

GENESIS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Genesis chapter 19 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our previous study we saw the Lord and two angels meet with Abraham. And as their fellowship ended, the two angels headed to Sodom to see the wickedness of this city and pour out God's righteous judgment upon them.

Keep in mind that Lot, Abraham's nephew was living in Sodom. So Abraham begins to intercede with the Lord for Sodom and the people who were living there. And Abraham says to the Lord, "**Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?**" Genesis 18:25. In other words, God is righteous and He would never judge unfairly, He would never judge the righteous with the wicked!

So Abraham begins to barter with the Lord, "If there was only 50 righteous people living in Sodom You would not destroy the city because of those 50?" And the Lord said that He would not destroy the city if there were 50 righteous people living there in the city. And Abraham goes on to 45, then 40, then 30, then 20 and finally 10. If there were 10 righteous people living in Sodom God said that He would not destroy the city!

At this point I think that Abraham felt good because there had to be at least 10 righteous people living in Sodom and I think he was thinking of Lot's family. You see, there was Lot and his wife, his two unmarried daughters, he has at least two sons, his two married daughters and their spouses, which equals 10! There could have been more but at least 10 in Lot's family. The problem is, they were not all righteous, as we will see here tonight. There were not 10 righteous people living in Sodom! That is where we will pick up our study this evening in Genesis chapter 19, starting in verse 1 as these two angels come to Sodom.

GENESIS 19

VERSES 1-3

1. When a person begins to compromise his faith there is a steady progression downward as we see here with Lot. Back in Genesis 13:10 we saw Lot looking towards Sodom, a city that was filled with wickedness. Then, in Genesis 13:12 we see Lot pitch his tent toward Sodom. He is getting closer and that is how sin works. By the time we get to Genesis 14:12 we see that Lot is now living in Sodom. And now here in Genesis chapter 19 he is sitting at the gate of the city, he was a judge in Sodom. And as we are going to see, this righteous man who compromised his faith could not make an impact on those around him, not even his family!

2. Folks, the same is true in our lives. If what we believe does not impact our lives in such a way that it is not manifested in our actions, then we will not impact anyone with the Gospel message. Compromise waters down what we believe and people are watching! Compromise destroyed the testimony of Lot and it will also destroy our testimony!

3. Notice the hospitality of Lot. He offers these two angels a place to lodge, in his house. But they felt they could just stay out in the square for the night. When Lot heard that he insisted that they come into his house and they did. Why did Lot make these two visitors, these two angels come into his house? Because he knew the wickedness of Sodom and he knew it was not safe for anyone to be out in the streets, especially visitors! That is why he wanted them to come in, to protect them because he had seen what happened to others, how dangerous it was!

VERSES 4-9

1. Look at the depravity of the people of this city and their boldness to commit these depraved acts. The young, the old, from throughout the city, not just the bad areas, they all were bad, come to Lot's house to have homosexual relations with his guests. They wanted to rape them! Folks, before we judge them we need to take a good look at the depravity of America, how low we have sunk into sin. Can you image a person from the 1800's coming to our time and hearing and seeing what we do, he would be outraged at the depravity of this nation and yet, for many, they have become accustomed to this depravity! And folks, when any person or nation turn away from the true and living God, then God will give them the evil that is in their hearts!

Paul makes that point in Romans chapter 1, beginning in verse 24, that if you turn from God, **“Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. . . .**

. . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.” Romans 1:24-32.

2. Now homosexuality was not the only sin that brought the judgment of God upon them. In Ezekiel 16:49-50 we are told, **“Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit.”** So sin filled the land and God is preparing to judge them and He will, as we will see tonight!

3. Today, in our society, it is not politically correct to say that homosexuality is a sin, but it is! In Leviticus 20:13 we are told, **“If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.”** And in Leviticus 18:21-25 we are told, **“And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord. You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion. ‘Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.’”**

First of all, if homosexuality is not a sin, then there is nothing wrong with sacrificing your children to Molech, the god of pleasure, right? And, sadly we do that as over 40 million children have been murdered in the womb, they have been aborted to the god of pleasure! And if there is nothing wrong with this, then there must not be anything wrong with bestiality! Folks, when you ignore God’s Word, then nothing can be wrong, nothing is evil. You can’t tell me something is evil; it may good for me even though it might not be good for you! That is ridiculous, sin is sin! We need to obey God’s Word instead of the empty philosophies of this world that change more often than we change our socks it seems! But God’s Word does not change!

