

HOW TO BE BLESSED

SERIES ON THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM

DECISIONS DETERMINE DESTINY (Week 6)

OPENING: What brought you to Lloydminster? What is your most favorite thing about living in this city?

DIG DEEPER:

Pastor mentioned on Sunday that, "What you decide upon now will determine what you become tomorrow. What you decide to fill your heart and mind with will determine who you become tomorrow." How would you describe your life three years ago? How different was it from your life today? Aside from the years, what made the difference between your life now and three years ago?

This study is dedicated entirely on learning about and gathering lessons from the life of Abraham's nephew, Lot. In Lot, we find a man who made some very bad decisions. In this series, we have been learning that, we can save ourselves from a lot of heartaches if we only trust and obey God's will for our lives. The purpose of this series is to help us pursue and embrace the blessings God has for us. Life is but the sum total of the decisions that we will make, that means, even the smallest decisions matter greatly in the direction of our lives.

Lot was a part of Abraham's family and was therefore a part of the blessing.

Read Genesis 12:1-5. Abram launched out to pursue the blessing that God promised and brought Lot with him. It was a great pursuit! But like in any scenario where growth is involved, change comes along, and personality clashes happen. In this story, the clash was between Abram's and Lot's herders. *What was their solution for the dispute in Genesis 13:8-9?*

The separation was merely meant to address the disputes between their workers, but it was not meant for Lot to pull himself out of the will God altogether—but it did. How did Lot take himself from the realm of God's promise in Genesis 13:10-13?

THE POWER OF SMALL DECISIONS.

- What seemed to be a tiny, harmless decision actually pulled Lot out of the center of God's will for him! There were no warning signs. There were no alarms sounding off. To him it was a very small but a very convenient decision. *What attracted to the land that he chose in Genesis 13:10? Has there ever been a time in your life when you chose something based on its appearance?*
- We have this mistaken notion that if it's not convenient then it's not a blessing. In fact, many people have developed the habit of escaping inconvenient situations. *Have you ever run away from an inconvenient situation? From this story, we learn that truth that: Not all that's convenient is a blessing.* In the Bible, some of the mightiest blessings of God came in the most inconvenient situations.
- Not all that's convenient is wrong. However, sometimes, convenience can be a disguise—a lure to keep you from receiving what God has for you. The best example that Pastor gave was the temptation that Satan laid out to Jesus in Matthew 4:1-11. Satan promise Jesus—food, fame, fortune and power, but Jesus said no to every one of them. Satan was trying to lure Jesus from living out His purpose on earth, and that's what Satan wants to do with each of us—to lead us to a life completely devoid of meaning by making us believe that nothing else is worth pursuing except money. *What are some of the ways the enemy tries to lure us from pursuing God's purpose for us?*
- Satan has the capacity to give, but he does not have the capability to bless. He can give you what you want, but he doesn't have the power to give you satisfaction. *Remember the Hebrew words for "bless"?* How can we better pursue the "elevation" that God wants for us to experience in Him?
- Verse 11 says, *So Lot chose for himself...* Anyone could tell that Lot's decision was a reflection of his character. He made a choice based mainly on appearance and convenience. It's the seemingly small decisions that actually express who we truly are. Don't gamble your destiny away by removing God from the equation of your decisions.
- We need to *Stay Anchored in God's Truth*. Even good guys like Lot can drift away if not anchored in the truth of God's Word and promises. Drifting away from God's favor could be triggered by the small choices we make. So we need to plant ourselves firmly on Jesus, the Word of God and His promises; because when we do, our decisions will be based on God's word, on God's promises; on God's purpose for us. Read Colossians 2:6-8. Lot's uncle Abraham made foolish decisions too and had to face consequences of his decisions; but because Abraham was deeply anchored in the promise of God, he always came back to the promise of God. On the other hand, Lot wasn't:
 - In Genesis 13:10, we see Lot looking at Sodom. What do you choose to see; what to you choose to look at?
"What you choose to magnify you get more of."
 - In Genesis 13:12, we see Lot living near Sodom.
 - In Genesis 14:12, we see Lot living in Sodom.
 - In Genesis 19:1, we see Lot ruling over Sodom.

