

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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“Even As Far As Sodom: Lot And His Wife”

By William J. Stewart



“When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, ‘Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city.’ And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife’s hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, ‘Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed.’” (Genesis 19:15-17)

Getting Too Close to the World

Lot was with his uncle Abram from the time they departed *“...Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan...”* (Genesis 11:31) After the death of Terah, Lot continued with Abram (Genesis 12:4-5; 13:1). Eventually, as tensions arose between their herdsmen, Abram and Lot realized they needed to separate. Lot chose the plain of Jordan; Abram dwelt in Canaan (Genesis 13:10-11).

However, when Lot settled in the plain, he did not continue just in the plain of Jordan. We’re told that *“...Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom.”* (Genesis 13:12) Moses then comments of Sodom, *“...the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD”* (verse 13).

In discussing the judgment of the wicked, the apostle Peter spoke of the destruction which came upon Sodom and Gomorrah, as God made *“...them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)...”* (2 Peter 2:6-7).

Why was his righteous soul tormented from day to day? The simple answer is because of the wickedness of the Sodomites. Why did he continually see the wickedness of the Sodomites? In what began as the pursuit of fertile soil, Lot eventually gained an attraction to the cities of the plain (Genesis 13:12; 19:20). He did not condone their actions, in fact, he spoke against them (Genesis 19:9), but through seeking prosperity and comfort, he willingly tolerated the continual presence of extreme wickedness around his family.

Friend, we cannot help but live in the world, but we must be careful about the associations we keep, and the places we choose to go to, live at, etc.. James asked, *‘Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.’* (James 4:4) We must be careful not to get too close to the world!

Decisions And Consequences

The plains of Jordan and Sodom looked nowhere near as appealing on that dreadful day as it had years before. Destruction was on the horizon, and in fact would have come while Lot was still there were it not for the Lord’s mercy (Genesis 19:16). Lot went to his sons-in-law and daughters, compelling them to leave the city, but they would not listen (Genesis 19:14). The angels took hold of Lot, his two remaining daughters and his wife, and led

them out of the city. While departing, his wife, perhaps longing for the life they were leaving behind, looked back, and became a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26). The decision to locate to Sodom cost Lot at least half of his family!

"Remember Lot's wife." These words were spoken by the Lord as a caution of the danger of turning back (Luke 17:32). We know nothing about Lot's wife, except that she ought to have been focused on escaping the judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah. Instead, she was compelled to look back. Certainly, she was responsible for her own actions, but Lot bore a portion of it, for he led his wife and children into the devil's nest.

Decisions which we make in life need to be based upon spiritual merit, not physical. Men are to lead their families in such a way that sanctification, holiness, and faithfulness to the Lord prevail (Ephesians 5:26-27; 6:1-4). Jesus asked, *"...what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Matthew 16:26)

Each step closer to the world we take is a step further from the Lord. Let us cling to God.

“Remaining Faithful”

By Randy Blackaby

Of genuine concern to many persons contemplating obedience to the gospel is the question of whether they can remain faithful to the Lord after they do so. Some ponder the question to such a degree that they become convinced that they can't and use such a decision as an excuse for disobedience.

In studying what the Bible has to say on the subject, it is first necessary to make certain we are speaking of the same thing. Temptation, which our Lord himself suffered on the mount with Satan, and the human desire to yield to temptation are two completely different things. Our Lord was tempted in every manner that we are - YET - without sin, according to Hebrews 4:14.

To the individual who is convinced that it is totally impossible for him to remain faithful, we must quickly direct his attention to 1 Corinthians 10:13 - *"There is no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it."*

Also of interest to the concerned sinner is the fact that a developing Christian will find faithfulness a constantly easier thing as he learn and applies the gospel. The Psalmist wrote, *"through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way."* As a Christian matures, temptations begin to lose their power or may even no longer be temptations.

A noted gospel preacher once listed four activities for the Christian to insure faithfulness. He called them "backsliding preventatives." To begin he said, let God say something to you every day; that is, read the Bible. *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path"* (Psalm 119:105). *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night"* (Psalm 1:1-2).

Secondly, he said, say something to God every day. Pray to Him. James points out the value of this advice when he said, *"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."* (James 5:16).

We should also say something for God each day. The usefulness of this practice is boldly expressed in James 5:19-20. *"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."* The expression of our faith in God can do nothing but strengthen each of us.

Lastly, it was noted that each Christian should do something for God each day. The Bible clearly points this out in 1 Corinthians 15:58. *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."*

The growing Christian will find faithfulness easier in the knowledge that his work here is gaining for him an eternity in heaven, where temptation will not exist and where he can be with the God he is now striving to please.

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Sam Johnson, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, and Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Brandon Briggs, Jimmy Briggs, Chad Harris, Randy Ferrell (Brandi's brother in law), Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Wayne Bivens (recovering from double by-pass) Ricky Doles, and Jamie Jones.

Danny Cottrell has an upcoming surgery in March.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:	Nathan Meade
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon #1:	<i>"The Amen Sermon"</i>
<u>Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:</u>	Fred Johnson
Workbook:	Philippians
Author:	Paul R. Blake
Starting Page & Question:	<i>Page #71, Question #14</i>

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:	Doug George
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Lee Busby
Scripture Reading:	<i>1 John 3:12</i>
Song Leader:	Paul Busby
Lord's Supper:	Jerry Kennemur
Assisting:	— —
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon #2:	<i>"The Value Of Righteousness"</i>
Closing Prayer:	Danny Sheffield

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

March 1st:

Auditorium Bible Class:	Paul Johnson
Workbook:	The Miracles Of Jesus
Author:	Mike Willis
Starting Page & Question:	<i>Page #83, Question #15</i>
Invitation:	Brian Meade
Song Leader:	Russell Briggs
Closing Prayer:	Tim Harris Sr.



