

Abraham and Lot

Part 1

Speaker	Paul Dronsfield
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[00:00:00] I'd like to talk about two men this evening, Abraham and Lot. In Genesis 18 we read about Abraham. And the Lord appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre, and he sat in the tent door, in the heat of the day. And he lift up his eyes, and looked, and lo, three men stood by him. And when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from my servant. Let the water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort you your hearts. After that, you shall pass on, for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of [00:01:03] fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf, tender and good, and gave it unto a young man, and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree, and made it eat. Now if we just drop down to verse 16. And the men rose up from thence, and looked towards Sodom. And Abraham went with them to bring them on their way. And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation? And all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him. For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him. And they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because [00:02:06] their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me. And if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went towards Sodom. But Abraham stood yet before the Lord. Chapter 19. And there came two angels to Sodom as even. And Lot sat in the gate of Sodom. And Lot, seeing them, rose up to meet them. And he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servants' house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay, but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly, and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house. And he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat. But before [00:03:02] they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter. And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came into thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, and said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man. Let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do you to them as is good in your eyes. Only unto these men do nothing. For therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came into

Sodom, and he will need to be adjudged. Now we will deal worse with thee than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great, so [00:04:05] that they wearied themselves to find the door. And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides, son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place, for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord, and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law. And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife and thy two daughters, which are here, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him. And they brought him forth, and set him without the city. And it came to pass, [00:05:04] when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain, escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them, O not so, my lord. Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shown unto me, in saving my life. And I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die. Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one. O let me escape thither, is it not a little one, and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither, for I cannot do anything till thou become thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zohar. The sun was risen upon the earth, when Lot entered into Zohar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon [00:06:03] Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. And so we'll read. Perhaps we ought to consider how these two men came to where they were at the beginning of these two chapters we've read. Abraham sitting in the plains of Mamre, in the door of his tent, in the heat of the day, and Lot sitting in the gate of Sodom. These two men were at one time together, but their ways separated at one point. Chapter 13 of Genesis would tell us of that history. Abraham and Lot had grown great in their possessions, and the time came when the place where [00:07:05] they were both in, it wasn't enough to maintain them and sustain them both. So Abraham said to Lot, the whole land is before thee, separate thyself I pray thee from me. If Lot would go to the left, Abraham would go to the right. If Lot would go to the right, then Abraham would go to the left. It was not Abraham's intention that Lot should leave the land. He said to him, the whole land is before thee. Abraham wanted Lot to separate from him, but stay in the land that had been promised. This was the thing that Abraham delighted in, which he had embraced in his heart, the thing that God had promised him. And Lot had been with him for all those years, and no doubt Abraham felt that this was the thing that would be Lot's desire as well, the land which God had promised. But we [00:08:02] read that Lot, he lifted up his eyes, in verse 10 of chapter 13, and he beheld all the plain of Jordan, and it was this that he desired. And so he went out from the land, and he dwelled in the cities of the plain, while Abraham dwelled in the land of Canaan, in verse 12 of that chapter. No doubt Abraham felt very discouraged at that. He must have felt perhaps like the Apostle Paul felt when he could say to Timothy, hasten to come to me, do thy diligence to come to me quickly, because demons hath forsaken me, having loved this present world. Abraham, he loved the things that God had set before them, but Lot, he had turned away from those things, and his heart was set upon that which [00:09:07] God had condemned, which was coming under the judgments of God, the city of Sodom. When Paul says of Demas, he hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, no doubt in Paul's mind there was that contrast between that which is present, that which is

fleeting, and also that which is eternal, that which Paul longed for in his soul, the world to come, the world where the Lord Jesus would be supreme, where God throughout all eternity would be all and in all, where the Lord would have his bride share with him in his glory. This was before the Apostle Paul, that heavenly calling, that heavenly hope, and his heart was fixed upon that, and nothing else. That one thing he could [00:10:06] speak of, that was set before him, so he forgot the things that were behind, and he pressed on toward the mark, even the prize of the high calling of Christ Jesus, the Lord himself was that prize.