4. What about those who say that they were born that way, that they were born homosexuals? I believe that is true! Now hear me out on this. There is no biological research to prove that people are born homosexuals, but they are born with a sin nature and thus, we all have a predisposition or a tendency to sin at whatever capacity or depravity that may be! It does not make it right nor did God create a person that way, they choose to go down that path. And folks, homosexuals make up a very small proportion of the population, anywhere from 5% to at the most 10%, but it seems a lot lower than that. But the rest of the population is no different, they just commit other sins and apart from Christ they are dead in their trespasses and sins, they will die in their sins!

5. To me, what is even more disturbing is the fact that Lot is willing to sacrifice his virgin daughters, he was willing to have them raped by these men just to protect these guests. I have looked at this over and over again and folks, there is nothing you can say to justify his behavior. In fact, he calls this band of sinners, “**brethren**” but they have no respect for him. It is possible that his compromise of faith made his witness ineffective! What a lesson for us to learn. We are not to be “Buddy, buddy” with the world, but we are to love them and have a desire to bring them into the kingdom of God through Jesus Christ. May we not lose sight of that!

VERSES 10-11

1. So as this mob presses hard against Lot, trying to get past him and into the house to get to Lot's visitors, these two angels open the door and pull Lot in. They then strike this mob with blindness, they can't see. So what do they do? You would think they would try to get out of there, but instead, they are trying to find the door to get into the house and have sexual relations with these visitors, to rape these men, to fulfill their lustful desires. Sin is a deadly poison that controls our lives if we allow it. God wants us to walk in the Spirit and not be taken captive by the flesh!

VERSES 12-14

1. Enough is enough, this depravity is not going to continue on, and the judgment of God is coming very quickly for the people of Sodom. Thus, the angels warn Lot to gather up his family and get out of town quickly. Again, as we saw last week, God will not judge the righteous with the wicked!

2. So Lot goes to his family and warns them of the coming judgment of God and they respond, "Your nuts! Crazy old man!" I am paraphrasing of course, but the reality is, they thought he was just joking. They refused to take him seriously. Only his wife and his two virgin daughters listened. And yes, there were not 10 righteous people living in Sodom, and as we will see, only three will eventually escape the judgment of God! As I have said, Lot's testimony was lost, his witness had no affect and thus, his life impacted no one for the Lord!

Yes, Lot was saved but what a wasted life. It is as Paul said in I Corinthians 3:15, **“If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”** May we live what we believe and not compromise our faith. And, if we walk as God has called us, we will shine for Him and our life will impact others for Christ!

VERSES 15-16

1. As the sun comes up where is Lot? He is still in Sodom; he did not leave yet, why? Because his heart was still in Sodom, he did not want to leave. As we are seeing, it was difficult to get Lot out of Sodom and it was even more difficult to get Sodom out of Lot's family! And Lot had too much of the world in him to be happy in the Lord and he had too much of the Lord to be happy in the world. How about you? It is not a good place to be.
2. Folks, keep in mind that this is the second time the Lord rescued Lot, the first time he was take captive, (Genesis 14:12, 16), and yet after he was rescued, he went right back to Sodom! Lot heard God's warning but did not heed it! Now these angels had to grab Lot by the hand and forcibly drag him out of the city. Lot was not grateful for God's mercy upon him but he **LINGERED** in Sodom! Now, these two angels dragged them out of the city, Lot, his wife and two daughters and listen to what transpired next!

VERSES 17-22

1. Lot not only **LINGERED** in Sodom until the angels dragged him out, but now he is **ARGUING** with the angels, he does not want to go to the mountains, he has his own ideas of where to go. You would think he would have learned, but he didn't. And what a sad statement this is of Lot's faith. God was going to save Lot from the judgment that was coming and now he thinks that he will be destroyed if he flees to the mountains, he does not trust God. How foolish and to me, it just tells me that Lot wanted to be close to Sodom, maybe not realizing how devastating this judgment of God was going to be. Maybe he thought after a time he could return there! Folks, as God brings us out of things, don't look back and don't go back. God knows what is best for us. May we listen and obey!

Thus, Lot and his family will go to Zoar or "little ones" instead of the mountain of the Lord. In fact, Lot **BEGGED** to go where he wanted. Don't settle for second best, seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and He will give you what is best if you will follow Him! So we see Lot **LINGER**, **ARGUE** and **BEG** to get his own way. Not a good idea folks.

2. We also see here the answer to the question of God judging the righteous with the wicked or as Abraham asked the Lord, **“Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”** Genesis 18:25.

