

Lot: Entangled in Sin

Passages: As listed in the lesson.

Memory Verse

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.” (1 John 2:15–16)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Learn about Lot’s choices and the progression of loss that he experienced.2. Learn about the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah.3. Understand that God’s mercy comes to those who seek Him out.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God is righteous.2. God is merciful.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pitch our tents close to God.2. Avoid drifting into sin by focusing our vision on Christ and actively seeking God.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Understanding Lot’s Choice
- B. The Consequences of Lot’s Choices
- C. The Mercy of God

Life Application: Where Have You Pitched Your Tent?

Optional Activity: Drifting Out of Line

1. Focus Our Eyes
2. Take Action and Row

Memory Verse

Conclusion: We must not allow ourselves to drift into sin as Lot did, but instead keep our tents pitched close to God by keeping our eyes focused on Him and actively seeking Him out.

A. Understanding Lot's Choice

What do you remember about Lot? From what you remember, how would you describe his character? Let's read Genesis 11:31. The Bible first mentions Lot when Abraham left Ur of the Chaldeans for Haran with his father Terah (Acts 7:4). It seems that like his uncle Abraham, Lot also grew up in Mesopotamia, which lay between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. At the time, Ur itself was one of the most advanced settlements at the time, with the first discovered records of writing. Today, the region of Mesopotamia is situated in modern day Iraq, Kuwait, Turkey, and Syria.

Let's now read Genesis 12:4. When God called Abraham out of Haran, Lot also chose to follow his uncle once more. Although Lot was not directly addressed by God, it seems that he also chose to walk a path of faith. It can be inferred that Lot also learned about the true God through Abraham, so perhaps it was this learning that compelled him to follow. This was the first recorded change in Lot's life, and it can be seen as a positive one.

Let's continue by reading Genesis 13:1–12 to find out what happened to Lot after this. Because Abraham and Lot were very wealthy, they each had a great number of flocks and herds, resulting in strife between their herdsmen. Abraham wisely thought of a solution and gracefully offered his nephew first choice despite being the elder. As a result, the second big change in Lot's life occurred when he made the choice to settle near the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Unfortunately, this change was quite a negative one in comparison to the first.

Lot's Choice

Why did Lot choose this land in particular? What do you think of this choice? Do you think it was a wise one? Let's read Genesis 13:10–11 again. If we examine the passage, we will notice that Lot neither prayed nor sought direction from God when making his decision. Lot "lifted his eyes," "saw," and "chose." Lot's decision was a worldly decision because it was based on sight alone: he saw something that was pleasing to his eyes and decided that it would be best to settle there.

Moreover, Lot's decision was quite selfish. As the elder and authority figure in Lot's life, Abraham had every right to simply tell him what to do, but he still selflessly gave Lot the first choice. Even more importantly, the Bible teaches us not to lean on our own understanding, but in all our ways acknowledge him (Prov 3:5–6). Yet despite learning about Him through Abraham, Lot made a reckless and selfish decision without any regard for God or respect for his uncle. What was the result of this? Let's read 2 Peter 2:7–8.

Peter says that Lot was "righteous," and his soul was "tormented" by what he saw. This means that he knew Sodom was wicked. He didn't want to participate in that kind of culture, and their immorality truly bothered him deeply. Because of his selfish decision, he had surrounded himself with sin, and the lack of morality not only led to Lot feeling "tormented" but also deeply impacted his family.

B. The Consequences of Lot's Choices

With each unwise choice that Lot made, he ended up facing progressively worse consequences. Because he had allowed himself to remain surrounded by moral depravity, not only was Lot personally endangered but his family was also severely affected. He later lost everything.

1. Surrounded by sin

Genesis 13:13 says that the “men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.” Ezekiel also recorded that “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” (Ezek 16:49). Let’s read what happened in Genesis 14:1–17.

