

Famous Bible Stories

Dangerous Decisions

Genesis 13.5-13,19

www.thischristianjourney.com

[Your life is but the sum total of the decisions that you will make. In this story of the life of Lot we find the story of a man who made some terrible decisions. As we study we will discover how Lot's decisions not only affected Lot's life but the lives of those Lot loved.]

[In this story we have a contrast between Abraham and Lot. For the purposes of this study Abraham is going to represent the spiritual man and Lot will represent the carnal man.]

[This study could be called today, the choices of a carnal man.]

[Lot was Abraham's nephew and he went out of Ur of the Chaldeans with Abraham as he went. Lot is referred to as a saved man. The Bible says,]

[2 Peter 2:7-8⁷ And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:⁸ (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)]

[In our last study we saw how Abraham stumbled for a time in his faith, and then restored himself in his faith. Now, it shouldn't surprise us that a Christian might stumble for a bit in his faith. However a spiritual Christian, once he recognizes what has happened in his faith, will rededicate himself and restore himself in his faith. However, a carnal Christian may not ever really recognize where he is in his faith and will often continue in his devastated state for the duration of his life.]

[I call a carnal life a devastated state because the Bible says of Lot,]

*[2 Peter 2:7⁷ And delivered just Lot, **vexed** with the filthy conversation of the wicked:]*

[Vexed – wear out by toil or suffering, oppress, **torment**; only passive in the NT *be distressed or worn out* (2P 2.7); *be mistreated* (AC 7.24)^[1]]

[Lot was tormented day in and day out by his carnal condition and what it was doing to him and his family. A carnal Christian will never be a happy or satisfied Christian.]

[Now, I'm not saying that a carnal Christian cannot come to himself as the prodigal son did. Of course he can, but it is much harder for him to become a spiritual Christian, not because he can't but because he is far less likely to recognize his carnal state. Until you are honest about where you stand with God you are not likely to improve your standing with God.]

^[1]Friberg, Timothy ; Friberg, Barbara ; Miller, Neva F.: *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich. : Baker Books, 2000 (Baker's Greek New Testament Library 4), S. 221

[In this story of Lot we have a clear picture of a carnal saved man, or as I will refer to the condition for the sake of our study today a carnal Christian.]

Notice,

- A. **Lot And His Choice (vs 8-9,10,12)** [– Abraham is a rancher, he has flocks and herds, he has cattle and sheep. Lot likewise is a rancher and there is not enough grazing land. So a range war starts and Abraham comes to Lot and says that they ought not to be fighting among themselves, it just wouldn't look good. **The Devil would rather start a Church fuss than sell a bottle of liquor any day.** A fight among Christians does more damage than anything else. Why? Because it is a disgrace to the cause of Christ.]

[Abraham had been given all the land by God. Abraham could have said, “Lot now you get outta here this is my land.” But he didn't, instead Abraham, in his great humility said,]

[Genesis 13:8-9⁸ . . . Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. ⁹ 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.]

[Lot then looked across the land and the text states,]

[Genesis 13:10¹⁰ 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 [a bit of paradise, or heaven], like the land of Egypt [a bit of the world], as thou comest unto Zoar.]

[The land looked like a combination of the Garden of Eden (all the best of God) and Egypt (all the best of the world) and Lot made a very materialistic decision, he chose Sodom.]

*[Genesis 13:12¹² Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, **and pitched his tent toward Sodom.**]*

Notice that Lot's choice was,

1. **A Selfish Choice (vs 11)** [– *Then Lot chose him . . .* – That is Lot choose for himself. Lot wasn't thinking about Abraham, he wasn't thinking about his family, He just chose for himself. Lot was more interested in his,
 - a. [Gold than he was in his God.]
 - b. [Cattle than he was in his Children.]
 - c. [Fortune than he was in his family.]

[So Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom. This was a terrible choice for his family, but Lot didn't care about that. He was only thinking about himself. It didn't matter to Lot that the people of that place were exceedingly wicked, he just saw that green succulent grass.]

[One of the marks of carnality is me first, taking Christ off the throne and putting self on the throne.]

2. A **Small Choice (vs 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. –* Lot must have thought to himself, “Now Sodom can’t be all that bad, anyways look at that land.” Now we know that Egypt in the Bible is a type of sin. Lot had his appetite wetted for sin when he went down with Abraham into Egypt. As Lot looked out across the land he must have thought, **“Now this is great, here is a little bit of Eden and a little bit of Egypt.”**]

[This is just what the carnal man tries to do, he tries to live in both worlds. He thinks, “I can do down there, its kind of like the Garden of Eden and kind of like Egypt. After all, I’m not going all the way into Sodom. I can have my little bit of heaven and I can have my little bit of earth. **Oh, I’m going to take hold of God with one hand, and I’ll take hold of the earth with the other hand.**”]

[It was after all a seemingly small thing. He wasn’t moving all the way into Sodom, he was just moving into the suburbs of Sodom. One can almost hear the discussion now. Lot would ask Mrs. Lot, “Do you think we really ought to make this move honey.” Mrs. Lot answered, “Well the kids could go to Sodom high, that’s a very good high school. You know we would never really be a apart of that city, but they do have some really fine entertainment in Sodom.”]

[After all they weren’t moving into Sodom, they were just moving to the boarder lines of sin. We’ll can have our Eden and our Egypt all at the same time. It was just a small choice.]

