

# Genesis 13

by Robert F. Adcock

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*The importance of having a clear and bright Christian testimony, and the consequences of compromise and prioritizing personal gain over one's testimony for God.*

**Duration:** 33:22

**Scripture:** Genesis 13:11, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 3:15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 2 Peter 2:6, 2 Peter 2:8

**Topics:** "Genesis"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the rebellious spirit of the world against God and the need for humility and submission to His will. He contrasts this with the story of Joshua, a faithful servant of God who led the Israelites into the promised land. The preacher warns of the impending judgment that will fall upon the world and emphasizes the importance of knowing Jesus as Savior to escape this judgment. He also highlights the danger of conforming to the ways of the world and emphasizes the need for Christians to live differently and reflect the image of Christ in their conduct.

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## Transcript

I'd like for us this morning to turn in your Bibles to Genesis chapter 13. We live in a world in which sometimes there's a lot of confusion that surrounds Christian profession. Sometimes it's hard to distinguish those that know the Lord Jesus as their Savior from those that are just living in this world and for this world.

We're going to read in the Scriptures this morning about such a man. This man had no clear-cut testimony for God. Yet we'll discover, and we have to be told by someone else just what his position was, but we'll discover that things are said about him that if we just had the account that you're about to read, we wouldn't know these things about him, and that's safe.

The Word of God says, let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Christian testimony in this world in which we live today should be something that is clear and bright. We're likened to salt.

We're not to lose our saltiness, and we're pictured as being light in a world that is very dark, but not to hide that light, but to let it shine. So this is a very sad commentary on a life that really belonged to the Lord, but obviously the Lord got no glory out of this life. Reading from verse 1 of Genesis 13, "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and lot with him into the south.

And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold. And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, and unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Haiiah, under the place of the altar which he had made there at the first. There Abram called on the name of the Lord.

And Lot also who went with Abram had flocks and herds and tents, and the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together, for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle, and the Canaanites and Perizzites dwelt then in the land. And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we are brethren.

It 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 wilt depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zor.

Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east, and they separated themselves the one from the other." Now, in the New Testament I want to read so that there will be that enlightenment that we're looking for, that we're not being presumptuous in saying that this man belonged to the Lord. We have to turn to Peter's second epistle, and in the second chapter we read an account of the destruction of this place that Lot chose to live in. Verse 6 of chapter 2, 2 Peter says, "...and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly." And listen to this, "...and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filth and manner of life of the wicked." Verse 8 says, "...and for that righteous man dwelleth among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." Now, if you know the account, and I trust you've read it, you'll have to read on up through the passage to discover just what it was like in Sodom and Gomorrah, this place that Lot chose to live.

I'm so glad we do have the record in the New Testament that he was a just man, that he was a righteous man, righteous in the sense that he belonged to the Lord. That place that he lived in, many today make references to Sodom and Gomorrah, and they equate conditions that were in Sodom and Gomorrah to the world that we're living in today. I'll tell you, that spirit of every man doing what was right in his own eyes it seemed to prevail in Sodom and Gomorrah.

The word sodomy comes from this place, a sodomite. And you know, if you know the definition of this term, you know what it means. Sexual perversion and things that, indeed, you don't even like to talk about, but they prevail in Sodom and Gomorrah.

It was a place of wickedness where all that is in man that is corrupt, all that is a product of that defiled nature, it was just being poured out without any restraint. Of course, the question that comes to your mind when you think about Lot, man that you've discovered that is described in the scriptures as being a righteous man, a just man, what are you doing in Sodom and Gomorrah? You're out of place here. Well, you know, he went there by choice.

He decided that it looked pleasant to the eye, and I'm reminded from New Testament teaching that to be a friend of this world is to be the enemy of God. And there's so much in this world that appeals the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life, all of it is involved in the decision that Lot made to go to the cities of the plain. But God's going to have a dealing with those cities in the plain, and in spite of his presence there, one man that is deliberate with his family, you're going to find out that God sometimes very patiently

waits.

And, in a sense, I could say of Lot, brother, when you went to Sodom and Gomorrah, if you had been what you should have been for God, perhaps those places could have been spared. And this world should be a better place because of the presence of Christians in this world. I believe it is, personally, but I believe that our impact upon the world could be far greater if there was less compromise and conformity to the ways of the world in which we live.