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“The Amen Sermon”

Lesson Text: **Revelation 22:18-21.**

— **Definition Of Amen:** Transliteration of Hebrew word signifying something as certain, sure and valid, truthful and faithful. It is sometimes translated “so be it.” In the OT it is used to show the acceptance of the validity of a curse or an oath, to indicate acceptance of a good message, and to join in a doxology in a worship setting to affirm what has been said or prayed.

“Amen” may confirm what already is, or it may indicate a hope for something desired. In Jewish prayer “amen” comes at the end as an affirmative response to a statement or wish made by others, and is so used in the NT epistles.

(*Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (pp. 56–57). Holman Bible Publishers).

I. The Use Of Amen In The Old Testament.

- Occurs 30 Times In The Hebrew Old Testament.
- **Deuteronomy 27:15-26.**
 - It Used As Response Of Warning And Agreement To Curses For Unfaithfulness.
 - **Jeremiah 11:5.** Jeremiah Reminds The Of This Agreement They Did Not Keep.
- **Nehemiah 5:13.** Amen In Response To The Call not To Extort The People.
- An Affirmation Of A Blessing, Prayer, Song, Or Praise To God:
 - **1 Chronicles 16:36.** David Praises And Thanks God.
 - **Nehemiah 8:6.** Ezra Reads The Law And The People’s Response.
 - **1 Kings 1:36.** Benaiah Amens Solomon As The New King.
 - **Jeremiah 28:6.** Jeremiah Gives An Amen, Then Corrects Him With Truth.
 - **Psalms 41:13; 72:19; 89:52; 106:48.** 7 Times In 4 Places For Praise To God.

II. The Use Of Amen In The New Testament.

- Occurs 129 Times In The New Testament (99 Times In Gospels).
 - Jesus’ Use Of “Amen.” *“truly I say to you” or “in truth I tell you”*
- “Amen” is most commonly used in the New Testament as Jesus’ acknowledgment of the truth and authority of His teachings, statements, or corrections of religious law (Osborne, *Gospel of John*, 40).
- **John 8:34; 8:51; 10:7; 13:16.** *“Amen, Amen...”*
 - **Revelation 3:14.** Jesus Is Personified As *“The Amen.”*
- An Affirmation Of A Blessing, Prayer, Song, Or Praise To God:
 - Praise To God- (**Rom 1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 15:33; 16:27; Gal 1:5; 6:18; Eph 3:21; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 13:21; 1 Pet 4:11; 5:11; Jude 1:25; Rev 1:6; 5:14; 7:12; 19:4).**
- **1 Corinthians 14:16.** In Agreement With What Is Said/Prayed In The Assembly.
 - **2 Corinthians 1:20.** The Promises Of God Are All True And Sure.
 - Almost All The New Testament Books End With “Amen.”
 - The Exceptions are James And 3 John.

“The Value Of Righteousness”

Lesson Text: **1 John 3:12.** Like Cain, Many Today Don't See Its Value!

I. What Is Righteousness?

1. *dikaiosune* (δικαιοσύνη, 1343) is “the character or quality of being right or just”; it was formerly spelled “rightwiseness,” Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Vol. 2, p. 535).

- Jesus Frequently Used This Word In His Teaching:
 - **Matthew 5:6; 10; 20.**
 - **Matthew 6:1** “*Acts Of Righteousness.*” (RV, NASB, ESV)
 - It Is Something We Practice **1 John 2:29.**
 - It Is A Path Or Way Of Walking: **Psalm 23:3; Proverbs 2:20; 8:20; 11:5; 15:9.**
 - God’s Word Teaches Us It: **Psalm 119:172; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 5:13.**
 - We Become Righteous By Obedience- **Romans 6:16-18.**
- Many Will Choose Not To Walk In It: **Matthew 21:32; 2 Peter 2:21.**

II. Why We Need To Value Righteousness.

- It Is How Many Received Approval & A Good Report From God (**Hebrews 11:2**).
 - **Hebrews 11:4.** Abel’s Righteousness Still Speaks.
 - **Hebrews 11:7.** Noah Became The Heir Of Righteousness.
 - **James 2:23.** Abraham Becomes God’s Friend By Righteousness.
 - Righteousness Could Have Saved Sodom. **Genesis 18:23-32.**
- It Is What Delivers Us. **Ezekiel 14:20; Proverbs 11:8.**
- It Is Why God Hears Our Prayers. **1 Peter 3:12.**
- It Will Exalt Us. **Proverbs 14:34.** (Our Nation Needs It!).
- It Makes Us Acceptable To God. **Acts 10:33-34.**
- How We Have God’s Love. **Proverbs 15:9.**
- It Is Why We Will Have Eternal Life. **Matthew 25:46.**

I. How Do We Place Value On Righteousness?

- We Pursue And Maintain It. **Revelation 22:11.**
- We Guard It. **Proverbs 12:26.**
- We Make It A Priority. **Matthew 6:33.**
- We Make It Our Life! **Psalm 118:19-20.**