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Genesis

Chapter 19 - God's Rescue Mission

Who's Watching the Family? (vs. 12-16)

Genesis 19:12-16: Then the two men said to Lot, “Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring them out of the place; for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.” Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, “Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city.” But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting. When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city.” But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city.

Truly, all Scripture is God-breathed. And it's profitable for correction, for reproof, for training in righteousness. In other words, Scripture is applicable to your life. It benefits you. You read the Old Testament, I oftentimes hear people say, "I don't really understand how that's applicable to me." And yet, as I read passages such as this with the narrative and the circumstances that surround it, the events that are recorded within the passage, I'm amazed at how God begins to teach me. And I would trust as we go through this that you begin to see the wonderful lessons that God is teaching all of us as God begins to demonstrate His efficacy in our lives through Scripture.

This passage with Sodom and Gomorrah, it's a very familiar passage. People have oftentimes talked about it. Sodom and Gomorrah are almost household names, so we know that people know what you're talking about when you make reference to it. What's interesting is it starts back in Chapter 18 in which the Lord Himself comes and visits Abraham, first to bring good news and then to

protect those that are His. I was thinking about this whole event of Sodom and Gomorrah, and there would really be no need for the Lord to come down to destroy a city. There's no need, because fire and brimstone come down from the heavens. It's going to come down and do the work itself. The purpose of Him coming down was to save. And so, as He comes to Abraham, we hear the intercessory prayer of Abraham asking God, "If there are just 50, if there are just 45, if there are just 40," as he goes down the list, ultimately going down to 10. We realize that God is certainly approachable, but more than that, it was God's idea to come and save. And so, even before the intercessory prayer of Abraham, God is doing a work of salvation. It's His idea. Salvation is His idea. Strangely enough, we get things confused, and we begin to think of ourselves as being the source of salvation. And as we come into Chapter 19, we see Lot actually trying to save the angels, which is a bizarre thought. Who's saving who? And they're coming down to clearly give salvation to him. Nevertheless, he perceives on the onset that he has to protect them from the evil. What the

passage begins to show us in a very ironic way is that we tend to focus on the wrong things, and we tend to perceive that doing good is that which we perceive to be good. We have our own thoughts about actually helping, and we are so far off that we don't even know we're far off.

When I think of this particular passage, I think of the responsibility of the head of the household, and Lot within the text is the head of the household. Lot should have been doing a lot of things, and we're going to be talking about those things that he should have been doing. However, he's neglected the very things that have been the most important, and because of that, he finds himself and his family in dire straits. It is that which we begin to see. I remember a saying given to me a long time ago, and that is, "A failure is one who is a success in all the wrong things." And what we see within this passage is Lot being a success in all the wrong things.

When you think about parenting, you oftentimes think about, "Well, I have a responsibility to give my kid every opportunity that they deserve, and I have a responsibility

to make sure that they have enough money when they grow up, and I have an opportunity to make sure that we move next to the right schools.” So, it's all about positioning yourself and giving opportunities. And these kind of things the parents begin to focus on, but they're focusing on the wrong things. And the very things that we desire to see accomplished in the lives of our children, such as happiness, “I just want my kid to be happy,” or just to have all the opportunities that we feel are necessary for the child to thrive, are the very things that will oftentimes bring sorrow and pain in their lives. So, as we come to this passage, we initially see, of course, Lot seeing things upside down, seeing himself as a savior.

And as we come to the text that we're looking at in verse 12, we see the angels finally coming before him and saying, “You've got to get out of here.” Now, that in and of itself is kind of a bizarre statement because you would think that right away when Lot had gone into Sodom and Gomorrah, he would have seen that this is not a good place to live. Once again, obviously seen as a place of great opportunity. And what we know, according to

earlier passages, that at one time Sodom and Gomorrah was perceived as like paradise. So, boy, it sure looked like a nice place to live. It sure looked like a place of great opportunity. But he was looking at all the wrong things. Because had he looked at the morals and the ethics, of those that were living there, he would have said, "This is a horrible place to live. We shouldn't be here. We need to get out of here." So, he finds himself in a place where he shouldn't be. And of course, as the passage begins to describe Sodom and Gomorrah, it's a wicked place. And the outcry of the wickedness is so great that it brings God down. Now, when it's talking about the outcry, it's talking about the outcry of misery. And once again, God is coming to save. And so, how do you save? Well, one of the ways that you save is you destroy the wicked because they're hounding and bringing great trials and tribulation upon those that want to do the right thing.

