

REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE! - Lesson #3

Let us begin our service by reading from Luke's Gospel, 17:26-32. Christ speaks of His Second Advent. That great event and the things immediately connected with it are described here from the very lips of our Savior Jesus Christ.

First, there are important facts for us to focus our attention on--we should observe what a fearful picture our Lord gives of the state of the professing Church at His Second Coming. We are told that as it was in the "days of Noah," and in the "days of Lot," "so shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

The character of those days we are not left to conjecture or question. We are told in very plain language that men were entirely taken up with eating, drinking, marrying, buying, selling, planting, building, and would attend to nothing else.

The flood came at last in Noah's day, and drowned all except those who were in the ark. The fire fell from Heaven at last in Lot's day, and destroyed all except Lot, his wife, and his daughters. And our Lord declares most plainly that the same events will happen when He comes again at the end of the world: 1st Thessalonians 5:3,

"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them."

It is hard to imagine a passage of Scripture which more completely overthrows the common notions that prevail among men about Christ's return. The world will not be converted when the Lord Jesus Christ comes again. The earth will not be full of the knowledge of the Lord. The reign of peace will not have been established. The Millennium will not have begun. These glorious things will come to pass AFTER the Second Advent, but not before.

If words have any meaning, the verses before us show that the earth will be found full of wickedness and worldliness in the day of Christ's appearing. The unbelievers and the unconverted will be found everywhere. The believers and the Godly, as in the days of Noah and Lot, will be found, but few.

Let us take heed to ourselves and beware of the spirit of the world. It is not enough for us to do as others, and buy and sell and plant and build and eat and drink and marry, as if we were born for nothing else. Exclusive attention to these things may ruin us as thoroughly as open sin.

We must come out from the world and be separate. We must dare to be peculiar. We must escape for our lives like Lot. We must flee to the ark like Noah. This alone is safety. Then and only then, we shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger, and avoid destruction when the Son of Man is revealed.

Zephaniah 2:3 "Seek the Lord all you humble of the land, who do His just commands, seek righteousness; seek humility, perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord."

In the verses we read in Luke 17, a most solemn warning is given by our Lord against unsound profession. He says to us, in connection with the description of His Second Advent, "Remember Lot's wife." Lot's wife went far in religious profession. She was, remember, the wife of a "righteous man" Lot. She was connected through him with Abraham, the father of the faithful. She fled with her husband from Sodom in the day when he escaped for his life by God's command.

But Lot's wife was not really like her husband. Though she fled with him, she had left her heart behind her. She willfully disobeyed the strict injunction which the angel had laid upon her. She looked back towards Sodom, and was at once struck dead.

She was turned into a pillar of salt and perished in her sins. "Remember" her, says our Lord, "Remember Lot's wife." Lot's wife is meant to be a beacon and a warning to all professing Christians. It may be feared that many will be found like her in the day of Christ's Second Advent.

There are many Christians in the present day who go a certain length in religion. They conform to the outward ways of Christian relatives and friends. They speak the "language of Canaan." They use all the outward ordinances of religion. But all this time their souls are not right in the sight of God. The world is in their hearts, and their hearts are in the world. By and by, in the day of sifting, their unsoundness will be exposed to the world.

Their Christianity will prove rotten at the core. The case of Lot's wife will not stand alone. Let us remember Lot's wife, and resolve to be real in our relationship with God. Let us not profess to serve Christ for no higher motive than to please husbands, or wives, or masters, or ministers.

A mere lean-to religion like this will never save our souls. Let us serve Christ for His Own sake. Let us never rest until we have the true Grace of God in our hearts, and have no desire to look back to the world. How many married people do well in their relationship with God to all appearance, until their children begin to grow up, and then they fall away?

In the early years of their married life they seemed to follow Christ diligently, and to witness a good confession. They regularly attended the preaching of the Gospel: they were fruitful in good works; they were never seen in vain and degrading society.

Their faith and practice were both sound, and walked hand-in-hand. But, alas, how often a spiritual blight comes over the household when a young family begins to grow up, and sons and daughters have to be brought forward in life. A leaven of worldliness begins to appear in their habits, dress, entertainments, and employment of time.

They are no longer strict about the company they keep and the places they visit. Where is the decided line of separation which they once observed? Where is the unswerving abstinence from worldly amusements which once marked their course?

It is all forgotten. It is all laid aside like an old almanac. A change has come over them: the spirit of the world has taken possession of their hearts. They walk in the steps of Lot's wife. They looked back.

And how many young women seem to love the Lord and His Word until they are twenty or twenty-one years of age, and then lose all?

Up to this time of their life, their relationship with God is all that could be desired. They keep up habits of private prayer; they read their Bibles diligently; they visit the poor when they have the opportunity; they teach in Sunday schools when there is an opening; they minister to the worldly and spiritual wants of the poor.

