

Godly Man vs. Man of God Abraham Vs. Lot

An example of this most inconvenient of truths is found in the Biblical account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Here God warns Abraham of imminent judgment:

- God continued, "The cries of the victims in Sodom and Gomorrah are deafening; the sin of those cities is immense. I'm going down to see for myself, see if what they're doing is as bad as it sounds. Then I'll know." The men set out for Sodom, but Abraham stood in God's path, blocking his way. Genesis 18:20-22 The Message

As this tragic drama unfolds, there is much to be learned. First, God was literally preparing to rain fire down upon these two cities as judgment for their sins, And as a warning to future generations. Again a global scenario all the more easily accomplished today given an arsenal of 10 thousand nuclear weapons.

- "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." 2 Peter 2:6 New King James Version

Second, while these cities were clearly guilty of outrageous sins, they were no more so than any major metropolitan area within developed nations! In fact the sins of our cities may well dwarf that of Sodom and Gomorrah given abortion, murder, drug abuse (Biblically referred to as sorcery), demonism (represented in thousands of [horror](#) and gore movies) [sexual sins](#) (brazenly displayed everywhere included TV and laptops, tablets and smart phones), homosexuality, pornography, divorce, violence, gluttony, materialism, humanism, idolatry, unthankfulness, etc.

Third, this story takes place in the Bible's first Book, long before it was even written. Imagine for a moment the tens if not hundreds of thousands of grandparents and parents, teens and children, God reduced to ash. Not a one with so much as the Law of Moses, much less

the historical and prophetic Books of the Old Testament. Neither did they have Christ's teaching in the Gospels or any of Books of the New Testament. Neither did they have the fullness of the Holy Spirit, 2,000 years of Church history or the spiritual blessings and unprecedented wealth and technology we so readily take for granted. In this day and age, we must be at least 1,000 times more culpable than those of Sodom and Gomorrah.

So what's to be done? Biblical passages and human experience demonstrate that our beliefs only have value in as much as they lead to actions. As previously referenced:

- "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!" James 2:17-18 New King James Version

This is not to suggest that our thoughts and words are without meaning. They are the quarry from which by actions, or lack thereof, we build our lives. For this reason, Jesus warns to judge carefully. Again James agrees:

- "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God." James 1:19-20 New King James Version

In this context, being "swift to hear, slow to speak" suggests the willingness and ability to think through difficult issues. Those who do soon find that thoughts and words matter. Sometimes even the smallest of them. Consider again the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Along with the two wicked cities, there were two righteous individuals, Abraham and Lot. While the Bible states both were upright before God, identifying the difference between them yields an important lesson.

The patriarch Abraham was the father of our faith. As warrior, prophet, and extraordinary intercessor, he clearly earned the distinction of "man of God." So much so, that prior to raining sulfuric fire down on the region, the Lord felt it necessary to inform only one man on the entire planet:

- Then God said, "Shall I keep back from Abraham what I'm about to do? Abraham is going to become a large and strong nation; all the nations of the world are going to find themselves blessed through him. Yes, I've settled on him as the one to train his children and future family to observe God's way of life, live kindly and generously and fairly, so that God can complete in Abraham what he promised him." Genesis 18:17-19 The Message

Because of his honored status before God, Abraham was given an extraordinary opportunity to [intercede](#), [wrestling with God](#) for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Or perhaps it was Lot's family and friends that concerned him. But what occasioned this distinction? Likely it was Abraham's previous preparation and practice of [seeking God](#) to discern the truth of four critical spiritual issues. Who he was? Where he was? When he was? What God was doing? Abraham understood the importance of [knowing God's will](#) and [interceding](#) until [seeing it realized](#) in the lives of those he loved. As a whole hearted man of worship and obedience, he had likely worked diligently to daily build his faith. In so doing Abraham grew into a commitment level meriting the distinction of a **man of God**.

