

# Sermon Study Guide

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**THE MAIN THING:** Decisions entrusted to God make the greatest difference in bringing honour and glory to Him!

**PURSUE RELATIONSHIP:** *Opportunities to connect and pray as a group*

1. Who was your favourite Aunt/Uncle? What was special about your relationship with them?
2. When have you not heeded a warning sign? What were the consequences?
3. When have you had to make a difficult decision in your life? What was the outcome?

**PURSUE GOD:** *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

1. Review the decisions that Abram\*\* made in Genesis 12. Which were good decisions? Which were bad?
2. Divide a page into two columns. Write names of Lot and Abram at the head of each column. Read Genesis 13 recording the descriptions and actions of each man.

What do you learn about each man?

Contrast the way the two men are making their decisions.

Does Abram's offer and Lot's response surprise you? Why? Why not?

3. *'While we are free to make choices in life, we are not free from the consequences!'* – Pastor Ashwin  
Contrast some of the continuing consequences that Abram and Lot each experienced. (Genesis 13:14-18 and Genesis 19)
4. What makes Genesis 19:37 an important verse to note?  
(clue: Ruth 1:1-5; 4:13-17)  
How did God redeem the choices that Lot made?

**PURSUE MISSION:** *Seek to be the community of God's people in your community as you live out your calling.*

1. Consider your past life situations. When God was a part of your decision making, what difference did it make?
2. Whom do you most resemble now (Abram/Lot)? Are there steps you need to take to grow more as a Godly decision maker? Reflect on Matthew 6:33.

\*\*Abram's name was changed to Abraham (Genesis 17:5)

## THE WORD (NIV)

### Genesis 13

So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. <sup>2</sup>Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold. <sup>3</sup>From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier <sup>4</sup>and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the LORD. <sup>5</sup>Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. <sup>6</sup>But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. <sup>7</sup>And quarreling arose between Abram's herders and Lot's. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time.

<sup>8</sup>So Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives. <sup>9</sup>Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left." <sup>10</sup>Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) <sup>11</sup>So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: <sup>12</sup>Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. <sup>13</sup>Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD. <sup>14</sup>The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. <sup>15</sup>All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring<sup>[a]</sup> forever. <sup>16</sup>I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. <sup>17</sup>Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you." <sup>18</sup>So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he pitched his tents. There he built an altar to the LORD.

### Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

# Sermon Study Summary

The 20th century philosopher Albert Camus once said "Life is a sum of all your choices." This is true of life - in our education, vocation, our relationships - and more so in regards to our spiritual life. This is most noticeable when contrasting the sum of decisions of two different individuals. And while we are free to make our own choices, we are not free from consequence. In the Bible we see this in the lives of Abraham and Lot.

In Genesis 13, Abraham and Lot decide to part ways, and Abraham gave Lot the choice between the fertile lands of the Jordan and the lands of the Canaan. Lot, looking upon the lush lands of the Jordan, chose this land for his own personal gains - not out of humility or respect for Abraham. After parting their separate ways, God showed Abraham the land about him and promised it to him and his offspring as a reward for his faith and obedience.

While at first it seems as if Lot had made the better choice, later on, during his time in Sodom, the culmination of his selfish choices begins to appear - first with the destruction of Sodom, then with the incestual encounter with his daughters. Abraham on the other hand remained faithful and obedient towards God, and while he was forced to wait years before his wife, Sarah, to bear any children in accordance with God's promise, Abraham was rewarded richly. The one small decision each of these individuals made led them down different paths with widely different outcomes.

The consequences of Lot's life can be drawn from his choice to live by a double standard. If we choose to live our own lives with a double standard life - where we don't practice what we preach - our words lose credibility to those who have not heard of the Gospel yet. And not only this, but we suffer spiritual torment when we live with such a double standard; 2 Peter 2:7-8 reveals how this double standard tormented Lot, a righteous man. Abraham, however, trusted God and waited for His promises. If he truly wanted to, Abraham could have chosen the finest lands as was his right, but he chose to forgo his rights in favor of God's will. This is true for our lives as well.

As Christians, when we put our trust in Jesus, when we choose to put God's plans before our own, when we wait on His promises, we will be rewarded. To live like this does not mean we are passive or complacent - it means that we are placing our confidence and trust in knowing that God has our best interest at heart in all He does. We can still decide to live life our way - but that doesn't mean we are living it the right way. So, do we choose to be like Lot or Abraham: to follow our own desires or the desires of God? Reflect back on the choices you have made and contemplate on whether they are leading you towards righteousness or ruin. Regardless of which path we are on, we can always turn our hearts to God and He will be faithful as He was to Abraham, and come to our aid.