But Demas had chosen those things that were passing. We read of those in the first letter written by the Apostle John, chapter 2, verse 15. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. But he that doeth the [00:11:07] will of God, abideth forever. When a believer, because Lot was a child of God, we read quite clearly that he had a righteous soul. There is none righteous, the Bible tells us, no, not one. That is man after the flesh. But Lot was righteous in God's eyes, he had a righteous soul. And so, even though in the record of Lot in the Old Testament, there's very little evidence of that, but God, who can search the hearts, he knew the soul of Lot. It was a righteous one, and so he was a child of God. And we might ask, how could a child of God depart from the things which once he had, he had owned, that he'd wanted, that he had delighted in, and go away from these things, [00:12:01] and end up in such a wicked place as Sodom, filled with the most dreadful depravity, from the top to the bottom. How could he go into this place? Well, it was a slow departure, it was not something which happened all at once. Lot didn't leave Abraham and go into Sodom immediately. First of all, we read that he lifted up his eyes, and he beheld the plains of Jordan, and in his mind, they reminded him of the, of Egypt. Because he'd been into Egypt, he'd gone in there with Abraham, you remember. And it would seem that although Abraham had come out of Egypt, and he had judged the position before God, and he had been recovered, he went back to where he was at the beginning, he went back to Bethel. Yet he had taken Lot there with him, and it would seem that although Lot had [00:13:06] left Egypt, there was still in Lot's heart a hankering for those things of Egypt. There was a taste for them, which he hadn't judged, which he still had in his heart. And perhaps we have there a lesson for us all, because none of us lives our lives, our Christian lives, in isolation. We influence other believers by what we do. There is always some younger believer, perhaps not, who is regarding us, and seeing how we live our lives, and perhaps taking us as sort of a benchmark.

A weaker brother, we might say, a weaker sister, Lot was a weaker brother. And so Abraham, [00:14:01] in taking Lot into this place, although he himself came out, and it was restored, yet Lot was ruined by it. His testimony was destroyed. His effectiveness, his service for the Lord was gone. He was lost as far as his communion with the Lord was concerned. He ended up in Sodom, and he never really recovered from that, even after Sodom was destroyed. But as we said, it's a slow process. First of all, the taste for Sodom, for Egypt in his heart, he hadn't judged it. We should not be surprised when we find that there are things in the world which have an attraction for us, because we read quite clearly in the scriptures that we have that in our hearts, which desires these things. It's the nature which God has judged, and we're not yet rid of it [00:15:03] completely, but it's been condemned by God, and it has been declared to be dead by him. And we ourselves also should reckon that nature dead, and we should turn away from it. But when these desires come into our hearts, we should, because we are acquainted with the Word of God, because we know the Lord, we should have our confidence, our trust in him, and his judgment of these things. And so we should be able to turn away from them and say, no, this desire which I find in my heart is a wrong one, and I want

nothing to do with it. If Lot had said that, then he would have gone on happily with the Lord. But no, he goes into the cities of the plain, and his tent was pitched towards Sodom. Outwardly, he was still a pilgrim. Outwardly, he was still confessing that this world had no place for him. He dwelt in a tent. But in his heart, well, it was a different story. In his [00:16:05] heart, he was desiring the things of Sodom. Perhaps he didn't even realize it. Perhaps he didn't even realize then that he would end up in that wicked place. But there it was, and it hadn't been judged. And then we find him eventually in Sodom itself, in the gate of Sodom. He had risen to a place of influence within Sodom. The gate was for the elders. The problems of the city would be taken to those in the gate, and they would sit in judgment. And Lot was one of these men. A terrible indictment upon him, that he should be there judging the affairs of these wicked sinners before the Lord. But Abraham, we read, he sat in the plains of Mamre. Mamre was a man, he was an [00:17:02] Amorite, and Abraham was lodging, as it were, on his land. This was the land that Abraham would one day possess, but at the present he didn't possess it. He was there as a pilgrim, as a stranger. And Mamre means prosperous, rich, wealthy. It means to make fat, literally. It speaks to us of, of riches. Because although Abraham apparently had nothing in the way of lands, yet he was rich.

