

PICTHING OUR TENT TOWARD SODOM



You will recall Jesus' words just before His betrayal, where he was taken captive and then, of course, crucified: He said...

John 14:30 ...for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

The use of the term “world” here, refers to that fallen and corrupted system that dominates the carnal experience: the kingdom of darkness. This kingdom includes the unlawful enticements, pleasures, philosophies, methodologies, and overall mentality of the carnal existence. However, when the prince of the world came to the Prince of Peace he found no hidden allegiance, no secret lust, or sympathy for the fallen, sinful world. Jesus had no inclination toward these things, hence, there was nothing the enemy could exploit; there was no spiritual place for the devil to stand, no ground for the enemy to operate, entice, or otherwise appeal. Likewise, we must be hidden fully in Christ, our affections set on things above, not beneath, or we will provide the enemy a venue in our lives. In this article, we will examine a well-known O.T. story that demonstrates this principle. We will begin by reading in *Genesis 13*...

“And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan,

and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.” -Genesis 13:1-13

...and in the New Testament, we turn to John's first Epistle...

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” -1 John 2:15-17

As we examine our story in *Genesis 13*, we immediately see several areas of concern that, no doubt, contributed to Lot's spiritual demise.

AT THE ROOT, *LOT* WAS A CAUSALITY OF SECOND-HAND RELIGION

Genesis 13:3-4 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; Unto the place of the altar, which he (Abraham) had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

If we are perceptive, we immediately notice, such language is conspicuously void of any hint of spirituality in describing Lot and his experience. Abraham built altars and called on the name of the Lord, but never, not one time, do we read such words regarding Lot. Now, I'm not suggesting Lot had no valid experience at all. There is something to be said for being with the right people at the right time (that's more than can be said for most). Looking back in *Genesis 12* we see he was obviously willing to go, to leave the familiar, and step out by faith. Furthermore, we would be amiss not to acknowledge his faith was in God's Word, but as it was revealed to Abraham, remember...

Genesis 12:4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him...

This is a fundamental problem with Lot: true, there's nothing wrong with Uncle Abraham being a God-used vessel to provoke. Ultimately, though, he must see it for himself. Lot is willing, perhaps, to follow those who have heard from God but hesitant to establish a deep, abiding, first hand knowledge of God for himself. So, ultimately, his lack of personal revelation led to his demise. How true it is, second-hand revelation will never equip us to endure to the end. Perhaps many of you reading this article are in the right place, at the right time, under the right teaching, but have you seen the truth from God's Word for yourself? Would you believe what you have been taught by godly men even if you had to stand alone? Make no mistake, it's good to have God's will confirmed by your pastor, husband, parents, etc. but sooner or

later, unless you build an altar and seek God, the enemy will one day wax more convincing than your authority.

LOT ALLOWED TRIALS, DIFFICULTIES, AND HARDSHIP TO DRIVE HIM

Genesis 13:7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle...

The universal life-experience of man is filled with surprises, disappointments, tests and turns. With Lot, it was no different. We see, there came tension in the camp and no doubt, where carnality is forced to submit to spirituality, there will be unrest, trouble, and conflict.

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other...

Now, true, our text points out a legitimate problem in the natural.

Genesis 13:6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

Substance equated to wealth which primarily speaks of livestock: thus, there was not enough grazing lands. But, certainly, the problem could have been remedied without Lot going all the way into Sodom and Gomorah.

Genesis 13:12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain...

Cities are not noted for their grasslands, no doubt, Lot was attracted to something other than grazing land for his cattle. Apparently, Lot allowed this necessity of separation in proximity to become a separation in influence. This, as we shall see, was not a wise decision.

"Life is tough. But it's even tougher if you're stupid." -John Wayne

Sadly, like many who are half-hearted and double minded, he allowed difficulties in the natural to drive him into the path of least resistance. Too often, carnality naturally flows in the broad path, which will always end in destruction. Sadly, many follow along until the cost to follow is raised then they fall away.

Matthew 13:20-21 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

This flawed mentality naturally established the next...

***LOT* FAILED TO ESTEEM THE VALUE OF GODLY INFLUENCE AND FELLOWSHIP**

Genesis 13:11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

The trouble began when he disesteemed his relationship with Abraham, God's human vessel of faith in the Earth.

1 Cor. 15:33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Obviously, God sovereignly placed Abraham in Lot's life to be a godly influence and offer wise counsel. No doubt, God intended for Abraham to be Lot's spiritual authority, a father figure, if you will: I'm sure Abraham loved Lot and addressed areas of compromise in his life. However, Lot apparently failed to comprehend the value of such a relationship (Abraham represents God's delegated authority, i.e., parents/husband/church/etc.). So it is for you and I, when we disesteem godly counsel and fail to see the importance of God-ordained relationships, then we wax independent.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

God forbid that we would lack wisdom and have to suffer the consequences of not appreciating spiritual authority.

***LOT* ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE ENTICED BY THE WORLD**

Genesis 13:12-13 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

"*Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom.*" This is a very telling statement. Notice, he didn't immediately go into the heart of the cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*. Only that he pitched his tent toward (*this was merely a reflection of his heart*). To have a heart toward Sodom is to be internally froward to God.

Psalms 101:4 A froward heart shall depart from me...

Looking back at verse 10, we see Lot's heart manifest...

Genesis 13:10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

Here, in this seemingly innocent moment, this insignificant choice, this is where the enemy came and found place in Lot. Nobody could condemn him on the ground of this choice alone. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life got him. The lack of personal revelation, the shallow commitment, the independence, it was all exploited here. Instead of walking by faith, Lot walked by sight: the bait was taken, the trap was sprung, and his ruin was basically sealed. When we walk by sight, it may look like we hit the lottery, but in fact, the devil is baiting us into the fiery judgment of God. Drifting Christian, *whomever*, Satan is making a bid for your soul and he is using the *world* to entice, seduce, and appeal to you. I know, it is true, it looks so inviting, so satisfying and fulfilling. What's that you say?

"I won't go all the way out into Sodom, just in the plains, just half-way between here and there."

Don't be deceived, as the often quoted and old truism goes...

"Sin will take you further than you want to go, sin will cause you to stay longer than you intended to stay, and sin will cause you to pay more than you wanted to pay."

Lot only considered natural increase when making his choice, he never dreamed he would soon be offering his daughters to Sodomites in an attempt to keep them from raping angels.

TRUE, LOT WAS DELIVERED, BUT AT A GREAT COST

2 Peter 2:7 And delivered just Lot...

How can God refer to Lot as *just*? Surely, God did not see Lot as *just* because He approved of his sin.

No, not at all. The Scripture refers to Lot as "just" because, in the end, he had enough faith to take God at his Word and be delivered, but only just enough. Likewise, you Christian reader have been justified, but your life of sin was evil, dangerous, stupid, and cost you dearly. Remember, Lot was spared, but at an incredible cost that could have been avoided. He lost his wife and his son-in-laws. His daughters were obviously perverted, and through them, he

sired two sons whose seed were perpetual enemies of God's people throughout history. The amazing thing is this: *Lot may never have known, but if it hadn't been for Abraham and his intercession, Lot would have never made it.* You may say, “What’s the big deal, he made it out?” True, but he was the *only one* who made it out and barely.

Matthew 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Do you really want to play with this principle? Besides, dear reader, do have someone like Abraham interceding for you?

–B.W.