

Lot: Villain or Victim

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[0 : 00] I'd like you to open up your Bibles to Genesis chapter 19 this morning.

! If you are using one of the Bibles that we have scattered around in the chairs, you can simply turn to page 13 in those Bibles. But we're in Genesis chapter 19 this morning.

And we're going to spend our time this morning not so much considering what we generally think of as the main topic and the main issue of Genesis chapter 19, and that is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

We will get to that later on. But I want us this morning to take some time to look at Lot, the central character that we find in Genesis chapter 19.

I want us to ask a really basic question about who Lot is, and that is, is Lot, as he is portrayed in the book of Genesis, is Lot, is he a villain?

[1 : 07] Is he a reprehensible character that we should want to turn away from and always do the exact opposite of what he does? Or is he somehow a victim?

A victim of the circumstances that surround him? A victim of the society in which he lived? Where do we locate Lot? What are we supposed to think about this kind of enigmatic figure who's mentioned here and there?

He's a main character a couple of chapters ago, and now he's back to the center, back to the fore in the story of the book of Genesis. But then he's going to disappear again after this chapter. And what are we supposed to think about Lot?

Lot, because I think at the conclusion of our examining and looking at what we actually learn about him in the book of Genesis, we're going to look and find out that Lot is very much like we are.

He's very much a normal person. He's a regular person. We have those figures in the Bible that we point to and we think, well, those are the biblical heroes. The reality is if we examine them more closely, they probably look more like us than we're comfortable admitting.

[2 : 12] But we tend to put them on a pedestal and admire them. But Lot is one that's difficult to put up on a pedestal. He's very much like us. Back and forth, sometimes he appears to be making good decisions, at other times bad decisions.

The little bit that we know about Lot, I believe, places him as sort of a normal guy. In fact, some of you have probably seen this meme in the last week or two. Allie pointed it out to me, I think last week or the week before.

But it's been since the storm. And it's a funny meme. It simply says that Texans should erect a statue to normal guy with a bass boat. Because those normal average guys really turned out in droves, many of them from Louisiana, a lot of them from just around here and wherever the areas that were flooded, and did some truly remarkable things.

And there's a pretty good chance that some of you actually know someone who got out with their boat and went out on rescues. Maybe some of you were even a part of that, were able to be involved in doing those kinds of things.

And you might know some who've done that, and you're thinking, I would have never put that person into the category of hero. Because in all honesty, he's a little bit of a jerk. He's not a very nice guy.

[3 : 26] And yet here he is doing these heroic things, because that's what it is to be normal. In some areas of your life, people look at you and think, I don't know about that guy. But at other times of our lives, you might find yourself in the position of being the hero, or being the one who does an extraordinary act of kindness, and helps someone out.

Because in real life, people are complicated. And Lot, being a normal, regular person, is actually fairly complicated.

So let's dive into Genesis chapter 19. I want to ask you to stand. We're just going to read down through verse 22. We won't read the whole chapter this morning, but I want us to get a good feel for the events that are happening here.

Genesis chapter 19, verse 1. The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and bowed himself with his face to the earth, and said, My lords, please turn aside to your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet.

Then you may rise up early, and go on your way. They said, No, we will spend the night in the town square. But he pressed them strongly, so they turned aside to him, and entered his house.

[4 : 41] And he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house.

And they called to Lot, Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them. Lot went out to the men at the entrance, and shut the door after him, and said, I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly.

Behold, I have two daughters, who have not known any man. Let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please. Only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof. But they said, Stand back.

And they said, This fellow came to sojourn, and he has become the judge. Now we will deal worse with you, than with them. Then they pressed hard, against the man Lot, and drew near to break the door down.

But the men reached out their hands, and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. And they struck with blindness, the men who were at the entrance of the house, both small and great, so that they wore themselves out, groping for the door.

[5 : 43] Then the men said to Lot, Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the city, bring them out of the place, for we are about to destroy this place, because the outcry against this people has become great before the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it.

So Lot went out, and said to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, Up, get out of this place, for the Lord is about to destroy the city. But he seemed to his sons-in-law, to be jesting.

As morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, Up, take your wife, and your two daughters who are here, lest you be swept away, in the punishment of the city. But he lingered. So the men seized him, and his wife, and his two daughters by the hand, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out, and set him outside the city.

And as they brought them out, one said, Escape for your life. Do not look back, or stop anywhere in the valley. Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away. And Lot said to them, Oh no, my lords. Behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have shown me great kindness, in saving my life. But I cannot escape to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me, and I die. Behold, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one.

[6 : 53] Let me escape there. Is it not a little one? And my life will be saved. He said to them, Behold, I grant you this favor also, that I will not overthrow the city, of which you have spoken. Escape there quickly, for I can do nothing, till you arrive there.

Therefore, the name of the city, was called, Zoar. Father, Father, we thank you for, through your spirit, inspiring Moses to record these events for us, so that we might learn, and be taught, and be instructed.