At the time, “kings” were those who ruled over their respective cities. Several leaders chose to rebel against the ruling kings, including the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. However, their cities fell to the enemy, and Lot was kidnapped along with others, perhaps because of his wealth and status. Unfortunately, despite his harrowing experience, Lot chose to return to the city after his rescue, so he continued to be surrounded by sin. What followed was yet another serious consequence of his decision to remain in Sodom. Let’s read Genesis 19:1–5.

The wickedness of the city is seen incredibly clearly here. They sought to inflict their perversity even upon strangers who entered the city. Lot, who had promised the two guests their safety, was now hard-pressed to protect them from his very own neighbors.

2. Affected by sin

Let’s continue reading Genesis 19:6–11. Lot was a man who had been taught the ways of the Lord by Abraham. This is clear in his courageous offer to shelter the two strangers, knowing the dangers of the city. But the decision that he made when under intense pressure shows us something very clear: Lot had allowed his own judgment to be corrupted by the sin around him, to the point that he was willing to offer his own daughters to be sexually assaulted. How did Lot come up with such a terrible plan? What kind of parent would offer their own child to be sexually assaulted by a group of men?

Lot knew right from wrong, but the culture of Sodom and Gomorrah was extremely perverted. It was clear that living there for so many years had affected his judgment to the point that he decided on such a terrible compromise. Lot should have known that he had a better way out – he should have turned to God (1 Cor 10:13). But once again, he made a choice based on his own limited understanding and power. He made the grave error of believing that he had only two options and forgot that in times like these, he was supposed to rely on God’s power for help. In the end, it was solely because of God’s mercy that he did not have to commit to this terrible decision.

3. Attached to sin

Lot was clearly attached to life in Sodom. After being kidnapped by the five kings and rescued by his uncle, he immediately returned to the city. It was easy for him to slip back into his old lifestyle once things seemed safe again. But even when he was warned of grave danger, he hesitated to leave. Let’s continue reading Genesis 19:12–21. There are a few things here that show Lot’s visible reluctance to accept the danger of God’s judgment.

It was nighttime when the angels urged Lot to leave the city, but “morning dawned,” and he was still there. We do not know why he took so long, but regardless of the reason, the Bible records that “while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife’s hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city” (Gen 19:16). Lot lingered and was slow to take heed of God’s warning. Perhaps he was still trying to convince his family to leave, or maybe he was trying to pack his possessions. Whatever

the case, he ended up being unable to act, and the angels had to physically pull them out.

However, despite accepting the danger to the city, Lot was still reluctant to flee entirely as he was told. He then begged the angels to allow them to stay in a small city, under the excuse that some evil might “overtake” him so that he would “die.” It is clear that Lot had forgotten whom the angels served – if God had chosen to save him and his family from the city, why would He not be equally able to save him from any danger that he faced in the mountains? Yet despite this, God had mercy on him and permitted him to stay in Zoar.

Unfortunately, although Lot heeded the angels’ instructions, his wife did not. Let’s read Genesis 19:22–26. Like Lot, his wife had clearly grown attached to the city and had forgotten the importance of obeying God’s commands. Because of this, she became a pillar of salt, and Lot tragically lost his wife in a moment.

4. Unguarded

After witnessing the complete destruction of the two cities and the death of his wife, the Bible records that “Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar” (Gen 19:30). All of the years that Lot had spent in the city had gone to complete waste, and he was now reduced to living in a cave after years of fortune and success. Let’s read Genesis 19:31–38.

Lot had been taught God’s will from Abraham, but his daughters had grown up in Sodom. Although Lot himself generally knew right from wrong, it is apparent that his daughters did not. After being reduced to living in a cave, they chose a path of complete immorality and turned to incest. The Bible records that his daughters had initiated this wicked abomination in the eyes of God. Clearly, Lot hadn’t trained them up properly. The Bible also tells us that Lot was drunk, a stark example of why Paul wrote that we should “not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18). Both he and his daughters’ actions were deeply influenced by Sodom and Gomorrah. In the end, the result was the births of Moab and Ammon, nations that both became enemies to Israel over time (Deut 23:3–6; Judg 3:13–14).