Listen carefully to what the angels are saying here, **“Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there. . . .”** Genesis 19:22a. In other words, God will not judge the righteous with the wicked, the judgment of Sodom and the surrounding cities will not begin until the righteous are safe!

Folks, we will deal more with this on Sunday, but the Lord does not judge the righteous with the wicked and thus, in the coming judgment, the church will be removed before God pours out His judgment on the wicked. I truly believe this is important for us to understand because if we don't believe we will escape the coming judgment, then instead of looking for the return of Jesus Christ we will be looking for the coming of the Antichrist! I don't know about you, but I am looking for the Lord to return and after I am gone, then the Antichrist will be revealed, not before.

VERSES 23-26

1. When did the judgment of God begin? As soon as Lot was in Zoar where he was safe!

And then God rained down upon these cities fire and brimstone. Whatever this was that came down, and there is much speculation, it destroyed these cities and we will see that this smoke is going to rise up so that Abraham will see it afar off. Not only were these cities destroyed, but the land was destroyed also. Remember back in Genesis 13:10 where we were told, **“And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar.”** This area around the Dead Sea was lush, it was beautiful, it was fertile at one time.

But now the judgment of God has come and the land is a barren wilderness. The area of land is about seventy miles long and eighteen miles wide. Also, located in this area is the Dead Sea, some fifty-three miles long and nine to ten miles wide. Many believe that these cities lie under the Dead Sea as they sank and the waters covered them. What is interesting about the Dead Sea is that the salinity range is 26 to 35% and because of this and the high mineral content, you don't sink but float on the surface. I have done this and it is a strange feeling. Also, there is no life in the Dead Sea because of this high salt and mineral content. But, what is even stranger is how barren the land is around this area, on the southern portion of the Dead Sea, even today. God's judgment was complete upon these cities for their wickedness.

And, according to Deuteronomy 29:23 we are told of the other cities that were destroyed. We are told, “**The whole land is brimstone, salt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does it bear, nor does any grass grow there, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the Lord overthrew in His anger and His wrath.**” Zoar is not mentioned.

2. Not only is this tragic, that the people refused to turn to God and away from their wicked ways, but now Lot’s wife looks back and she turns into a pillar of salt!

Remember what the angels said back in Genesis 19:17, “**. . . ‘Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed.’**” Lot’s wife “**looked back**” or she looked intently back at Sodom, longing to be back and God gave her the desire of her heart! Not a good thing here. Was she saved, I don’t believe so because of her actions and she was destroyed with the wicked! You see, what was in her heart could no longer be hidden, but it was exposed and judgment came upon her.

3. As Jesus spoke of the last days, the coming judgment upon a Christ rejecting world, He made these interesting remarks in Luke 17:32, “**Remember Lot's wife.**” In other words, as Christians we should not have one foot in the world and one foot in the Lord, and I don’t believe you can. Lot’s wife may have said the right words, acting like she was saved, but in the end her actions proved where she stood, what was in her heart. Thus, don’t play games with God because you will lose and you will face the judgment of God! Remember Lot’s wife!

4. I want to share a few observations from archeology regarding this area and what took place.

- **BRONZE AGE DOORS:** "When Kyle and Albright excavated the site of Tel Beit Mirsim... they found evidence in the level of the Middle Bronze Age (2200-1600BC) of strong walls and great doors. On the other hand, in the level of Early Iron II (900-600BC)... inhabitants used only archways or curtains..." (Free p.62). Lot lived around 2000BC and had a door on his house that was sufficient to keep out the mob at Sodom. The Bible account fits the Archaeological record even in this little point! (See picture of a door from this era in Boyd p.84.).
- **TRAVEL:** Travels of great distances were possible in Abraham's day. People regularly traveled the whole length of the "fertile crescent." Legal documents for the rental of carts in Babylon have been found containing the stipulation that the renter not take the cart all the way into Canaan! Thus a thirty mile (as the crow flies) distance between Abraham and Lot would be no great distance, and it was entirely possible for Abraham's army to pursue Lot's capturers for 150 miles to the Damascus area (Fisher).
- **SALT, SULPHUR, AND ASPHALT:** Geologists (including Fredrick Clapp) confirm huge quantities of salt, sulphur and bituminous material, also known as brimstone or asphalt, around the areas associated with Sodom and Gomorrah (Boyd p.51, 86, Wilson p. 67-68, Wood).
- **A CONFLAGRATION:** It is generally agreed that there was a subterranean lake of oil beneath these cities. The area is located on a fault line, and natural gas would have poured out of fissures in a seismic disturbance. "A tremendous explosion took place, which carried burning sulphur, oil, and asphalt into the air above the cities. Mingled with salt, this brimstone and fire rained down upon the whole plain" (Boyd 51,86). Dense smoke suggests smoke from a petroleum-based fire. (cf. Wilson p.67, Kitchen p.47, Pfeiffer p.543, Library of Congress, Wood, Sanders II).