3. A **Shortsighted Choice (Gen 19.1; Prov 20.17)** [*– And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: . . .* – That Lot sat in the gate of Sodom means that Lot was now a public official in Sodom. He is now a vital part of the life of Sodom. **That’s the way it is with sin, sin starts small but it ends big.**]

[Proverbs 20:17¹⁷ Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.]

[Lot thought he could live on the boarder of sin and be just fine. **But you can never ever judge a situation by where it is. You must judge a situation by where it is heading.**]

[Sin is like the little sliver of a rail on a railroad, it seems such a small sliver at first, but it is the difference between east and west. The time to deal effectively with sin is when it first rears its ugly head.]

[When the wickedness of Sodom first appeared and Lot looked across the plain Lot should have said “NO” right then. But, like lot, we allow little sins to become big sins.]

B. Lot And His Character [– So we notice Lot’s choice, but all the choice did was reveal Lot’s character. If God ever wants to reveal your character He just gives you a test. God just gives you a choice.]

[Illustration – have you ever gone out after a storm and you notice that **a tree was blown over.** You might wonder, what happened to that tree, it looked so strong. Then when you get up closer you notice that the heart of the tree was rotten. Now, you couldn’t see it on the outside, but on the inside the tree was rotten. The storm did not cause that rottenness; all the storm did was reveal the rottenness.]

[When God examines you, He does not call you into a room and give you a verbal or written examination.]

When God examines you He gives you a series of relatively small choices.

[How you respond to or answer those choices is your examination. How you answer these relatively small choices will determine your destiny as a Christian. Relatively small choices make a big difference down the road.]

[Lot thought he was just making a relatively small choice, but Lot was revealing what was really inside of him, what his desires were. His desires would not only alter life for Lot and his family, but the spiritual flaws in Lot’s character became terminal, lie ending flaws for those around Lot. You see, as the story goes, if only ten (10) souls had been influenced for God during Lot’s stay in Sodom, then God would have saved the entire city. But Lot could reach even ten souls.]

[The choices that lot made graphically displays the content of Lot’s character. God tested Lot with a series of small choices, and Lot failed the exam.]

C. Lot And His Calamity (Gen 19.7-9, 24-26, 35-36; 2 Kings 8.13; 10.32-33; 1 Cor 10.12) [– At first there didn’t seem to be any calamity. Lot seemed to be successful and prominent. Lot was in leadership, he was a member of Sodom First Church, he had money in Sodom first bank, he was a member of the local community outreach group, he was a leader in the city. But in the eyes of God Lot was a colossal failure.]

[Lot had become so much like the wickedness as Sodom that lot lost his ability to make any decision rightly. Sin had warped Lots mind, just as it will and Christians mind.]

There three persons sitting in your seat today,

- **There is the person You are.**
- **There is the person God could cause you to be.** [You may never know what God could do through you if you were totally given to God.]
- **There is the person Evil could cause you to be.** [None of us really realizes the propensity for evil that lies in our heart.]

[There was a man in the Old Testament named **Hazael (2 Kings 8.12-13)** who Elisha went to, prophesied in tears, and said that he would do hideous things like killing babies and women. Hazael responded,]

[2 Kings 8:13 ¹³ *And Hazael said, **But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?** . . .]*

[Hazael, like us, and like Lot, did not believe that the evil prophesied about him was in him. But then we read,]

[2 Kings 10:32-33 ³² *In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: **and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel;*** ³³ *From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.]*

[Hazael couldn't believe the evil that was in his own heart. And such it is with us, when you get your eyes off of the Lord Jesus Christ there is no limit to the level of vileness to which you could sink.]

[King David was a man after God's own heart and look at the vileness that got into David's heart. Thus the Bible warns,]

[1 Corinthians 10:12 ¹² *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.]*

[It is hard to believe that the Bible says of Lot,]

[2 Peter 2:7 ⁷ *And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: ⁸ (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)]*

[Lot had lost the ability to see the difference between right and wrong.]

[Illustration - The leaders of a school for boys once said, "The greatest problem we have in our school is that the boys who come here have no concept of right or wrong." Lot had not concept of right or wrong. Many in our culture have lost all concept of right and wrong.]

[Now God begins to send judgment,]

[Genesis 19:24-25 ²⁴ *Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah **brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;*** ²⁵ *And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.]*

[Do you doubt how God feels about immorality and sin. Consider what God, in His Word records about the gravity of sin.]

[Genesis 19:26 ²⁶ *But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.]*

[The story of Lot's depravity continues,]

[Genesis 19:35-36 ³⁵ And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. ³⁶ Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.]

[Notice Lot's calamity, the carcass of sin in Sodom was bloated and ripe for the vulture of judgment. God would have spared that city if He would have found but ten (10) righteous people in it. But Lot had not influenced even ten people in the city. So God called Lot out of the city. **But the angels had to drag Lot out.** Lot was still there checking his bank book, checking his possessions, bidding his friends good bye. Then the angles drug him out, while his wife looked back, longing for that city. Then his daughters were still infused with the wickedness of that hideous city.]

[Here was a man who just pitched his tent toward Sodom, you had better not measure a thing by where it is, but by where it is headed. Where are you headed?]

[Was Lot Happy? - He was vexed, meaning he was tormented like in hell.]

[Was Lot Influential? - No one came to God through him.]

[What about Lot's family? – They were lost to the wickedness of that city and culture.]

[What about Lot's prosperity? – It was all destroyed in the judgment.]

[Watch your decisions, because decisions determine destiny. The seemingly small decisions make all the difference in the world.]

CrossRoads Baptist Church, Evening, October 18, 2009
