

Introduction

In Matthew 7:13-14 there are two gates. There is a narrow gate that leads to life and a wide gate that leads to destruction. In the same chapter, in verses 24-27, we find two foundations. There was a house built on the rock and a house built on the sand. In Romans 8, there are two mindsets. The mind set on the flesh is death and the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. In all of these examples, there are two choices. Someone can enter through the narrow gate and follow God or they can enter the wide gate and follow the ways of the world. They can build their lives on the principles of the Word of God, or they can build their lives on worldly philosophies. They can set their minds on the things of God or on the things of the world. Paul says in Romans 8:14 that those who are led by the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. He says that those who have their minds set on the flesh do not subject themselves to the law of God and are not even able to do so. You have to enter the narrow gate of Jesus and get on the narrow path before you begin to build your life on the solid foundation or before you can be led by the Spirit.

(Rom 8:5-7) “For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. {6} For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, {7} because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.”

In our text today, Lot and his daughters are not led by the Spirit of God; they are led by the flesh. They have their minds set on the flesh, and they are led by the flesh. They have not entered the narrow gate and are not living on the narrow path. They are not building their lives according to the word of God; they are building on a very shaky foundation. They are not led by the Spirit but led by the flesh. This morning, we are going to finish up Genesis 19, which is about Lot and his daughters. We will look at how Lot and his daughters were led by the flesh. Then, we will jump to the New Testament to look at being led by the Spirit.

Our text today does not talk about being led by the Spirit. It gives us just the opposite, how Lot and his daughters were led by the flesh. It is a great example of how not to be led. The things that they based their decisions on are not the things that God wants us to base our decisions on, so I could not just leave us here; I had to cover the second path. Over the 32 years that I have pastored, one of the most frequent questions I get is about how to know God’s will about a matter. I have written lots of articles, and preached many messages on the topic. I have never used Genesis 19 before, but there are lots of learning points in our text today.

Two Ways Of Being Led

1. **Led by the Flesh** (Gen 19:30-39)
2. **Led by the Spirit** (Pr 3:5-6, Rom 8:14)

1. **Led By The Flesh** (Gen 19:30-39)

(Gen 19:30) “Lot went up from Zoar, and stayed in the mountains, and his two daughters with him; for he was afraid to stay in Zoar; and he stayed in a cave, he and his two daughters.

Our text today begins with Lot going up from Zoar to the mountains. Earlier, when the two angels were leading Lot and his family out, Lot had requested that he be allowed to stay in Zoar.

He said that disaster would overtake him if he went up in the mountains, so he asked if he could stay at Zoar. Zoar was originally Bela, but was renamed, Zoar, which means small or insignificant. Now, Lot leaves Zoar and goes up to the mountains. It says that Lot was afraid to stay in Zoar. Our text does not say what he was afraid of. He may have been afraid of more judgment to come. He may have been afraid of the wicked people in that town. The whole valley was full of wickedness. My guess is that he was afraid of the local inhabitants. In any case, he was led by his fear (vs 30)

(Gen 19:19-21) "Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, for the disaster will overtake me and I will die; {20} now behold, this town is near enough to flee to, and it is small. Please, let me escape there (is it not small?) that my life may be saved." {21} He said to him, "Behold, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have spoken."

We will talk about being led by the Spirit later, but I want to introduce it right now. In Romans 8:14-15, Paul wrote, "*For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'*" Being led by the spirit is in contrast to being led by fear. Children of God are not led by fear, and Lot was being led by fear.

Fear is just one of the many ways that people are led by the flesh. Most of us do not like conflict. Some people are willing to confront people, but many people run from conflict. One of the first questions that I often ask visitors is where they have been going to church. My follow up question is why are you leaving your current church. I am trying to find out if they are being led to our church or they are running away from some other situation. Lot was not being led by God to the cave. He was running away from another situation. He was being led by fear.

The next example in our text is how Lot's daughters were being led.

