

# Remember Lot

by J.C. Ryle

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*The sermon 'Remember Lot' by J.C. Ryle emphasizes the importance of making wise choices, avoiding worldly influences, and prioritizing spiritual growth and development in order to avoid destruction and make progress in our spiritual lives.*

**Duration:** 55:08

**Scripture:** Genesis 19:1

**Topics:** "Biblical Warning", "Spiritual Consequences"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Lot and his wife from the book of Luke. The sermon is divided into four points: what Lot was himself, what the text tells us about him, the reasons for his lingering, and the consequences of his actions. The preacher emphasizes the importance of remembering Lot's wife as a warning to all believers. He also highlights the connection between Lot's choices and the negative impact it had on his family and the world. The sermon concludes with a reminder that believers should not linger in unprofitable and sinful ways.

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## Transcript

The scripture reading for tonight's sermon is from the book of Genesis, chapter 19. And there we hope to read the first 17 verses. Genesis 19, beginning in verse 1, And there came two angels to Sodom at Eden.

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 carry 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 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 in to 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 ye 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 fellow came in to sojourn, and he will need to be a judge. Now will we 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 great, small, and great, so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

And the men said unto Lot, 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, 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. Here ends the reading of God's Holy Word.

Let us turn unto the Lord in prayer. Great and Most Holy God and Father, we come before Thee, and we ask Thee, Lord, to look upon us in mercy, that Thou would help us. For we have gathered here for Thee, and for Thy honor and glory.

O Lord, Thou knowest our sin, and the effects of sin that are hearts by nature are now hardened to Thee. And we are inclined to all evil, rebellion, and sin. We need cleansing.

We need forgiveness granted, Lord, for Jesus' sake. And in Him also, we pray that Thou would grant repentance. That we would turn from our evil way through the life and strength of Christ.

Lord, Thou has taught us these things. We do not know what we speak, except that Thou would lead us and guide us into all truth. Do it now, we pray, that in prayer, in the reading of the sermon, in singing, in giving, we would worship Thee with a right heart, with our whole heart.

O how we need Thee, Lord Jesus. We pray, Holy Spirit, to work in our midst, in each one. For Thou art able and willing.

Lord, don't leave us over to ourself, we pray. We pray for Thy church, the one holy Catholic church as we have confessed. Lord, bless her and keep her.

We have heard of those sad reports of divisions and fightings and strifes, and men seeking to exalt themselves in the church. O Lord, help us. Stop us and turn us that only Thy great name, only the salvation of Christ, only Thy work, O Holy Spirit, would be loved and looked to for help and strength.

We pray that Thou would bless Thy servants and Thy Word as they bring it, especially in the mission fields. We pray for the Vandenberges in China. Help them and be with them.

We pray for the Omens in Africa. Lord, help them in all their needs and the many callings and opportunities they have. Give them strength and discernment to know Thy will and love for Christ as they carry out their service.

We pray for Adrian Neely and his family as Thou has called him to South Africa. Lord, be with them, strengthen them, help them. We also pray for Thy work in Bali.

Lord, make things right there that Thy name would be honored and glorified. We pray for our nation, for our president and all our leaders. O Lord, give them to see their need for wisdom as Thou didst with Solomon that they may pray to Thee for wisdom and for guidance that they would fear and reverence Thee and Thy Word.

We pray for those soldiers in a strange land risking their lives separated from their loved ones. Lord, be with them and prepare them to meet Thee if that is Thy will. We pray for those leaders in the war that Thou would give them to see that their strength is not in weapons, but only in the work, the wonder of grace there also.

We pray for those places that were so devastated by an earthquake and the massive wave that struck the coasts. O Lord, how dependent we are upon Thee and what awful destruction has been worked by our sin. We pray that Thou would yet show Thy greatness and Thy goodness to bring good out of that which is so terrible.

We pray for our little flock. We acknowledge this Thee, Lord, that we need. We pray that Thou would bless Thy Word in our midst, also by sending Thy servant which Thou hast chosen.