Help us to understand, and to see, what you would have us to know, about this man Lot, and how that should influence, the way that we live our lives.

I ask these things, in Christ's name. Amen. You guys, take a seat. So we are introduced to Lot, fairly early on, in the story, about Abraham.

We're told all the way back, in Genesis chapter 12, that when Abraham, obeyed the call of God, and he went out, he left his father, and he left his father's household, and he went out, at that time, not really knowing, where he was going, just told, go to a land, that I will show you.

[8 : 00] Of course, that ended up being, the land of Canaan, the land of promise. He told Abraham to go out, and we are told, that at that time, Lot went with Abraham. The only person, from Abraham's family, aside from his own wife, and probably his servants, who belonged to him, that went with him, was his nephew Lot, and then Lot's servants, if he had them at that time.

Lot, this strange figure, he just pops up out of nowhere. Lot, traveling with Abraham, into the land of promise. And the next time, we hear about Lot, we simply are told, that when Abraham, went down to Egypt, and then came back out of Egypt, Lot was with him.

All we know, from the first few chapters, of the story, of the life of Abraham, is that this nephew Lot, accompanies him, stays by his side, goes with him, wherever Abraham goes.

But then of course, there is a division, and a separation, between Abraham and Lot. Not because Abraham and Lot, had an issue with one another. Not because they were personally, at odds with one another.

But we are told, that Lot's shepherds, and Lot's workers, were having difficulty, with Abraham's workers, and shepherds, and the two groups, couldn't get along. They had too many possessions.

[9 : 19] They had too many animals, to graze upon the land. And so, this dispute, arose among them. And Abraham and Lot, of course, not wanting this dispute, to rise to a level, where they themselves, came to be at odds, they decided, to part ways.

Abraham was of course, gracious, in this entire exchange, and said to Lot, choose whatever part, of the land, that you want.

And if you look back, in Genesis chapter 13, you'll see the account, of Lot's choice of land. In Genesis chapter 13, verse 10, we're told this, And Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw that the Jordan Valley, was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar.

This was before, the Lord destroyed Sodom, and Gomorrah. So apparently, before the events, that we read about, in chapter 19, this area, was a sort of paradise.

After that time, of course, it was a land, of desolation. Even centuries later, ancient authors, would note, how the land there, was just desolate, was, there was ash, there was, so it's not an area, that you would ever think of, as being fruitful, but at this point in time, before God, had executed judgment, upon what we know, as the cities of the valley, around the Dead Sea, it was apparently, a very fertile land.

[10 : 45] Read on verse 11, so, Lot chose for himself, all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Verse 12, Abraham settled, in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled, among the cities, of the valley, and moved his tent, as far as, as Sodom.

So the first, first thing we see, Lot doing, after he departs, from Abraham, or Abram, at this stage, of the story, after he departs, from him, is he takes, he takes all, of his possessions, and he takes his, his flock, takes his tents, and he moves, to the cities, of the valley, to the Jordan Valley, but he settles, near Sodom, as far as Sodom, indicating, that he's not, in the city of Sodom, which would make, no sense, for a man, who was a farmer, and a shepherd, who had all, of these, these animals, to take care of, he wouldn't be, a city dweller, but he's on the, outskirts of Sodom, he goes as far, as Sodom, and just, to make sure, that we don't, miss the point, of saying, that Lot, has journeyed, and set up, his tents, near Sodom, Moses, reminds us, in verse 13, now the men, of Sodom, were wicked, great sinners, against the Lord, so Lot, has moved, from being, near Abram, the one, through whom, God's blessing, and promise, has come into the world, to now, being near, and outside, of Sodom, he's not accused, of anything, in the passage,

Lot is not presented, as a villain, in chapter 13, he's not, the issue is not, between him, and Abraham, in fact, he's pictured, as just as willing, and eager, as Abraham, to solve the dispute, between their shepherds, in a way, that wouldn't create, a rift between, the two of them, he's not a villain, in chapter 13, in any sort of way, but he does make, a foolish decision, the foolishness, of his decision, is twofold, one, in moving away, from Abraham, on the surface, that seems like, a wise decision, on the surface, that seems like, a good idea, if we need to, avoid strife, amongst our workers, then we're going, to have to separate, we're going to have, to go to different, parts of the land, I'll go way over here, you stay here, it seems on the surface, to be the product, of wisdom, but we know, as the readers, of Genesis, that Abraham, is the one, he's chosen, by God, to be the one, through whom, God would bless, all the families, of the earth, and for Lot, to distance himself, from Abraham, is great foolishness, but then secondly, his foolishness, is compounded, because he moves, near Sodom, he moves, from being next, to Abraham, the chosen one, of God, to being next, to the city, that has, the greatest reputation, for wickedness, he's near, he's right next, to Sodom, but it is important, to note, that he doesn't go, and live in Sodom, he doesn't just, leave Abraham's side, and then travel, and say, aha, instead of Abraham,

