

Pitching Toward Sodom

by G. Campbell Morgan

The sermon explores the life of Lot as a cautionary tale about the dangers of selfish choices and compromising one's faith.

Scripture: Genesis 13:10

Topics: "The Danger of Compromise", "Choices and Consequences"

Description

G. Campbell Morgan explores the life of Lot, a man described as righteous yet flawed, who made a disastrous choice by pitching his tent toward Sodom. Despite his good intentions, Lot's selfish decision led him away from God's will, resulting in the loss of his peace, family, and ultimately his wealth. Morgan emphasizes that the small choices we make reveal our true character and warns against the folly of self-centered seeking and compromising between good and evil. He contrasts Lot's fate with Abram's, who chose to let God guide his decisions, leading to true blessings. The sermon serves as a cautionary tale about the consequences of prioritizing personal gain over spiritual integrity.

Transcript

"Lot moved his tent as far as Sodom."--Gen. liii. 12.

While a great many details in the story of Lot are purely local, and their colour has faded, the underlying principles are full of present meaning and present application. And so I propose to ask you to look with me at this man Lot. Lot was a good man who acted upon a wrong principle, with disastrous results. Now, it may be almost a startling thing to say that Lot was a good man. I am bound to confess that if I only had the story of the history that I find in the Old Testament I should hardly have come to that conclusion, but my failure to understand Lot would have been due to my inability to read the story aright. In the New Testament it is distinctly declared that he was "a righteous man."

I repeat, therefore, that this is the story of a good man--good, that is, in intention, good in the deepest desire of his heart, perfectly sincere in many ways, always desiring to be right, and yet becoming so sadly wrong that to-day he stands out upon the page of Holy Scripture, not as an example in whose steps we should follow, but as a warning, in order that we may avoid his pathway. What a strange contradiction this is--a good man held up as a warning, a man who meant well, and yet so lived that the one thing we need to be careful of in life is, that we do not live as he lived. Is it not true that there are thousands of such people in the world at the present time? I am not at all sure, that if it were possible for us to analyse the inner life of the great majority of people we should not find them in very much the same condition. They

mean well, and think that they would always choose the good and refuse the evil; and yet they are very often doing evil and refusing the good. Strange contradictions they seem to be, men who want to be right, and are wrong; men who admire the things that are high and noble and beautiful, and yet do the things that are low and mean and base.

Lot was such a man, and therefore it must be of great interest, I think, that we should attempt to discover his mistake, to trace it in its outworkings, that we may be warned from treading in his footsteps.

Now, first of all, let me remind you that this man Lot had been closely associated with Abram from his first move, from his move with Terah from Ur of the Chaldees. Let us go back, and read one or two verses, to give us the sequence of the history. In the eleventh chapter of Genesis, and the thirty-first verse, I read: "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife"--will you notice what happened--"and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan"--but they did not get to Canaan-- "they came to Haran and dwelt there." That was the first move, and it would almost seem as though originally the move was not that of Abram, but that of his father Terah. What I want you specially to notice, however, is that Lot was with them.

Now pass on to chapter twelve, and the fifth verse, "And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance, that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." That was the second move. They waited in Haran until Terah died, and then they moved on again, again starting to go into the land of Canaan, and this time arriving there. Notice specially that Lot was still with them.

Now turn on to the thirteenth chapter, and I read, "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him," so you see that he had been with Abram when he had gone down into Egypt-- something Abram ought never to have done-- and after that Abram came up out of Egypt, Lot was still with him, and now we come to that crisis in the lives of the two men, when they parted from each other, and it is in this connection that the true character, both of Abram and Lot, is revealed before us.

Notice the crisis for a moment. Domestic difficulties had arisen, which had in them elements of discord. Abram and Lot had become very wealthy. The herdsmen of the two men quarrelled over the pasturage of the flocks. Abram, with the magnanimity of a great soul, and the foresight of a great statesman, said to Lot, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou take the right hand, then I will go to the left."

It is under these circumstances that the true character of Lot is manifested. He lifted up his eyes, and he saw the well watered plain of the Jordan; and he saw down there on the plain the cities in which the men of the plain had congregated, and were living for commercial pursuits, and the making of wealth, and he chose to move in that direction, and in that choice we have a revelation of the man. Parting company from Abram, "he pitched his tent," as the Old Version has it, "toward Sodom."