He was rich toward God. He had embraced the true riches, the things that God had showed him. In fact, God had said, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. This was the riches that Abraham had, and so he was indeed rich. And we might find in Abraham a picture of ourselves, [00:18:02] and yet how much richer are we than Abraham. Because not for us an earthly inheritance, not for us an earthly calling, but rather for us we have those heavenly things, the unsearchable riches of Christ, which lay before us in Ephesians. How these things God would have us occupied with them. The riches of the glory of God, the riches of the grace of God, incalculable riches. Can we possibly ever in our hearts say, well, the things this world can offer us are more valuable to our hearts than the things which God would hold out to us. The things which Christ has died for in order that he might win them for us, that we might share with him in the pleasure of these things, that we might possess them for ourselves, now be in the enjoyment of them, possess them fully in [00:19:03] that eternal, in the eternal ages to come. Yes, we are indeed rich like Abraham, and it was because of this that he dwelt in his tent door, he sat in the tent door. That spoke of the fact that he was a pilgrim. He did not want to settle down in those cities round about him, because they had no attraction for him. He had made, he had purposed in his heart that the things which he wanted were the things that God had set before him. We read of that purposing in his heart, of that faith in Hebrews chapter 11. By faith Abraham, verse 8, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with [00:20:03] Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Yes, Abraham, when he was offered riches by the King of Sodom, he said, no I don't want these riches, because I'm going to be rich, but God will make me rich. I don't want you to say in a coming day when you see me with all my possessions that God has given me, I don't want you to pat yourself on the back and say, well I contributed in that. No, Abraham would take these things only from the hand of God, he would not take them from the hand of anyone else. Reminds us of the Lord Jesus, when he was tested, when he was tempted, Satan showed him all the kingdoms of the world, but no, he would not have them. He wouldn't have them from Satan's hand, although they belonged to him, although they were rightly his, and he would have them, he would possess them in a coming day, but his God would give them to him, because he was [00:21:04] faithful, because he was the true, the faithful witness. Now, we read later on in this chapter, verse 15 of Hebrews chapter 11, verse 14, for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country, they declare it plainly by their actions, they're not continuing in those things that they have turned away from, they've

separated themselves from it, and truly if they've been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to return. If they had hankered after those things that they had come out from, well they could have gone back, but they didn't. Abraham, Jacob, Isaac, these faithful men, and these faithful women throughout the Old Testament, and they're all listed here in Hebrews 11, the character of their faith, this is the importance [00:22:03] of Hebrews 11, their faith, which was displayed in so many different ways, but it was faith in God, he was whom they had embraced, his, the things that he held before them, and that had captivated their hearts, they wanted nothing else. Verse 16, but now they desire a better country, that is, and heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. In verse 16, we are brought in, but now they desire a better country, it's important in the understanding of this verse to see what the word now means. There are different words for now in the Greek, and you can find this out in Vines, this is where I found it, I'm no, I won't pretend to know any Greek, but three words which are often used in Scripture, one of them, Ede, or Ede, it suggests some time, [00:23:09] some time in the past, the subjective present, we might say. An example of that, in regard to Abraham, it says, Abraham did not consider his body now dead, that doesn't mean that it was dead now, at this present moment, but it was dead when he didn't consider it, in other words, it was not capable of bearing children, it was not capable of providing seed for Sarah to bear children, it was dead, it says it was now dead, in other words, some time in the past, but we have other words, we have another word, the word none, now that means a time in the immediate present, in contrast with that which has passed, it's the immediate present, but this word is a strengthened [00:24:01] form of that, it's the word none, it's the, so the inspired writer will get across to us that it is now, this immediate present time, the time which we are in, not a past time, but the immediate present, the hope that we have, a heavenly hope, Abraham did not have a heavenly hope, the things that God brought before Abraham were earthly things, we never read of Abraham ever having a heavenly hope, no, it is the Church of God in this present day, we have a heavenly hope, and so because of that, we have left those things that once we were part of, this system, this world system, and we have embraced that heavenly hope, that calling that we have, we have a better country, Hebrews is full of better things, heavenly things, in contrast with that which has gone, that which God once would [00:25:02] bring before his people of old, we have better things than they, and so how much more should we desire these things, because they are better, they are greater, they are heavenly, Sodom, Lot, he sat, in the beginning of chapter 19, in the gate of Sodom, now if Mamre means to make fat, Sodom means fettered, and if in our hearts we have grown cold in our love for the Lord, if our appetite for the things of the Lord has become diminished, has grown weak, then ultimately when we've gone away from the Lord, when the things of this earth have become brighter to us, and we become occupied [00:26:05] with them, we shall find that our spirits, our souls cannot rise as they ought to God, this perhaps comes home most of all when we are gathered together, when we are there to remember the Lord Jesus, as he has desired that we should, when we sit there and are conscious of the fact that our heart should be going out to him, and yet our hearts are cold and mouths are shut, we are fettered, we are bound, we haven't got that liberty before God to rise to him, because we have not been occupied with the things of Christ, rather other things have come in and taken up our attention, our time, we [00:27:01] have gone away, and so there's a coldness where there should be a warmth. We read in Exodus 29, that when the priests came before God, he filled their hands with things, you can read of those things, Exodus chapter 29, verse 22, also thou shalt take of the ram the fat and the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards, and the call above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, and the right shoulder, for it is a ram of consecration, and one loaf of bread, and one cake of oil bread, and one wafer out of the basket, the unleavened bread that is before the Lord, and thou shalt put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons, and shalt wave them for a wave offering before the Lord, [00:28:02] and thou shalt receive them of their hands, and burn them upon the altar for

