

Camaloty

Sacrificing Your Relationship in Pursuit of the World

She couldn't let go. Even as her feet ran forward, her heart lingered behind. How difficult it was to leave a life of such comfort, ease, and pleasure. So difficult in fact, the choice to leave it all behind was not made of her own accord, but by two angels sent to her rescue. After much delay, her rescuers were left with no option but to drag her and her family outside the city walls. And then they gave this warning: *"Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain...lest you be destroyed"* (Genesis 19:17, NKJV).

The story of Lot and his wife is a story of choice: the choice to lose our life and relationships in the pursuit of the world, or to save our life and relationships in the pursuit of God.

While we are busy running after the world and its lusts, our relationships are being lost. In an endless pursuit of money, possessions, and achievements, we have chosen to follow our fleshly desires and leave God and our families behind. In this lesson we will see our tendency to follow our flesh, linger in the world, and hang onto its attractions—all of which will lead to *our* destruction *and* the destruction of our most valued relationships.

Proverbs 4:23, 25-27 says, *"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life... Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or to the left; remove your foot from evil"* (NKJV).

Allurements

The lush land of Canaan was truly magnificent—a land of plenty. Clear water gushed from its springs. Its valleys were filled with vines and fig trees, olive oil and honey. Untouched riches lay waiting to be discovered in its hills. Genesis 13:10 tells us that it was much *"like the garden of the Lord."*

Let's begin by reading Deuteronomy 8:7-20. When you are finished, describe the good land given by the Lord. _____

What similarities do you see in the land in which you now live? _____

Now turn to Genesis 13:1-13. As you read this passage, keep in mind that the land described in Deuteronomy is the same land Lot looked upon.

Put yourself in Lot's place. What appeals to you about this land? _____

The world has promised fulfillment and satisfaction in the attainment of food, industry, houses, and assets. How do your choices indicate that you have bought into this lie?

**WOMAN: THE GLORY OF MAN
SHINING IN THE MIDST OF YOUR MARRIAGE**

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“And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain...” The word “saw” in this passage indicates that Lot gave “considerable thought”¹ to the whole land—its advantages and disadvantages.

What were the advantages? Disadvantages? _____

It has been said that the eyes see what the heart loves.² What compromise was Lot willing to make to dwell in the good land? _____

In making his choice, do you believe Lot considered the consequences to his family? Why or why not? _____

Verse 11 says “Lot chose for **himself**...” This implies that when making his decision, Lot placed a greater value on the attainment of his desires than on the welfare of his family.

It is also interesting to note that as Lot “journeyed east” (Genesis 13:11) he turned *from* Bethel (“house of God”) *towards* Sodom and Gomorrah (“burning” and “a ruined heap”).³

When Lot gave in to the desires of his flesh, his concern for the “support” of his flocks, herds, and tents, turned into a concern for the attainment of money, possessions, and achievement. While he may not have considered the ramifications to his relationships with God and his family, he *was* willing to pitch his tent closer and closer to “wicked and sinful” Sodom (vv.12, 13).

Turn back to Deuteronomy 8:7-20. What warnings were given to the people upon becoming prosperous? _____

This passage tells us to be aware of our tendency to lift up our hearts and forget the Lord our God (v.14). The closer Lot came to the city and its people, the more spiritual pride he had to maintain to blind his eyes to its affects on his relationships with God and his family.

Maybe you’ve convinced yourself that participating in (or pushing for) the attainment of a larger bank account, a bigger home, or more possessions can’t hurt you or your family. Have you become blind to the affects of worldly lust? How so? _____

Where do we find Lot in Genesis 14:12? _____

Read Psalm 106:13-15. Carnal lusts cause the soul to waste away. How has your desire for more sent leanness into your soul? _____

Read Luke 12:16-21.

Strife

Turn back to Genesis 13:6-8. As Abram and Lot increased their possessions, what suffered?