I want to live, with these wicked people, I'm going to be one of them, he doesn't, he doesn't do that, at all, he's simply near there, he goes as far, as Sodom, but he's not, a city dweller, just yet, he's still a shepherd, he's not, a city dweller, but the next time, we see him, there's a great change, that has taken place, we see him, in the next chapter, in chapter 14, now, some time has passed, we don't know, exactly how much time, but chapter 14, gives us the portrait, of Abraham, that we called, sort of the brave heart, Abraham, Abraham the warrior, Abraham goes out, and fights, but the reason, that Abraham goes out, to fight, is because, the cities of Sodom, and Gomorrah, and the other cities, around there, had been defeated, and all the people, taken captive, by these foreign kings, and so, Abraham rises, because, the life, of his nephew Lot, has been put in jeopardy, take a look, in chapter 14, verse 12, they, that is, these foreign invaders, they also, took Lot, and just, as a reminder, as to why Lot, matters, the son of Abraham's brother, that's who he is, Lot's important, Lot matters, because he's a part, of the family, of Abraham, he's a part, of those, connected, to Abraham, and the promise, and the blessing, that's why he matters, but notice, what's said next, about him, they took Lot, the son of Abraham's brother, who was dwelling, in Sodom, something has changed, between chapters 13, and 14, we don't know, we don't know precisely, what led to Lot, to Lot now being, in Sodom, and dwelling, in the city of Sodom, we're not told, how does someone, who possesses, so great, a number of animals, that he has to move, to another part, of the land, to give grazing room, to them, to keep them away, from his uncle's, large herds, what could happen, to a man, who had such great wealth, that he's now living, in the city, you might say, well those invaders, took everything he had, no no no no, here the text, makes it clear, that when the invaders, arrive, Lot is already, living in the city, so at some point, between Lot, moving to the Jordan Valley, and now the invasion, of the Jordan Valley, by these outsiders, at some point, [16:09] Lot moved, from being a, wealthy, successful, farmer, to being a, city dweller, in the most wicked, city, mentioned, in the Old Testament, over, and over, and over, throughout, the rest of the Bible, even the New Testament, if, if a writer, wants to emphasize, the wickedness, and the sinfulness, of a person, or a culture, or a society, they will say, that they were like, Sodom, or like, Gomorrah, and now Lot, for reasons, unknown to us, finds himself, living, in the city, and then, we encounter, Lot, finally, again, in Genesis, chapter 19, and again, there is movement, in the life, of Lot, notice, how he's introduced, chapter 19, verse 1, the two angels, came to Sodom, in the evening, and Lot, was sitting, in the gate, of Sodom, now, you might say, what's, what's the big deal, it just tells us, where he was,

I mean, he happened to be, sitting outside, by the gate, to the city, what's the big deal, well, most scholars, will point out, that, to sit, in the gate, of a city, in the ancient world, normally meant, that you were, among those citizens, within the city, who were considered, to be, judges of a sort, so that people, would come out, to the gates, of the city, and present, to those sitting, near the gates, those considered, to be wise, those considered, to be a capable, of rendering, judgments, for various cases, people would come out, to them and say, so my neighbor, has done this to me, or this has happened, we need you, to decide the case, before us, which means, that Lot, has gone, from being with Abraham, to moving away, from Abraham, and settling, near the city, of Sodom, to being in, the city of Sodom, to now being, a sort of leader, within this great, and wicked city, called Sodom, there has been, this slow, steady, decline, for Lot, but I would argue, that that by itself, does not turn Lot, into a villain, in fact,

I believe, that chapter 19, for the first paragraph, at least, gives us, a fairly positive picture, of Lot, despite his foolishness, despite the mistakes, that he's made, because we've, already seen, in Genesis, that foolishness, is no reason, to write someone off, Abraham, has done, incredibly foolish, and we would say, sinful things, and he's never, written off, Lot's foolishness, and moving, into this wicked city, and now being, apparently, it appears to be, a leader, within this wicked city, that doesn't mean, that he's automatically, written off, as some sort of villain, or tragic character, who has no, redeemable qualities, he's actually presented, in a somewhat, positive light, in these opening verses, I say that because, and I think I mentioned this, several weeks ago, Lot is intentionally, by Moses, the writer of the book of Genesis, Lot is intentionally, being contrasted, and compared, with Abraham, in the previous chapter, the two angels, accompanied by the Lord himself, appear to Abraham, as men, as three men, and Abraham, responds to them, first by bowing, to the ground, not because he immediately, recognizes that it's, the Lord himself, there's no indication, that he does initially, but just out of respect, for these visitors, to his tent, to his household, and then, he urges them, to stay a little while, so that he might, provide them with a

meal, so that they might, be able to wash, their feet, and be cleansed, and rested, for whatever journey, they have before him,