It's hard for us to believe that there would be so many wicked people on the face of the earth as in the days of Noah. That's hard to believe, isn't it? Nevertheless, it says that every thought of man's mind, every intent that he

had, was only evil continually. In other words, he was only thinking about destroying, hurting, bringing hurt to people around him all the time. What a horrible place to live. It is important to know that all the way through these different stages, certain things were known by these individuals. In other words, before the flood, they were well acquainted with the idea that there was a garden of Eden. In fact, before the flood, the angel was still standing before the garden of Eden protecting it. So, they knew that there was a paradise. They knew that there was the goodness of God. They knew there was a time in which God was gracious and that man had rejected that. Nevertheless, every intent of man's thoughts and heart was wicked and evil continually. So, it wasn't like God didn't have and didn't bring a witness before them. The same thing is true with the flood. This isn't that long after the flood. So, people are very well acquainted with the flood and the things that happened, and yet Sodom and Gomorrah still exist. I think the thought is that, well, if people just saw the goodness of God, they would not go on sinning. Well, that's not true. And if they saw just the evil that happened and the destruction that would ensue

because of that, then they would clearly do the right thing. That's not true.

So, Sodom and Gomorrah begins to reveal to us the wickedness of man. And as we see the evil pounding on the doors of Lot and desiring to do things that are clearly unmentionable, we now come to verse 12, in which the men now have been revealed to us in Genesis 19:1, as the two angels.

It reads this way in verse 12,

(Genesis 19:12) “Then the two men said to Lot, “Whom else have you here? ...””

Now, once again, that's kind of a bizarre question to me, because at this particular juncture, I would think that Lot would already be thinking in terms of saving his family.

And there are little nuances within the passage that I want to make note of, and that is, those that are there, the two angels begin to mention certain ones.

And if you look in the passage,

(Genesis 19:12) “... A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring them out of the place.”

Did you notice the list? There's somebody missing. His wife. His wife is missing. Now, they're going to mention his wife later, and that'll be the next day; which tells me that in company, she's not there. They would have mentioned her first, “Where is your wife?” So, they mentioned these individuals that he is responsible for. He's the head of the house, it's his home, and yet, where are they? “You need to go talk to them.” That it would even be something that they would have to bring up is just, well, beyond comprehension.

If you look at verse 13,

(Genesis 19:13) “For we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry...”

Once again, the emphasis upon this is the misery that is being afflicted upon the poor.

“... has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.”

(Genesis 19:14) Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, "Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city." But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting."

Making sport. It's just a joke. You know, I think one of the things that Scripture is making reference to is the fact that if we're not living the kind of life that is credible to those around us, when the time comes that we actually do have to warn them, they're not going to take us seriously; because we haven't been taking God seriously throughout. We're cavalier in the way that we handle things, and we're not really committed in the faith that we have. We've been more concerned with teaching them things about the world rather than teaching them things about our faith, and we've been too focused on caring for ourselves than caring for others. We have no credible reference in our demeanor because we have not been following the Lord. And so, when you finally take a stand, when it's finally necessary to take the stand, nobody believes you because you haven't been acting in an honorable way.

I consider the different ones that were heads of houses throughout the Old Testament; one of the ones, of course, that we first read about is Adam. And it seems as if he was so involved with the pleasures of the garden that he neglected his own wife and her protection. In fact, ultimately, as the text goes on to read, he throws her under the bus.

Abraham will be too focused on the lineage and the progeny to actually care for the feelings of his wife. And he'll neglect those feelings as well as he will neglect the things that were best for her and good for her. Just simply because he's focused on something else.

The same thing will happen basically with Jacob. Jacob will be so intent on avoiding the frustrating things of his life, i.e. Laban, his father-in-law, and not only Laban his father-in-law, but Esau, his brother, who's coming to kill him. He's so focused on dodging the bullet, that he won't teach his kids morals. And there will be a lot of problems that ensue because of that. What Scripture begins to reveal to us is that we get so focused on so many things that we neglect the weightier things.

