

5 SIGNS A RELATIONSHIP IS AT ITS CAPACITY

BISHOP RC BLAKES

Abram and Lot

Genesis 12–14

A relationship can retain its place in your heart while requiring a different place in your life.

Some relationships strain while love remains. The history is meaningful, but the present arrangement no longer accommodates who God is making you. The question is whether that arrangement can mature or needs to change.

Relational capacity includes the ability to:

- A. Honor boundaries.
- B. Handle growth.
- C. Resolve disagreements.
- D. Share responsibility.
- E. Respect another person's obedience to God.

Capacity describes what a relationship can presently sustain; it does not determine someone's worth.

Genesis 12:1 KJV

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

God calls Abram to leave his kindred, yet Abram takes Lot. Scripture does not specifically prohibit Lot by name or explicitly condemn bringing him. The clearest evidence of capacity emerges in Genesis 13:6: their households can

no longer dwell together.

1 SHARED HISTORY IS REPLACING SHARED DIRECTION

Genesis 12:5 KJV

And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

Lot is Abram's nephew. Their connection is real, but family connection alone cannot sustain every form of partnership.

Relationship answers, 'Who are we to each other?' Partnership asks, 'What are we capable of carrying together?' Why would we assume that answering the first question settles the second?

Family isn't an all-access pass into your future.

Someone may deserve your affection while lacking the judgment to manage your business, protect your confidence, or respect your independence. Family and friendship status do not automatically establish relational capacity for who God is making you.

Proverbs 4:23 KJV

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Guarding your heart includes discernment about the influence you permit. Familiarity does not remove that responsibility.

"Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me." — [Henry Cloud and John Townsend, Boundaries](#)

Practical sign: History is your main defense of an arrangement that no longer has sufficient trust, respect, or agreement.

History explains the connection. Present character helps determine the access.

2 YOUR GROWTH NO LONGER FITS THE ARRANGEMENT

Genesis 13:6 KJV

And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

Both households have grown. Their possessions exceed what the shared land can sustain. Growth exposes a limitation in the arrangement.

The same can happen when new responsibilities require different availability, financial boundaries, or decision-making authority. If expectations remain fixed, healthy development begins to feel like rejection.

A request for privacy becomes an accusation of secrecy. Reduced availability becomes an accusation of neglect. The relationship leaves little room for your present responsibilities.

Proverbs 25:17 KJV

Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.

Even welcome relationships need appropriate limits. Space can protect affection.

"And so if we speak boundaries sooner, it's much, much easier to set boundaries." — [Nedra Glover Tawwab, interview with Lewis Howes](#)

Practical sign: Preserving the old arrangement requires neglecting legitimate responsibilities or suppressing healthy growth.

The arrangement that accommodated your beginning may need to change to accommodate your growth.

3 CLOSENESS IS PRODUCING CONFLICT THAT SPREADS

Genesis 13:7–9 KJV

And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. 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.

The conflict reaches their workers. Likewise, unresolved relational strain can make employees, relatives, or ministry workers manage tension they did not create.

Abram says, "For we be brethren," then proposes separation. Their family bond gives him a reason to protect peace by changing the arrangement. He names the problem, offers a solution, and gives Lot a choice.

Romans 12:18 KJV

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

We are responsible for our contribution to peace. Sometimes that contribution includes an honest conversation and clearer limits.

"Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind." — [Brené Brown, Dare to Lead](#)

Practical sign: The same conflict keeps returning, and other people increasingly carry its consequences.

Because we are family, we should care enough to address what is hurting our relationship.

4 YOUR CHOICES REVEAL DIFFERENT PRIORITIES

Genesis 13:12–13 KJV

Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

Lot chooses the well-watered plain. Its economic attraction is understandable, but the narrator also identifies Sodom's wickedness. A promising appearance does not disclose every consequence of an environment.

Lot travels with Abram, pitches toward Sodom, and eventually lives in Sodom. What you move toward can become the setting in which you must live with your choices.

Proverbs 13:20 KJV

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

Our associations affect our direction and exposure to consequences. In a present partnership, recurring disagreement about integrity, responsibility, or obedience can limit what we can safely carry together.

Practical sign: Your shared decisions repeatedly reveal priorities that cannot support the partnership you are trying to maintain.

Affection alone cannot supply the agreement that shared decisions require.

5 THEIR DECISIONS DRAW YOU INTO BATTLES YOU DID NOT CHOOSE**Genesis 14:12 KJV**

And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

Genesis 14:14 KJV

And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.

Lot did not start the war, but living in Sodom placed him within its reach. Abram mobilizes 318 trained men; the rescue requires resources, strategy, and exposure to danger. Lot's situation now reaches Abram's household.

The modern warning becomes sharper when one person repeatedly makes independent decisions while expecting another person to absorb every cost. Genesis records one rescue here and does not condemn Abram for helping.

Galatians 6:2 KJV

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:5 KJV

For every man shall bear his own burden.

Paul holds mutual care alongside personal responsibility. We can help someone through hardship while still expecting appropriate accountability. Abram rescues Lot without the narrative reporting a return to their former shared arrangement. Emergency help does not automatically restore every previous form of access.

Practical sign: The relationship depends on your willingness to absorb consequences the other person will not take responsibility for. Compassion can remain after access changes.

CLOSING**Genesis 13:14 KJV**

And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

God reaffirms His promise after the separation. He had also spoken while Lot was present; the assurance is that the changed relationship has not cancelled His commitment.

Abram still calls Lot family when he proposes separation. He still cares when Lot becomes captive. Love remains while the arrangement changes.

Ask: What can this relationship presently sustain? What specific access needs to change? What responsibilities remain mine?

Family isn't an all-access pass into your future. Love still has a place when access needs to change.

Father, help me recognize where I must mature and where an arrangement must change. Give me courage to speak honestly, wisdom to set appropriate limits, and compassion to help responsibly. Keep my heart tender and my steps faithful. In Jesus' name, amen.