As for Lot, the Scriptures testify he was a **godly man**:

- "God decreed destruction for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. A mound of ashes was all that was left—grim warning to anyone bent on an ungodly life. But that good man Lot driven nearly out of his mind by the [sexual filth](#) and [perversity](#), was rescued. Surrounded by moral rot day after day after day, that righteous man was in constant torment. So God knows how to rescue the godly from evil trials. And he knows how to hold the feet of the wicked to the fire until Judgment Day." 2 Peter 2:6-9 The Message

Peter uses Lot as an example of God rescuing the "righteous" and "godly" from trials. Too many modern Christians, if they ever even read this verse, speak and act as if assured God would do the same in our case. Why? Because we might read the story? The most common response is because we believe. Yet remember James' warning that even the demons believe, to the point of [trembling with terror](#). The Bible is clear that God's [free gift](#) of [eternal salvation](#) is received only through

[living faith.](#)

Additionally, untold millions of obedient believers, the likes of which the world is unworthy, have and will be martyred. Even in the 1st century, Divine intervention was rare. With deliverance more the exception rather than rule, in this context "rescue" would seem to refer to spiritual insight and support in the face of persecution and martyrdom, as well as eternal salvation and reward. C.S. Lewis put it this way, "God, who foresaw your tribulation, has specially armed you to go through it, not without pain but without stain."

In the Book of Acts Peter declares that "God is no respecter of persons." This being true, there is yet reason to hope for the spiritual rescue for those who are willing to adopt lifestyles like Lot. Who in righteousness fully [engaged his culture](#), to the point of being "driven nearly out of his mind by the sexual filth and perversity." Surrounded by moral rot and decay, day after day, that "righteous man was in constant torment." Not as an apathetic or grumbling bystander, as hundreds of millions are today, but as an active spiritual combatant. Like Moses, Lot chose the rigors of a resistance fighter, rather than enjoy the false peace of a sympathizer or fleeting rewards of collaboration.

How few of us in the [First World Church](#) today live as righteously as Lot? As Jesus warned, "Remember Lot's wife." Remember as well the grim fate Lot's daughters and whole family nearly suffered at the hands of Sodom's mob:

- "...the men of Sodom...called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally." So Lot ...said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof." And they said, "Stand back!" Then they said, "This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them." So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. Genesis 19:4-9 New King James

Version

Striking the crazed mob blind, the angels continued their rescue:

- "Do you have any other family here? Sons, daughters—anybody in the city? Get them out of here, and now! We're going to destroy this place. ... Lot went out and warned the fiancés of his daughters, "Evacuate this place; God is about to destroy this city!" But his daughters' would-be husbands treated it as a joke. At break of day, the angels pushed Lot to get going, "Hurry. Get your wife and two daughters out of here before it's too late and you're caught in the punishment of the city." Lot was dragging his feet. The men grabbed Lot's arm, and the arms of his wife and daughters...and dragged them to safety outside the city. When they had them outside, Lot was told, "Now run for your life! Don't look back! Don't stop anywhere on the plain—run for the hills or you'll be swept away." Genesis 19:12-17 The Message

Thoughtful consideration of this story's horrendous ending yields additional [insights](#). Among them is the fact that Abraham was so correctly tuned into who, where and when he was, as well as to what God was doing, that while living safely outside the impact zone, God confided in him rather than Lot. Abraham's wholly dedicated lifestyle afforded him uniquely intimate intercession. **Furthermore, as a man of God, Abraham and his family were repeatedly afforded a kind of protection that Lot's was not.**

While being a godly man saved Lot's physical existence, in nearly every other respect his life was effectively destroyed. His wife was turned into a pillar of salt. His sons-in-law, friends and those he had ministered to in Sodom were burned alive. Perhaps second only to Noah's flood, Lot became humanities greatest reminder of judgment against sin. Lot's daughters, fearing barrenness, would get him drunk and become pregnant by incest. Unlike Abraham, Lot's legacy would for all practical purposes disappear from the Scriptural record, only to resurface as the heathen nations of Moab and Ammon. Both continual thorns in the flesh of God's people Israel:

- Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; he is the father of

the Moabites to this day. And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the people of Ammon to this day. Genesis 19:36-38

This vital passage on the judgment of God against individuals and societies who's sins have reached Heaven reveals many crucial truths. First among them is that Scripture clearly differentiates between Abraham, the **man of God** vs. Lot a **godly man**. Next, that Lot's lot was far from pleasant. Outside of saving him and his daughters physically, their rescue likely appeared to the three of them more as smoldering judgment.