We pray that Thou would work through us and Thy condescending love would show us Thy will and work it according to Thy grace in Christ. We pray for Thy blessing upon Thy Word as we hear a sermon from Thy servant of old. Give us help in speaking and in listening that in all things we would be amazed to see the depth of Thy mercy and the wonders of Thy grace that we would know it, feel it in our hearts.

Thy salvation through Word and Spirit, Lord, grant it for Thy honor in Christ. In His name we pray, Amen. The text we're receiving tonight is from Genesis 19.16. It's a short text.

The words from that verse, He lingered. This is a sermon written and preached by J.C. Ryle entitled, Remember Lot. Just a word in introduction.

The word lingered in the dictionary is defined as waiting or staying in a place with reluctance to leave. So as we hear the text mentioned several times throughout the reading, if we can keep this in mind, it will bring insight into the teaching and the message that Lot was reluctant to leave. Who is this man that lingered? Lot, the nephew of faithful Abraham.

And when did he linger? The very morning Sodom was to be destroyed. And where did he linger? Within the walls of Sodom itself. And before whom did he linger? Under the eyes of the two angels who were sent to bring him out of the city.

Dear congregation, the words are solemn. The voice of the Lord Jesus commands you to remember Lot's wife in Luke 17. The voice of one of his ministers invites you this day to remember Lot.

Let me try to show you with four points. One, what Lot was himself. Two, what the text tells you of him.

Three, what reasons may account for his lingering. And four, what kind of fruit his lingering brought forth. So again, four points.

What Lot was himself. What the text tells you of him. What reasons may account for his lingering.

And what kind of fruit his lingering brought forth. First, what was Lot? You would perhaps say, ah, Lot was a poor, dark creature. An unconverted man.

A child of this world. No wonder he lingered. But, mark now what I say, Lot was nothing of the kind.

Lot was a true believer. A real child of God. A justified soul.

A righteous man. The Holy Ghost has placed the matter beyond controversy by calling him just and righteous in 2 Peter 2, 7 and 8. And has given us evidence of the grace that was in him. One evidence is that he lived in a wicked place seeing and hearing evil all around him and yet was not wicked himself.

Also from 2 Peter 2. Now to be a Daniel in Babylon, an Obadiah in Ahab's house, an Abijah in Jeroboam's family, a saint in Nero's court, and a righteous man in Sodom, a man must have the grace of God. Another evidence is that he vexed his soul with the unlawful deeds he beheld around him. He was wounded, grieved, pained and hurt at the sight of sin.

This was feeling like David who says, I beheld the transgressors and was grieved because they kept not thy word. Rivers of waters run down my eyes because they keep not thy law. From Psalm 119, 136 and 158.

Nothing will account for this but the grace of God. Another evidence is that he vexed his soul from day to day with the unlawful deeds he saw. He did not at length become cool and lukewarm about sin as many do.

Familiarity and habit did not take off the fine edge of his feelings as is too often the case. Many a man is shocked and startled at the first sight of wickedness and yet becomes at last so accustomed to see it that he views it with comparative unconcern. This is especially the case with those who live in towns and cities.

But it was not so with Lot. And this is a great mark of the reality of his grace. Such a one was Lot, a just and righteous man, a man sealed and stamped as an heir of heaven by the Holy Ghost Himself.

Before we pass on, remember that a true Christian may have many a blemish, many a defect, many an infirmity, and yet be a true Christian nevertheless. You do not despise gold because it is mixed with much dross. You must not undervalue grace because it is accompanied by much corruption.

Listen and you will find that Lot paid dearly for his lingering. But do not forget as you listen that Lot was a child of God. Secondly, let us pass on to the second point I spoke of.

What does the text tell us about Lot's behavior? The words are astounding and wonderful. He lingered. And the more you consider the time and circumstances, the more amazing you will think them.

Lot knew the awful condition of the city in which he stood. The cry of its abomination had waxed grave before the Lord. From verse 13.

And yet he lingered. Lot knew the fearful judgment coming down on all within its walls. The angels had plainly said, the Lord has sent us to destroy it.

Also from verse 13. And yet, Lot knew that God was a God who always kept His word. And if He said a thing, He would surely do it.