Now, these are small matters. First of all it was a very small matter that created the crisis which manifested the character of Abram and Lot, and the choosing of this particular place was a small matter. The crises that test men are always small. A man is never revealed when he is prepared for the occasion of examination. We are never really manifested if we have been notified beforehand that we are going to

be examined. Scholastic examinations are really no test of what a man knows. It is true in every department of life, that the test foreannounced and prepared for, sometimes by cramming, is often at fault, when we want to know what a man is or knows. God never foreannounces His examinations. If God were to announce to us to-night that to-morrow at twelve o'clock He would meet us, in order to find out what we were in character, what preparations there would be between now and twelve o'clock to-morrow. How careful we should be to appear at our very best, and the result would be false. What you are flashes out when you do not know any one is likely to be watching you critically. In the small things, in the little details, in the commonplaces of life, character shines out. I never try to find out what a preacher is when he is preaching. It is when he is at home, and when he thinks there is no one there to critically survey, that is the time to find out what he really is. I never want to find out what a deacon is in a deacons' meeting. You do sometimes, but that is not the best time. The time to find that out is on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, during the week. I do not want to know what your character is when you are singing. I want to find out what your character is when something goes wrong, some little commonplace with your work at home. When you are carried along by the stream of the commonplace, then your character is revealed. The characters of these two men are revealed forevermore, when their servants begin quarrelling. The herdsmen of Abram and the herdsmen of Lot, to use an every-day expression, are just having a row, and on the basis of that quarrel between the herdsmen the character of Abram is revealed and the character of Lot is revealed, and I know what Lot is and what Abram is, in the light of that very unpleasant and absurdly ridiculous quarrel between men whom they employed and paid.

Many a man has been revealed in his true light over quarrels amongst other people, about mere trifles. It was Charles Haddon Spurgeon, that prince of preachers, who once said, " I will find out what pattern your creed is, not when I look at you in the sanctuary, but as I see you on Sunday morning, getting ready for church, if certain things are not to your hand as you think they ought to be." It was a quaint, forceful, illuminative statement of a great truth about character. I see Lot, and I see Abram, and I see the inner, underlying principle of life in the case of each, and all the subsequent history is true to the revelation of character that flashes out when their herdsmen are quarrelling.

Let us now look at Lot. When I close I shall ask you to look at Abram by way of contrast. But our business is with Lot. First of all we will look at his choice; secondly, we will look at the results that follow his choice; and then conclude by attempting to draw the very evident lessons from the study that may be of profit to ourselves, as we take our way through life.

And first we ask the question, Was it wrong to choose? Certainly not. The supreme dignity of human life is that it is made to choose. The greatest gift that you possess is the gift of will, the fact that there comes to you every day, and every hour, I think I may safely say every moment, something concerning which you have to elect, to decide, to choose. We are not automatic machines. We are independent, free agents. I can choose heaven or hell. It is a tremendous issue, but it is a magnificent possibility. That is the dignity of human life. If we were but machines, then the romance and the poetry and the passion of life would be at an end. If I must, then I must, and the colours fade from the sky, and everything becomes ashen and grey. It lacks iron, force, vim, virtue. Life is life to me, because I have to choose. There are often moments when we would almost wish that some other could choose for us, and in our childhood's days, though a passion for choice arose, it was a gracious thing that others had to choose for us. But it would be a sorry thing if we always remained children. In the very possession of our being is the right to choose, this capacity for decision, this magnificent power for election. And in life every man must choose. Lot made his choice. What, then, was wrong? Notice carefully the principle of his choice, and the purpose of his choice, as we

have them revealed in the actual words of Scripture. I do not want to depart in imagination from Scripture, but will read at the eleventh verse. "So Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east; and they separated themselves the one from the other." Now go back behind that eleventh verse, "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan," and when he looked, what did he see? He saw "that it was well watered everywhere like the garden of Jehovah, like the land of Egypt, as thou goest into Zoar." First you have the purpose of his choice revealed in that very little sentence, that we read so carelessly-- "Lot chose him." The central purpose of his choice was that of selfishness. "He chose him." A moment has come in the life of the man when it is necessary for him to choose. He must make a choice, and he proceeds to exercise his will upon the basis of personal desire alone. "He chose him," he chose something for himself, something that should minister to himself. He put outside the realm of the things that actuated him everything except his own desire, and his own desire in these things was that which should minister to his own self-life. There is a revealing sentence, "Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan." He was already a wealthy man. He had gotten great gain while sojourning with Abram, but he is still seeking gain, and self is the underlying reason.