Few today trouble themselves with the moral of such stories. Hundreds of millions of modern believers feel confident they are beyond such reproach. Unfortunately, this popular worldview again demonstrates a tragic and persistent Biblical disconnect. There are thousands of direct and indirect passages where God commands and encourages, confronts and warns, disciplines and even destroys His own people. Some still object, going so far as to insist God's Church is above deception. Yet this was hardly the case even with such powerfully anointed men as Samson and David. Today, far from achieving half the practical righteousness of the famous of Scripture, our lifestyles may be more in keeping with the moral decay and disillusionment of unbelievers. If so, rather than anticipating the praise of God, might we be storing up wrath against the day of God's wrath?

Furthermore, is it spiritual preparedness or presumption to simply assume a favored status before God? Ought we not care enough to invest the time to genuinely study Scripture? To understand the Bible's explanation of positional vs. conditional righteousness? To learn to differentiate between different levels of righteousness, in regards to the kind of corporate and personal sanctification the Jesus of Scripture requires?

The final list below represents seven simple yet all but miraculous steps in learning to Walk In The Spirit. Becoming spiritually disciplined enough to keep our WITS about us, while seeking happiness through a soldier's joy, recognizing we are all living in a cosmic war zone.

1. **Accurately understand God's Word:** **Discerning** spiritual truth from God's **written** and **spoken word**. Learning to know *Who* and *Where* we are.
2. **Compellingly communicate the Times and Seasons:** Knowing *When* we are and what *God is doing*. Caring enough to develop skills **in hope** of engaging others in thought and conversation, **prayer** and **sanctification**.
3. **Clearly hear the Lord's voice:** Growth in the ability to speak **Holy Spirit**, by **honestly** and **humbly** studying Scripture and being studied by it. As well as **practicing** and developing **spiritual sensitivity**. Responding appropriately to all the above.
4. **Recover the miraculous Fruit and Gifts of the Holy Spirit:** Entering into the long avoided crucible of **James 4's Prayer of Anguish**, in hopes of exiting with James 5's **spiritual power**. Particularly by regaining the **gift of healing the sick** and **signs and wonders**, trademarks of **Biblical Christianity** and the Kingdom's **Children's bread**.
5. **Be "filled with all the fullness of God":** Increasingly entering **God's Rest** while transforming into an entirely **New Creation**. The very purpose and principal mandate of **Biblical Christianity**.
6. **Daily impart and demonstrate all the above:** For the sake of **family** and friends, neighbors and even enemies, often harassed and enslaved by **temptation** and **deception**, **entitlement** and **sin**. All the more as the **times and seasons** quickly deteriorate and **"you see the Day approaching."** Understanding Earth is a **besieged planet**, investing our time, talent and treasure wresting humanity from the grip of **Heaven's angelic rebellion**. An insurrection that, having marred the **history of eternity**, has and continues to **reshape our own**. Through **Bible study** and **strategic prayer**, **radical discipleship** and **disciplined sacrifice**, donning the full the **armor of God**. Understanding we **"wrestle not with flesh and blood"** when struggling to rescue others from **Satan's wisdom** and **demonic resistance**, who as **"the god of this world"** holds mankind **"captive to do his will."** Inside and outside of **modern Churchianity**.
7. **RTDMN others to do the same:** Recruiting, Training, Deploying, Monitoring and Nurturing an army of Kingdom citizen soldiers to fight our way through hell to Heaven!

In light of such realities and choices, we do well to not only carefully consider our current plans, but frequently reevaluate them. For the sake of **our own souls** and **those of others**. In regards to both our enjoyment of time spent in this life, and more importantly, eternal **punishment** or **reward**. As Paul directs:

- **"Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith.** Don't drift along taking everything for granted. **Give yourselves regular checkups.** You need firsthand evidence, not mere hearsay, that Jesus Christ is in you. *Test it out. If you fail the test, do something about it.*" 2 Corinthians 3:5 MSG