But these concepts are condemned in this day in which we live. If we make any mention of puritanical standards, then very often we're condemned for that. If you're too straight-laced, you would return us to a place of legalism and legalistic behavior, and that sort of thing.

Well, anything that's based upon the word of God that represents holiness and pureness within the heart and soul and life of a Christian is something that we do well to take heed to. We live in a world that is under the curse, and there's so much that has been sacrificed in the way of standards of righteousness. We have world leaders that are even concerned about all of the compromise when it comes to moral values.

They express that concern. They even pray for spiritual revival. We've just passed a period in which we had a day of prayer in this country in which we live.

I don't know how many people pray, but we're reminded in the word of God that if we want to survive as a people that honor God, we must humble ourselves. We must be submissive to the ways and the will of God. He loves us.

He's patient. He's long-suffering, but how long will that hand of judgment be saved? One day, things will be so different. All of the judgment and the wrath of God that was poured out upon Sodom tomorrow, one day it will fall upon this sin-curser.

And only those that know the Lord Jesus as their Savior, those that have grown to be with him, will escape that fiery judgment, that awful time of tribulation and trial that's faced by those that are outside of Christ here upon the face of the earth. We would warn men and women, and if we would warn them, it'll have to be more than just giving lip service to what we see in the word of God. We'll have to have a life that supports our testimony as Christians, and I'm persuaded that Lot in the city of Sodom and Gomorrah, he had no testimony.

He had compromised his position. The word of God says that they looked at him in an offense. They scoffed and sneered at even the thought that this man claims that he knows the true and the living God.

And I think of people in the course of this life that profess to be Christian, and you can mention their name and associate their name with being a believer in the Lord Jesus, and people have been heard to snicker and to lie, and looked intently upon that person that even professes to be a Christian. I think there are two things that are very important to remember about Lot and about what we have described in this account of a man that made a decision in the course of his life, a man that belonged to the Lord. There's something that's so important that we remember that it all started, perhaps, with a desire in his heart.

He entertained thoughts in his mind that were not of God. He wasn't thinking about glorifying God in his life. He wasn't thinking about doing that which would be for the best interest of his own testimony for God.

He only thought of personal gain, short-term gain. And so, instead of honoring and respecting his uncle, who perhaps had given counsel and advice about many of these things, he chooses to make a decision not only affecting his own life, but the life of his entire family. I wonder if you've ever questioned what family life would be like in a place like Sodom and Gomorrah, where homosexuality, all thoughts of sexual perversion prevailed, where there were so many things there that were just loathsome and despicable, and certainly not a place to raise up a family.

He had daughters, he had a wife, and you can tell that what they were subjected to there had an impact upon their life because, obviously, his wife was not a woman of faith. And his daughters proved later with their father that they had learned things there, they had been associated with things there that, in their practice of these things, proved to be, indeed, despicable. But a man makes a choice, and he not only brings hurt upon himself, but others that are influenced with him.

You know, it behooves the Christian parent today to be very careful what kind of decision you make, because it has an impact upon your whole family, where you live, what you do, and sometimes I've heard men and women say that they've made a decision to go to a certain place, change a job, move away, whatever, and later you discover that it wasn't for their spiritual good. It resulted in something in the way of monetary gain. Maybe materially they gained something, but the loss they suffered spiritually.

Sometimes a compromise of their position as a Christian. The Apostle Paul makes mention of what the standard should be for the Christian. A man or woman that claims to be a follower, a believer of Jesus Christ, he says, let them present their bodies as a living sacrifice unto God.

A living sacrifice. We're to live for the Lord Jesus. We are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

God wants us to be different in this world from all that are around us, and there was something distinctly different about Rock. Those in that city recognized it, but it had no impact for good, because he had sacrificed his position. Listen, believer in the Lord Jesus, it's important that we take our lives very seriously as Christians.

Where we go, what we do, what we say. We shall give an account one day to God for what we've done with our lives. Will it win his approval, or will we suffer loss? Here is a man saved as though by fire.