We see now what was the principle. You may say it was not wrong to get gain. He was already a wealthy man, they were both wealthy. There was surely nothing wrong in gain. Notice here carefully, however, that desiring simply for himself, he is entering upon a compromise between two wrong principles. Again two little sentences manifest this. He sees all the wonderful plain of the Jordan. Notice what two things attracted him--"Like the garden of the Lord," "Like the land of Egypt." Ah, yes, this man has recently been down to Egypt. He has seen its commerce, he has seen its wealth, he has seen its sordidness, he has seen its blinded materialism, and he wants to be able to get gain as the Egyptians are getting, gain. He has seen that down in those cities of Egypt gain was gotten faster than it ever can be when living a nomadic life. Here is a quicker way to live and get gain, to live in nearness to a city. Like the land of Egypt, and yet like the garden of the Lord.

What Lot is attempting to do is to bring two things together which are in opposition to each other. It is the principle of compromise, and when he makes his choice, he does not go straight into Sodom and live there, "he pitched his tent as far as Sodom," and lived near it. You see without multiplication of words what this man is doing. He says in his heart, Now my chance has come. I have been with Abram a long time, I have believed in his God, and in his faith, but he is a little behind the times, he is a little old fashioned, he is just a wee bit fanatical. I cannot get him away from the tent and the altar. Wherever he goes, he pitches a tent and builds an altar; and presently he moves the tent and the altar. He is always wandering, he is not settled. So I will pitch my tent toward Sodom; I will get as near it as I can. Sodom is wicked. I have no desire to share its wickedness. I am not drawn toward its evil, but I will be near enough to it to get gain out of it. The day Lot pitched his tent as far as Sodom, there is, first, a selfish motive behind his choice, "he chose him"; and there is, moreover, the fact that he tried to compromise, he got his good, and yet got near enough to evil to gain something out of it. I am not at all sure, indeed I am personally inclined to believe that when he pitched his tent toward Sodom he hoped not merely to get something out of it, but to put something into it. I may do these people good, I may influence them along my line of life, I may be able to help them, I may be able to use the purity of a simple faith, I may be able to do something to bring them near the true and living God. I am going there to make wealth faster than I can in the old-fashioned way. Abram's God I worship and I love, but I will choose for myself, and I will endeavour to make a compromise to get as near to Sodom as I can in order that I may have the advantage of life "like the garden of Jehovah," and that of the city where wealth may be made faster than it can by men in tents moving from place to place. It was choice based upon purely personal and selfish reasoning.

In the light of things seen, Lot for the moment had shut out of vision the unseen things. He was acting as though this life were all, as though the only thing worth thinking about was wealth, as though the supreme aim of existence was that of becoming more and more wealthy. The man's eyes are fastened upon the earth, and he does not see the gleaming light of the spiritual realm. He has forgotten the things permanent, and is attempting to grasp the things perishing. "He chose him," and it was a choice selfish and compromising.

But now how did this work out? What followed; what was the sequel? And again I want to read verses, remarkable as revealing the sequel, and easily remembered. Read the text first: "He moved his tent as far as Sodom." Notice that carefully, not into the city, but near it, just near enough to be able to use it. Turn over to the very next chapter, and you will find something else. In the fourteenth chapter, and the twelfth verse I read these words, "Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom." Now, how much time elapsed between my text and that I cannot tell you, but certainly not very long. When he parted from Abram, he did not go into Sodom, he went near it, but in the very next chapter I find that he has moved into Sodom. It is a natural sequence. He went near Sodom in order to make use of it. He was near enough to reap some of its advantages, but it would be so much more convenient if he went in. Now I find him living no longer in a tent, but in a house; no longer near Sodom, but in the midst of it; no longer separated from Sodom, but mixed up in its life.