- PILLARS OF SALT:** A strata of salt 150 feet thick is to be found in the area, including a veritable mountain of salt called Jebel Usdum (or translated from Arabic to English, "Mount Sodom.") Pillars of salt can be found all around the Dead Sea. That there are pillars of salt is indisputable, but could a human be turned into salt? Excavations in the Italian city of Pompeii demonstrate evidence that a volcano can indeed quickly cover human victims and preserve them. According to Boyd (p. 85), the bodies in Pompeii actually turned into salts during the process of the volcanic cataclysm. The Bible phrase concerning Mrs. Lot being "back from behind" indicates she was rather far behind the rest of her family and was covered by the fallout whereas her husband and daughters were not. (Boyd. p.86, Wilson p.69, Unger p.1206, NIV Study Bible).
- CHANGES IN CIVILIZATION:** "In the Middle Bronze IIa period (1900-1750BC), Bethel, Shechem, and Dothan and other cities associated with the Patriarchs flourished. At Jericho, tombs show that desert nomads at this time reoccupied cities that had been allowed to fall into ruins, but the main area of occupation was the hilly districts of Palestine and the Southern desert (Negeb) which Glueck's survey has proved to have been once thickly populated. Similar surveys show that Moab and Ammon were also inhabited c.2000BC, but at the time of the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Zoar...the population hurriedly abandoned adjacent sites and returned to their semi-nomadic life. Sedentary occupation of the country east of Jordan is not found again until the 13th Century" (Wiseman) (cf. Sanders II) In other words, archaeology confirms the movement of shepherds like Lot into cities during Abraham's time period, then suddenly leaving the area uninhabited for several hundred years. This matches the biblical record!
- REMAINS OF CITIES DESTROYED BY FIRE:** The site of Bab-edh-Dhra was discovered by Melvn Kyle in 1924 on the Lisan Peninsula in the southern Half of the Dead Sea. It has been excavated by others, including Wm. Albright. All the evidence points to a Cannanitish city dating from the time of Abraham which was burned and left uninhabited for several hundred years (Pfeiffer p.543). Several ancient historians also mention having seen the ruins: Tacitus *History* 5.7. Josephus *Wars* 4.4 (Unger's p.1201), and Strabo (Wilson p.66). The Ebla tablets also mention the names of the five cities, naming one of their kings as "Birsha," matching the Bible account (Wyatt).

- ZOAR: According to the Biblical record, one would expect Zoar not to have been wiped out as were its sister cities, since Lot escaped to this town. Sure enough, historical evidence for a city named Zoar is to be found where only legend and speculation exist for her sister cities. "Josephus says that the Dead Sea extended from Jericho as far as Zoar (B.J., IV. Viii.4); and the Christian historian Eusebius, of the fourth century, confirms that statement and adds that a Roman garrison was there. Also the mosaic map found in a Greek church of Medeba, dated from the fifth or sixth century, places Zoar at the Southeast corner of the sea... In 1924...Drs. Albright and Kyle, explored the territory at the south end of the Dead Sea... they found the ruins of a Zoar of the Byzantine and Arabic periods, but believed that the site of the earlier Zoar had been submerged..." (NIV Study Bible). This site is also associated with Rast and Schaub's "Sufi" site (Shank P.36) (cf. Sanders I)

- Nate Wilson Sodom & Gomorrah

VERSES 27-29

1. When Abraham saw the destruction of these cities, the smoke that was rising up into the sky, do you think he felt that God did not answer his prayers? Absolutely not! I totally believe Abraham knew that God removed the righteous before He destroyed the wicked. How did he know that? Because he spent time with the Lord and thus, he believed in God's promises, that God is faithful, that God is righteous and-so-on. Folks, God wants that kind of relationship with us, He wants us to know Him intimately so that we can trust in Him. And what He has promised to us through His Word we can believe and walk by faith as Abraham did.