Abraham is, is a, a very good, example, of, hospitality, and not hospitality, in the sense, that we use the term, hospitality, like, oh I invited a few people, to come over for dinner, at my house, but, but hospitality, in the ancient world, and even today, amongst, amongst those societies, that are, that are perhaps, more culturally aligned, with the sort of culture, that we see, in the Bible, we see that, hospitality, is, is held up, as one of the highest, virtues, and hospitality, in the ancient world, meant that you actually, cared for, sheltered, protected, whoever was, visiting, whoever was sojourning, in your community, as if they were, one of your own, family member, you bring them in, and you take care of them, and you protect them, from anything, that might harm them, and Abraham, is pictured as, as sort of the, the preeminent example, of what it means, to show hospitality, to strangers, others, but if you notice, in the opening verses, of chapter 19,

Lot's response, to the presence, of these two angels, who appeared to him, as men, is very similar, to Abraham's, notice what we see here, middle of verse 1, when Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and bowed himself, same language used, to describe Abraham's, initial response, he bowed himself, with his face, to the earth, and said, my lords, now pause for a moment, look back in chapter 18, Abraham, when he saw them, he ran from the tent door, to meet them, and bowed himself, to the earth, and said, oh lord, so Lot addresses, these men, in the same way, that Abraham, addressed the lord, in chapter 18, he bows, he runs to meet them, he bows on his face, he calls out to them, my lords, and then he says, please turn aside, to your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet, then you may rise up early, and go on your way, he's, he's doing, exactly what,

[22:12] Abraham does, in chapter 18, there's a clear comparison, between the two, Abraham is the preeminent, example of hospitality, he is the embodiment, of what the bible, expects of us, as we treat those, who are foreigners, and aliens, and sojourners, among us, but Lot, in many ways, is reflective, of Abraham, not in every way, initially, the men refused, no, we will spend the night, in the town square, but he pressed them strongly, so that they turned aside, to him, and entered his house, and he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate, Lot's doing, what he's capable, of doing, Abraham on the other hand, exceeds Lot, in hospitality, Abraham asks them, to stay, but Abraham goes, and he gets a calf, the finest that he has, and he slaughters the calf, so they might have meat, he has his wife Sarah, prepare the best flour, that they have, to make the best bread, that they have, all that Lot provides, for them, it's called a feast, but the only thing, that's named, is unleavened bread, certainly not the finest, flour available, so Lot, in many ways, mirrors the actions, of Abraham, but he, but he falls short, of Abraham's behavior, he's, he's not on the level, of Abraham, he's not to be admired, in the way, that Abraham is, at least in Genesis chapter 18, but he's not a villain, he's not doing anything, evil, or wicked here, in fact,

Lot stands out, from the wicked citizens, of the city of Sodom, Lot stands out, because though he lives, in the midst of them, he has not really, and truly, become one, of them, you notice how they, when they speak to Lot, how they address Lot, look there in verse 9, but they said to Lot, this is after he's told them, leave these men alone, they said, stand back, and they said, this fellow, came to sojourn, and he has become a judge, now we will deal worse, with you, than with them, because even though, Lot has arisen, to the point of being, being a sort of, important figure, in the community, sitting at the city gates, he is still, in their eyes, an outsider, he is still, when push comes to shove, and there's a problem, and there's a disagreement, he's an outsider, and you can almost, there's a, there's a sarcasm, I think, dripping from their words, he has become a judge, well actually, yeah, he has, that's why he's sitting, at the city gates, but they mean it, in a pejorative sense, you're going to judge us, for our behavior, you're just a foreigner, but he's been there, probably for decades, by now, he's not one of them, he has not, fully assimilated, into the culture, of Sodom, and I believe, that the reason, that Lot stands out, above and beyond, and different from them, is that Lot, has not given in, to their wicked behavior,

I think that's what, Moses intends for us, to see, when he makes the comparison, between Lot, and Abraham, the people of Sodom, respond, by wanting to, grab, and sexually assault, these men, Lot responds, to their presence, by wanting to care for them, and bring them, into his home, and feed them, and wash their feet, he's, he's not like, the Sodomites, he's, he's not, one, of them, Lot is not, the villain, of the story, we are not, intended to see him, that way, and as Moses, is crafting, and writing, the story of Genesis, he wants us, to see, if we will pick up, on all the clues, that Lot is not,

he's not, the bad guy, he's not, the villain, but I also think, that Moses wants us, to see, that Lot is, not a victim, either, he's neither, villain, nor, victim, there were no, outside forces, pushing Lot, to move, near Sodom, we're not told, of any cataclysmic event, that led Lot, to becoming, someone who dwelt, within the city, of Sodom, we're not told, we're not shown, in any way, that Lot, was forced, to do, any of these things, these are Lot's, own decisions, if we want to, refer to him, as a victim, in any sense,

Lot is only, a victim, of his own choices, he's not a victim, of outside pressures, and influences, and threats, oh no, Lot's own decisions, have put himself, in this particular, position, he's not, he's not a victim, he's not a villain, he's not a victim, so, what is he?