a burnt offering, for a sweet savour before the Lord, it is an offering made by fire unto the Lord. It was God's intention that when his people, when his priesthood came before him, they should come with their hands full, and how full their hands must have been, and God had given it all to them, and he would receive it of them, and God has given us that whereby our hearts may be filled, filled with Christ, and he will receive that of our hearts, and that's his desire, it's a sweet savour to him. We should not be in a position when we come before the Lord empty, it should be a matter of deep concern to our hearts, things have gone wrong, and we must get right with the Lord, we must be before him, and we [00:29:01] must judge those things that have come into our lives, that have caused us to become in such a condition, and we must confess them, turn away from them, so that we can be restored once again to this happy position that Abraham was in, a pilgrim, a stranger, at rest, at peace, in the door of his tent, in communion with the Lord, happy. Lot, although he was in Sodom, we read that his righteous soul was vexed, and you know, the Lord does not want the soul of his people, the souls of his people to be vexed, it is not his desire. If Lot had judged Sodom, if Lot had, in Sodom, if he had, like the Apostle Paul before Felix, if he had spoken to those men of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, then he would have found very quickly that they would have said to him, go thy way, just like [00:30:01] Felix did to Paul, they would want none of it. He would have, as it were, nailed his colours to the mast, to the mast, and he would no longer have gone around vexed, but it was because he was in association with those things that they caused him so much pain. He knew they were wrong, he had a bad... In the very heat of the day, yet his heart was not vexed, he was at rest, he was at peace, and even if, in testifying for the Lord in this world, even if we find ourselves facing tribulation and reproach the heat of the day, yet the Apostle Peter would tell us, in 1 Peter chapter 4, and verse 14, if ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory [00:31:04] and of God resteth upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. Now we must move on, there's other things to talk about. Abraham, when these men made themselves known to him, he was very anxious that he should show them hospitality, and that he should minister to them.

This was very close to Abraham's heart, and he was very quick to do so. We read, verse 6, he hastened into the tent, and then he said to Sarah, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, a fine meal needed, and make cakes upon the hearth. And then he ran unto the herd, he was in a hurry, he was anxious to be hospitable to these men. And hospitality [00:32:06] is something which is very close to the heart of God, that his people should be hospitable. It is something which he delights in. There are many instances in the New Testament where we're told to be given to hospitality. We are told to not be forgetful of hospitality. And perhaps that verse particularly would remind us of what Abraham was doing, because it says, be not forgetful to entertain strangers, because in doing some have entertained angels unawares. Now, that word hospitality literally means, lover of strangers. And you remember Gaius, in the third letter of John, he was commended because he received the brethren, and that strangers, and he was well [00:33:06] reported of because of that. He did well in doing it. He didn't know these brethren, they were strangers to him, but he was anxious to show them hospitality, because Gaius was a godly man. He knew the mind, and he knew the will of God, and he was Christ-like. And so Gaius showed these strangers who came to him, hospitality. And it's one thing to show hospitality to friends and to relations, that's easy to do, because we're on good terms with them, we know them, we like them, we get on well with them, they're our friends, our family. But God particularly delights in this hospitality to strangers. You remember how it says of God, in Leviticus 19, [00:34:02] chapter 33, in his instructions for Israel, verse 33, If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, you shall not vex him, but the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you. Thou shalt love him as thyself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God. God loves strangers. We read in Ephesians, that when we were strangers, from