(Gen 19:31-36) "Then the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of the earth. {32} "Come, let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him that we may preserve our family through our father." {33} So they made their father drink wine that night, and the firstborn went in and lay with her father; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. {34} On the following day, the firstborn said to the younger, "Behold, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father." {35} So they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger arose and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. {36} Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father.

Lot's daughters were led by their own reasoning and by pride. The oldest daughter said that our father is old and there is not a man on earth for us to marry. So, let's make our father drunk and preserve our family through our father. The daughters were being led by their own reasoning and understanding. In Proverbs 3:5-6, we are told to trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not on our own understanding, and He will make our paths straight. The daughters were not trusting in the Lord to bring them a husband. The daughters were not acknowledging the Lord in any of their ways. They were merely leaning on their own understanding.

The people of the world do not acknowledge the Lord in any of their ways because they have not placed their trust in the Lord. If you remove the Lord from the equation, you are left with doing whatever is right in your own eyes. In Judges 17:6 and 21:25, we read that in those days there was no king in Israel and every man did what was right in his own eyes. If you remove God, the ultimate authority, you can do whatever you think is right in your own eyes. One of the goals of secularism today is to remove God from the equation. If you have no God to answer to, then abortion is up to the mother to decide. If you remove God from the equation, who determines whether gay marriage is acceptable or not. Lot's daughters were not under the kingdom of God, that is the rule and reign of God. They were just doing what was right in their own eyes.

(Judges 17:6) "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes."

About two years ago I had two teens, a boy and a girl, come to our door. They were out campaigning for someone in the upcoming election. I took a few minutes to speak with them, and asked them some questions. I asked them how their candidate felt about gay marriage. They responded, "He would never judge anyone. That choice is up to people to decide for themselves." My next question was whether it was okay for men to take eight-year-old girls and marry them. Oh no, that would be wrong. I asked them why it was wrong, and they could not answer that. I told them that in the Middle East where I grew up, that was not that uncommon. I said that our culture in America disagrees with it, but their culture says that it is morally acceptable. I said the problem with homosexuality, gay marriage, incest, and abortion is the absence of God. God created the heavens and the earth and everything on it. He is the owner and the ultimate authority. He is the One that determines what is right and wrong, and He has given us the Scriptures to help us know what is right or wrong. God says that abortion is wrong. God says that homosexuality is wrong. We saw last week where God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because they went after strange flesh. In other words, homosexuality was rampant. A Sodomite is a homosexual. God brought judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah because the outcry against them and their gross immorality had become too great. We have to have a moral plumb line to determine what is right and wrong. Lot's daughters had no moral compass. They just did what was right in their own eyes.

In Numbers 15:39, God told Moses to tell the people to put a tassel on the corner of their garments. They, He explained what it was for. It was to be a perpetual reminder that they were not to follow after their own heart and their own eyes, but to remember the commandments of the Lord. The Word of God is our authority and we are to do according to what is written in the Word of God, and not just follow after our own heart and our own eyes.

(Num 15:39) "It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, so as to do them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot."

Now, at this time, the Scriptures had not been written and canonized. We have an advantage in that regard. But, Uncle Abraham was tight with the Lord. They could have gone to Uncle Abe and got his counsel. Two angels had appeared to their father, and to them. He had seized their hands and taken them out of Sodom before it got destroyed. The angels were sent from God, and they could have prayed and asked God's counsel. They could have asked their own father for his counsel. Instead, they did what was right in their own eyes and did not receive outside counsel.

Notice that the decisions and plans that they had made according were deceitful and wrong. They were going to get their father drunk so that they could do what they wanted without any resistance from him. I want to mention a few things about alcohol. This is the second time that alcohol is mentioned. Noah planted vineyards and got intoxicated. Now Lot gets intoxicated. So, I need to make a few remarks about alcohol. I cannot ignore the topic.