Move on, and see how this ends. I go to the nineteenth chapter, and in the nineteenth chapter and the first verse I read these words: "And the two angels came to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom." We read that, and it does not mean to us necessarily and immediately what it ought to mean. "Sitting in the gate" is a peculiarly Eastern phrase, which brings up a picture of Eastern life. It simply means that he had become the chief magistrate in the city. The chief magistrate of these Eastern cities sat in the gate to decide questions of dispute between the inhabitants; and to receive visitors as the representative of the city's hospitality. If you will let me translate that little phrase, "Lot sat in the gate of Sodom," into the language of to-day, into the phraseology more familiar, it is exactly as though it were stated that Lot had become the mayor of Sodom. There had been great advancement. First he pitched his tent toward Sodom, then he dwelt in Sodom, and now he is the mayor of Sodom. That appears as though he were getting on wonderfully well. He is a great success. If that man lived to-day, his biography would be sold and given away to young men, as an example of how to get on in the world. Oh, this gospel of getting on! I wish I could get rid of it forever. I can almost suggest a title for the book, "From the Tent to the Mayor's Chair; or, How to Get on in Life." I pick up a book and I read, "From Log Cabin to White House." I am not going to cast any shadow on Garfield, but I do say that his greatness was not proved by the fact that he left the log cabin and reached the White House. He was a great man in the cabin. If a man gets on, and gets into position, becomes mayor, president, and thinks that is everything, it is a lie, and the sooner those facing life get rid of such an idea, the better.

I wonder where poor Abram is? He is still there in that old tent by the oaks of Mamre; he has made no progress. He is still pitching his tent and building his altar; he is far behind the times. It is Lot who has got on.

But now I want to talk to this man a little while. I want to ask him a few questions. I want to put him into the witness-box, and I want you to hear his evidence. Lot, you have made a great success of this. You have pitched your tent toward Sodom, and finding that not to be so convenient as it would be to be in, you went in, and you must have got on wonderfully well if they made you mayor, and put you to sit in the gate. But I want to ask you four] things, Lot: How has this move affected your own inner life, your own mind, your own

heart? And then I want to ask you how it affected your family, whom you took into Sodom with you? And then I want to know how your coming into Sodom affected Sodom? And then I want to ask the meanest thing--and I put it last, though it might have been asked first--How much money you/ made out of it by the time you had done? If* you want to get on in life, surely these questions are fair. How will your move act upon your heart and conscience, your loved ones, upon the city into which you went, and lastly, how much money will you make from the transaction?

Let us begin with the first. Lot, how about yourself? You are mayor of the city, how about your own heart and mind? And coming on here to the New Testament I have the answer. Listen. "Lot, distressed by the lascivious life of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their lawless deeds)." That is the picture of discontent! Surely when the man got on this way he must have been content. Nay, discontented! Surely when a man moved into the city, and lived amongst them, and became mayor, he had peace. Nay, he vexed his soul, his heart was hot and restless. He had seen the vision of the higher things, and therefore he was never satisfied with the lower. If you want to know where rest is, and peace is, and quietness is, and joy is, it is with old-fashioned Abram up there in the tent, under the oaks, the man who never chose upon the desire of selfishness, but always upon the basis of the divine will and government, and the man who always lived not merely seeing the things perishing, but the eternal things, the infinite and undying things. Lot lost his peace and rest when he went into Sodom. If you have lost your own heart's ease, there is nothing that can make up for it. You may make your fortune, you may make your position, you may make money, but if your heart is hot and restless, you will make a disastrous failure of it. An old woman living away up on the wild North coast of my country came to her Christmas Day, and had absolutely nothing for her Christmas dinner upon her table, but a piece of bread and a glass of water. And a Christian person who, thinking of the old lady on that glad day, went to her about mid-day, to take her something, found her already sitting down to her Christmas dinner, which consisted of the bread and the water. She was very hard of hearing and did not notice the footstep of the person who came into her little cottage. But this person heard the old woman ask her blessing. With eyes shut, and hands clasped, and that sweet, ineffable light that never was on land or sea on her face, the old woman said, " O God, I thank Thee for these gifts of Thy love on this Christmas Day. Thou hast given me all these and Christ." You know as well as I do, if you are only true to your own heart, that you would rather have this old woman's heart's ease than all the wealth in the world. What is it worth to a man, if surrounded with all luxury, and all wealth at his command to minister to every desire of his material body, if his heart is hot and restless, if he vexes himself every day, and is filled with a great hunger that cannot be fed. That was Lot's condition. It was a sad failure, that move of Lot's.

