



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

Staying clean in a dirty world!

Genesis 19:1-38

Message #21 of 50 – S920

Sermon given on November 8, 2020

@ Hawk Ranch, Murrieta, CA



Sunday Morning Service

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Staying clean in a dirty world!

Genesis 19:1-38

Opening Comments

- Good morning – turn to **Genesis 19**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- Humans truly are a remarkable creation of God
- In almost any environment they will eventually adapt and find a way to flourish in that environment
- On the surface that sounds like a good thing
- In reality, it is only good if the environment you are adapting to is good
- Here in Genesis 19 we see a righteous man in the midst of a wicked and perverse culture – a bad environment
- Paul warns us about that **1 Corinthians 15:33**

Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.”

- Sadly, the righteous man in our text provides virtually no examples of how to stay clean in a dirty world
- What is important to us is that the world we live in today is a lot like it was when this account took place
- This chapter of Genesis should serve as a warning to anyone who wants to live a life that is pleasing to God
- It is also a warning of the consequences of choosing not to do that
- You should know that there is some bizarre stuff in this chapter
- You should also know that I will not be trying to be politically correct, so if you don't agree with God's Word and His absolute right to determine right and wrong you might be offended by something I say this morning
- My objective is not to offend, but to tell the truth
- We are living in a dirty world, and God is calling us to live clean, pure lives, even in this dirty world **1 Peter 1:13-16**

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; ¹⁵ but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*”

- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to teach us how to do that
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Staying clean in a dirty world!**
- Chapters 18 and 19 are a contrast of two characters: Abraham and his nephew Lot
- In the last chapter, the Lord appears with two angels to Abraham
- Abraham serves them a kingly feast and then the Lord engages in a conversation about his plans for Sodom and Gomorrah
- Abraham intercedes on behalf of the righteous people in Sodom and then the Lord departs
- **Genesis 19:1-3**
- Lot is 'sitting in the gate of Sodom' – elders/judges of the city
- It was customary to offer traveling strangers hospitality
- The angels at first turn Lot down but he insists
- It is likely that Lot did not recognize them as divine beings
- It could be because he understood what happens at night in Sodom
- **Genesis 19:4-5**
- In the last chapter the Lord told Abraham that **Genesis 18:20**
...the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave...
- The word 'outcry' speaks of oppression and violence
- '...that we may know them.' – is an idiom used throughout the Bible to refer to having sex
- They are not inviting them out to a party – they are demanding that they come out so that all the people can forcefully and violently have their way with them
- So sick was this culture that they didn't even try to hide their wickedness but were bold in proclaiming their right to do whatever they want to whomever they can.
- They were way past waving rainbow flags in parades
- Lot tries to intervene
- **Genesis 19:6-7**
- 'my brethren' – Lot is fully immersed in the culture of Sodom
- At least two of his daughters are married to Sodomite men

- He is sitting in the gate as one of their leaders
- Tells them that what they want to do is exceedingly wicked
- But then he offers them something that is unbelievable
- **Genesis 19:8-9**
- Lot has two virgin daughters, probably in their mid-teens
- He offers them to this vicious, lust-crazed mob to do as they wish
- Lot is not a good father, not a good person
- But before we condemn him to eternal judgment listen to what the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to write about Lot **2 Peter 2:6-8**
 ...and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; 7 and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked 8 (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)...
- The men of Sodom are offended that Lot would resist them
- People who have given themselves over to some kind of sin are often offended when you don't join them or at least give hearty approval to their actions
- The angels rescue Lot
- **Genesis 19:10-11**
- The men of Sodom are so consumed with their wickedness that they don't even recognize that they have been blinded
- Maybe not a literal blindness, but blind to the door of Lot's house
- **Genesis 19:12-14**
- The Bible describes Lot as a righteous man – he believed in God and put his trust in Him
- But Lot was so consumed with the things of the flesh that he compromised his faith until he was only slightly different than the world around him
- He was so compromised in his faith that his testimony of the truth of God was comedy to his sons-in-law
- Within a few hours Sodom would be a smoldering ruin and Lot did not have the spiritual influence to lead them to safety
- He sat as a leader in the gates of Sodom, but he failed to lead his family
- **Genesis 19:15-23**