All of these events could have been avoided if Lot had made a wiser decision when Abraham asked him where he wanted to dwell. Lot’s relationship with God was not his top priority. As a father, Lot had the responsibility of shepherding his family and training his children in the way they should go, so that when they were old, they would not depart from it (Prov 22:6). However, he instead allowed both himself and his family to be influenced by the culture around them. Likewise, we need to be very careful while living in the world. We should not follow in the footsteps of Lot and commit such dreadful sins.

C. The Mercy of God

While Sodom and Gomorrah became an example of God’s judgment “to those who afterward would live ungodly” (2 Pet 2:6), Lot was an example of God’s deliverance and mercy. Let’s read his plea to the angels in Genesis 19:18–21. God could have just as easily left Lot to his fate or ignored his plea. But God listened to him and allowed Lot’s request. Lot was perhaps spared in part because of his relationship to Abraham, but we also read that Lot’s heart was “tormented” by the cruelty that he witnessed, and that he remained righteous in the eyes of God despite his decision to live within such a sinful city.

Despite his weaknesses, Lot showed a form of courageous hospitality (Gen 19:1–3). He knew the dangers, yet still invited the visitors to his home. Although they declined him at first, he did not give up, but insisted on inviting them to stay for their protection.

As humans, we are bound to make poor choices, but from the example of Lot, we can see God’s abounding mercy and grace. It is important for us to understand that we are not better or more righteous than Lot, nor have we done anything deserving of God’s mercy. We have received this same grace, but that doesn’t mean that we have a free pass to do anything that we want! What are some conditions for experiencing God’s mercy?

- 2 Peter 3:9 – “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”
- Proverbs 28:13 – “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”
- Luke 1:50 – “And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.”
- Psalm 103:17 – “But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children.”

From these verses, we can see that experiencing God’s mercy first requires that we seek Him out and repent of our sins. While Lot chose to remain in Sodom, we ourselves must instead strive to live by God and His righteousness, and learn to make choices that are for our spiritual benefit rather than our physical. In this way, we will also experience God’s mercy and care. He will rescue us when we are facing tribulations, and He will hear our prayers.

Check for Understanding

- 1. What was the primary issue with Lot’s decision when choosing which land to dwell on?** He made it based on sight alone, without any regard for Abraham or for God.
- 2. What fundamental error did Lot make when making the terrible compromise of offering his two daughters in exchange for the safety of his guests?** He made the grave error of believing that he had only two options and forgot that in times like these, he was supposed to rely on God’s power for help.
- 3. How do we know that Lot was attached to life in Sodom?** After being kidnapped and rescued by his uncle, he immediately returned to the city. Later, when the angels came to save his family, he lingered in the city, was slow to heed God’s warning, and begged to flee to Zoar instead.
- 4. Instead of shepherding his family spiritually, what did Lot’s choices result in for himself and his family?** He allowed both himself and his family to be influenced by the culture around them.

Life Application

Where Have You Pitched Your Tent?

Part of the struggle in Christian living is our attraction to the world. Like Lot, we unintentionally make our homes as close to sin as possible. To make ourselves feel better, we may attempt to draw invisible lines – “that is sin, and this is not, so I will be safe here” – but these lines are malleable that shift with our moods. When we are stronger, the line moves further from sin, and when we are weaker, we end up moving into Sodom. Let’s read 1 John 2:15–16. “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.”

Many find the Bible restrictive because it teaches us that you cannot love or serve both the world and God. We like to see gray areas where we can coexist between the two, but the fact of the matter is that our worldly desires will only pull us away from God. We cannot serve both God and mammon. Like a soldier serving a cause, we need to choose what we fight for, and know where to pitch our tents! Of course, we may choose to pitch our tent close to God, only to realize that we have somehow drifted closer and closer to sin. This is because sin is a progression – it is a series of choices that make us drift away from God without even realizing it. So how do we avoid drifting closer and closer to Sodom?