He's a normal, person, who has made, foolish, and terrible decisions, that have now, placed him, in an impossible, situation, that's, that's who he is, and the situation, that he faces, is, is pretty grave, note, just how it's worded, in here, look in verse 4, before they lay down, they've eaten, Lot has taken care, of them, before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people, to the last man, surrounded the house, now that's an important sentence, in itself there, all the people, to the last man, surrounded the house, that's an important sentence, that's an important statement, because, in chapter 18, Abraham prayed, and begged God, don't judge, don't judge the city of Sodom, don't judge the righteous, with the wicked, if there are just, and he whittles it, all the way down, if there's just ten, righteous people, in the city of Sodom, will you spare it, and God says, yes, if there are ten, righteous people in Sodom,

[28 : 05] I will not judge the city, as wicked as it has become, God of course, knowing, there are not, ten righteous people, in the city of Sodom, down to the last man, every one of them, they come, and they surround Lot's house, verse 5, and they called to Lot, where are the men, who came to you tonight, bring them out to us, that we may know them, Lot went out to the men, at the entrance, shut the door after him, and he said, I beg you my brothers, do not act so wickedly, you see the desperation of Lot, he wants to appear, to be one of them, I beg of you my brothers, they are not his brothers, he has left aside, the brotherhood that he had, with Abraham, long ago, Abraham has not forgotten it, Abraham willing to rescue, Abraham willing to pray, and intercede, on behalf of his nephew, Abraham's not forgotten it, but Lot, here is Lot, trying to appear, at least externally, to be one of them, oh my brothers, don't do this, but he is not one of them, he is not one of them, because he says, don't do this wicked thing, don't act so wickedly, they don't even see, what they are doing, as wicked, this is just, who they are, this is how they live, this is how they behave, to the very last man, of the city, every one of them, so far gone, that they see nothing wrong, not only with homosexuality, but with the forceful violation, of these strangers, among them, they see no problem with it, this is who they are,

Lot's not their brother, otherwise he would have never seen, the great wickedness, of who they were, Lot's in a tough spot, he really is, and we probably, scratch our heads the most, at what Lot says next, in fact, I think the reason, that we are prone, to put Lot, into the category of, villain, is because of, what he says next, it's, unthinkable for us, today, verse 8, behold I have two daughters, who have not yet, known any man, let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please, only do nothing to these men, for they have come, under the shelter of, of my roof, the willingness of Lot, to, throw his daughters, to the mob, to sacrifice, his daughters, even, in what we might call, a good cause, of rescuing these strangers, it's, it's difficult for us, to even, make sense of, which, which is why, it is so easy, for us to say, what a despicable, evil, wicked figure, but that's not how, he's portrayed, throughout Genesis, that's not how, he's portrayed, so what are we to do, with what he says,

I think here, what we're seeing is, not necessarily, the influence of Sodom, upon Lot, it's not because, Lot lives in Sodom, that he's willing, to give up his daughters, I think what we're seeing, is the influence, of a much broader culture, at that time, that ruled, and reigned, over most of humanity, if not all, and certainly, in the ancient Near East, in which women, were treated as, barely more, than a possession, it's a great, it's a great failure, of the ancient world, it is a great failure, that is condemned, over and over, in the Bible, when you get to the law, of Moses, there is law, after law, after law, that are aimed, within the context, of that culture, aimed to protect women, laws about inheritance, that are aimed, to protect women, laws about marriage, and divorce, and remarriage, that are aimed, to protect women, because outside, of the law of Moses, there were no protections, for women, they were nothing, and it's not just Lot, who's like this, this is Abraham's, problem as well, is it not?

We scratch our heads, when Abraham, lies about Sarah, and says she's not his wife, and is willing, to put her in danger, and risk her, and have her, taken into the home, of another man, and we think, what's wrong with him?

What is wrong with him? Because we live, at such a great, cultural distance, at least, in regard to how we think, about women, from the ancient world. See in the modern, western world, and what I mean by that, when I say the western world, I mean primarily, European, and American society, and then other places, in the world, that have been heavily influenced, by European, and western values.

[32 : 34] In the modern, western world, and by modern, I guess, I should clarify as well, I mean, really the last, say, hundred years or so. In the modern, western world, the attitude, and thinking about women, has turned, and changed, so that it is different, than almost every other culture, in every other time, and place.

It's different. It just, it just is. I think that's because, of the influence, of Christianity, within the world. You see the seeds, being sown, for a more, biblical attitude, towards, towards women, as being created, equally in the image of God.

You see a more, biblical attitude, toward that, the seeds of that, being sown, even prior to, the last hundred years, even prior to, the 20th century. You can see, within those places, where Christianity, became dominant, though, though we don't have yet, the kind of equality, that we like to think of, where women are fully regarded, as equally made, in the image of God.

You still don't always, see that, but you see a vast difference, even 200 years ago, in Christian societies, the way women are regarded, and treated, as opposed to other, more pagan, more idolatrous societies.

The seeds were sown earlier, but they really began, to bear fruit, in the 20th century, so that, in America, women were given, the right to vote. Today, it's unthinkable to us, even that there was a time, when women, weren't allowed to vote.

