

Series: The Believer's Place in a Wicked World
"The High Cost of Worldly Thinking"
Genesis 13-19

Introduction:

1. I don't know that there is a sadder, more tragic story in the entire Bible than the story of Lot and his family.
2. It is an absolutely heart-breaking story of the gradual demise of a man and his entire family. Lot and his family had a love affair with this world. The beginning of the road looked so promising and prosperous, but their story ended in tragedy.
3. Lot and his wife stand as an everlasting monument to the devastating effects of worldly thinking. We live **in** the world, but Jesus said we are not **of** this world; Paul said we are not to be **conformed** to this world, and John said we are not to **love** this world.
4. The story of Lot is obviously an important story. Jesus made mention of it in Luke 17, and Peter likewise made mention of it in 2 Peter 2. **2 Peter 2:6-8**
5. Paul said the stories of the Old Testament are written for our admonition (**1 Corinthians 10:11**). In other words, there are valuable lessons to be learned as we study these things.
6. What is the primary truth that we learn from this story of Lot? The high cost of worldly thinking. When you allow a worldly mindset to creep into your thinking, you need to understand that there are consequences. There is a cost.

Worldly thinking will lead you places you never intended to go. Genesis 13:12-13, 14:12

1. Lot was Abraham's nephew. After leaving the city of Ur, they settled in Canaan for a rural life in which they both became prosperous farmers. **Genesis 13:5-7**
2. For the sake of peace, they decided it was time to split up the land with definite boundaries. Lot had a choice to make. **Genesis 13:9-11** (Satan's system was alive and well.)
3. Lot journeyed east towards the worldly city life that existed. From this point on we see a steady downward progression over the next several years.
 - Next he pitches his tent toward Sodom. 13:12-13
 - Next he is living in Sodom. 14:12
 - Next he is sitting at the gate of Sodom (a social gathering place). 19:1
4. Lot had a secret love in his heart for the world. He wasn't like Abraham (18:19). Did he think it would ever lead him to a place like Sodom? **Jude 7** describes this wicked city.
5. Do worldly believers think that their secret love for this world will lead them to adulterous affairs, fornication, sexual disease, pornographic Web sites, ungodly chat rooms, soliciting a prostitute, a teenager pregnant out of wedlock, nightclubs, arrested and in jail on a DUI, out of the ministry for a lucrative job, etc.
6. When you allow a love for this world to creep into your heart, it will lead you places you never intended to go.

Worldly thinking will callous your heart towards sin. Genesis 19:5-8

1. Paul said that God gave the law so that sin might become exceeding sinful.
Romans 7:13
2. As we read, study, and hear God's Word, it reproves (of sin), corrects, and instructs us in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**
3. Do you know what Satan's counterpart to that is? Filling your mind with thoughts pertaining to his worldly system. As he accomplishes this (via worldly forms of entertainment, worldly literature, music, friends, etc.), Satan knows that he can break down any inhibitions you might have against sin in your mind.
4. Look at **Genesis 19:5-8**. Is this not unbelievable? Lot was going to throw his virgin daughters to this perverted pack of wolves. The world had warped his mind.
 - This is about as stupid as Christian parents throwing their kid into a bedroom with the Internet and cable TV at his fingertips, or allowing their kid to run the streets until all hours of the night, or allow their teenage daughter to dress like a streetwalker and get in a car alone with a boy to go to a dance or movie.
5. **2 Peter 2:8** says that Lot vexed (tortured) his righteous soul in seeing and hearing their unlawful deeds. Verse 7 says he vexed himself with their filthy conversation.
6. As you fill your mind and feast your eyes and ears on the things of this world, your mind becomes twisted and warped, and instead of sin looking like a deadly rattlesnake, it looks like a cute, little furry puppy. **James 1:15**

Worldly thinking brings a shattered testimony. Genesis 19:12-14

1. As believers living in a wicked world, we have to decide - do we want acceptance or respect? We can excuse our worldliness and blend in with this world system, but do not think that we will have any influence for Christ in the time of crisis.
2. To me, the most gut-wrenching part of Lot's story is found in **Genesis 19:12-14**. He seemed as one that mocked.
3. Lot was a hypocrite. He knew the Lord, but he loved the world. His verbal testimony meant nothing because his living testimony was so worldly.
4. Can you imagine the complete horror of hearing your own flesh and blood consumed with fire and brimstone and knowing that you could have prevented it?
5. Do you desire acceptance by the world? **1 John 3:1, 13**

Worldly thinking destroys those closest to you. Genesis 19:24, 26, 31-31

1. Could Lot have imagined what his worldly thinking would lead to? His daughters, sons-in-law, and sons were all consumed in fire and brimstone. 19:24
2. As he and his wife were fleeing, they were instructed not to look back. God desired to see a heart change in them. The world had such a tight grip on her heart, and she had so little esteem for God's Word, that she looked back. 19:26
3. Lot ends up in a cave with only his two youngest daughters. 19:31-32
 - He took his daughters away from the world to a cave, but he couldn't get the worldly thinking out of their heart. What a lesson for parents.
4. We don't know what happened to Lot after this, but can you imagine the tears and regret? He was a broken man with nothing but two grandchildren born out of incest.

Worldly thinking brings irreparable damage.

1. We can always repent of our sin, separate from this world system, and love God with all of our heart. As long as we are alive, it is never too late to do this. I hope Lot did this.
2. But his repentance wouldn't bring back his wife, children, and grandchildren. It wouldn't undo the incestuous relationship he had with his daughters.
3. So many times, our worldly decisions and worldly actions bring tragic consequences that can never be undone.

In Conclusion:

1. I guess the saddest thing about this story is the fact that nobody on the earth had more opportunity to know God than Lot and his wife.
2. There was no written Word during this time, but by virtue of their relationship with Abraham, they had privileged access to divine revelation.
3. What unparalleled opportunity, but they squandered it because of a love for this world.
4. What opportunity you have today. I pray there won't be any Lots here in our midst. Are there elements of this world system that you have fallen in love with? Allow God's Word to work in your heart, purge that out of your life, and love God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength.