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Genesis

Chapter 19 - God's Rescue Mission

Who's Saving Who? (vs. 1-11)

Genesis 19:1-11: Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. And he said, “Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant’s house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.” They said however, “No, but we shall spend the night in the square.” Yet he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter; and they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them.” But Lot went

out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him, and said, “Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly. Now behold, I have two daughters who have not had relations with man; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men, inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof.” But they said, “Stand aside.” Furthermore, they said, “This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them.” So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door. But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. They struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway.

Well, we've been in the Old Testament, if you didn't notice. And in the Old Testament, what we're dealing with is the Law, referred to by the Hebrews as the Torah,

which means the Law. Paul will talk about this in Galatians specifically and make reference to the fact that the Law is good because it's a tutor to lead us to Christ. But as he states in Romans, the Law, weak as it is, can't really save. Why does he make the contrast and comparison between the Law and grace? Well, the reason is, because the Law really emphasizes you working somehow into that righteousness. In other words, you doing what you need to do to become righteous. It's your labor, it's your effort that saves you. And so, as you look at the Old Testament, what you see are those that are struggling with this particular issue. How do I save myself? How do I save those that I love and are concerned for? How can I make this happen? And of course, that's what the Law is all about. The Law is about you and the things that you can do.

As we come to this passage, it is full of irony because you have Abraham virtually praying before the Lord, for the lives of those that are in Sodom, specifically for Lot. However, the irony is that before he even starts with his prayer for Lot, the two had already gone down to Sodom

before he had even said anything. So, it really demonstrates that God is the One that saves. And it's actually His thought first, not ours.

The way that it's put in Isaiah 43:11 is this,

"I, even I, am the LORD,
And there is no savior besides Me."

So, He's making it very clear that though you may want to save people, and though you may strive to save people, there's only One who can save, and that's God. I think one of the things that the Old Testament does is it reveals to us the frustration that we oftentimes go through by virtue of seeing ourselves as the savior. And so, as we come to this passage, we see not only Abraham desiring to see somebody saved, and of course God already doing the work, but now in this particular passage we're going to be looking at, what we see is actually Lot trying to save the angels, which is a pretty interesting and once again ironic state of being in which ultimately the angels save him. And so, thus the message, who's saving who, is really what I'm going to be talking about today, and the fact that we try so hard to save those that we're concerned

about. And I think fundamentally we're all kind of stuck in the Old Testament in the sense that we feel like we're the salvation of people.

When you look at the different ones, and as we've been looking specifically at the life of Abraham, what we have seen at the very beginning is that Abraham has tried to work through the things that he thought was best in order to save people. In fact, at the very calling of Abraham in Genesis 12, in which immediately he has to deal with a famine that comes into the land. And how do you do that? Well, use strategy, right? You go down to Egypt. That's a smart thing to do. And of course, what we see is that when man tries to save by virtue of strategy or he tries to save by virtue of force, it never turns out well. And it's man's way of trying to make things happen, seeing himself in the position of salvation. Even when you consider that Abraham was trying to work in the realm of manipulation when you were dealing with his wife and misrepresentation, you find the compromise of truth in the midst of it. Every time man tries to do that which is what he believes salvation, you find compromise coming

into play. This is true whether it's Abraham, it was true with Moses. How do you save a guy that's being mistreated? Well, you kill the other guy. I mean, that's the way it works. Of course, ultimately what it did was it brought greater problems in Egypt at that particular time, and literally, Moses has to take a 40-year sabbatical. So, He kind of puts him on the shelf for 40 years because of that. And what we see is, that's man trying to save. And that's man trying to work out things on his own. You see that with David. Probably, one of the biggest examples of this is Peter, as he tries to save God by cutting off a guard's ear. But the only thing that he does, if you think about it, is he brings reproach to his testimony. He brings reproach to the message. And so, here man tries to go into the realm of salvation, and he puts his own life at risk. He stirs up trouble. Quite frankly, he hurts other people. And Abraham actually puts his wife in jeopardy by virtue of him trying to figure out things. And if you think about it, with the whole Hagar-Sarah issue, he divided the household and it causes all kinds of problems. So, there's enough information in the Old Testament that fundamentally says you don't want to try that "saving"

stuff. Now, after saying all that, it's clear, according to Proverbs 24, that God is not calling upon us to do nothing. In other words, when there's an issue where we can see something, and it's as Proverbs 3:27 says, when it's within our power to do something, then God says, "You can't say you didn't see it." And there are times that God actually tells us, "You need to do something about this." In fact, He's placed us there to do that. It's not a do-nothing faith. However, the problem comes when we presumptuously see ourselves as the answer to salvation. Now, I know it's probably, in your minds, maybe semantics that we're dealing with here, but there is a strong line. And the line comes into play when we actually see ourselves as the "savior." And we begin thinking that it's all up to us. I mean, there will be times where God gives us opportunity to do things, and He says, "You can't renege on the opportunity." Yet we're not the Savior. So, it's in those times that we find ourselves doing the wrong things. And the biggest problem in all of this is that, quite frankly, we don't know exactly how to save. I mean, somebody needs a particular thing and needs to be rescued in a certain way; we might come in from a particular angle that would

actually bring more harm to that person. I oftentimes think of Jehoshaphat, where he's kind of, through nepotism, trying to save Ahab and the family. And the sage comes up to him and says, "Why are you bringing all these problems upon yourself, going against God, helping the wicked?" And I think sometimes, under the guise of "we're trying to help," we find ourselves causing more problems, causing more hurt, and actually hurting the person that we're trying to help rather than helping. So, not only do we not know how to help, but quite frankly, we're not the ultimate answer to all their needs. And so, when we save it's only temporary, it is not a continual fix. So, ultimately, we want to do that which will literally help them.

Once again, to preface all of this as well, there's nothing wrong with feeling responsible. There's nothing wrong with caring for the welfare of others. There's nothing wrong with wanting to help. There's nothing wrong with being willing to give of yourself. Nothing wrong with serving. There's nothing wrong with seeking to protect those we love and respect from trials. There's nothing

wrong with that. However, when we see ourselves as the answer to these problems, we begin to step into realms that were never ours to step into. And so, as we look at this passage, what we're going to see is Lot trying to fix problems. At this juncture, at the beginning of Chapter 19, he doesn't realize he's the one that needs to be saved. But he's the one that needs to be saved. Now, when the angels begin to approach him, he perceives that they need to be saved. And that's the irony of the passage.

So, we pick up in Genesis 19:1. Now, and picking up in this verse, it actually is a continuation from Genesis 18:22. So, let's go back to Genesis 18:22.

It says,

(Genesis 18:22) “Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the LORD.”

And once again, this is where Abraham goes into his prayer before the Lord in some way, perhaps to rescue Lot. And of course, God has already sent the two ahead of him.

We then pick up in Genesis 19:1,

“Now the two angels...”

Now, the identification of these two men becomes known to us as we read this narrative.

“Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom...”

Now, that's a key phrase and it will actually help us understand what's going on. Because of the culture, because of that time, sitting at the gate means something completely different than somebody just relaxing and enjoying the view. It is somebody that is there as a judge and will oftentimes be there for the purpose of adjudicating. We know, according to Proverbs 1, that the gate is a place of adjudication. We know that, according to Isaiah 29:21, it speaks of those who adjudicate at the gate, and by the time you read in Genesis 34:20, that actually becomes a tradition that you see. It's the place where the elders meet, they come together, the people that are judges come together. They make decisions, which makes a lot of sense because if you figure, the decision is, “Do I let these people in or not?” And so, the

gate is kind of that metaphor for making a decision about what is right and what is wrong, the people that are acceptable, the people that aren't. And it kind of had established that kind of thought process. So, what we understand is that Lot in some way is adjudicating at the gate. He's making judgment calls.

The reason why I want to emphasize this is that by the time those guys come to try to break in the door, if you'll look with me a little bit further, it says,

(Genesis 19:9) “But they said, “Stand aside.” Furthermore, they said, “This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge...”

Well, that's true. And you might say, “Well, how did he get that position?” Because his uncle saved the city! So, it's not as much that he was necessarily liked by the people, but he became somebody as Abraham came and rescued all of Sodom and began to open the door for a particular position. And there he is sitting at the gate. And when Lot sees these men coming, he makes a decision. And the decision is that these are ones worth saving.

So, as the text goes on, it reads that he was at the gate of Sodom,

“... When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.”

Which tells us that Lot has not lost his sense of decorum. We saw the same thing with Abraham. What we will see is the people of Sodom do not think this way. So, we have an individual that is at the gate. Probably a lot of people don't think that he should be there because he's probably making just decisions.

We're actually going to turn to a passage in the New Testament that makes reference to Lot, and that's in 2 Peter 2. In 2 Peter 2, it actually calls Lot “righteous Lot”. Well, that particular term is not really talking as much about his righteousness as it is talking about his position as judge. And so, as the passage talks about, here is a person that at least has a sense of right and wrong, a sense of decorum, cares about strangers, the necessity to take care of them.

And so, he turns to them and says in verse 2,

(Genesis 19:2) “And he said, “Now behold, my lords...”

Once again, a title of respect, not a sense of understanding who they are.

“... please turn aside into your servant’s house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.” They said however, “No, but we shall spend the night in the square.””

“In the middle of the street and abroad.” He's going, “You can't do that!” You can hear panic in his voice. You can hear all of this. Why? Because he knows exactly what the city is like. Now, what we have is somebody making decisions out of all kinds of different reasons. And we all make decisions out of all kinds of different reasons. And we perceive that we have the reason why this person needs to be saved. But just remember that there's a lot of baggage that you have in your mind that causes you to make the decisions that you make. For instance, in Lot's mind, I'm sure there's issues of regret. I'm sure there's issues of guilt. I'm sure there's issues that he's in a place that is causing harm to his family. And yet, here he sits. He knows he shouldn't be here. Scripture tells us there in

2 Peter 2, that his soul was being tormented. So, we know that he knows that he shouldn't be here. And by virtue of the way that he responds to these men, he goes, "No, don't go in the streets. Come in my house." And you can feel him alluring, "I'll wash your feet. I'll give you a big meal. We'll take care of you, then you can go." And that sense of, "And you need to go. You need to get out of here," is there with him.

(Genesis 19:3) "Yet he urged them strongly..."

Because at this juncture they said, "No, we're going to go in the courtyard." And he says, "You've got to, you've got to."

"... so they turned aside to him..."

This is a very interesting point that God is acquiescing in some ways to that cry. It's sort of like that picture in the Gospel of Luke where Christ talks about the widow that continues to go before the judge. The judge finally goes, "Okay," so that you quit knocking. And that doesn't mean that God wears down, but it means that God is looking for those that will be consistent and desire. Ultimately, that passage goes on to say in the Gospel of Luke, "When

Christ comes, will He find faith on the earth?" And what he's talking about is that continuance. You know, "I'm going to trust God. I'm going to believe Him. He's going to be the source of salvation." So, in this particular context, what you see is a desire to rescue, and God, I think oftentimes, goes, "It's a good desire." And He lets us do things. But in the process of us doing the things that we do, we're going to find ourselves jeopardizing ourselves. There are so many in Scripture that God doesn't condemn, but He doesn't condone. And I think sometimes we think of it, "Well, that's a green light. I mean, if He's not saying I can't do it." Oftentimes, it's God allowing us to see the ramifications of our own decisions, but He's still doing it in the realm of safety. And so, just to remind you, I've oftentimes thought of the fact that if your kids are in your house and they're going to rebel, it's better to rebel in your house than outside your house. So, when they get old, there's nothing you can do about that. But if they're going to rebel in your house, that's a good thing, because we can deal with that. And it's kind of in the safety net of the home. Once they're out of the home, guess what? We're not parenting anymore.

But in this passage, he begs them,

“Yet he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread...”

It's kind of a meal made in haste; probably made reference to that.

“... and they ate.

(Genesis 19:4) Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter.”

It can literally be translated, “from one end to the other.” And it shows a bold and insolent behavior that obviously, it's not the welcoming committee that's come in. There is actually a name for what's actually happening here, and I don't want to give it to you because I don't want it to be in your head. But what's actually happening here is an education process. And so, the older are educating the younger how to do things that are inappropriate, we'll put it that way. And believe it or not, that's actually happening in other countries, even today. So, what you

have is the text, “both young and old.” And Scripture is saying there's a teaching process that's going on in what they're doing in the text, from all over the place.

And it kind of reminds you, when you went through that thing in Chapter 18 and Lot goes, “If there's only 50, if there's only 45, if there's only 40,” you come to this text and God goes, “They're all wicked, from one side to the other. They're all wicked.”

(Genesis 19:5) “and they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? ...”

How they got word of it, how they knew, I don't know. People were probably there at the gate, as well as Lot.

“... Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them.”

(Genesis 19:6) But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him.”

Now, what is Lot thinking? “I'm going to save them.” That's what he's thinking. “They'll listen to me.” I mean, if you think about it, Abraham would use a strategy, he could use force, he will sometimes use manipulation, but

in this, he's going to try to use diplomacy. And I've seen people try to use diplomacy, but the only thing that man's diplomacy will ultimately do is compromise. And that's what's going to happen within the passage.

“But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him,

(Genesis 19:7) and said, “Please, my brothers...”

And I feel a little uncomfortable that he's actually calling them “my brothers” because he's actually making reference to the fact that “I'm one of you.”

“...Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly.”

He sees himself as somebody that maybe can save these people.

(Genesis 19:8) “Now behold, I have two daughters...”

Oh, there's the compromise. Not only is his morality going to wane, but now he's going to jeopardize the welfare of his family. I've found an interesting phenomena of people that will oftentimes minister to other people is that they will often sacrifice their own household for their ministry. And what I mean by that is that it's often a lot easier to

minister to other people than it is your own household. And I'm going to tell you the reason why. Because in your household, people aren't too thankful. They take you for granted. They expect certain things from you. And because of that, there's not the affirmation that you would normally get with the strangers. You do something nice for a stranger and strangers go, "You're such a nice person. Wow, I'm just amazed at how wonderful you are." And you're going, "Anything else I can do for you?" And we're just simply drawn by that. But what's interesting is that he has no problem throwing his daughters under the bus and using them to somehow help him save these angels.

"Now behold, I have two daughters who have not had relations with man..."

Let me just say this, too. Let me just stop here. Once again, I cheated and read ahead. But as you read a little bit further ahead, you'll find out that they were engaged.

"... please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men,

inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof.””

“And I'm ministering.” It's bizarre, isn't it?

(Genesis 19:9) “But they said, “Stand aside.” ...”

Oh, you mean people don't listen to your reasoning? Your diplomacy isn't saving anybody? I mean, I'm going to approach this, “Please, don't do this. You're acting terribly. Don't do that.” That's going to help. He's just going to get them mad.

“But they said, “Stand aside.” Furthermore, they said, “This one came in as an alien...”

Of course, we're now beginning to feel what they've been feeling all along, “What are you doing at the gate? You don't even belong there. The only reason you're there is because of your uncle.”

“... and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them.” ...”

Okay, so that didn't turn out well.

“... So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door.”

Now, watch how it ends with verses 10 and 11.

(Genesis 19:10) “But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door.

(Genesis 19:11) They struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway.”

You read, whether it's Isaiah or Chronicles or Kings, of that particular issue with Hezekiah and the Assyrian army just literally surrounding Judea. And God just sends one angel; 185,000 are dead. One angel. It's bizarre how we can perceive ourselves to be the savior, and end up finding that we're the ones that are going to be saved out of this mess that we've dug for ourselves. And so many times, in the venture of us trying to save people, we find ourselves in hot water. We don't understand, “Well, why is this happening? Why is this stirred up? Why are the problems now multiplying?” And the answer is, because you tried to do the saving instead of believing that God is saving. It might surprise you, but God is really very proactive in saving. And He knows who needs to be saved

and who doesn't. Now, once again, that doesn't mean that we do nothing. However, when we go into realms that we're never meant to go into, oftentimes, as Proverbs says, it's not within your power to do this, then that's where problems begin to ensue.

And just as a reminder, if you'll turn with me to 2 Peter 2, which we've already made reference to it a couple of times; one of the points that is repeated in this second chapter is the Lord knows how to save. That's good to know, isn't it? I thought He forgot how to save. You know, we all have concerns. It's natural to have fears and concerns for ourselves and for others. I was looking at an article by Chapman University about the fears that people have. It's surprising. You want to know what the number one fear that people have? Number one fear that people have is corruption of government officials. Number one fear, that's bizarre. Number 2 is "that the people I love become seriously ill or die." Number 3, high medical bills. Having enough money for bills in the future were some of the ones that were listed, which I thought were very interesting. When you consider these particular issues,

whether it's corruption of the government or people that I love becoming seriously ill, once again, I think we kind of jump on the boat and try to be the savior. We're going to be the answer to the government issues. We're going to be the answer to the health issues of those that we love. And we begin to go into a realm that was never meant to be ours. Having enough money, obviously you need to work hard with your hands and not be in any need, but ultimately that's not in your hands. You need to work hard as unto the Lord, but you can push it to the fact of actually being pushy to perhaps the people that you work for and demanding raises so that you can take care of your family. And God goes, "That's not yours. That's Mine. You do your work as unto Me." And that's what we need to do.

Young people have fears. One of the main fears of young people is being left out. Sounds familiar. Being a disappointment. Failing at something very important. Being misunderstood or judged by others and being made fun of or bullied by others. Now, once again, I've seen parents come into the mix and go, "Well, I don't want my

kid to be disappointed. I don't want him to fail. I don't want him to be misunderstood or judged. I don't want my kids to be made fun of." And they begin to stick their life into this. There's nothing wrong with, once again, wanting to protect. There's nothing wrong with caring for somebody. But are you really the one that can save them from this?

In 2 Peter, it says this in Chapter 2, there are going to be many false prophets, and they're going to malign, and they're going to exploit you in their greed. But one thing that Peter wanted everybody to know, and if you drop on down to verse 4, it says this,

(2 Peter 2:4) "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;

(2 Peter 2:5) and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;

(2 Peter 2:6) and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes,

having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter;

(2 Peter 2:7) and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men

(2 Peter 2:8) (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, ...”

That judge of doing what is right, wanting to do what is right, even sitting at the gates trying to make good decisions to save people from this kind of behavior.

“... while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds).”

The conclusion is in verse 9,

(2 Peter 2:9) “then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment.”

In other words, God knows how to save. And that's a great example that is given to us in Genesis that here Lot is thinking that he has to know how to save and God goes, “I sent these men not for you to save, but to save you.

And I'm the Savior." And it's just a good reminder all the way around.

And it kind of brings us back to 2 Peter 1, where we're reminded in verse 2, that grace and peace is multiplied to us in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ.

Watch verse 3,

(2 Peter 1:3) "seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything..."

Okay. So, I just want to make sure we're all on the same page here. Everything.

"... everything pertaining to life..."

Okay. So, that kind of covers all of my life.

"... everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory..."

So, obviously everything is taken care of in regard to life. That means that disappointments, failures, being made fun of, God has actually got that one?

The way Paul puts it in Colossians 1:28 is,

(Colossians 1:28) "We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ."

God says, "I'm going to supply all your needs according to My riches." All your needs? You think He's just talking about money? God's not slow about His promise. He's not apathetic. He's not late in what He's doing. There's some fundamental things that you and I need to do, though, in order for that salvation to come. I mean, one thing is clear. We need not to be in a horrific place where we know that evil is literally ruling. 2 Corinthians 6 says, "Come out from among them." You read it in Revelation 18 where he talks about the city of Babylon. Divorce yourself from the world. The problem with Lot is he's at the wrong place. How is salvation going to come? They've got to get him out of there. You know? I mean, you could sit all day long in the middle of Sodom going, "Oh Lord, save us, oh Lord, save us, oh Lord, save us." God's saying, "Get out, get out, get out, get out." "Why am I not being saved?" There are things that we know that we're doing that are wrong. God goes, "Get out. Don't be in that." And

you can feel Him tugging at you. You can feel Him pulling. “Stop. Get away from that. Get away from that influence.” You know, people tell me, “I find myself getting mad every time I'm watching the news.” Get out. Turn it off. Such a simple solution. Beyond the point that we need to point to God as the Savior, believing that He's the one that's going to do the salvation.

One of the most wonderful familiar passages there in Luke 15 is that the good shepherd leaves the 99, he goes and gets the 1. You go, “Well, God's just not interested in the 1.” He just told you He was.

And there's an interesting passage, if you look with me, in John 10, where you see the good shepherd in this particular text. And in John 10, He'll use the phrase, “My sheep hear My voice,” right? “And they come.”

It says in John 10:4, as it gives the analogy,

“When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.”

(John 10:5) A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”

(John 10:14) “I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me.”

Now, watch verse 16. Here again. Proactive.

(John 10:16) “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also...”

Does that sound like God is just passively going, “Que sera sera”? It sounds like He's going to get them. I mean, it's really no different than those two angels going down to Sodom. I mean, and they're shutting the door, they're pulling him in. It kind of reminds you of that passage in Jude, snatching some out of the fire, hating even the clothes that they're wearing. You realize that certainly, it is God. And it's good to know that He knows what we need.