When you come into 1 Samuel, Eli the priest is so lazy and so lethargic and so apathetic about his own kids that they are running riot while he's being a priest and he just totally neglects them. And Samuel will do the same thing. It's so bizarre when you read about these individuals. In fact, Samuel will turn to his sons and say, "You shouldn't be doing this stuff." And of course, nothing's done. I think oftentimes as a parent, we're so afraid to be the bad guy and to be looked at in that vein that we begin to pull back where we should take strong stands.

David will find and wrestle with the same thing. We know one of the things that David wrestles with is the desire to be liked. He wanted to be liked by his parents. He wanted to be liked by Saul. And ultimately, God will bring him to the point of him only focusing on Himself. His wife will neglect him. Saul will neglect him. All will neglect him. But God says, "I'm here." And David will ultimately do that. However, in the process of his desire to be liked, even by his children, he will neglect to correct them when they need to be corrected. And of course, you know that he has to live not only with Amnon, his son, who does

something horrific, but then Absalom, his son, who wants to kill him.

Scripture is telling us that we get focused on the wrong things, and because we get focused on the wrong things, we put not only ourselves in jeopardy, but our family in jeopardy. And that's really what this passage is about. It's about putting your family in jeopardy. Just simply because you think you're doing the right things, but quite frankly, you're a success in all the wrong things. And this is going to bring great harm to you and your family.

“We're about to destroy this place. Get them out.” So, Lot goes out, he goes to his sons-in-law. They just can't believe him. There hasn't been a credible lifestyle up to this point.

And verse 15 reads,

(Genesis 19:15) “When morning dawned...”

We've been going through the whole night. Everybody's still there.

“When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying,
“Up...””

Now, the wife must be present.

“... take your wife...”

It's interesting in the Gospel of Luke, as he begins to record the different incidences, whether it's Noah or Sodom and Gomorrah, he actually uses this phrase, one of the shortest verses of all Scripture, “Remember Lot's wife.” And of course, that picture is her turning around because she was tied to Sodom and Gomorrah. Where was Lot when she began to have this love affair with the city of Sodom? What did he say? Was he really encouraging her to follow the Lord with all of her heart?

“When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city.””

Now, watch verse 16, a key text.

(Genesis 19:16) “But he hesitated...”

It's in the reflexive, which seems to convey that he was unwilling to turn away from the things that were there.

He delayed. He lingered. The heart begins to be revealed in this particular situation.

“But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand...”

They're actually having to drag him out. Not only is he not saving his family, they're having to drag him out because he's so attached to the things of this city.

“... So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters...”

Why did they drag him out? I think it's very interesting. This is not the evil of God, you know, that there are times when I think parents just have to grab their kids and go, “You're out of here.”

I remember one time that my daughter wanted to go to a party. And I said, “Well, what are they going to be doing at the party?” And “Oh, dad, it's going to be a great party. There's no problem.” And everything like that. And I said, “Okay, here's the deal. The party starts going awry. You call me. I'll come get you.” She goes, “No, there's not going to be any problems.” I said, “Just call me.” And so, there she is going to the party. And I would say within

about 5 or 10 minutes, I got a call, “Dad, you’ve got to get me out of here. It's going in this direction.” And one of the reasons why we trusted her in that particular scenario is because we believed that we had entrusted and placed within her a sense of right and wrong.

Obviously, Lot had not done that to the point to where he even appeared as jesting before the people when he takes a stand to come to God. And I don't know if he was just internalizing all the things that were right and wrong, but he obviously never seemed to make reference to it in a public way before his family. And in this particular situation, him hesitating and them having to drag him out; if you just look at that from the external, oftentimes taking the stands doesn't look like love. But if you look at the passage, why did the angels do what they did? Because the Lord looked upon them in a compassionate way.

Read the text.

“But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for

the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city.”

The father wouldn't be compassionate. The father wouldn't do the right thing. But God was more compassionate. And He dragged them out.

There are certain things that are being neglected here within the passage. One of the things, if you look with me in Deuteronomy 6, is clear that there wasn't a consistency in the proclamation of God and making the priority a relationship with God the way that it should be. Once again, we want our kids to be happy, right? We want them to be happy. Unfortunately, and just to clarify something to all of us, you can't make people happy. So, even if you're a parent, you can't make your child happy. It's beyond your ability. And here again, it's you focusing on something that you were never called to do and neglecting the very thing that God had called you to do. What has God called you to do?