Through he escaped the judgment that fell on Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of the flames. But, in a sense, the very smell of fire and smoke was upon his garments, and they're Christians that are living today in this world, and their lives should be a bright light and testimony for God. But, they're living for self, and they're only looking at short-term gains.

Something that appeals to the eye, to the flesh, the pride of life, fear that they may suffer something in the way of rejection and condemnation from this world. But, look at what happened to your Savior when he lived in this world. This world condemned him and nailed him upon a cross, and this world has never been the enemy of God and the enemy of the Lord Jesus.

And, as believers in that wonderful person, the Lord Jesus Christ, we should be reminded that he loved us, and he experienced the shame and the suffering of Calvary's cross to redeem us, to save our souls, and to deliver us from the power of sin that is in this world, that can have its impact upon us in this world. What learn through painful experience that to entertain desires and thoughts in your heart and mind, for often it can bring about experiences in your life that can never, in a sense, be replaced. Once it's said,

once it's done, that's it.

So, decisions are important in every life. We ask people to make decisions for the Lord Jesus Christ, but the Christian, after he has received Christ, there is an important place to find every decision that we make. What am I going to do with my life? How seriously do I take this matter of sin that may touch my life and may defile my life? I get the notion sometimes that Christians say, when they are making reference to someone that's not a Christian, that poor sinner, that person whose life is controlled and dominated by sin, and yet that same Christian may take sin lightly in his own life, and doesn't think that he's defiled by sinful acts, sinful deeds, sinful words that are spoken.

Sin is defiling upon all that it touches, saint and sinner alike. God no more condones sin in the life of a believer than he condemns it in the life of a person that has never received Christ. Sin is a repulsive thing in the sight of God.

It must be condemned. It must be judged. We read in the book of Proverbs that the way of transgressors is a hard way.

That speaks for itself. Was this man not going to pay a price for this decision that he made, this determination that affected his own life and the life of his family? You better believe he did. It's recorded on the pages of Scripture.

It is shameful, the outcome of this life, and we had to read and have the witness of someone else to even remind us that he belonged to the Lord. I think of so many Christians that I know personally that their testimony as a Christian has long been lost. People no longer take seriously anything in the way of their witness for Jesus Christ.

Their lives are so inconsistent with everything that we have in this blessed book. If we want to look for a rule of conduct, a standard that should be maintained in the Christian life, let us look in God's book, in the Bible, in God's Word. And it says, don't be conformed, don't be pressed into the mold of this world like Lot was.

He became a part of everything in that evil, wicked place. We live in a world today, believer, beloved, believe in the Lord Jesus. It will press you into its mold.

It will so make you like this world that we're living in that no one can tell the difference between you and those that are truly of this world. We must exercise care. We read about Abraham.

This was a man that his life was built around an altar. Contact with God was of utmost importance to him. But you don't read this about Lot.

There was no devotion for God in his soul. You just get the notion that he's riding along on Abraham's coattails. And there are many people like that today.

The influence of others over their life is the only thing that even gives them anything that identifies them with other Christians. They don't have anything in the way of a personal witness, and that's to our shame. If we do not have a strong, vibrant testimony for Jesus Christ in this world in which we live today, if we do not have a light that is shining brightly for the Lord Jesus, that's to our shame and to our hurt.

When I read in the Word of God that the way of the transgressor is hard, we're thinking in terms of a treacherous way. We're thinking in a way that is selfish. It has selfish views.

Gratification of flesh is the thing that is being given the important place. Not any view of glorifying God, not any view that takes into account, my life is very short, and I'll only pass through this way one time. I have the opportunity as one that has been redeemed, one that has been loosed and set free.

I have an opportunity to glorify God in my life, but living my life so carelessly and indifferently, no one can detect any change in my life. Any change that marks me out as being different from this world, that's what the world's looking for, something that is different. The Word of God says that God's people should be a peculiar people.

That doesn't mean oddball. That doesn't mean eccentric just for the sake of being different. We are different because we are in the family of God.

We have the life of God within us. He wants us to be conformed to the image and likeness of his Son. How often do we say this? How much of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ can others see in you and me? Do others see Christ in our conduct, the one that loved as no other could love? He loved us even to the end.