I think there are times in a person's life that he/she is more susceptible to alcoholic abuse. Noah's wife died and he was probably very lonely. There were no other women in the world for him to marry and enjoy companionship. He had his children and his grandchildren, but I think he was pretty lonely. In our text today, Lot is living with his two daughters, but he has lost his wife. He is probably lonely. He is probably grieving over the loss of his wife, the loss of his home, the loss of his flocks and business. I imagine that he was at a very low point in his life. All of us go through some difficult things in life, but how we handle them is very important. Many people take alcohol or drugs to medicate their pain, loneliness, and troubles.

I do not think that Lot's daughters could make their father drink and get drunk. I think that Lot was drinking every night and they just made sure he had enough to be thoroughly drunk. I don't think they said, "Dad, we brought you a flask of wine to enjoy, and then made him drink it. That may have worked the first time, but two nights in a row. No, I believe that Lot was drinking on a regular basis and they just made sure he had enough to be thoroughly drunk. They took advantage of him.

The Scriptures do give some benefits of wine and alcohol. Consider the following verses:

- Cheer up a person (Judges 9:13)
- Makes life merry (Ec 10:19)
- Cheer up a bitter heart (Pr 31:6)
- Medicate a dying person (Pr 31:6)
- Medicinally help with stomach ailments (1 Tim 5:23)
- Forget your poverty and your troubles (Pr 31:7)

However, consider the long list of potential problems and negative side effects from the use of wine. These are just a few, not an exhaustive list.

- Become drunk (Gen 9:21, Eph 5:18)
- Loss of inhibitions (clothing, sexual) (Gen 9:21)
- Loss of alertness (Pr 31:5)
- Loss of memory (what has been decreed, Pr 31:5)
- Make poor decision (Pervert the rights of the afflicted, Pr 31:5)
- Addiction (seek another drink) (Pr 23:35)
- Quarrels and contentions (Pr 23:29)
- Brings poverty (Pr 23:21)
- Makes you drowsy (loss of energy) (Pr 23:21)
- Brings woes and sorrows (Pr 23:29)
- Causes people to complain (Pr 23:29)
- Brings wounds without cause (health problems) (Pr 23:29)
- Brings redness of eyes (irritation)(Pr 23:29)
- Makes you hallucinate, see strange things (Pr 23:33)

- Lack of consciousness (Pr 23:35)
- Sickness from hangover (Pr 23:34)

In addition to the use of alcohol and using it to intoxicate their father, their plan included incest. In nearly every culture of the world, incest has been considered immoral and wrong. Everything that Lot's daughters did was wrong. Their decisions were not based on Godly wisdom, but in worldly wisdom. They were led by the flesh.

In James 3, we are given a test to test whether something is godly wisdom or worldly wisdom. He said that our good behavior and deeds show the wisdom of God. Worldly wisdom is full of bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, and arrogance. It lies against the truth. Where there is worldly wisdom, there is disorder and every evil thing. That is what characterizes what Lot's daughters did. It was full of selfish ambition, disorder and every evil thing. God's wisdom is pure. What Lot's daughters did was not pure. God's wisdom is peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits. The fruit of God's wisdom is righteousness. We can be assured that Lot's daughters were not operating in the wisdom of God; they were led by their flesh.

(James 3:13-18) "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. {14} But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. {15} This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. {16} For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. {17} But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. {18} And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

What was the fruit?

(Gen 19:37-38) "The firstborn bore a son, and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. {38} As for the younger, she also bore a son, and called his name Ben-ammi; he is the father of the sons of Ammon to this day."

Moab was the first son born. Moab comes from the prefix m and ab, and it means from the mother's father (Strong's H4124). The younger daughter had Ben-Ammi, which means son of my people (Strong's H1151). The Moabites and Ammonites were the fruit of their actions. In Deuteronomy 23:3-4, Ammonites and Moabites were prohibited from entering the assembly of the Lord. They were considered enemies of God's people, the descendants of Abraham. When the children of Israel came out of Egypt, the Ammonites and Moabites did not provide food or water. They also hired Balaam to curse God's people.

(Deut 23:3-4) "No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the LORD; none of their descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall ever enter the assembly of the LORD, {4} because they did not meet you with food and water on the way when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you."

