

STORYTELLERS
Slip-Sliding Away
Genesis 12-14, 19

Rob's story is another example of just how twisted life can become . . . and just how awesome God's power to redeem always remains! One thing has been evident to me in every story that we have heard in this series: People impact people. You are either having some effect on the people around you, or they are having an impact on you! **If you want to impact people around you for GOOD and for GOD, then you are going to have to consider ONE KEY FACTOR in your life: DIRECTION.**

-I am a directional thinker: Every one of us is MOVING in some direction!

-ANDY S. – **DIRECTION, not INTENTION, determines DESTINATION!**

***READ - The Principle of the Path - P. 19-20, 28**

-What direction are YOU moving in? Are you moving towards God . . .

***In your SPIRITUAL actions, your RELATIONSHIPS, or your MORALS?**

Let's review the history of one man's life to see the importance of DIRECTION.

Lot was the NEPHEW of Abraham. **[SET UP THE STORY: GENESIS 12-19]**

-Remember, Lot was a SAVED man! **2 Peter 2:8 NLT**

8 Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day.

***Lot was brought to a point that demanded a DECISION. Genesis 13:8-9 NLT**

-We are not just making DECISIONS; we are establishing PATTERNS!

-Unhealthy patterns lead to the LOSS of our IMPACT and WITNESS to the world!

First, Lot moved NEAR SODOM. Genesis 13:10-13 NLT

10 Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the LORD or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) 11 Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram. 12 So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. 13 But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the LORD.

WHAT COMPROMISING FACTORS DROVE HIS DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

***His choice was driven strictly by APPEARANCES. (Vs. 10)**

-What do YOU consider when offered a career move choice? [Church?]

-How often is APPEARANCE the prime factor for you? [Relationships?]

***ONE-DIMENSIONAL THINKING!**

*His choice showed no sign of FAITH. (**Vs. 11** – “Lot chose for himself . . .”)
 -No evidence of PRAYER or seeking COUNSEL! He just SAW and CHOSE!

*His choice DISREGARDED the destructive presence of WICKEDNESS. (**Vs. 13**)
 -He JUSTIFIED: “What’s WRONG with it?” He got as close to evil as he dared!
 *What MARGIN are you keeping between you and evil?
 -Define margin. **[Guardrails, Speed bumps, and Roadblocks]**

*His choice had NO MERIT in the eyes of GOD! **Genesis 13:14-15 NLT**

14 After Lot had gone, the LORD said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction--north and south, east and west. **15** I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants as a permanent possession.

-God had no part in his decision: “Chose for himself!”
 -God OVERRULED Lot’s choice in favor of Abraham: (**Vs. 17**)

*Lot was now MOVING in a DIRECTION! [We are ALWAYS moving in a direction!]
 - His proximity to Sodom put him in great DANGER.
 -CONFLICT was a CONSTANT in this region! **Genesis 14:1-7 NLT**
***Set up the possible reason for his next move: Conflict.**

Next, Lot began LIVING IN SODOM. Genesis 14:12 NLT

12 They also captured Lot--Abram's nephew who lived in Sodom--and carried off **everything he owned.**

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF COMPROMISE?

*Lot’s PROSPERITY was TIED to the wealth of Sodom. (**Vs. 11-12**)
 -Their gain (or loss) was also his.
 -Lot saw no problem in YOKING himself to Sodom – Unlike Abraham!

Genesis 14:21-23 NLT

21 The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give back my people who were captured. But you may keep for yourself all the goods you have recovered." **22** Abram replied to the king of Sodom, "I solemnly swear to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, **23** that I will not take so much as a single thread or sandal thong from what belongs to you. Otherwise you might say, 'I am the one who made Abram rich.'

-Can you do BUSINESS or have RELATIONSHIPS with unbelievers? Absolutely!
 - Should you YOKE UP with them and tie your very LIFE to theirs? NO!

2 Corinthians 6:14 NLT

14 Don't team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness?

- *Lot began to live a life that was constantly in need of RESCUE! **Genesis 14:14-16**
- He eventually had to be rescued again . . . by angels! **(Ch. 19)**
- *How often do YOU have to be BAILED OUT of trouble by others, and WHY?
- In spite of Abraham's example, Lot REMAINED in Sodom!

Later, Lot became a LEADING CITIZEN in Sodom. Genesis 19:1-10 NLT

- *Though Lot became a prominent citizen, he was NOT a person of INFLUENCE!
- Lot had not even impacted 9 PEOPLE in the City for God! **Genesis 18:22-32**
- ***Note: God would have spared the WHOLE CITY for 10 people!**
- Lot failed to impact ANY of the people of Sodom for God: **Genesis 19:9 NLT**

9 "Stand back!" they shouted. "This fellow came to town as an outsider, and now he's acting like our judge! We'll treat you far worse than those other men!" And they lunged toward Lot to break down the door.

-Immoral slide of culture is gradual: Materialism, Arrogance, and Sexual license.
Ezekiel 16:49-50 NIV

49 "Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. 50 They were haughty and did detestable things before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.

- *Sodom's wickedness greatly corrupted and confused Lot's righteousness.
- Lot offered his two daughters to the men for sex! **(READ Genesis 19:6-8)**
- *How is this slide slowly changing YOUR morals? **2 Peter 2:8 NLT**

8 Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was **tormented in his soul** by the wickedness he saw and heard **day after day**.

*Tormented=To Wear Down and Wear Out [How I feel about current culture]
"Woe to those who call bitter, sweet and sweet, bitter . . ."

- *What will it take for you to see the sorry lack of your own MORAL AUTHORITY?
- YOU WILL BE SAVED, but how are those around you being affected?
- He ultimately failed to impact even his own inner circle: **Genesis 19:14 NLT**

14 So Lot rushed out to tell his daughters' fiancés, "Quick, get out of the city! The LORD is about to destroy it." But the young men thought he was only joking.

Finally, Lot had to be DRAGGED out of Sodom! Genesis 19:15-26 NLT

- *Lot HESITATED to accept that mercy! **Genesis 19:15-16 NLT**

15 At dawn the next morning the angels became insistent. "Hurry," they said to Lot. "Take your wife and your two daughters who are here. Get out right now, or you will be swept away in the destruction of the city!" 16 When Lot still hesitated, the angels seized his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters and rushed them to safety outside the city, for the LORD was merciful.

*His pattern of life made FULL OBEDIENCE more fearful than potential destruction!

-He begged for permission to stay in Zoar, NEAR SODOM! **(Vs. 18-22)**

-In what ways are YOU HESITATING around sin for the sake of gain?

*Unwise, shady Business decisions? Ungodly relationships?

Lot's deliverance was the most costly event of his life.

*Lot's choice cost him his WEALTH!

*Lot's choice cost him his wife's life - **(Vs. 26)**

-The Spirit of Sodom had entered his wife's heart!

-Beware of the evil that YOU casually introduce to your loved ones!

*Lot's choice cost him his daughter's moral foundation - **(Vss. 30-36)**

-What is your compromise going to cost in YOUR family?

*DO YOU SEE HOW CONFUSING and DESTRUCTIVE the MORAL SLIDE of a BELIEVER CAN ACTUALLY BE?

DIRECTION - NOT INTENTION - LEADS TO DESTINATION!

What CHOICES are currently before you? [Question I asked at Covington]

In which DIRECTION are your CURRENT DECISIONS leading you?

Let's pray.