VERSES 30-32

1. Where did the angels tell Lot to go in the first place? Up into the mountains. But Lot didn't want to go there, he went to Zoar and when the judgment of God fell, he fled to the mountains for safety. That is where the Lord wanted him to go in the first place and he took the long way home. Why do we run to Zoar or the "little ones" of this world when we should be running to the Rock, Jesus Christ and take refuge beneath the shadow of His wings! It is as David said in Psalm 61, "**Hear my cry, O God; Attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. For You, O God, have heard my vows; You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name. You will prolong the king's life, His years as many generations. He shall abide before God forever. Oh, prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him! So I will sing praise to Your name forever, That I may daily perform my vows.**" Psalm 61:1-8.

2. Now, when you read what his daughters are going to do, you may come to the conclusion that they think God destroyed all life except for them and thus, they need to have sexual relations with their father to keep life going on planet earth. Sounds reasonable but it is wrong. The reason I say that is because they just came from Zoar and there were people there, they were not destroyed. So there were other people out there and they were aware of that, even though some may have fled from Zoar.

It could be that they felt no one would have contact with them because they came from the cities that were destroyed. That is possible, but whatever the reason, they did not trust in the Lord and resorted to their own plan to fulfill what they wanted. They knew it was wrong and they knew their father, Lot. He would never go for this so they had to get him drunk to carry out this sin. Living in Sodom did affect Lot's daughters and not in a good way!

3. One other point here and that is, where did they get the wine? They were not there long enough to make it so they must have brought it with them from Sodom! That tells me they were more interested in worldly things than with their own family, with the people of Sodom. Lot must have been aware, maybe he brought it himself, but whatever the case, a heart filled with compromise will lead to destruction, as we will see.

VERSES 33-38

1. Now some have a hard time with this. They wonder why in the world God would place this immoral act and many other sexual sins in the Bible for people to read? I like the way that Donald Barnhouse put it. He wrote:

“It is far better for children to learn the facts of life from the Word of God where sin is condemned than from dirty words on alley walls, or from lewd stories. No one can escape knowledge of sin . . . these things are never mentioned without being accompanied by the stern warnings that God hates sin and punishes it.”

How true that is. The world calls good evil and evil good and it has no problems with flaunting sin, they are proud of it. Do you want your children learning those lessons from them or do you want them to learn what God has to say about these things and the warnings He gives if you go down that path? For me, I am glad they are there so no one can say, "I didn't know!" They do know, they many times just choose not to believe and obey the Lord.

2. Also, why did Lot allow himself to drink to the point where he was drunk and had no control over his actions? Again, I just think it shows the state of Lot, maybe he believed it was hopeless and might as well drink instead of trusting in the Lord and resting in Him. One person said, "Ironically, in his own drunkenness Lot carried out the shameful act that he himself had suggested to the men of Sodom: he lay with his own daughters."

(Shailhamer).

3. So both his daughters end up conceiving a child with their father and the oldest daughter has a son by the name of Moab and the younger daughter has a son by the name of Ben-Ammi. Now here is the thing, these children become the father's of the Moabites and the Ammonites and they will be a thorn in the side of the children of Israel, just as the sin of Abraham, having a child with his wife's maidservant, Hagar, and their sons name was Ishmael. They all were and continue to be a thorn in the side of Israel. There are consequences to our sin and sometimes they last a lifetime!

The Moabites seduced the men of Israel and caused them to sin. We are told of this in Numbers 25:1-3, where we read, **“Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.”**

And the Ammonites taught Israel to worship Molech and they would sacrifice their children in the arms of this bronze statue, this god they worshiped after the hands of this god were heated in the fire, they would burn their children! He is also called Milcom as we are told in I Kings 11:33, **“because they have forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do what is right in My eyes and keep My statutes and My judgments, as did his father David.”** And In Jeremiah 32:33-35 we are told, **“And they have turned to Me the back, and not the face; though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not listened to receive instruction. But they set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal which are in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech, which I did not command them, nor did it come into My mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.”**

4. As I close this evening may we learn these lessons God is showing us, may we remember Lot's wife as an example of what we are not to do. You see, we are in the world but not of this world as Peter tells us, **“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”**

I Peter 2:11-12.

Folks, a boat needs to be in the water to function properly but when water gets into the boat the boat is sunk! The same is true for us as Christians, we need to be in this world shining brightly for Jesus, not compromising our faith, but as soon as the world gets into us, we are sunk! May we listen and obey. May we not look back, but as Paul said, **“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”** Philippians 3:12-14. May we look up and be guided by our Lord!