He could hardly be Abraham's nephew and live long with him and not be aware of this. Yet, he lingered. Lot believed there was danger.

For he went to his sons-in-law and warned them to flee. Up, he said, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy the city. From verse 14.

And yet, he lingered. Lot saw the angels of God standing by waiting for him and his family to go forth. And yet, he lingered.

Lot heard the voice of those ministers of wrath ringing in his ears to hasten him. Arise, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. From verse 15.

And yet, he lingered. He was slow when he should have been quick. Backward when he should have been forward.

Trifling when he should have been hastening. Loitering when he should have been hurrying. Cold when he should have been hot.

It is passing strange. It seems almost incredible. It appears too wonderful to be true.

But, the Spirit writes it down for our learning. And so it was. And yet, there are many of God's people very like Lot.

Mark well what I say. I repeat it that there may be no mistake about my meaning. I have shown you that Lot lingered.

And I say that there are many Christian men and women in this very day like Lot. There are many real children of God who appear to know far more than they live up to. And to see far more than they practice.

And yet, continue in this state for many years. Amazing that they go as far as they do, and yet, they go no further. They hold the head, even Christ, and love the truth.

They like sound preaching and ascend to every article of Gospel doctrine when they hear it. But still, there is an indescribable something which is not satisfactory about them. They are constantly doing things which disappoint the expectations of their ministers and of more experienced Christian friends.

Marvel that they should think as they do, and yet, stand still. They believe in heaven, and yet, seem faintly to long for it. And in hell, and yet, seem little to fear it.

They love the Lord Jesus, but the work they do for Him is small. They hate the devil, but they often appear to tempt him to come to them. They know the time is short, but they act as if it is long.

They know they have a battle to fight, and yet, a man might think they were at peace. They know they have a race to run, and they often look like people sitting still. They know the judge is at the door, and there is wrath to come, and yet, they appear half asleep.

Astonishing they should be what they are, and yet, nothing more. And what shall we say of these people? They may be classed under one sweeping description. They are all brothers and sisters of Lot.

They linger. These are they who get the notion into their minds that it is impossible for all believers to be very holy and very spiritual. They allow that eminent holiness is a beautiful thing.

They like to read about it in books, and even to see it occasionally in others. But they do not think that all are meant to aim so high a standard. At any rate, they seem to make up their minds that it is beyond their reach.

These are they who get into their heads false ideas of charity, as they call it. They would fain please everybody, and suit everybody, and be agreeable to everybody. But they forget they ought first to be sure that they please God.

These are they who dread sacrifices and shrink from self-denial. They never appear able to apply our Lord's command to cut off the right hand and pluck out the right eye. They spend their lives in trying to make the gate more wide and the cross more light.

But they never succeed. They are they who are always trying to keep in with the world. They are ingenious in discovering reasons for not separating decidedly, and in framing plausible excuses for attending questionable amusements and keeping up questionable friendships.

One day you are told of their attending a Bible reading, and the next day perhaps you hear of them going to a ball. They are constantly laboring to persuade themselves that to mix a little with worldly people on their own ground does good. Yet in their case it is very clear they do no good and only get harm.

These are they who cannot find it in their heart to quarrel with their besetting sin, whether it be sloth, indolence, ill-temper, pride, selfishness, impatience, or what it may be. They allow it to remain a tolerably quiet and undisturbed tenant of their hearts. They say it is their health or their constitutions or their temperaments or their trials or their way.

Their father or mother or grandmother was so before them, and they are sure they cannot help it. But when you meet after an absence of a year or so, you hear the same thing. But all may be summed up in one single sentence.

They are the brothers and sisters of Lot. They linger. If you are a lingering soul, you are not happy.

You know you are not. It would be strange indeed if you were. Linging is the sure destruction of a happy Christian.

A lingerer's conscience forbids him to enjoy inward peace. Perhaps at one time you did run well, but you have left your first love. You have never felt the same comfort since.

You never will till you return to your first works like Peter when the Lord Jesus was taken prisoner. You are following the Lord afar off. And like Him, you will find the way not pleasant, but hard.

Come and look at Lot. Come and mark Lot's history. Come and consider Lot's lingering and be wise.