[33 : 58] That's strange to us, but, it was just a century ago. It wasn't that long ago. Attitudes have, greatly changed, for the better.

Of course, societies that are not, built upon the word of God, are prone to extremes. And the further, our society has moved, from even a semblance, of Christian morality, the more we're falling off, on the other side of things.

Even while we, as a society, claim, that there's, greater equality, for women, than at any other time, and there is, but even while, that's the case, things are moving, quickly in, a direction, where women are regarded, once again, as very little, more than property.

I mean, after all, how, what are we told, constantly, in the media, and by other, and by other, outside influences, what are we constantly, what are the pictures, we're shown, what do women, have to do, in order to be of worth, and value, and attain success, in the world today, they need to do, one of two things, they either have to, they have to meet, the sexualized image, that's displayed, everywhere before us, and everything is about, their outward appearance, or they have to, effectively, become men, behave like men, and talk like men, there's, there's no sense, of a balance, between genuine, authentic femininity, the way that God, has designed it, and yet still, equality with men, equally made, in the image of God, that's a biblical world view, that is absent, everywhere else, it's not surprising to me, that we are headed, in a direction, to where, while we continually, champion women's rights, they're being thrown, out the window, and women are being treated, horribly, and the expectations, placed upon them, are ridiculous, I believe, we're headed, in that direction, but in the ancient world, they were in a place, where women, were already regarded, as barely more, than a possession, that's reflected, in Abraham's treatment, of Sarah, is reflected now, in Lot's treatment, of his daughters, seems unthinkable, to us, but this is not, a sign of Lot's, great wickedness, this is a sign, that Lot, like Abraham, was prey, to the shortcomings, of the broader, society, in which, he lived, that in itself,

I think is probably, a lesson for us, that Lot, could do such, a wicked, terrible thing, and yet, not be portrayed, as a villain, in the book of Genesis, I think it is a lesson, to us, not to judge, too quickly, as we look back, upon the past sins, of other believers, so often times, we will, we will look back, at the period, of American history, where slavery, was rampant, prior to the Civil War, where, where there were, many, professing believers, that were slave holders, and, if you dig, deeply enough, you will find, that many of those, that you admire, many Christian theologians, that you admire, from the past, they owned slaves, and sometimes, they even, they even said, positive things, about slavery,

and it is tempting, for us, when we discover that, to immediately, dismiss that person, as, well, they must have been lost, or, they must not have known, anything, no, they were, they were, like all of us, blind, to the sins, that were, part of the fabric, of the society, in which, they lived, and they just, they couldn't see it, and I have no doubt, that a hundred years, from now, two hundred years, from now, future generations, will look back, upon us, and they will wonder, how could preachers, preach week in, and week out, and never address, and I can't name the issue, because I can't see it, [37 : 45] I can't see it, and you can't see it, but future generations, will look, and they will see it, and they will know, and they will point, to the scriptures, and the scriptures, will be clear about it, and will be wrong, and I hope, they don't dismiss us, and account us, as just wicked, awful sinners, and I hope, we don't do that, to law either, wicked, terrible, was his deed, wicked, terrible, was slavery, and all those, who supported it, and were okay with it, wicked, we can condemn, sin, in a person, and even in a society, without condemning, the person, completely, and dismissing them, entirely, if you can't do that, then you're going to be, you're going to be hard pressed, to find anyone, throughout history, to admire, other than Jesus himself, you won't find anybody, in the Bible, worth admiring, if you can't do that, if you can't condemn, someone's sin, while not writing them off, as a lost cause, Lot's, response, is, unthinkably wicked, and yet, he is not himself, unthinkably wicked, like the people, of Sodom, how do I know that,

I know that, first and foremost, because, Lot is portrayed, throughout Genesis, as, a good man, making foolish decisions, but a good man, nonetheless, and I know this secondly, because the New Testament, tells us, I want you to hold your place, in Genesis, and turn all the way back, to 2nd Peter, near the back of your Bible, if you're using, one of the church Bibles, page, 1018, 1018, we're moving from, the front of the Bible, to the back of the Bible, in 2nd Peter chapter 2, verse 6, referencing, looking back, Peter's looking back, to the destruction, of Sodom and Gomorrah, he says, if by turning, the cities of Sodom, and Gomorrah, to ashes, he, that is God, condemned them, to extinction, making them, an example, of what is going, to happen, to the ungodly, and if he rescued, now mark this, if he rescued, righteous Lot, greatly distressed, by the sensual, conduct of the wicked, that's what you're seeing, in Genesis 18, righteous, or Genesis 19, righteous Lot, greatly distressed, by the sensual, conduct of the wicked, blind to his own sin, yes, but he's not in, with the wicked,