Optional Activity: Drifting Out of Line

*Teachers: As a simple activity to demonstrate this point, have your students try to walk without looking in the direction they are trying to go. **Please skip this if your classroom is very cluttered, as a lot of furniture may cause injury, as well as provide frames of reference that will lessen the effectiveness of the activity.** Also note that this activity will only work if space allows – if the tape is too short or your classroom is too small, there will be less time to “drift.”*

- *Prepare a length of tape or string on the ground – the longer the better. **Remove any potential obstacles so that students do not injure themselves.***
- *Prepare a target for the students to look at, directly out of line of the direction they are supposed to walk, such as a small piece of paper on a blank wall slightly behind them, a few feet above eye level. The further “back” they have to look, and the fewer objects within their frame of reference, the more likely they are to “drift.”*
- *Have students take turns trying to walk along the strip of tape while looking at the target that you prepared.*

1. Focus Our Eyes

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” (Heb 12:1–2 NIV)

When we go walking or biking and focus on something interesting to the side, we often unintentionally begin to turn towards the focus of our gaze. Our bodies are wired so that our eyes lead our heads, and our heads lead our bodies. This is also true mentally. When our brains are fixated on something, we tend to devote much of our waking thought to that object, whether it be a show, a celebrity, a hobby, or even a subject at school. Over time, this focus leads our brains to pick up accumulated knowledge, and we slowly become experts in the subject.

Of course, the same is true of our spirituality. Whatever our hearts are focused on becomes the target of our lives. When we focus on God, our minds accumulate knowledge in His word, and our bodies subsequently act according to God’s will. To avoid drifting, we must therefore refocus our spiritual sight. The easiest way is to start with our physical eyes! When we think about it, we may have spent hours of our lives staring straight at Sodom. Consider the following:

- a. How much time do you spend passively scrolling through social media?
- b. How much time do you spend on various social platforms chatting or playing games with your friends?
- c. How much time do you spend reading, researching, or shopping for materials related to a personal hobby that you love?

- d. How much time do you spend looking at your marks, reviewing possibilities for your future, or looking up places to live, study, or work?

Of course, that isn't to say any of the above are particularly bad on their own. God does not ask us to spend every waking hour staring at the Bible – He knows that we have to live in this world, too. But He has also told us that when we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, He will take care of all our needs. This means that we need to spend time communicating with Him and fixing our eyes on Him to find His will (Heb 12:2). As Jesus Christ taught us, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Mt 6:21).

2. Take Action and Row

"Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near." (Isa 55:6)

What happens when you cut the engine or stop rowing a boat in open water? Your vessel begins to drift with the waves, so to move in a certain direction, you start up the engine, or pick up the paddle and start to row. Both are conscious choices that we make, followed by an action. Likewise, we need to actively find our way closer to God instead of letting ourselves drift into sin. Let's read Psalm 119:9–16. Circle or write down all the verbs.

Cleanse, taking heed, sought, (not) wander, hidden, declared, rejoiced, meditate, contemplate, delight, (not) forget.

Keeping our tents pitched in their proper place requires diligence and persistence. One of the biggest obstacles in our faith is often as simple as the failure to act. How many times have you failed to change something about yourself simply because you were too lazy to act upon that resolution? It is easy to make a determination during SSC, and even easier to discard that determination after returning home, simply because you have lost your motivation!

Let's take a second look at all of the actions that we circled in Psalm 119. Do you *cleanse* yourself daily in your prayers? Do you *heed* God's will and *meditate* upon it? Do you *seek* Him out, avoid *wandering* from His commandments, or *hide* His word in your heart? Take a moment to figure out which actions need the most work. Pick two. For each, write down why you need to take this action, and how you will implement it moving forward. Be as specific as you can. Share what you wrote with the class.

Teachers: Students may brainstorm ideas individually or as a group. See examples below.

