

Case Study: Lot – Too Close For Comfort

Description

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Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of the Lord or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) 11

Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants. 12

So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the Amorites. 13 But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the Lord.

Genesis 13:10-13 NLT

We don't know much about Lot other than the short moments where the Bible speaks about him, however there is much to learn from these snapshots in time. When speaking about Lot, Christian's reference for him is typically that his wife was turned into a pillar of salt during their departure from Sodom as God destroyed the valley. While that story is true, I think that an even more important story and lesson is learned from observing Lot's behavior during his separation from Abram.

Lot was blessed to have an uncle, Abram, who was favored by God. Because of his familial association, Lot was able to obtain spillover blessings as God poured into Abram, who allowed Lot tag along with him as he followed God's direction for his life. I believe that Lot observed his uncle Abram's glow-up and admired the confidence, wealth, and respect that Abram operated with as he left his father's house and traveled throughout Canaan. When it came time for Lot and Abram to separate, we get a inside look at Lot's values and character by his decision. When Abram presented the Lot with the decision where he would set up camp, Lot looked out over his choices and chose the best looking land. Now one may consider Lot's decision and just say that he made the smart choice, but I would counter that Lot was well aware of the history and reputation of Sodom and Gomorrah when he chose to set up his camp there. Oftentimes our actions during or after decisions reveal our level of awareness. Lot was aware of where he was choosing to live based on his decision to set up camp on the outside of the cities, but very close. Now one may say this was because Lot had alot of possessions, but I'd counter that Lot was aware of the practices of the people of the land and thought that he may be able to dwell close to the cities and benefit from the proximity, without adopting any of the negative practices. This is a tough concept to consider, because I personally believe the old saying, "be ye in the world, but not of the world." We don't have to hide from society to avoid to being contaminated with worldly practices, but we must not be blind to the impact of being constant exposure, close proximity, and most importantly, a lack of spiritual discipline. I believe what most negatively impacted Lot was his lack of spiritual discipline and lack of a personal relationship with God which allowed him to find comfort and belonging in an environment, and amongst a people that he should have never voluntarily surrounded himself with. Lot valued and admired Abram's possessions, which was reflected in his decision to seek the greener pastures and amenities of Sodom and Gomorrah. When we don't have a firm foundation in God, we will seek and place a greater value on the temporal things that provide us no real value. When we haven't developed a personal relationship with

God, we have foundation and standard to protect us from the allure of sin and the false promises it offers us. We last see Lot living on the outskirts of the towns, and then later we're re-introduced to him sitting at the gates of the city as a well-respected elder (Genesis 19). I'm not saying that Lot's position in the town was reflective as a lack of moral standards or relationship with God, but I am saying that this ascension in their community can sometimes be reflective of an adoption of values and ways that are in conflict to what God is calling you to do. While Abraham maintained a positive outlook of Lot, and God honored Abraham's request, the stain of the city on Lot's family was nonetheless too great for his family to escape unscathed (read Genesis 19 entirely).

Reflection Time

Are there clear lines between your values and beliefs, and that of regular society? Have you observed a relaxation of some principles that you know God has given you to live your life by? Are you okay with the possible damage to your family that your blurring of lines, and intermixing could have? I challenge you to take inventory of your walk to see where you need to refine and sharpen some things possibly for the livelihood and saving of yourself and those whom you love.

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