Peter says, he was righteous, greatly distressed, by the sensual, conduct of the wicked, and then, for as that righteous man, lived among them, day after day, he was tormenting, his righteous soul, three times, he's called righteous, by Peter, and of all you know, about Lot, and all you can see, about Lot, is what he does, in regard to his daughters, and you miss, the larger picture, of who Lot is, both in Genesis, and in the scriptures, as a whole, he's, he's not the villain, he's not really, a victim, except of his own, foolish decisions, he is, a sinner, saved by grace, in process, of transformation, who is not yet, there yet, he's not there, he's not complete, neither is Abraham, Abraham's not finished, acting foolishly, he will fall back, into the trap, of exposing his wife, to great danger, there again, that broad, society wide sin, and wickedness, that they were blind to, and they just couldn't see it, but though they were blind, to that,

God did not, let it go, without its repercussions, its consequences, for Abraham, his treatment of Sarah, resulted in, him taking Hagar, and from Hagar, a son born, who would be a thorn, in the side, of the rest, of Abraham's, descendants, strife, within his household, between the two women, Abraham suffered, for his treatment, of Sarah, and Lot, suffers for his treatment, of his daughters, look down, at the end of Genesis 19, I want you to see this, beginning in verse 30, we'll read, several verses here, so you can see it all, now Lot, this is after the cities, have been destroyed, now Lot, went up out of Zoar, and lived in the hills, with his two daughters, for he was afraid, to live in Zoar, we don't know, why he was afraid, maybe he's seen, the consequences, of living, among the wicked, we don't know, he begged to live there, he's there, and he's afraid, so he lived in a cave, with his two daughters, and the firstborn, said to the younger, our father's old, there's not a man, on earth, to come into us, after the manner, of all the earth, come let us make, our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve, offspring from our father, so they made their father, drink wine that night, and the firstborn, went in and lay with her father, he did not know, when she lay down, or when she arose, the next day, the firstborn, said to the younger, behold, I lay last night, with my father, let us make him, drink wine tonight also, then you go in, and lie with him, that we may preserve, offspring from our father, so they made their father, drink wine that night, also, and the younger arose, and lay with him, and he did not know, when she lay down, or

when she arose, thus both the daughters, of Lot, became pregnant, by their father, the firstborn, bore a son, and called his name, Moab, he is the father, of the Moabites, to this day, the younger also, bore a son, and called his name, Ben-Ami, he is the father, of the Ammonites, to this day, I said that, Lot is, contrasted, and compared, with Abraham, but he is also, I believe, throughout this chapter, contrasted, and compared, with Noah, Lot, like Noah, is the only, the single, righteous one, in a sense, in a very real sense, God answered, Abraham's prayer, don't destroy, the righteous, with the wicked, and he doesn't, he pulls the one, righteous person, out of Sodom, and destroys the city, that's what he does, like Noah,

[44 : 09] Lot is the one, righteous, among a society, filled, with incredible, incredible wickedness, like Noah, he is the only one, rescued, and saved, out of God's judgment, God's judgment, and like Noah, after, after all, that has happened, after God, has miraculously, delivered him, when, the dust, has settled, Noah, became drunk, Noah's, sons, one of his sons, saw his nakedness, I don't think, that's a euphemism, for anything terrible, I think it's literal, saw him, but, but it was a great shame, to Noah, that that happened, so much so, that some of his descendants, received the curse there, for that, Lot, in the same way, mirrors, Noah, now, becomes drunk, but, for Lot, something far, grave, more grave, happens, here, now, a sin, takes place, it's not just, that we, in the modern, western world, are revolted, by this, no,

Lot's world, and Lot's culture, would have been, in revulsion, against this, the law, there is law, after law, guarding, against this, in the Old Testament, this is an incredibly, wicked thing, that Lot, does not knowingly, participate in, and as a result, two peoples, are put on the earth, the Moabites, and the Ammonites, who become a thorn, in the side, of God's chosen people, the people of Israel, this is historically, how the sin, of Lot, in Sodom, comes to its fruition, not only does Lot suffer, but the people of God, suffer, as well, there are consequences, for Lot, in fact, in the Old Testament, Lot is only mentioned, three more times, in the entire Old Testament, and every time, it's in connection, with his descendants, every time, that's his legacy, maybe that's sometimes, why we think of him, as a villain, because, his legacy, is so colored, with darkness, and clouded, by this wicked thing, that he did, in the midst, of a terrible situation, and then, what happened to him, afterwards, with his daughters, perhaps, that's why, we have a tendency, to color him, in a darker way, that's, that's how he's remembered, in the rest of the, of the Old Testament, his reputation, is salvaged, by Peter, thankfully, so that we, we can see clearly, and understand clearly, how we ought to be reading, the story of Genesis, but for Lot, there are great consequences, that affect, not only him, but the people of God, and that,