Action	How will I take this action?
<i>Cleanse</i>	I need to change a particular habit that has been affecting my spiritual life negatively. To do so, I will use a calendar to track whenever I avoid or repeat this habit, and ask God to help me change myself in my daily prayers.
<i>Taking heed</i>	I know that God wants me to honor my parents, but I fail to do so. I would like to change this by learning something new about their past and the different troubles or joys that they have experienced.
<i>Sought</i>	I need to pay greater attention in sermons. To do so, I will aim to write at least one key lesson or verse from each sermon in my notebook and review it after church.

<i>Not wander</i>	I know that I do something in particular that God dislikes, so I will aim to avoid this in the future by asking a friend or family member to hold me accountable.
<i>Hidden</i>	I don't know enough of the Bible, so I would like to memorize the memory verse from each RE class. To do this, I will write it down in my notebook for daily review and recite it without looking at least once during the week.
<i>Declared</i>	I often stutter or mumble when I talk about church to my friends, so I will prepare myself for next time by writing down and orally practicing a few different responses to their questions.
<i>Rejoiced</i>	Church and religion in general feel like a chore. To try and rejoice in God, every Saturday, I will write down at least three blessings that He has given to me over the past week.
<i>Meditate</i>	I often read my assigned Bible passages without thinking deeply about them. To help myself meditate on them, I will buy myself a study Bible and write down my thoughts in a notebook while I read.
<i>Contemplate</i>	Although I often write notes from sermons and RE class, I rarely think about them again after writing them. To help myself contemplate further on God's word, I will read my notes again at least once in the middle of week.
<i>Delight</i>	Helping out in church often feels more like a chore than a delight. To generate more delight in His statutes, I will try serving in different ways to find something which I can find delight in while serving God.
<i>Not forget</i>	I often forget about God outside of church, so to counter this, I will post sticky notes around my room and place visual reminders in my school supplies to remind myself of God's word at home and at school.

By actively taking small, daily steps towards God, we can avoid becoming like Lot and drifting into sin, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It is easy to get sucked into the delights of the world, so it is our responsibility as God's children to remain vigilant and to keep ourselves from becoming too attached to anything that can distract us from God. Of course, changing our habits or preferences is not an easy thing, so it is always important to ask for help from church friends and family, and to always rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to change ourselves. In this manner, we can keep our tents pitched where they should be – right next to God!

Memory Verse

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world." (1 John 2:15–16)

Meaning

See *Life Application*.

Conclusion

Although Lot took the big step of following Abraham and God into Canaan, his subsequent choices led only from trouble to disaster. However, he remained righteous within a sinful city, and despite his mistakes, God had mercy on him and saved him from destruction. We must not allow ourselves to drift into sin as Lot did, but instead keep our tents pitched close to God by keeping our eyes focused on Him and actively seeking Him out.

Lesson 1 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. Why is it impossible to love the Father while also loving the things of the world?
We like to see gray areas where we can coexist between the two, but the fact of the matter is that our worldly desires will only pull us away from God.
2. “But the _____ of the LORD is from _____ to _____ on those who _____ Him, and His righteousness to children’s children.” (Psalm 103:17)
mercy, everlasting, everlasting, fear
3. What was the primary issue with Lot’s decision when choosing which land to dwell on?
He made it based on sight alone, without any regard for Abraham or for God.
4. What were the four main consequences of Lot’s choices?
He was surrounded by sin, affected by sin, became attached to sin, and was unguarded against sin.
5. To experience God’s mercy, what must we first do?
We must seek Him out and repent of our sins. While Lot chose to remain in Sodom, we ourselves must instead strive to live by God and His righteousness instead. We must learn to make choices that are for our spiritual benefit rather than our physical.
6. Write down what actions you chose to take based on Psalm 119:9–16. At the end of the week, were you able to begin taking steps? If not, then try to add details to your plan to help you carry it out in the future.
Personal answers.