Record Proverbs 15:27a in the space provided. _____

The demands of greed are never satisfied. How has greed brought disturbance and calamity into your relationship with your spouse? _____

According to Romans 8:5-6, what happens when you set your mind on the things of the flesh? _____

Read James 4:1-10 and answer the following questions:

What do people quarrel and fight over? _____

What is the root cause? _____

As with Abram and Lot, strife equals separation. Strife is defined as “bitter, sometimes violent, conflict or dissension; an act of contention. It is a fight or a struggle; an exertion or contention for superiority: discord.” Discord is “a lack of agreement or harmony between persons, things, or ideas; active quarreling or conflict.”⁴

Read Amos 3:3 and Mark 3:25. What warnings are given to those who allow strife to enter their relationships? _____

Read 1 Timothy 6:3-10. The desire for earthly treasures causes us to pierce ourselves through with many sorrows. Why? _____

According to 2 Peter 2:8, how did Lot do this? _____

Relationships Lost

Lot’s decision to linger in the world had devastating affects on his family. Read Genesis 19:12-29.

What could have caused Lot and his family to linger in the city? _____

What does this say about the value they placed on their possessions? _____

What similarities do you see in Genesis 13:10, 12 and Genesis 19:17? _____

“Lift your eyes to Me! Don’t dwell on the outskirts of evil!” If only Lot had listened to this warning before he made his choice to dwell in the plains of Sodom.

Because of His great mercy, the Lord’s angels forcefully removed Lot, his wife, and daughters from imminent destruction. But in the escape, the affects of living in carnality became morbidly real.

What caused Lot’s wife to look back? What was she hanging on to? _____

Can you relate to Lot’s wife? How? _____

Could you walk away from your earthly possessions, your comforts and pleasures, your business associations, and your relationships—all that you’ve grown to love—without a second thought? Why or why not? _____

What has God revealed about your unhealthy attachments to the things of the world?

What was the consequence of Lot’s wife’s longing? _____

The lure of what had been left behind was too great. When the time came to choose between life with the world’s attractions and life with nothing but her husband and daughters, she chose the one that she had made the most important.

Luke 17:32-33 says, “Remember Lot’s wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it” (NKJV). The Message says it this way: “If you grasp and cling to life on your terms, you’ll lose it, but if you let that life go, you’ll get life on God’s terms.”

May Psalm 119:37 be our prayer: “Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in your way” (NKJV).

In closing, read Luke 12:29-34.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Security is listed as the number one need among married women. Security is defined as “freedom from danger, freedom from fear or anxiety, and **freedom from want or deprivation.**”⁵ How have you allowed money and possessions to give you a false sense of security?
2. We invite strife into our marriage by pointing out that our current material needs and wants are not being met. What sort of pressure does this place on your husband?

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How has this pressure manifested itself?

3. Read Luke 12:22-28. In this passage we are assured that God will provide all our needs. How do your spending habits demonstrate your belief in this promise?

4. Luke 12:15 says, “*Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses*” (NKJV). Covetousness is an excessive desire for wealth or possessions. It is demonstrated by a lack of restraint and discrimination.⁶ Debt is the result. How have you convinced yourself that life *does* consist in the things you possess?

5. We learned that Lot’s soul was tormented by living in such close proximity to the world. When we partake in the world’s systems, namely excessive buying, torment enters our lives in the form of sleepless nights and constant worry over paying bills. How have you “tormented” yourself by living in carnality?

6. C. S. Lewis said, “Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man.”⁷ How has your desire to be seen as superior to others played into your quest for more?

7. The second most common reason for divorce is a change in priorities. As wives, our first priority should be to care for our families. How has your attempt to gain more, or achieve more shifted your focus? (Consider the time spent.)

8. How have your relationships with God, your husband, and children been negatively affected by this?

9. Read James 4:4 and Romans 8:7. What does this mean in your relationship with God?

10. Just like Lot’s wife, the rich young ruler in Mark 10:17-22 couldn’t leave his earthly treasures behind. Identify why you have difficulty trusting God in areas of provision.

11. And lastly, reread Luke 12:31-32. If we’ll preoccupy ourselves with His kingdom, what will He provide?

¹ Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.* electronic ed. Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996, S. H7200

² Wiersbe, Warren W. *The Bible Exposition Commentary: Pentateuch.* Colorado Springs, Colorado: Cook Communications, 2001. 74

³ Ibid, 74. (Also Strong, James: S. H1008; H5467; H6017.)

⁴ Merriam-Webster, Inc: *Merriam-Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.* 9th ed. Springfield, Mass., U.S.A.: Merriam-Webster, 1985, c1983

⁵ Ibid, 1062.

⁶ Ibid, 300.

⁷ Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity.* New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1943. 110.