I believe, is a lesson for us, that the closer, we align ourselves, with, with a wicked, culture, and with sinful people, even if we don't, directly participate, in their sin, we will put ourselves, into positions, where we are, forced to make, a sinful decision, Lot, at least in his own mind, we could think of, some other ways out, but Lot, in his own mind, had no other way out, because, of the life, that he had chosen, because he had decided, to live in that city, because he had, he had, at least externally, tried to become, one of them, he couldn't participate, in their wickedness, but he arose, to a place of prominence, among them, he calls them brothers, he wants, to be accepted, by them, he can't be, one of them, but for some reason, he wants to be, accepted by them, and we fall, into the same trap, over and over, and over, we want to be, accepted by, a people, that we, we just don't have, anything, in common with them, in terms of, our morality, and our standards, for living, we don't, and we, but for some reason, we are drawn, to be accepted, by them, to be loved, by them, and to be wanted, by them, and if, if the story of Lot, teaches us anything, it was, it is, that we must be separate, and different, and stand out, and not put ourselves, in a place, where we encounter, great spiritual danger, you know, believers can do that, we can make decisions, and we can pursue things, that put us in positions, of great, spiritual danger, future, it may be because, we are pursuing something, that on the surface, is not a bad thing, so it is not a bad thing, for you to want to, receive a promotion, or switch jobs, because you get a better salary, or better benefits, and you're, and you're able to take care, of your family better, but if it, if it rips you away, from the people of God, so that you are never able, to assemble together, with the people of God, though, initially, it looks like, you have a, good goal in mind, it requires you, to take a path, the Bible specifically says, don't, don't do that, or sometimes we, we want so badly, to be accepted, by others around us, that we compromise, and, and we make friends, in the world, and yet, we keep our mouths shut, and never share, the gospel with them, never call them, to repentance, never say anything, that might, put us on the outs, with them,

I think that's, Lot's problem, he finally, he finally says, don't do this wicked thing, and that's when they're like, who's this guy, who does he think he is, been silent, for far too long, and often times, we are silent, for far too long, sometimes we will try, to even use, the example of Jesus, to justify, our failure, to stand out, and be different, from the sinful society, that surrounds us, we'll say, well Jesus, ate and drank, with sinners, that's all I'm doing, is eating, and drinking, with sinners, well let's see, what the Bible says, last place, I'll have you turn, I promise, Mark chapter 2, Mark chapter 2, verse 15, he has just, called Levi, a tax collector, to be one of his disciples, we're told, as he reclined, at table in his house, that's Levi's house, many tax collectors, and sinners, were reclining, with Jesus, and his disciples, for there were many, who followed him, there it is, there's your justification, he's eating with them, he's spending time with them, it's all I'm doing, okay, it's fine, scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw, that he was eating, with sinners, and tax collectors, said to his disciples, why does he eat, with tax collectors, and sinners, which would seem, on the surface, to put me, in the category, of the Pharisee, right now, hope not, when Jesus heard it, he said to them, those who are well, have no need, of a physician, but those who are sick, I, came not, to call the righteous, but, sinners, and if you're wondering, what it means, for Jesus to come, and call sinners, just look back, a chapter, Jesus, as he proclaimed, the gospel of God, said, in verse 15, of chapter 1, the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God, is at hand, repent, and believe in the gospel, when Jesus came, to call sinners, to himself, and sat, and ate with them, and made friends with them, he came for the purpose, and that he might say, repent, and believe, God has no problem, with us entering, into the lives, of our sinful neighbors, and sinful family members, and sinful co-workers, he has no problem, with that, so long as we do it, for the purpose of saying, repent, and believe, build up a relationship, such that you're able, to do that, doesn't mean the first time, you encounter them, you look at them, and go, hey, you need to repent, but it means, that that's your goal, get to the point, to where you can look them, in the eye, and say, here's what the Bible says, here's what I believe, you need to repent, and believe, that's what Jesus was doing, and I dare say, that's not what Lot was doing, and that's not what we are doing, when we most of the time, cite this passage, to justify, our being intermingled, with the sinful elements, around us, as not what he would have us, to do,

[52 : 40] Lot is, an example, for us, an example, of how the righteous, can fall in, with the wicked, and though he himself, doesn't succumb entirely, to that wickedness, he can become, so compromised, that he later, has to face, the grave consequences, of his failings, and we ought not, go down that path, we ought, those of us, who have trusted in Christ, those of us, who have repented, of our sin, and put our faith in him, we ought not, to turn, and go down that path, we ought not, to even begin, to go down that path, we ought not, to separate ourselves, from the covenant people, of God, so that we are absent, the influence, of God's grace, and God's mercy, upon us, no, we stick close, to God's people, we stick close, to God's word, so that as we go out, and mix, and mingle, with others, we can take, the gospel to them, you know,

Abram, mixed and mingled, he was sitting, at his tent, that day, in Genesis 18, when the angels, appeared to him, by the oaks, of Mamre, Mamre, his friend, the one, with whom he made, a covenant, who fought, in battle with him, against the foreign, invaders, in all likelihood, a pagan, it wasn't as if, Abraham had walled, himself off, from the world, but it's also not, as if Abraham, went to live, among the sodomites, and the covenant, people of God, you and I, declared righteous, through faith, in Jesus, have an obligation, in this world, to interact, and engage, with those around us, without trying, to be accepted, by them, and become a part, of them, because we have a message, repent, and believe, in the gospel, let's pray, for those who do, do you do, do you do,