Read Hebrews 2:1. The truth is your compass! The Word of God is your true north. When your world gets so muddled and confused, when there's a pull from every direction, if you're anchored in God's truth, it will lead you to make the right decision.

THE POWER OF COMPROMISE.

- What compromising does is that, little by little we become adjusted to the wrong things around and wrong things become normal for us.
Here's how it works:
Compromise - "Just once."
Moralize - "It's not that bad."
Liberalize - "It's OK."
Hedonize - "It's awesome! Come join me."
- Lot had lost the ability to see the difference between right and wrong. That is why it's important to stay anchored in the truth. Lot revealed what he valued more in life with a series of small choices he made. Lot chose to be richer quicker at the expense of his family and his faith.

THE EFFECTS OF SHORTSIGHTEDNESS.

Lot's decisions not only affected his life but the lives of those he loved. He chose gold instead of his God. He chose career instead of his children. He chose fortune instead of his family. The decisions we make are not just about us, but they impact the people around us, especially those we love. We must never ever judge a situation by where it is.

- We must always judge a situation by where it is heading. When Lot made his decision to pull himself out of the center of God's will him and promise to Abraham, he based it on the immediate instead of the long run. It was a short-sighted decision. What Lot failed to see was the fact that he was compromising his family's spiritual direction and future in exchange for financial stability. *What is your greatest priority in life? Are you making God-directed choices?*
- Salvation of the city. God would have spared the city if He found ten (10) righteous people in it. But Lot, who had the power to influence the city was too busy making money. He did not influence anyone for God in Sodom, not even his family. *God has placed us where we're at to be the positive Godly influence there. Are you fulfilling that calling in your spheres of influence? Have you ever shared the gospel or invited anyone from your spheres of influence?*
- God called Lot out of the city, but the angels literally had to drag Lot and his family out (Genesis 19:16-26). In the verses we just read, we find the effects of Lot's decision on his family. His family loved their things; their convenient life in Sodom, even more than they loved their family members. What did Jesus say in Luke 17:32-33 concerning being so attached to the things we have?
- Never going back. Genesis 19:29-30. So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, He brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived, because God kept His promise to Abraham. By God's mercy, Lot was spared; but he did not return to his uncle Abraham. He distanced himself from God's promise and blessing for the rest of his life. In verse 30, we find him living in the mountains in fear. What did Pastor say about fear?
- Lot's decisions messed up his daughters' spiritual condition. His daughters were so greatly infused with the wickedness of the hideous city they lived in (Genesis 19:31-36). Here's a lesson to parents/future parents: Give your children/future children the spiritual stability they need to prepare them for their own decision-making and propel them to their God-given destinies, and live under divine favor. But here's the thing, you cannot provide what you don't have. The Bible says, if we ask for it, He'll give it; and once you've got it, work it out—and begin to see the favor of God fall upon your family! Favor is the result of choices made in faith. The Bible tells us that both Lot's daughters each had a son—Moab and Ben-Ammi. In the books of 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles, the descendants of Lot, the Moabites and the Ammonites became enemies of the descendants of Abraham, the Israelites.
- Redemption. Ruth was a Moabite, the great-grandmother of David, the ancestor of Jesus Christ. No one is beyond the REACH OF GOD'S grace! No sin is too great to be forgiven; no decision is too stupid to be redeemed; no mistake is too hard for God to produce good out of! Because here's what we believe, all things work together for the good of those who God and are called according to His purpose! Do you want to be blessed? PURSUE THE PURPOSE OF GOD FOR YOU!

ANNOUNCEMENT: DreamTeam Convergence – AUGUST 28 (Right after Sunday worship.)
This gathering is for all who serve as a volunteer in any ministry at Mosaic.