What's interesting about this particular verse, and I just wanted to call attention to it, is when He states in verse 16,

“I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also...”

And in the text, He actually tells us how He does it. What does He say? Watch.

“... and they will hear My voice...”

You know what He's saying? He's saying, “I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to bring them into earshot of my voice.” I get this continually from the people that visit us. My first question I always ask them is, “What brought you here?” And the stories differ, but somehow God brought them into earshot of hearing His voice. And I think that's the most important thing that we could ever do. Parents try to protect their kids, but you bring them in earshot of the voice of God, God will save them. And when God saves them, you don't have to follow them around with an umbrella. Now, they may still get a cold, but God is ultimately going to rescue them, and it will be forever. And you know, there's nothing better. Robinson and Molly [missionaries in India], when I was over there a number of times, I said, “So, when people make a decision and you know that their life is in jeopardy,

especially when they get baptized,” because the Muslims really hold back until somebody gets baptized, and when they get baptized, then they try to destroy the church or kill the people that are there. And I said, “Aren’t you concerned?” And they say, “No. Once they’re the Lord’s, they’re the Lord’s, and the Lord protects them.” I thought, “Wow, that’s the way we ought to think.” The worst thing we could do is try to save them and not... So, here we are in our house and we’re shutting the door. You don’t think they can break down the door? But if God saves, He can just strike them all blind and He’ll rescue them. He’ll bring them in earshot.

“... and they will become one flock with one shepherd.”

Just a reminder, if you drop on down in John 10:27,

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

(John 10:28) and I give eternal life to them...”

I’d say that’s a continuous fix.

“... and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.”

Do you actually believe that? I mean, I always feel that I can let go when I've pointed them to God. Up to that point, I'm still trying to juggle everything and getting frustrated. And how good it is to know that, like Isaiah 46:10 says, God is the one that declared the end from the beginning. So, does Lot even know that Sodom is about to burn? He has no idea what's about to happen. Does he even know what's going on in all of this? No. But God's saving him literally in spite of himself.

When you go a little bit further in the Gospel of John, if you look with me in Chapter 15, we'll just close with this text; Jesus turns to His disciples, and He lets them know that it's not going to be an easy road. People aren't going to love them. Shock of all shocks. "They crucified Me. They're going to crucify Me; they're going to hate you."

He states this,

(John 15:18) "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.

(John 15:19) If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I

chose you out of the world, because of this the world
hates you.”

He is literally preparing them for the problems that come. Now, once again, as maybe parents or loved ones, we would try to shelter the people that we care for from all hatred. But that's not going to work, is it? Because hatred's all around us. How about saving their soul, and God will protect them from the hatred?

The next chapter goes into this in verse 1,

(John 16:1) “These things I have spoken to you so that you
may be kept from stumbling.”

(John 16:2) “They will make you outcasts from the
synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills
you to think that he is offering service to God.”

(John 16:3) “These things they will do because they have
not known the Father or Me.”

(John 16:4) “But these things I have spoken to you, so that
when their hour comes, you may remember that I told
you of them.”

What is He saying? He's saying, "I know what's going to happen. I'm preparing you for it. I'm not saying it's going to be easy. In fact, I say it's going to get more difficult. But I'm going to take care of you. And one of the ways you know I'm going to take care of you is that it's going to happen just like I said. And when it begins to happen just like I said, you're going to go, 'He said it was going to happen this way.'" We must be in the will of God.

I mean, literally, in the text, it says in verse 2,

"They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God."

And I could just imagine, had Christ not said what He said, somebody would have been coming after them in the name of God, and they would have thought, "I'm doing something wrong." But now they're going, "I'm right on target." And God is saving them eternally. The best thing you can do is get out of the things that are wrong, the best thing you can do is point to the Savior; bring them in earshot of the voice. He'll save them.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness to us and the realization that You're the Savior. There's no One besides You. And that means me too. Lord, I realize that the greatest thing, the best thing that I could ever do for those that I love for myself is to draw near to You, to trust in You, to believe that You are the One that saves.

Your head's bowed and your eyes closed. I don't know what your fears are. I don't know what you're working through. I don't know what you're distressed about. There's a lot to be distressed about. But I can tell you this, it doesn't matter. Because you have a God that already knows what's going to happen, and He's already prepared a way for you to be saved. So, stop listening to yourself. You feel His tug? He's rescuing you. And He's saying, "Trust Me."