the, let's turn to Ephesians chapter 2, verse 12, You were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. [00:35:06] But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. The Lord Jesus, he is the one who has gone out to those who are strangers to him, you and me, who had no claim upon him. He has died in order that our need might be met. He came as a servant, he came to minister, to give himself a ransom for many. When we were strangers, yes, he reached out to us, and he wants the same, he wants to see that in us, that which is in him, his love for those who had no claim upon him, he wants to see it in us, in his people, because he wants to see himself worked out, the features which are in him, he wants to see in us. And so hospitality to strangers is a very important thing. We might, and by stranger I think the [00:36:02] scripture means those people, children of God, who are strangers to us. Do you remember how, and we might say as we read this, well surely if the Lord came to my house, as he did to Abraham, I would run to minister to him, as Abraham did. But you remember those who said to the Lord in the coming day, when he said to them, when I was a stranger, you fed me, you ministered to my need, they said, when did we do this? He said, if you do this to the least of my brethren, you've done it to me. And so there is a way in which we can minister to the Lord today, even as Abraham did, by ministering to those who are the brethren, even the least of his brethren. And you know often we tend to overlook those who perhaps have not much public gift, those perhaps who don't say much, you take a very, take a back seat in the gatherings, [00:37:03] who are shy, we tend to overlook them, the least of the Lord's brethren we might say. But the Lord Jesus values them and he desires that we should show that same care and love for them as we do for others, who perhaps are more prominent, who perhaps have a greater gift or more easy to get on with. Now the other important thing in our time is going quickly, but Abraham, his service was acceptable to the Lord and they said, so do as thou hast said. Now we get Lot in Sodom and he's got the same intentions, but the angels say to him, when he says to them, I pray you, tarry all night, wash your feet, you should rise up early and go your ways, they say nay, we will abide in the street. If we are to serve the Lord, then we have to be in a fit condition, we have to fit for the Master's [00:38:03] use, we have to be ready for every good work, we have to be separate from those things which are dishonoring to him, whether it's things in Christendom or things in this world, we must be separate from them, we must take that pilgrim place separate from the world, if we are to be used by him to serve him. Now just one little comment on Sarah and we haven't got much time, but we read of Sarah in verse 17 of chapter 18, that when she heard what the Lord had said regarding having a child, she laughed within her heart and God says to Abraham, why did Sarah laugh?

Now Abraham might have thought to himself, I didn't hear Sarah laugh, I don't think she laughed, but God could look into Sarah's heart and although no laugh had passed her lips, he knew that she had laughed [00:39:03] in her heart and so when Sarah said in fear, I didn't laugh, in a way she was telling the truth because she hadn't laughed out loud, but her heart, in her heart she had as it were laughed at these things and so God reproved her for that, but at the same time, we would never have known it unless we were told, but in in first Peter we read that Sarah is also commended because she called Abraham Lord and this is the only instance in scripture I think we have that she called Abraham Lord and so God is able to look into our hearts and he's able to discern that which is for him and that which is not. Now only God can do this, only God can know our hearts. In Revelation chapter two, when he's, when he declares himself to one of the churches, he says, I'm he that searcheth the hearts and the [00:40:02] reins, the inward parts, this is a mark of his deity, only God can do this, we cannot do this, we cannot judge a brother's or a sister's spirituality, we cannot make a judgment regarding their communion with the Lord, this is a sphere in which we're not able to make any judgment, only God can do that. The sphere that we are to make a judgment in and we're told, aren't we, in the in the