For our third point, let us consider the reasons that may account for Lot's lingering. This is a question of great importance, and I ask your serious attention to it. To know the root of a disease is one step toward a remedy.

He that is forewarned is forearmed. One thing I observe in Lot is this. He made a wrong choice early in life.

There was a time when Abraham and Lot lived together. They both became rich and could live together no longer. Abraham, the elder of the two, in the true spirit of humility and courtesy, gave Lot the choice of the country when they resolved to part company.

If you, he said, will take the left hand, then I will go to the right. If you depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. From Genesis 13.9. And what did Lot do? We are told he saw the plains of Jordan near Sodom were rich, fertile, and well watered.

It was a good land for cattle and full of pasture. He had large flocks and herds and it just suited his requirements. And this was the land he chose for a residence simply because it was rich, well watered.

It was the town near Sodom. He cared not about that. The men of Sodom would be his neighbors and they were wicked.

It mattered not. They were sinners before God exceedingly. It made no difference to him.

The pasture was rich. The land was good. He wanted such a country for his flocks and herds.

And before that argument, all scruples and doubts, if indeed he had any, at once went down. He chose by sight and not by faith. He asked no counsel of God to preserve him from mistakes.

He looked to the things of time and not eternity. He thought of his worldly profit and not of his soul. He considered only what would help him in this life and he forgot the solemn business of the life to come.

This was a bad beginning. But I observed also that Lot mixed with sinners and there was no reason for his doing so. We are first told that he pitched his tent for Sodom in Genesis 13.

This, as I have already shown, was a great mistake. But the next time he is mentioned, we find him actually living in Sodom itself. The Spirit says expressly, he dwelt in Sodom in Genesis 14.

His tents were left, the country forsaken. He occupied a house in the very streets of that wicked town. We are not told the reasons of this change.

We are not aware of any reason that could have arisen for it. We are sure that there could have been no command of God. Perhaps his wife liked the town better than the country for the sake of society.

It is plain she had no grace herself. Perhaps she persuaded Lot it was needful for the education of his children. Perhaps the daughters urged living in the town for the sake of friends.

They were evidently like-minded young women. Perhaps Lot himself liked it in order to make more of his flocks and herds. Men never lack reasons to confirm their own wills.

But one thing is very clear. Lot dwelt in the midst of Sodom without a good reason. When a child of God does these two things which I have named, you never need be surprised if you hear by and by unfavorable accounts of his soul.

You never need wonder if he becomes deaf to the warning voice of affliction as Lot was in Genesis 14, 12. And turns out a lingerer in the day of trial and danger as Lot did. Make a wrong choice, an unscriptural choice in life and settle yourself down unnecessarily in the midst of worldly people.

And I know no surer way to damage your own spirituality and go backward about your internal concerns. This is the way to make the pulse of your soul beat feebly and languidly. This is the way to make the edge of your feeling about sin become blunt and dull.

This is the way to dim the eyes of your spiritual discernment till you can scarcely distinguish good from evil and you stumble as you walk. This is the way to bring a moral palsy on your feet and limbs and make you go tottering and trembling along the road to Zion as if a grasshopper was a burden. This is the way to open the gate to your worst enemy, to give the devil the vantage ground in the battle, to tie your arms in fighting, to fetter your legs in running, to dry up the sources of your strength, to cripple your own energies, to cut off your own hair like Samson and give yourselves into the hands of the Philistines, put out your own eyes, grind at the mill and become a slave.

Listener, wake up and mark well what I am saying. Settle these things down in your mind. Do not forget them.

Recollect them in the morning. Recall them to memory at night. Let them sink down deep into your heart.

If ever you would be safe from lingering, beware of needless mingling with worldly people. Beware of lost choice. If you would not settle down into a dry, dull, sleepy, barren, heavy, carnal state of soul, beware of lost choice.

Remember this in choosing a dwelling place or residence. It is not enough that the house is comfortable, the situation good, the air fine, the neighborhood pleasant, the expenses small, the living cheap. There are other things yet to be considered.