They like Christian friends; they love to talk on religious subjects. But alas, how often they prove unstable as water, and are ruined by the love of the world! Young men are the same or worse! They show religious zeal and appear to love the Lord, but when they reach a certain age they start spending all their time on daily TV programs, going to so-called Christian rock concerts, attending sporting events, joining teams, and especially bad company.

They even become too involved in certain hobbies and activities, especially worldly friends who lead them into the world. Both young men and women fail along these lines, and little by little they fall away and lose their first love to Christ.

Little by little the "things seen" push out of their minds the "things unseen," and like the plague of locusts, eat up every green thing in their souls. Step by step they go back from the decided position they once took up. They suddenly find out that it is "uncharitable" to think that one person has more relationship with God than another.

They discover that it is "exclusive" to attempt any separation from the customs and activities of the worldly society. By and by they give their affections to someone of the opposite sex who makes no pretence to becoming a dedicated born-again Christian.

They see the neighbor's young men and women using drugs, and drinking, and having a good ol' time, and they imagine that their present life has been too restrictive. At last they end up giving up the last remnant of their own Christianity, and becoming thorough children of the world. They walk in the steps of Lot's wife. They looked back.

How many professed Christians in the churches today were at one time zealous and earnest professors and have now become lukewarm, formal and cold!

There was a time when none seemed so much alive in their relationship with God as they were; none were so diligent in their attendance on the means of Grace; none were so eager to promote the cause of the Gospel, and so ready for every good work.

None were so thankful for spiritual instruction; none were apparently so desirous to grow in Grace. But now, alas everything has changed! The "love of other things" has taken possession of their hearts, and choked the good seed of the Word.

The money of the world, the rewards of the world, the literature of the world, the honors of the world, have now taken the first place in their affections. Take note of such professed Christians: they subscribe to immoral magazines; some professed Christian even dress sensuous like Hollywood celebrity stars and singers; they watch all of the immoral, sexually-perverted TV comedy programs, which feature sex and crime, and afternoon programs with talk show hosts and hostesses who are an abomination and as wicked as Jezebel.

Instead of traditional church hymnals, these professed Christians have CD recordings by "hip-hop" artists, and hard rock music that they listen to; music that is violent in nature with words of unimaginable filth, and these Christians think nothing unscriptural of it. They continually talk of the horrid TV programs they have watched and movies they saw.

Is their conversation about spiritual things? Take note of their daily conduct, as I often witnessed at AT&T while working there almost 15 years, when these professed Christians gathered for a coffee break. You will hear little conversations or zeal about the kingdom of God.

They do have a religion of sorts, but it is no longer a living relationship with God. The spring of their former Christianity is dried up and gone; the fire of the spiritual machine is quenched and cold; the earth has put out the flame which once burned so brightly. They have walked in the steps of Lot's wife. They have looked back!

Ministers are not exempt from looking back. How many clergymen work hard in their profession for a few years, and then become lazy and undisciplined from the love of this present world.

I mentioned before that some years ago, I used to attend an Evangelical Ministers Conference, a large Fellowship of Pastors of a large county in the northern part of New Jersey. In mingling with these fellow pastors, I found out that their main topic of conversation, between meetings, was discussions about their "retirement." How they looked forward to reaching that age when they could retire from the Ministry and "enjoy" a second home in some

rural area, where they could live in freedom and without worrying about sermons to prepare and the business of the Church.

But, how is it, that so often after "beginning in the Spirit" they end up "in the flesh," and like Sampson, they are shorn of the strength in the lap of that Delilah, the world! Remember the lessons on "World, Flesh and Devil?"

Many preachers today are fearful of preaching the whole Word of God; they have a morbid fear of "extreme views," and they are filled with a cautious dread of giving offence. They indulge in sermons that will offend nobody in the congregation; the world has bound such preachers hand and foot. They have walked in the steps of Lot's wife. They have looked back.

Many today who claim to be Christians, and living saints, are only fooling themselves. It is sad to observe how professing Christians can blind their consciences by questionable arguments on this subject, and can defend positive worldliness by talking of God's Love, and the necessity of having a "cheerful religion."

The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches have strangled the Word from them, and they do not even know it.

They began like Jacob, and David, and Peter, and they are likely to end as Esau, and Saul, and Judas Iscariot.

They began like Ruth, and Hannah, and Mary, and Priscilla, and they are likely to end like Lot's wife. Remember Lot's wife!

We are always glad to give Scriptural advice and counsel to those who desire to write us about their problems, and to remember their requests for prayer in our services.

In addition, we publish sermons on other subjects, which take up in detail teaching on how to deal with God successfully and be delivered out of all our troubles. We will gladly send them to those who desire them for their own use or for others.

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