word of God, we're told on the one hand, judge not that you be not judged and that surely is in this sphere which only God can make a judgment, if we tried to do that then we would come under judgment for it, but there is another sphere, it says prove all things, make a judgment about all things, bring them to the test of the word of God, it says another place, he that is spiritual judges all things, there is a sphere in which we have to make judgments and that's the [00:41:01] outward things, the things which a man or a brother or sister does or a man does, the things which he says, these are the things that we make a judgment in, we cannot make any assessment as to his heart and God does not require us to or want us to, that must be left for him, what we must judge is the outward things and we must act in accordance with that, in faithfulness to the Lord, we must go on with that which we can and we must separate from that which we know is desiring to him, but we must leave the heart to the Lord, well finally testimony, I'll have to be very quick here, but God says of Abraham, I know him, he says, he will command his children and his household after him, they shall keep the way of the Lord, do justice and judgment that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he has spoken on, God could speak to Abraham of those things which he had upon his own [00:42:08] heart, we might say, shall I hide this thing from Abraham, no he won't do it because he knows that Abraham loves the things that God loved, he wouldn't keep it from him, Abraham was his friend, the Lord Jesus said, didn't he, I call you no longer servants, I call you friends, because a servant does not know what his master doeth, Abraham was going to know what the Lord was doing because he was his friend and God could take account of Abraham and know that he'll be faithful in his house, in his household, he would be through his own example, a godly testimony to his children, to his household, he would seek to bring his children up to follow in the ways of the Lord and this is where God would have us firstly faithful in our own houses, in our own homes, amongst our own households, bringing up our children, this is where God would have us to [00:43:04] be faithful and it is through our own example that that's the greatest impression upon those whom we are responsible for, our own example, you know Lot, when the time came when he would give testimony to what was in, what God was going to do, his household, they thought he was pulling their legs, he thought he was joking, he was having a joke with them, he said to them, come out from this place, up, get you out of this place for the Lord will destroy this city, but he seemed as one that mocked unto his son's-in-law because his life was not lived in accordance with what he was now saying, they would say to him, oh come on Lot, you've been here for years, you've never made any complaints, you've always been happy to go along and now suddenly you're telling us that God is going to judge this place and they thought he joked with them, how sad it was, [00:44:02] we will not be able to be a testimony, we will not be able to bring up our children for the Lord or be an example to our households, if our own lives are not in consistency with what we profess, with what we say, we'll have no moral authority and it's the same in the gatherings also, we may speak about things but if those things, those true things that we speak of are to carry that moral power and conviction and be used to convict the hearts of those who hear, then our own lives must be in consistency with those things, how the Apostle Paul could say, thou dost know my manner of life, my doctrine and so on, said Timothy, because his life, he lived out these things and so Timothy could take account of those things in Paul's life, Paul's example and this is a powerful testimony and it gave power to the things that the Apostle testified of. [00:45:04] Well finally, Lot, he's dragged out of Sodom by the angels but still he hasn't made a judgment, not truly, he, the angel wants Lot to escape to the mountain and that's where God would have us spiritually, it's in the mountain that so much in scripture, so much of the glories of God unfold, you remember Peter in the holy mount he could say, we, they saw his glory there and it left that impression upon Peter that would never go and it marked all that he said, it marked his witness for the Lord because he'd been in that mountain but Lot, no, he said I can't go to the mountain, here's a little city, it's only a little one, you see Lot could now judge the excesses, he could see now that Sodom was wicked and depraved [00:46:03] and it come under judgment but here was a little city, what was wrong with that, it's only a

little one but in our hearts it's not sufficient to judge excess, we must get to the principle, we must see what God hates, even if it's a little thing and we must depart from it because we know it's not in accordance with God's mind, God would have us not in the cities, he would not have us take up the things of the world, in whatever little measure he would have us in the mountain with him, beholding his glory, looking up it says, they saw no man but Jesus only, that's where the Lord would have us, with him, beholding his glory, our hearts filled with him, able to serve him, able to testify for him in this world.