But now, Lot, how about your family? When you turned your back upon Abram, upon the tent, and went to live in Sodom, what about your children? And the story is one that cannot be told. It is too dreadful, too appalling. Let it simply be said that when Lot moved into Sodom, and took his children there, he lost them. Oh, the tender infinite grace of God, as seen in the angel sent to bear to Lot the message of coming destruction. Upon hearing it Lot went out to persuade his sons-in-law, "and he seemed unto his sons-in-law as one that mocked." They laughed at him, and took no heed, and presently he left the city with his wife, whose heart had become knit to all the grossness of the city; and with his two daughters, who had become utterly corrupted in the city. He lost his children, he lost his loved ones when he took them into the city. And every one here that knows what that means, knows that when Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, he was making a disastrous mistake. Better keep in the tent, better be old-fashioned, better be considered out of date, and keep hold of the children, than move into the city to get wealth and satisfy the greed of a covetous nature, if the price to be paid is the price of the ruin of the loved ones.

Yet let me ask him another question. But Lot, what did you do for Sodom? Surely you had a good effect upon the men in Sodom, you must have influenced them. Where are they? You went down to purify Sodom, to lift Sodom up, to lift Sodom toward righteousness and God and truth. You know the awful story. There were not ten righteous men in the city. The man that nearly saved Sodom was not the man who went to live in it, but that man under the oaks. He prayed for Sodom, pleaded with God for Sodom, wrestled with God for Sodom, and he received the divine promise that if ten righteous men should be found therein, the city should be spared, but they could not be found, although Lot had lived there until he became mayor. It was a disastrous failure. He lost not only his peace and his children, but his influence.

And then the last thing. It is the meanest question, but I choose to put it last, and in this way. Lot, how much did you make? You know the answer. You do not want me to tell you. If you want to know how much he made out of it, go some day when you are on the other side of the ocean, to that brackish Dead Sea, whose lifeless waves lap the shore with an unending monotone of death. He lost it all, all he saved out of Sodom was his life, and he had to be persuaded to save that, for at last angel hands put upon his shoulders hastened him out of the city. He went in rich and came out a pauper. Now you see what I meant when I said, Here is a disastrous failure, a good man who wanted to be right, who, acting upon a wrong principle, took the wrong pathway, pitched his tent toward Sodom, came into Sodom, became chief magistrate of Sodom, lost his peace, lost his children, lost his influence, lost his very wealth at last; and we see him hurrying away, even as he leaves, himself so demoralised that he longs still for a city, and he says, "Oh, let me escape to Zoar, it is only a little one." He went to Zoar, and did not tarry there, but found his way to the mountains, the caves of the mountains, and when in those lonely mountain caves, he has left behind him all the wealth and finds himself back again in the old place of separation from things that are evil, then it is probable that he begins to find his peace, and will finally regain something of his influence.

Now, surely I need hardly hold you another moment to say anything about the lessons. They are so self-evident. I want to press them home in the closing words. The first lesson, then, is, that there is no folly quiteequal to the folly of self-centered seeking. This is the place to declare it. You will not hear that outside; that message is not preached in the ways of men to-day. It must be in the sanctuary of God, in the house of prayer, that this truth is repeated. Men are urged outside to take care of number one, to look after themselves. You can often tell what the world is thinking by its proverbs, its maxims, its little speeches. Take care of number one. That is a doctrine of devils. Said a man in my hearing, in one of the suburban trains in London some little while ago, travelling to the city, speaking of a man who had fallen out of the line of success: "Well," said the man, glibly, "it is each for himself, and the devil take the hindmost," and that is the gospel men are preaching outside. Look out for yourself, each for yourself. Here in the sanctuary of God, I say that that is not true, that in those cases the devil generally gets the foremost, and it is the man who is self-seeking, and who chooses in life simply upon the basis of his own selfishness, who is going to make the most disastrous failure.

And the second lesson I learn from this study of the character of Lot is this. It is utterly useless to try and make compromises between good and evil. Lot pitched near Sodom, and did not at first go into Sodom. It was an act of dishonesty and hypocrisy. If your heart is in Sodom, you might just as well go in first as last. I have infinitely more respect for the man who goes clean in than for the man pitching just outside, and trying to keep up a sort of religiousness while his heart is set upon evil things. You cannot do it. There is no via media here. You must find a simple principle of life, and act upon it. You may try to pitch your tent near Sodom, to keep up an appearance of loyalty to God, and get out of Sodom everything material and

sordid, but it won't last. The man will soon get into Sodom, but at last he will be driven out, a pauper and a beggar. There is no failure more heart-breaking and disastrous than success which leaves God out of the bargain.