Well, if you look in Deuteronomy 6, it says this,

(Deuteronomy 6:1) “Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has

commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it,

(Deuteronomy 6:2) so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.”

And I would say, even as that is inferred, successful.

(Deuteronomy 6:3) “O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you...”

That you may have a good life; that your emotions would be good. In other words, doing what God tells you to do will actually give you a happy life.

“... and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

(Deuteronomy 6:4) “Hear, O Israel! ...”

And actually, this particular text is called the great “*šāma*’,” which is “to hear.”

“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

(Deuteronomy 6:5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

Now, we like to park kids at the right place for their education, but have we told them that this is what they need to do? And have they seen in us the love and devotion for God? It's the greatest protection that you could ever give your child.

“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

Tools.

Deu 6:6 “These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.

(Deuteronomy 6:7) You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

(Deuteronomy 6:8) You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.”

Even today, if you go to Jerusalem, you can find those rabbis that are going against the wall, and they have these boxes on their head and they have these boxes on their hand. And what do you think are in the boxes? It's this verse. It's these passages. "You shall bind them on your..." So, of course, you know, a Jew is literal on everything. So, they just take the box and they go, "Okay, now it's working. The box is there." I don't know if somehow, it's going to seep in when it gets a little hot or something like that, but they have it there, and they have it on their hand. The reason why God is telling them to do this is not so they would make little boxes. The reason why God is telling them to do this is He's virtually telling them how the word of God needs to be in their lives. That is to say, everything you do with your hands should be done to please God. Every thought that you have and every facial expression that you present should be God's. For instance, you tell your children, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind." That facial expression betrays what God is wanting. And it really demonstrates that you don't feel that way. So, as the

passage says, this should be obvious by the things that you do and the expressions on your face.

And then in verse 9,

(Deuteronomy 6:9) “You shall write them on the doorposts of your house...”

In other words, your home should be noticed as a home that follows God. It should be obvious to the people in your neighborhood.

And not only that, but “on your gates,” which means in your social gatherings and the decisions that you make. Is that true? Is it that the word of God, is it that your love for God is so obvious that it's seen in all these different areas? Well, it wasn't obvious to the family of Lot. It wasn't obvious to those around him because they thought he was just joking. And it's interesting, by the time you come to the end of Revelation, it says, “Let the wicked continue to do wickedness and let the righteous continue to do righteousness.” The point is that you continue to do what you have been doing, or you are what you have been becoming. And the point is that when it comes down to the end result, when you finally have to make a

decision, you're going to make the decision that you've always made. What is that decision with Lot? Hesitate. He's lived a life of hesitation. He's lived a life which was really fundamentally non-committal. And so, when the time came to commit, he can't, because that's not what he does.

If you look with me in Psalm 1, one of the great famous passages that begin to reveal just really how people are made happy. How are you made happy? Well, once again, Psalm 1:1 starts off, “how blessed,” or as the phrase is, “how happy”. So, do you want happiness? Ok. How does it happen? Well, you go to Sodom and you go to all the opportunities that you... Well, obviously not, because that's not where happiness is fostered. In fact, bad company corrupts good morals, Scripture tells us. So, just because you're giving your child opportunities doesn't mean you're placing them in a place that is good for them.

Well, let's read the text.

(Psalm 1:1) “How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked...”

Is there counsel of the wicked there? People send off their kids to colleges, universities. Okay, what's the counsel there? That's what I'd like to know. What are they teaching? You're sending them to a place that they're teaching opposite of God? You've taken away happiness.

(Psalm 1:1) “How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

(Psalm 1:2) But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.”

Where does happiness come from? You're thinking about what God wants rather than what man says or what you want.

In fact, while we're here, just a little bit further over, Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, if you look with me in Ecclesiastes 2, it actually couldn't get much clearer.

Ecclesiastes 2, and we'll just read the one verse here, (Ecclesiastes 2:26) “For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy...”

Okay, so once again, I just want to clarify this. Where does happiness and where does joy come from? God. You can't fabricate it. You can't cause it to happen. You can't even make yourself joyful. That's why people are always popping antidepressant pills, because they can't get themselves out of something. It's just not within your power. But to the one that focuses on doing and pleasing God, He gives, He implants joy in you. That's what the passage says. I mean, we either believe this stuff or we don't, right?

“For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, while to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and collecting so that he may give to one who is good in God’s sight...”