- The text doesn't say why Lot lingered
- As an act of God's mercy, the angels grab Lot, his wife, and his two virgin daughters by the hand and drag them out of Sodom
- In verse 29 we are told that mercy was given because of Abraham

James 5:16

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

- Abraham's prayer saved Lot - Abraham's faith saved Lot's life
- But Lot's faith is tragically weak
- Angels tell him to escape to the mountains
- He begs them to send them to a little village nearby
- All the villages were designated for destruction – just as bad as Sodom
- Remarkably, they agree to spare this mini-Sodom on behalf of Lot
- Then the sun comes up and judgment falls

Genesis 19:24-25

- That's it – two verses to describe the utter destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and their surrounding villages
- Brimstone and fire – brimstone = sulfur
- Some would like to attribute to a natural event – maybe
- God can use natural to execute judgment, or He can create the tools of judgment out of nothing, like He did the universe and everything in it
- The tragedy continues

Genesis 19:26

- In verse 17 Lot and his family were told not to look back
- No explanation is given why she did
- Maybe she didn't want to leave her life in Sodom behind
- She still had at least two daughters in Sodom
- She paid the ultimate price for her disobedience
- Then the scene shifts west

Genesis 19:27-29

- We can only imagine what Abraham thought when he looked at the smoke of Sodom's destruction – Was Lot safe?
- The account then shifts back to Lot and one of the strangest accounts in the Bible

Genesis 19:30

- When Lot was with Abraham, he became so rich that he had to move away
- Now he is hiding in a cave with a little more than the cloths on his back with his two young daughters
- **Genesis 19:31-32**
- These are virgin teenage girls, likely between thirteen and sixteen
- If they were much older, they would be married already
- The older unnamed daughter suggests an idea to her sister
- This is the corrupted fruit of Lot's compromise in Sodom
- Virtually every culture views incest as wrong and unnatural
- But Sodom's wickedness had reached limits that few cultures do
- They believe this is the right thing to do, but they know that their father would never agree to it unless he was really drunk
- **Genesis 19:33-36**
- We are not given the names of the daughters, but we are given the names of their incestuous children
- **Genesis 19:37-38**
- The Moabites and Ammonites will appear regularly in Scripture and often as enemies of the people of God
- And one Moabite woman, Ruth, will end up in the genealogy of Jesus Christ
- Sodom was a filthy place; morally, sexually, and spiritually
- The wickedness, violence, oppression, and sexual perversion of that place became so bad that God destroyed it to keep it from spreading like a cancer
- Lot chose to live in Sodom, and even as a righteous man, Sodom came to live in him
- I don't imagine there are very many places in the world today that are as wicked as Sodom was, but there are countless signs that it is moving in that direction
- Genesis 18 and 19 depict two men the Bible describes as righteous; Abraham and Lot
- The difference between them is that Abraham chose to walk as close to the Lord as he was able
- And Lot chose to walk as close to the world as he was able

- Abraham received the promises of God and was a blessing to everyone around him
- Lot lost everything and was a joke to those around him
- We may not have a choice about where we live, but we do have a choice about how we live where we live!
- There was something about Sodom that was attractive or appealing
- The fact that he was ‘sitting in the gate of Sodom’ suggests he felt important there
- Staying clean in this dirty world is not easy
- It takes deliberate attention and diligence
- I don’t think Lot had any idea how he ended up in a cave with his two incestuous daughters – How did I get here?
- It is possible to stay clean, God commands us ‘Be holy’ – not perfect, but moving away from the world and toward the Lord – Christlikeness
- How do we do that?
- It starts with an honest examination of the things of your life
- Pick something like the shows you watch, or the music you listen to, or the podcasts or YouTube channels you are subscribed to
- Ask yourself – does this draw me closer to God or closer to the world?
- Does this glorify violence, oppression, immorality, and sexual perversion?
- Does this glorify God, bless others, and grow faith?
- As this world moves toward its inevitable judgment, it is going to be harder to stay clean in this dirty world
- That is why we need each other so much
- Get connected and stay connected to the church – the people
- And not in a superficial way, but with honest transparency
- Abraham walked close to God, Lot didn’t
- Walking close to the Lord will lead you to the fulfilment of God’s promises
- Walking with the world leads to emptiness and loss
- Personally, I want to experience God’s presence and blessings
- Not only that, I want those God has called me to lead to experience those things to - As for me and my house – we will walk with the Lord! - **Pray!**