

Gen. 19:23-26; Luke 17:22-37; Remember Lot's Wife I. The Context for this Reminder II. The Purpose of this Reminder

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, we live in an age and time when the sins of Sodom have become commonplace. The wicked, adulteration of our current generation is one that should send chills down our spine- when natural order and the structure of marriage and gender have been thrown into complete disarray. I have been hearing and thinking a lot about the sins of Sodom in our society lately. But today, our passage is going to lead us in a different direction. We will be looking at Lot's wife more than the residents of Sodom. Now the reason that it is timely to consider- to remember Lot's wife- is because we are living in a time when the financial markets are in chaos, inflation is eating away at our paychecks, government spending is out of control, and it seems like materialism is the most praised vice. So today we are going to consider the 2nd shortest verse in the Bible- Luke 17:32- Remember Lot's wife. We consider this theme: Jesus Christ instructs us to remember Lot's wife as a lesson to those who will face judgement. This short verse is extremely important- and whenever the Bible tells you to remember something- you do well to take it to heart.

I. The Context for this Reminder

In our first point, we consider the context for this reminder. Remember Lot's wife- now who was Lot? Well, as we find in the context of our reading from Gen. 19, Lot was Abraham's nephew. Because of infighting, Abraham and Lot had parted ways- with Lot choosing to go down and live by the people in the Jordan Valley- by the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah. Now over time, Lot had grown quite connected to the people of this land- living in their midst- and yet his heart was burdened. Lot was a righteous man as II Peter says- and he was tormented in his soul by the wicked actions of those who lived in Sodom. So although Lot lived in their city, Lot did not share in their sins. Now what was so bad about the people of Sodom that righteous lot was distressed by their actions. Well, as you will remember from Gen. 19, the men of Sodom were a particularly wicked kind of people. The sins of the

residents of Sodom were sexual in nature- homosexual men were raping visitors who came into the city. It was not a good place to live- much less to visit. And the cry of the oppressed went up to God- and the LORD sent His two angels to destroy this city. Now in reading of the sins of Sodom- which even comes into our language as Sodomy- we can see that these sins are present and growing in our nation. Sexual sins that are not only against God's law- like adultery- but even against the laws of nature itself- like the LGBT+ crowd- should fill our hearts with sorrow as we see these sins abound. And because of this wickedness, the LORD was going to destroy the city! Rest assured, God's judgment will fall upon those who live and give their approval to such wicked deeds. But God, who is rich in mercy, used the intercession of Abraham so that the righteous were not swept away with the wicked. If there were 10 righteous found in the city- the city would be spared as Abraham had pleaded for. But God's great grace is even better than that! Even though there were only 4- not even 10- even these 4 people who knew the LORD were not destroyed. The angel led Lot, his wife and his two daughters out of the city. So God kept His promise to Abraham- He graciously spares Lot, his wife and their daughters. Lot is given permission to flee to a small village- Zoar- and as the sun rises the LORD rains down His judgement on the cities in the Jordan valley. Fire and sulphur consume all that lived in the land. Imagine what Lot and his wife had to endure. It would be like getting an evacuation notice- there is forest fire quickly approaching. You must leave now! What would you take- how hard would it be to leave everything behind knowing that you would lose everything you had worked for! Well, this is the very issue at hand- isn't it! What would you take- what would you leave- could you leave everything if that meant saving your soul? Only a fool would hold onto earthly possessions at the cost of his life! By refusing to flee the raging fire because they loved their things!

II. The Purpose of this Reminder

Now that we have a little reminder of who Lot was, we come to crux of the issue. Remember Lot's wife! Now what do we need to remember about her? She does not even have a name! Our first point was

really- remember Lot and Sodom. Now we come to focus on Jesus' warning- remember Lot's wife. So we think back to our passage from Gen. 19- as Lot and his family are being led out of Sodom they are told by the angel- do not turn around- but run to the city of Zoar. But Lot's wife does the exact thing she was warned not to do- Lot's wife turned around and looked when the angels had instructed- do not look behind you. Now why would Lot's wife turn around? Why did she look behind her? Well, she looked behind her because her heart was still in the city of Sodom- she loved the world and longed for her former life. Lot's wife could not let go of the worldly possessions and pleasures- so she looked back with longing desire and regret. She did not look behind her because she was curious- she looked behind her because her heart desired the things of this world more than obedience to God and His word! So we note this clear contrast- Lot's wife was not destroyed in Sodom for the sexual sins of sodomy. No, her sin strikes much closer to home for us! Remember, Sodom was the Mecca of that time- filled with all sorts of treasure and pleasure- a life of ease and luxury. Her sin was that she loved the things of this world more than the LORD! She could not let them go! The seeds of the word were choked by the deceitfulness of wealth! She was a friend to this world- and thus she made herself an enemy of God! She longed for her life of ease more than obedience to God! So you can take Lot's wife out of Sodom- but you can't take the love of Sodom's treasure from her heart! Now how does Jesus use Lot's wife to teach us in Luke 17?

