

1: Opposites Attract | Bible Devotions

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God called Abraham to a great adventure in faith when He told him to leave family, friends, and homeland to go on a journey with God. And God gave him an amazing promise: I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" Gen. But the land was occupied by the Canaanites, and Abraham was a nomad traveling with his household and all of his livestock. Abraham "had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold," Gen. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. So their herdsmen started a range war. Abraham took the initiative to end it. Is not the whole land before you? This land is mine. As he did so he demonstrated a powerful principle: So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company" Gen. Clearly, Lot should have said, "No, Uncle Abraham, you choose first. God promised this land to you. I appreciate your bringing me with you. We learn from Lot that selfishness is focused on the temporal and the material. Lot saw that the plain was watered by the river and was lush and green. So he chose for himself the whole fertile plain of the Jordan. He thought only of the material and temporal advantages of living there. But we get a foreshadowing of the consequences of his selfish choice in the next verses, which tell us that Abraham "lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. Selfishness Does Not Consider Spiritual Hazards Lot pitched his tents near Sodom, unconcerned that Sodom was notorious for its evil" a city whose inhabitants were wholly given over to homosexual perversion. He just wanted that nice, green valley for his flocks. The selfish person only thinks of the here and now. He simply continued to reaffirm His promise to Him. After Lot left, God told Abraham, "Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you" Gen. Genesis 14 describes four kings who warred against five other kings in that area. Sodom was one of the defeated cities, and the victors carried loot and captives away with them. Guess who was included! Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom" Gen. So Lot was now living in Sodom. Apparently he considered the material advantages more important than the moral and spiritual concerns for his family in that environment. Let him take the consequences! Instead, he mustered trained men from his own household and pursued the victorious kings until he recovered all the goods and people they had captured, including Lot. When Abraham returned, the king of Sodom rushed out to meet him. All of the loot and the people Abraham had rescued rightfully belonged to Abraham. What an opportunity for Abraham to multiply his wealth! But he resisted the temptation. He was determined to let God alone be the source of his prosperity. Abraham would never let anyone, especially the depraved king of Sodom, have the right to say he was the one who made Abraham rich. Abraham had his eyes fixed on eternity. There are good ways and bad ways to accumulate wealth. As Christians, we must be willing to forego the fast buck that might be legal but is really unethical or ruthless. Instead, we trust God to give us what we need. Again, this is demonstrated in the story of Abraham and Lot. Although they looked like ordinary men, they were really the Lord and two angels. As was his custom, Abraham treated the strangers with lavish hospitality. Soon Abraham realized who his guests were, and he heard from them that Sodom was to be destroyed. At that point, the visitors left Abraham, and two of them headed for Sodom. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning! He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom" both young and old" surrounded the house. This passage tells us a lot, not only about the debauchery that permeated the city of Sodom, but also about how much Lot had acclimated to that city. He was now an important person in Sodom. We know this because the angels found him sitting at the city

gate, where business and legal matters were conducted. The rulers of the city sat in the gate. First he pitched his tent near Sodom. Then he moved inside. This ugly chapter in the book of Genesis gives us an accurate picture of what still happens today when homosexuality is an accepted, alternative lifestyle. As the story continues, we see how Lot himself was polluted by the immorality of Sodom. Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. So Lot offered his two daughters to the rapists. Protecting strangers was more important to him than protecting his daughters. It boggles the mind. Meanwhile, the Sodomites made no attempt to hide the contempt they had for Lot. Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door" Gen. The angels then urged Lot to get his family out of Sodom because God was going to destroy it. He had no credibility with them, either. Finally, the angels had to drag Lot, his wife, and his two daughters out of Sodom before the Lord destroyed it by raining down burning sulfur from heaven. After the luxury of Sodom they were reduced to living in a cave. Then the story took another unbelievable twist. Each of them bore a son as a result of that incest. We are their primary role models, and our responsibility to model unselfishness and godliness is enormous. Lot made the selfish choice to prosper personally, but as a result of his choice he lost everything: And you might say he lost his daughters to the culture of Sodom. Can you imagine what it was like living with them after their sexual impropriety? These are consequences we will face if we base our choices on material and temporal advantages. When we are focused only on the here and now, we will always choose what is best for ourselves. We often do so without a thought about the effect our actions may have on our future or on others, especially our families. We May Do Unselfish Things for Selfish Reasons Sometimes, in our selfishness, we are blind to our own behavior, having convinced ourselves that we are being sacrificial. We can fool ourselves into thinking that we are unselfish because we are serving others. Even the disciples who lived with Jesus for over three years were infected with selfish ambition. They expected the Messiah to set up His earthly kingdom within their lifetimes, and they had great plans for themselves when He did. These competitive young men even brought their mother into the act see Matt. He left His throne in glory and came to serve, to give His life as a ransom for many. And He alone is to be our role model. We are not to model ourselves after people who achieve greatness through power, riches, or position. The greatest privilege we have on earth is not to rule over others but to serve them and give our lives to bring them to God. The desire to be first. The longing to have the most. In fact, the opposite is true. Scripture tells us, "If you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice" James 3: Many sins have at their source selfishness and self-indulgence.

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