He loved us to the uttermost and encouraged us in our lives to love each other the same way that he loved us. You know, how much change has been wrought in our lives because we have identified ourselves with this wonderful person, Jesus Christ, God's Son. There are many lives of men and women that have been lived, and they claim to be Christians.

They belong to a group of Christians, and yet, upon their death, very often as someone preached that funeral and made reference to the fact that that person was a Christian, there were many that would hear that and say, that's the first time I ever knew that person was a Christian. There was nothing in that life span that disturbed of living faith in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Someone at their death had to tell others, this person was a Christian, this man was a Christian, this woman was a Christian.

And we had to turn to the New Testament and had to have Peter tell us, yes, what was a just man, what was a righteous man? You'd have never known it reading about this account that we have in the scriptures. He was a man that lived for this world and for what he could get out of this world. He brought great hurt upon his family and upon himself, brought great sorrow to the heart of Abraham.

In fact, he had to even intercede for him. Yet, indeed, the way of a transgressor, the way of a sinner, is a hard way. It's without tenderness.

Christians are encouraged to be tender and kind one to another, and to exhibit a loving spirit one toward another, and to look upon this world and realize that it's living in a state of rebellion against God. It hasn't changed its role for one moment. This world at this very moment is rebelling against God.

That defiant spirit of saying, God, if you're there, we don't want you. God, if you're there, do something about what's going on in the world today. That defiant spirit, that spirit that shows no reverence and respect for the God that created all things, that gave us his beloved son, that provided a way of salvation and escape from the judgment that is to fall upon this world.

I thought, in connection with this passage, what a contrast when we come to the book of Joshua. And, in that 24th chapter, and we read in that latter part of the 15th verse, Joshua, that old soldier, that one that

would have gone in to the promised land that God bid him. There was too much opposition.

He and Caleb had to stand alone. That old fellow said, one day, all of you can take whatever course you choose in this life, but I've made a choice. As for me and my house, we're going to serve God.

And, believer in the Lord Jesus, post on the heels of your decision to receive Christ, there should be that dedication of your life to service for the Lord Jesus. The whole thrust of my life as one that has been purchased with a price, the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, I am not my own. I belong to God.

I am His property. He has placed His seal upon me. I must serve my God.

I must live in this life for His glory and honor. And, I remind you this morning, dear believer in the Lord Jesus, if you're not doing that, there's something wrong in your life. And, the word of God makes ample provision for us to confess and to forsake our sins.

And, I'm going to ask this morning, as we bow just before we dismiss, before we have a hymn of invitation, that we bow our hearts in the presence of God. We live in such a busy world. Most of us have such hectic schedules, that once we go out that door, very often there's no time to meditate and to think upon these things.

But, let us search our hearts today and before God. But, Lord, if there's anything in my life that hinders my testimony as a Christian, I want you to reveal it to me. And, if I know what it is, I want to confess and forsake that thing this morning.

The time is too short, and I need to get down to business and living for God today, and bringing honor and glory to the name of the Lord Jesus. I've wasted too many years, but this morning I want to set things straight. Let this be a time of searching our hearts before the Lord in confession of anything that robs us of communion and fellowship with our God.

Let us pray. Oh our God, in the quietness of these moments, we come before thee in the wonderful name of your Son, the Lord Jesus. We thank thee for saving us.

We thank thee for providing such a wonderful salvation. We are reminded that the Word of God tells us that when we have restored to us the joy of our salvation, we shall go out and tell others our lives will be a witness for thee. Lord, if there's any sin in any of our lives, be they sins of commission or sins of omission, Lord, in all honesty before thee this day, help us.

We pray thee, O God, confess our sins. Lord, whatever it is in this life that would keep that light from shining brightly in dark days, Lord, we confess to thee. We know that you're righteous.

You'll honor this confession, and you'll forgive us. You'll restore unto us the joy of thy salvation. We shall go out and tell others about a wonderful savior.

Receive our thanks today for this privilege of assembly, for the very favorable and comfortable circumstances in which we're found. We remember all others less fortunate, and we do commit our way to thee. And, for the day we see thee face to face, grant, we pray thee, in that day we shall hear that word of approval.

Amen. Well done, O good and faithful servant. This we pray in the name of the Lord Jesus our Savior.

Amen.

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