You must think of your immortal soul. Will the house you think of help you towards heaven or hell? Is the gospel priest within an easy distance? Is the message of Christ crucified within reach of your door? Is there a real man of God here who will watch over your soul? I charge you, if you love life, not to overlook this. Beware of lost choice.

Remember this in choosing a calling or profession in life. It is not enough that the salary is high, the wage is good, the labor light, the advantages numerous and the prospects of getting on most favorable. Think of your soul, your immortal soul.

Will it be prospered or drawn back? What opportunities will you have for hearing the gospel preached? I solemnly warn you to consider this. It will profit you nothing to fill your purse if you bring leanness and poverty on your soul. Beware of selling your Sabbath for the sake of a good place.

I beseech you by the mercies of God to take heed to what you do. Make no rash decision. Look at the place in every light, the light of God, as well as in the light of the world.

Gold may be bought, but at too high a price. Beware of lost choice. Remember this in choosing a husband or wife if you are unmarried.

It is not enough that your eye is pleased, that your tastes are met, that your mind finds congeniality, that there is companionship and affection, that there is a comfortable home for life. There needs something more than this. There is a life yet to come.

Think of your soul, your immortal soul. Will it be helped upwards or dragged downwards by the union you are planning? Will it be made more heavenly or more earthly? Drawn nearer to Christ or to the world? Will its religion grow in vigor or will it decay? I pray you, by all your hopes of glory, allow this to enter into your calculations. Think as old Baxter said, and think and think and think again before you commit yourself.

Be not unequally yoked from 2 Corinthians 6. Marriage is nowhere named amongst the means of conversion. Remember Lot's choice. You may perhaps think, a believer need not fear.

He is a sheep of Christ and will never perish. He cannot come to much harm. It cannot be that such small matters can be of great importance.

Well, you may think so, but I warn you, if you neglect them, your soul will not prosper. A true believer will certainly not be cast away, although he may linger. But if he does linger, it is vain to suppose that his religion will thrive.

You may be an earnest, zealous Christian now. You may feel like David in his prosperity. I shall never be moved from Psalm 30 verse 6. But be not deceived.

You have only got to walk in Lot's steps and make Lot's choice, and you will soon come to Lot's state of soul. Allow yourself to do as he did. Presume to act as he acted.

And be very sure you will soon discover that you have become a wretched lingerer like him. You will find, like Samson, the presence of the Lord is no longer with you. You will prove to your own shame an undecided, hesitating man in the day of trial.

There will come a canker on your religion and eat out its vitality without your knowing it. There will come a consumption upon your spiritual strength and waste it away insensibly. If you would not become a lingerer in religion, consider these things.

Beware of what Lot did. Fourthly, let us inquire now what kind of fruit Lot's lingering spirit bore at last. I would not pass over this point for many reasons, and especially in the present day.

There are not a few who will feel disposed to say, after all, Lot was saved. He was justified. He got to heaven.

I want no more. If I do but get to heaven, I shall be content. If this be the thought of your heart, just stay for a moment and listen to me a little longer.

I will show you one or two things in Lot's history which deserve attention and may perhaps induce you to alter your mind. I think it of first importance to dwell on this subject. I always will contend that eminent holiness and eminent usefulness are most closely connected.

That happiness and following the Lord fully go side by side. And that if believers will linger, they must not expect to be useful in their day and generation or to enjoy great comfort and peace in believing. Mark then for one thing, Lot did no good among the inhabitants of Sodom.

Lot lived in Sodom many years. No doubt he had many precious opportunities for speaking of the things of God and trying to turn away souls from sin. But Lot seems to have effected just nothing at all.

He appears to have had no weight or influence with the people who lived around him. He possessed none of that respect and reverence which even the men of the world will frequently concede to a faithful servant of God. Not one righteous person could be found in all Sodom outside the walls of Lot's home.

Not one of his neighbors believed his testimony. Not one of his acquaintances honored the Lord when he worshiped. Not one of his servants served his master's God.

Not one of all the people from every quarter carried a job for his opinion when he tried to restrain their wickedness. This one fellow came in to sojourn, said they, and he will need be a judge. From verse 9, his life carried no weight.

