Matthew 4:11).

For those with an ear to hear, there is nothing that can stop the redemption offered by Jesus Christ. No amount of tragic news, real or from the words of a radio script, can deflect us from the gospel.

Commercial television in the UK has passed its 60th anniversary and is still with us. Jesus Christ has been around for a lot longer – and he remains, thankfully, very much in evidence. And nothing – no spoilers - should distract us from that incredible hope.