Well, in Luke 17 Jesus is teaching on the end times. He is speaking of the coming of the Kingdom- specifically the rapture on the last day. When Jesus comes again, there will be separation that takes place. Some will be called up to meet Jesus in the sky- while others will be left behind to suffer the judgement and fire as Jesus purifies the earth. This judgement will be swift and unexpected as Luke 17:28 says- as it was in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot when Sodom was destroyed. Suddenly and without warning, fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed them all. So it will be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In other words, Jesus is not going to give humanity a warning- He

is going to come back suddenly- He will rapture or bring up His people into the sky to meet Him and the wicked ones will be left behind to suffer wrath. But then Jesus gives this strange warning- remember Lot's wife in v. 32. Well, like Lot's wife, on the day of Judgement there will be many who are more interested in the things of this world than the things of God! Like Lot's wife, there will be people who will be longing for the earthly pleasures more than meeting Jesus in the air! If Jesus comes back and you are coming home from the field- would you go back to the field? Would you go back to work? If Jesus appears in the sky, will you back into your house to admire your earthly treasures one more time? Or to put this in today's context, if Jesus comes back- when the day of Judgement arrives- will you try to make a quick trip to the bank first? How foolish! If Jesus comes back and you are watching your favorite TV show, will you ask Jesus to wait until your show is over! This is the purpose of remembering Lot's wife! The destruction of Sodom was a picture of the coming destruction of this world on the Day of the LORD. In looking back, Lot's wife displayed what was truly important to her. Can you imagine that happening on the last day- the Day of Judgement? The Sign of the Lamb appears in the sky- the voice of the archangel is heard and the clouds are rolled back! And you have some people who look up to heaven with joy and expectation- while others are filled with worry and fret! Some jump at the opportunity to meet their Savior in the air- while others run to their basement to dig up and hold their buried treasures one more time! Remembering Lot's wife is to question of our priorities! Do we truly love Jesus more than these things? The death of Lot's wife is a warning to us- do we really love Jesus more than these earthly treasures? As we saw with Lot and his wife, being married to a Christian is no guarantee of your future deliverance! Is our commitment and obedience to Him one that is whole-hearted- or only surface and superficial? Truly, we need Jesus to give us a pure, clean, steadfast and obedient heart! Lord Jesus, please remove our love of this world! Teach us to love and obey God first! We must forsake all- and follow Him! Or as v. 33 puts it- whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it! If you are more concerned about your earthly treasures and joy- your love for this world- then in the end you will lose your life!

But if you forsake it all- if you deny yourself- if you love God with all your heart- then in the end you will keep your life!

To conclude, the destruction of Sodom is a reminder that the day of Judgment is coming. God used the intercession of Abraham- remembering Abraham's request- and thus Lot's life was spared. Lot was righteous- he was tormented by the wicked deeds he saw around him. But what about Lot's wife? Well, Lot's wife was not bothered by the sins of the world because she loved the pleasures and joy that the world gave her- and thus she too was swept away by God's wrath. She turned into a pillar of salt- her life a barren wasteland of materialism. Remember Lot's wife! When Jesus return on the last day, will we desire the things that are passing away more than presence of the Lord? Will our hearts turn back to the trinkets and toys of this life and thus miss out on the glory and riches reserved for God's people? When Jesus comes back, where will you look? Will your eyes be lifted up to see your Savior face- or will your eyes search for the gold and silver of this world- looking back to the cities of men? Like the plowman- you must not look back! Will your hands be lifted up in worship- or will they be weighed down by worldly treasures. The call to remember Lot's wife is a warning against worldliness and materialism. Yes, Sodom was destroyed- but so was Lot's wife! We can point to the sins of Sodom and say- those are deserving of God's wrath. But do we point to the sins of materialism in our own hearts? Do we take the plank out of our own eyes when it comes to loving the finances and riches of this world more than God and His glory? What gives us more pleasure- being with God and His people or holding earthly treasures in your hand? Jesus Christ instructs us to remember Lot's wife as a lesson to those who will face judgement. In Mt. 10, Jesus said it would be more bearable for the residents of Sodom on the day of Judgment than for those who heard the gospel but hardened their hearts. In this way, Lot's wife will suffer a worse eternity than the residents of Sodom- for she heard the angel's warning but turned back in her heart and with her eyes. May our heart and eyes remain fixed on the Lord of glory- so that when He returns, we are not swept away as well!