

Warnings from Sodom

Key Scriptures: Genesis 19:1-26

NLT Prov. 4:23 Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

*Genesis 13:10-13 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.)
11 So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. . . . Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom.*

1 Timothy 6:6-10 Now godliness combined with contentment brings great profit. ⁷ For we have brought nothing into this world and so we cannot take a single thing out either. ⁸ But if we have food and shelter, we will be satisfied with that. ⁹ Those who long to be rich, however, stumble into temptation and a trap and many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is the root of all evils. Some people in reaching for it have strayed from the faith and stabbed themselves with many pains.

2 Peter 2:6-8 He turned to ashes the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah when he condemned them to destruction, having appointed them to serve as an example to future generations of the ungodly, ⁷ and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man in anguish over the debauched lifestyle of lawless men, ⁸ (for while he lived among them day after day, that righteous man was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)

Luke 12:15 Then he said to them, "Watch out and guard yourself from all types of greed, because one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Key Point: Greed is dangerous: it can do to us what it did to Lot.

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- Who is someone (living or dead) you've seen whose life started well but ended poorly? What do you think made the difference?

Reflect, Think, & Share: Read through this week's passages, and share any observations or questions with the group.

- Genesis 19 shows us both sudden (cataclysmic) judgment and gradual judgment. What are some ways people today experience the "slow erosion" of spiritual life before a major collapse?
- How does Lot's willingness to compromise in Sodom reveal what had already been happening in his heart long before Genesis 19?
- Why do you think Lot lingered in Sodom even after being warned of its destruction (Gen. 19:16)? What causes believers today to linger in places they know are spiritually dangerous? (Note: Don't be too quick to eliminate positive reasons).
- 2 Peter 2 calls Lot a "righteous man" who was tormented by sin around him. How can someone be righteous before God and yet make such devastating life choices?
- In Luke 12:15 Jesus warned us to "watch out and guard yourself from all types of greed/covetousness." (This is defined as: a disposition to have more than one's share; motivating force for gaining something beyond an acceptable standard.) When do we know enough is enough?
- What are some less obvious forms of greed that can quietly shape our hearts?
- Why do you think greed is one of the hardest sins to recognize in ourselves? How does it disguise itself as responsibility, success, or providing for our family? How do we tell the difference between healthy ambition and covetousness?
- Lot's story reminds us that being close to sin eventually changes us. What practical steps can we take to guard our hearts before compromise becomes a pattern?

Start doing: One way to fight against greed and covetousness is through both generosity, and praying and asking God to search and reveal any areas in our lives that we need to change.

Prayer: Do you have any specific decisions or areas of life where you could use prayer from others asking God to guide you? If you feel comfortable, share these issues with your study group so that they can pray with you and for you.

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