Oh, my brothers and sisters, you know it. You tell me to-day about men amassing wealth, and you say of that man, that he is a far-seeing man. How far does he see? Oh, he sees a long way ahead, and he makes his arrangements, and arranges for combines. If you think a man is far-seeing because he just sees round the globe and buys all the ships up, you are as blind as he is. The man who is far-seeing is the man who sees off the earth into heaven. If you are simply setting out in life to amass mere material success, fame created or position gained, then success will be the most dismal and disastrous failure. The far-seeing man is the man who takes up his pen and writes, "If the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." That is a far-seeing man, a man who has taken into account the spiritual things in his dealing with the material, the man who has taken into account eternity as he is passing through time, the man who has reckoned with the immortal, while tabernacling in mortality; that is the far-seeing man, the man whose choice is based upon the right principle, who talks only of everlasting riches, the spaciousness of eternity. That is the far-seeing man. If a man shall build the temple of success, broad and radiant and beautiful, if its foundation be earth and its capstone no higher than the atmosphere, he is a disastrous failure. If a man shall build his character upon the basis of truth, which shall find itself in harmony with God, then that man has made a success, though he never make a fortune, and never make a name.

Return in conclusion to this statement. The choice is not wrong, it is man's prerogative to choose, it is a proof of the majesty of his being. What are we to do? Choose upon a right principle.

In conclusion, go back to Abram, the out-of-date man, the old-fashioned man. When Lot made his choice, did you notice in die thirteenth chapter what happened? When Lot had made his choice, and had gone, God said something to Abram. What did God say to Abram? He said, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art." "Thine eyes." Notice the force of it. A few moments before Lot had lifted up his eyes, "Lot chose him." God now says to Abram, "Lift up thine eyes." Which way is Abram to look? Look to the north, look to the south, and look to the east, look to the west. But that is every way. Exactly. But a man cannot look north and south and east and west without looking at what Lot has looked at. Exactly. I think I hear Abram say, I have lifted up mine eyes, and I have seen everything there is to be seen. Now says God, "All the land which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever."

But that cannot be right. Lot has that. Man does not possess anything except what God gives him. Did Abram choose? Oh, yes, before Lot did. What did he choose? Not to choose for himself, but to let God choose for him. That is the true principle of choice. You remember those oft-repeated lines, the lines of Tennyson. Remember these are not the words of the preacher at his desk, but the words of the poet in his sanctum, the words of the poet looking deeply into the very heart of things, standing for no particular morality, the exponent of no particular creed, or dogma, or doctrine. What did the great poet write for us? He wrote this:

"Our wills are ours, we know not how;

Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

That is the philosophy of life upon which Abram lived. He had a will. What did he do with it? He willed to do the will of God. Abram, you had a choice, what choice did you make? I chose that He should choose for

me, my law. With what result? Abram got everything, Lot lost everything. Won't you let me press upon you these two principles of life? Will you choose upon a selfish basis, for your own gratification, which is to compromise between good and evil; or will you rather exercise your kingliness of will by willing that God's will should be supreme? If you will do this latter, what then? Then you will prove the truth of Christ's words, "Blessed are the meek"--the people that are not selfassertive, the people that do not set up themselves as the standard and criterion of desire --"for they shall inherit the earth." It has always been so.

Take the Old Testament narrative and go through it. Take the New and go through it. Take human history and pass along it. You will always find this so. The people who let God choose get everything, and the people who choose for themselves lose everything. I can well imagine that there was a day when the men of the world laughed at Noah. I have sometimes tried to imagine what the newspaper articles would have been like if newspapers had existed when Noah went into that ark. There would have appeared in all probability a column headed, "Strange Case of Mental Aberration." "Noah, our highly respected fellow-countryman, has at last culminated his folly by going into this peculiar structure that he has been building; and he is locked in; he has given up his land and everything, except his own immediate relatives and a curious but carefully selected assortment of living things." But there came a day when the only land-owner in the world was Noah. There came the morning after the deluge and desolation and despair and darkness that Noah came out and the whole earth belonged to him. That is always so. Are you a little in doubt about it? Don't try and read all your life story in the appearances of these hours. Go back to history, and you find that it is always so. May God help you to choose upon the true principle, and letting Him choose, enthrone Him in the life, make Him absolute Monarch, handing over the reins of government to the King, flinging back the door of every chamber of the being, letting Him master you. Then will your life be in harmony with His will, the horizon will be set back, and the light breaking upon you will be the light that has no waning, the dawning of the eternal day. May we be delivered from the folly of Lot, and be brought into the wisdom of Abram.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/g-campbell-morgan/pitching-toward-sodom/>

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