His words were not listened to. His religion drew none. And truly I do not wonder as a general rule, lingering souls do no good to the world and bring no credit to God's cause.

Their salt has too little savor to season the corruption around them. They are not epistles of Christ who can be known and read of all from 2 Corinthians 3. There is nothing magnetic and attractive and Christ reflecting about their ways. Remember this.

Mark another thing. Lot helped no relation toward heaven. We are not told how large his family was, but this we know.

He had a wife and two daughters at least in the day he was called out of Sodom if he had not more children besides. But whether Lot's family was large or small, one thing I think is perfectly clear. There was not one among them all that feared God.

When he went out and spoke to his sons-in-laws, which married his daughters, and warned them to flee from the coming judgments, we are told he seemed to them as one that mocked. From verse 14, what fearful words those are. It was as good as saying, who cares for anything you say? So long as the world stands, those words will be a painful proof of the contempt with which a lingerer in religion is regarded.

And what was Lot's wife? She left the city in his company, but she did not go far. She had not faith to see the need of such a speedy flight. She left her heart in Sodom when she began to flee.

She looked back from behind her husband in spite of the plainest command not to do so. From verse 17, and was at once turned into a pillar of salt. And what were Lot's two daughters? They escaped indeed, but only to do the devil's work.

They became their father's tempters to wickedness and led him to commit the foulest sins. In short, Lot stood alone in his family. He was not made the means of keeping one soul back from the gates of hell.

And I do not wonder, lingering souls are seen through by their own families, and when seen through, despised. Their nearest relations understand inconsistency if they understand nothing else in religion. They draw the sad but unnatural conclusion, surely if he believes all that he professes to believe, he would not go on and do as he does.

Lingering parents seldom have godly children. The eye of the child drinks in far more than the ear. A child will always observe what you do much more than what you say.

Remember this. Consider these two things I have just mentioned. Do not misunderstand my meaning.

It is amazing to observe how readily people catch at the least excuse for misunderstanding the things that concern their souls. I do not tell you that believers who do not linger will usually be great instruments of usefulness to the world. Noah preached 120 years and none believed him.

The Lord Jesus was not esteemed by his own people, the Jews. Nor yet do I tell you that believers who do not linger will usually be the means of converting their families in relations. David's children were, many of them, ungodly.

The Lord Jesus was not believed on even by his own brothers. But I do say it is almost impossible not to see a connection between Lot's evil choice and Lot's lingering. Between Lot's lingering and his unprofitableness to his family and the world.

I believe the Spirit meant us to see it. I believe the Spirit meant to make it a deacon to all professing Christians. Let me speak a few parting words, especially to all who call themselves believers in Christ.

I have no wish to make your hearts sad. I do not want to give you a gloomy view of the Christian course. My only object is to give you friendly warnings.

I desire your peace and comfort. I would fain see you happy as well as safe and joyful as well as justified. I speak as I have done for your good.

You live in days when a lingering, Lot-like religion abounds. The stream of profession is far broader than it once was, but far less deep in many places. A certain kind of Christianity is almost fashionable now.

Talk about the leading controversies of the day to buy popular religious books as fast as they come out, to attend meetings, to discuss the merits of preachers. All these are now comparatively easy and common attainments. They require little or no sacrifice.

They entail no cross. But to walk closely with God, to be really spiritually minded, to behave like strangers in pilgrims, to be distant from the world in employment of time, in conversation, in amusements, in dress, to bear a faithful witness for Christ in all places, to leave a savor of our Master in every society, to be prayerful, humble, unselfish, meek, to be jealously afraid of sin and tremblingly alive to our danger from the world. These, these are still rare things.

They are not common among those who are called true Christians. And worst of all, the absence of them is not felt and bewailed as it should be. I give you good counsel this day.

Do not turn from it. Do not be angry with me for plain speaking. I bid you give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

I bid you not to be slothful. Not to be careless. Not to be content with a small measure of grace.

Not to be satisfied with being a little better than the world. I solemnly warn you, do not attempt doing what has never been done. I mean to serve Christ and yet keep in with the world.