So, I understand that the sinner is just frustrated. And when we're talking about sinner, we're talking about somebody who is rejecting God, not necessarily talking about somebody that's done something wrong. We've all done something wrong. But what we're talking about is those that have rejected God and not wanted or desired to please Him. That's the great sin. You're going to fail in

many ways, but your desire should always be, “I just want to please Him. I want to put Him first.” And it's in that pursuit that He gives you joy. He gives you happiness. See, the problem is that we've placed our family in the wrong circumstances with the wrong people, and then we sit on the sidelines going, “I hope, I hope, I hope that they have happiness.” And we've done everything wrong to give them that happiness. And we've forgotten that only God can give the happiness. We want to give our kids that surrounding place in which they have opportunities, but we should be surrounding them with those that love the Lord and those that will teach them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In fact, if you look in 2 Corinthians 6, you'll see this emphasized, and probably you can literally parallel this with Psalm 1. 2 Corinthians 6, and once again, we've read this a number of times, actually one of the passages taken from Isaiah 52 as well.

(2 Corinthians 6:14) “Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?”

Why are you in Sodom and Gomorrah? That's an interesting question, isn't it? Why have you pursued it? Why are you there? Why isn't Abraham there? I'd kind of be asking that.

“... what fellowship has light with darkness?

(2 Corinthians 6:15) Or what harmony has Christ with (waste) Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

(2 Corinthians 6:16) Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said,

“I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

(2 Co 6:17) Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST...”

Get out of Sodom and Gomorrah.

“... AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord.

“AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN;
And I will welcome you.

(2 Corinthians 6:18) And I will be a father to you,
And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,”
Says the Lord Almighty.”

It's a sad thing that God has to come in and drag us away from these things. And I think oftentimes the Lord is so gracious that He does that; He begins to tear down the very things that we've placed our hope in because He loves us so much. Because the very things that we've embraced are the very things that are destructive in our life. We want happiness for our kids, but we're going about it all the wrong way. We want stability for them. But the stability that we're seeking is in the financial realm rather than the spiritual realm. If, in fact, we truly believe scripture, it says in Matthew 6.33, if you'll seek first the standards of God, the kingdom of God, the rule of God, then all these things will be added unto you. In other words, that's security. God's going to take care of your kids. We're so concerned with us trying to make it happen that we're actually tearing down the only thing that can bring security in their lives; And that is the favor of God. If you seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, all these

things will be taken care of. I mean, talk about future stability. I don't think there can be anything more stable. And if you look at the kingdom as described by Christ, it's a kingdom of one being humble. And of course, much of what we're teaching our kids is to be superior. It's a kingdom in which the person is to be truthful, the person is to be faithful, the person is to be selfless in the things that they're doing. We're teaching them in Christ to be loving like He is. That's the goal of our instruction according to Paul. Are we doing that? Or are we trying to hit all of the things that are actually undermining the very things that we were hoping for? I mean, Scripture tells us how to provide opportunities for our kids. That's probably surprised you the way that it says, because quite frankly, Proverbs will say, "A man's gift makes room for himself." Well, what he's stating in that passage is that do your work heartily as for the Lord rather than for men. Do it with all your heart. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your heart. The Proverbs goes on to say, He'll place you before kings. Well, the thought is, "I need to move my kid where they have the opportunities." And God says, "No." You concentrate on the gifts that God has

given them and let them do those things for the Lord and God will place them before kings. You could never maneuver your kid before a king, right? You could never place them in the places where they needed to minister, or the impact of their life would be the greatest. You could never do that. But God can do that in a very unique way.

Let me show you a passage in Proverbs 18. And like I said, there are so many lessons that can be learned from this particular scenario in which Lot obviously had failed as a leader, as a father, as a protector of his household. This Proverbs 18 is dealing with seeking your own desire. And leaders, parents, shepherds, we don't have the option to seek our own desire. God has given us responsibilities. And in those responsibilities, we want the best for those that God has given us. When you think about the different passages that make reference to this, Titus 1 actually says to the elder, the deacon, the one that's going to be an overseer within the church, it says, "You need to have children who believe." Now, what the passage is fundamentally saying is that you should be living your life

in such a way that your faith is believable to your kids. That's what it's saying. And look, I've seen kids decide not to follow the Lord, but if you interview them and say, “Do you believe that your parents love the Lord, and do you believe that they are convinced of this?” And they would say, “Yes, my parents are convinced. They love the Lord.” And what it's talking about is that you have lived a credible life to the degree that your kids cannot deny the reality of your faith. They cannot deny that.

