

ABRAM AND LOT

Lessons: *Genesis 13:1-13 & 14:1-16*

There are times in our lives when we are faced with making some very important choices. Many choices we make are not all that important. When we have a school holiday, for example, we may chose to go to a football game, play games with our friends, or perhaps dad has asked us whether we would like to go fishing.

Each day our life is filled with choices about the books we read, the TV shows we watch, the music we listen to, the foods we eat, the clothes we wear, when we do our homework, when we help out in our home, and perhaps, at the close of the day, when we say our prayers, and what we read from the Word.

Every day we make thousands of choices. Do they all really affect our lives? Are they all of equal importance? Do we need to think much about them?

The story of Abram and Lot is a story that tells us a lot about choices. It tells us that there are sometimes hidden things in making choices that we need to be aware of and think about. Those hidden things are called *desires*. They are the inside feelings or cravings that cause us to want to do one thing more than another thing. These desires are often born with us—meaning, we got them from our parents, our grandparents, and some of our ancestors who have died a long time ago.

Some of these inherited desires and feelings are good and incline us to want to be led by the Lord, by His Word, and by the parents and adults in our life who are wise.

If we could peek inside the story of the Word, we would find that the story of how Abram and Lot come into the land of Canaan and make it their home, is really a story that describes our hidden good desires and feelings, and how they come from heaven into our mind. They come from deep inside of us, as though they came from a far off country, and try to find a permanent dwelling with us.

Some of our good desires are internal and bring us things of heaven. This is like Abram and his flocks. Some of our good desires are external and bring us delights from the world. This is Lot.

Does the story of Lot separating from Abraham mean that we must give up our desires and loves of the things of the world? No, if all of our desires are led by the Lord and His Word, then our heavenly desires and our worldly desires can live together and in peace. Lot's herdsmen did not need to fight with Abram's

herdsmen. And if they were all charitable Lot would not have had to move away.

The fact is that there are mixed in with our good desires of the world a lot of bad desires of the world. Some of these desires may be very strong, very selfish, and very bad. They are often accompanied by feelings of greed, anger, jealousy, revenge, and perhaps even a delight in hurting others.

That such desires live close to things that are actually evil and false is described by how Lot went to live near the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

So this story of Lot separating from Abram is a story of how we must make choices among our worldly desires. We will keep what is good and try to separate ourselves from what is bad.

When we have a desire to say, do, or experience something, the process of choosing begins. This is when we must stop and reflect about the kind of choice we are going to make. Will we listen to the voice of our conscience, and be guided by what the Lord has taught us? Or will we look away from Abram like Lot did, and make choices that are bad, and that bring us into the presence of things that are dirty and unclean? If we come to dwell in the gate of Sodom as did Lot, that is a very dangerous place to be.

The Lord has given His New Church more freedom than any other church in the history of the world, to freely use and enjoy all the delights and pleasures of the world. He only asks in doing so, that we be led by His counsel and wisdom.