I call upon you and beseech you, I charge you, I exhort you by all your hopes of heaven and desires of glory, do not be a lingering soul. Would you know what the times demand? They demand the shaking of nations, the uprooting of ancient things, the overturning of kingdoms, the stir and restlessness of men's minds. They all say, Christian, do not linger.

Would you be found ready for Christ at His second appearing? Your loins girded, your lamp burning, yourself bold and prepared to meet Him? Then do not linger. Would you enjoy much sensible comfort in your religion? Feel the witness of the Spirit within you? Know whom you have believed and not be a gloomy and melancholy Christian? Then do not linger. Would you enjoy strong assurance of your own salvation in the day of sickness and on the bed of death? Then do not linger.

Would you leave great, broad evidences behind you when you are gone? Would you like us to lay you in the grave with a comfortable hope and talk of your state after death without a doubt? Then do not linger. Would you be useful to the world in your day and generation? Would you draw men from sin to Christ and make your Master's cause beautiful in their eyes? Then do not linger. Would you help your children and relatives towards heaven and make them say, we will go with you, and not make them infidels and despisers of all religion? Then do not linger.

Oh, let not one of us linger. Time does not linger. Death does not linger.

Judgment does not linger. The devil does not linger. The world does not linger.

Neither let the children of God linger. Are you a lingerer? Has your heart felt heavy and your conscience sore while you have been listening? Does something within you whisper, I am the man? Listen to what I am saying. How is it with your soul? If you are a lingerer, you must go to Christ at once and be cured.

You must use the old remedy. Bathe in the old fountain. You must turn again to Christ and be healed.

Think not for a moment your case is past recovery. Think not because you have been long living in a dry and heavy state of soul that there is no hope for revival. Is not the Lord Jesus Christ an appointed physician for the soul? Did He not cure every form of disease? Did He not cast out every kind of devil? Did He not raise poor, backsliding Peter and put a new song in his mouth? Oh, doubt not, but earnestly believe that He will yet revive His work within you.

Only turn from your lingering, confess your folly, and come, come at once to Christ. Blessed are the words of the Prophet. Only acknowledge thine iniquity.

Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. From Jeremiah 13. Reader, remember the souls of others as well as your own.

If at any time you see any brother or sister lingering, try to awaken them. Arouse them. Try to stir them up.

Let us exhort one another as we have opportunity. Let us provoke unto love and good works. Let us not be afraid to say to each other, Brother or sister, have you forgotten Lot? Awake and remember Lot.

Awake and linger no more. Amen. In closing, I would like to read a portion from our Confessions.

As we have heard an exhortation which we may view as coming from the law, if we refine it into saying do not linger, is the law that we heard tonight. I would like to read from question and answer 114 and 115 of the Heidelberg Catechism. But can those who are converted to God perfectly keep these commandments? Answer.

No, but even the holiest of men while in this life have only a small beginning of this obedience, yet so that with a sincere resolution they begin to live not only to some, but all of the commandments of God. Question 115. Why will God then have the Ten Commandments so strictly preached since no man in this life can keep them? First, that all our lifetime we may learn more and more to know our sinful nature and thus become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin and righteousness in Christ.

Likewise, that we constantly endeavor to pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God until we arrive at the perfection proposed to us in a life to come. Let's close in prayer. Lord God in Heaven, we thank Thee for Thy Word and the warning we have read tonight.

Lord, help us. Use it, we pray, not that we would be thrown back on ourselves, but that we would be driven and drawn to Christ, driven by the law, drawn by the Gospel. Lord, do it, we pray.

Let us not live a careless life, we pray. Thou knowest all our weakness and all our sin and Thou art so patiently teaching us, showing so much forbearance and forgiveness, Lord. We pray that Thou would use this Word for the church is in a sleepy state and the things of this world are creeping in.

We pray that Thou would keep us holy through the holiness of Christ that we would look to Him in all of our need and especially in this calling to sanctification that we would seek in Thy Word those truths that we must live by. That all our fountains are in Him and in and of ourselves we are only sin and shame. And Thou has chosen, O Lord, to glorify Thy great name in the saving of lost, ruined, lingering sinners.

Help us not to remain thus, but save us, we pray, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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