The same thing is true when you consider 1 Timothy 3, where it says, “You need to be managers of your own household well.” And what he's talking about, once again, specifically is, as it goes on to say, “thus able to teach,” is you're not going to be able to teach if in fact you haven't presented this truth in front of your family yourself. So, it's not talking about the ability to teach. What it's talking about is the credibility to teach. And it is in that, that you manage your household well, and you live according to Scripture, and you begin to do those things.

Ephesians 6 will say, that, parents, you need to teach and train and actually discipline your children in the nurture

and admonition of the Lord. These are priorities oftentimes that we neglect. And unfortunately, because of that, we have not created a sense of values within our kids. They've seen the values that we've had. They've watched you. They watch the things that you get excited about, the things that your face lights up about. They understand the things that are important to you. And because of that, they've gone after those things. And unfortunately, we've not taught them who to like and who not to like in the sense of friends. Choose your friends carefully. And Scripture will warn you of this. Well, that's fundamentally what Proverbs 18 is about.

It starts off by saying,

(Proverbs 18:1) “He who separates himself seeks his own desire,

He quarrels against all sound wisdom.”

You can't convince him because he's just thinking about himself. Well, in thinking about himself, because of that, he can't choose friends wisely. And why is that true?

Because he's thinking of friends that might benefit him. In other words, “Wow, there's a kid with a lot of money,” or

“There's a kid with a lot of popularity,” “There's a kid that would bring a lot of opportunity.” So, they began to gravitate towards them. Why is that? Because somebody taught them the wrong value system.

So, the passage reads this way, if you look at me in Proverbs 18, and you drop on down a little bit further, (Proverbs 18:23) “The poor man utters supplications, But the rich man answers roughly.”

(Proverbs 18:24) A man of too many friends...”

Well, that would be popularity, wouldn't it be?

“A man of too many friends comes to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

I want you to see how this piggybacks in Chapter 19 as it goes on, and it says this in verse 4,

(Proverbs 19:4) “Wealth adds many friends...”

What is it talking about? Well, it's talking about the fact that you can become popular, and you can have a lot of people that say they like you just because of the things that you possess. But are they good friends? Well, now that goes back into Chapter 18.

And I want you to read this in verse 22,

(Proverbs 18:22) “He who finds a wife finds a good thing...”

Well, why did he throw that in the mix? Because you don't want a wife that marries you because you have money. You want the relationship to be first and then anything else that follows.

It goes on and says this in verse 24,

(Proverbs 18:24) “A man of too many friends comes to ruin,

But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

So, what is it doing? It's doing contrast and comparison. And the contrast and comparison are that, do you want a bunch of friends that could care less about you? Or do you want one that loves you and will always stick with you? Faithful are the wounds of a friend, deceitful are the kisses of an enemy, because people use each other. But the problem is most people don't know how to choose friends, because they've never been taught about what is important. They've never been taught about the heart,

they've never been taught about giving your life for somebody. The things that are of great value have been totally overlooked and we're just focusing on the superficial things which create an inability to be at the right place with the right people. Why are we in Sodom? Why are we having to be dragged out of the city? Why hasn't the dad pulled them out by this point? Interesting questions.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and we ask You to work within our hearts. Lord, we come before You, and we realize that loving You is the greatest thing we could ever do. And how wonderful and how easy it is to love somebody that would lay down His life for us. There's no doubt that You love us more than anybody else. And You

didn't just give us superficial things like silver and gold. You gave us Your blood. And we know that You're someone that we can trust. It is for this reason that we proclaim You. It is for this reason that we share with our family just how valuable this relationship is with You. To withhold these things back are to cause our children and our family to love the wrong things, to be attached to the wrong things, to be drawn away from that which is true.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, what we're asking you to do is reevaluate what you're successful in. Lot was successful, if in fact you perceive that success was placing his family in a marvelous city, a beautiful place, where everything was afforded to him. I mean, after all, Abraham was living in tents, but he was living in a city with great gates, in a place that looked like paradise, affording all the opportunities that could possibly be available at that time. And yet, who really benefited?

These passages are written for our edification. They're to bring our thoughts back to what is really important.