In Nehemiah 2, it was Sanballat and Tobiah that tried to stop the rebuilding of Jerusalem. They opposed Nehemiah. In Judges 3:28 they were explicitly called "enemies."

(Neh 2:10) “When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about it, it was very displeasing to them that someone had come to seek the welfare of the sons of Israel.”

(Judges 3:28) “He said to them, "Pursue them, for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hands." So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan opposite Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross.”

In 1 Kings 11:1-2, King Solomon took foreign wives, including Moabites and Ammonites. It says that these are “nations concerning which the Lord had said to the sons of Israel, ‘You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.’” The Moabites and Ammonites worshipped foreign gods. They did not enter the narrow gate and go down the narrow path. They did not build their house on the solid rock, the Word of God. They built their house on the sand. They were not being led by the Spirit; they were led by the flesh and were serving other gods.

(1 Kings 11:1-2) “Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, {2} from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." Solomon held fast to these in love.”

In 1 Kings 11:5-8, the gods of the Ammonites and Moabites are exposed. The Ammonites worshipped Milcom or Molech. One of the practices associated with the worship of Molech was child sacrifices. The Moabites worshipped Chemosh, and it included high places. Throughout the Old Testament, you will read about some kings that left the high places. These were altars built for the worship of other gods, including Chemosh.

(1 Kings 11:5-8) “For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. {6} Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father had done. {7} Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon. {8} Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.”

Lot and his daughters were not led by the Spirit; they were led by the flesh. They were not operating in the wisdom of God, but were operating in worldly wisdom. Their actions were not characterized by purity, goodness, reasonableness, but were full of selfish ambition, disorder and evil. The fruit of their actions was also bad. Their offspring were enemies of the people of God, and they worshipped false gods.

2. **Led By The Spirit:** (Rom 8:5-27, Pro 3:5-6)

I want us to finish this morning by looking at being led by the Spirit. In Romans 8, Paul contrasts being led by the Spirit and being led by the flesh. In verse 14, he says, “for all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” You have to be a son of God to be led by the Spirit of God. Being led by the Spirit should characterize a Christian’s life.

In Romans 8:9, Paul says, *“however, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.”* When a person receives Christ, he receives the Spirit of God. Ephesians says that *“after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.”* We are sealed with the Holy Spirit when we believe. The Holy Spirit comes and dwells inside of us.

(Eph 1:13-14) *“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, {14} who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.”*

Christians have the Holy Spirit and should be led by the Spirit. I know that I have been led by my flesh even though I am a Christian. We all sin. The Bible says that if we say that we have no sin, we lie and the truth is not in us. The Spirit of God does not lead us to sin. It is our flesh that leads us to sin. So, being a Christian and having the Spirit of God does not guarantee us that we will always be led by the Spirit. So, what are the things that we need to do to be led by the Spirit and not by our flesh. In Romans 8:5, Paul said that those who are according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. We must set our minds on the things of the Spirit. The problem that most of us have is our minds are set on the wrong things. We have to set our minds on the things of the Spirit. What are the things of the Spirit? First, I would say that we need to spend more time in God's word. Reading a three-minute devotional each day is good, but that is not setting your mind on the Word of God. We need to read God's Word. We need to study God's Word. We need to meditate on God's word. We need to fill our minds with God's word.

(Rom 8:5-8) *“For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. {6} For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,”*

In Deuteronomy 8:3, God tells us that we do not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. We need to make sure that we are taking in the necessary food for our souls every day.

(Deut 8:3) *“He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.”*

Another way of setting our minds on the things of the Spirit is worship. In Ephesians 5, Paul instructs us not to be drunk with wine for that is dissipation, but to be filled with the Spirit. When we get filled with the Spirit, it is only natural to have our minds set on the things of the Spirit. Paul goes on to tell us how to be filled with the spirit. He says for us to speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with our hearts to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things. Worship is a key way of setting our minds on the Lord and of being filled with the Holy Spirit. We should find time to feed on God's Word, and to worship. Our worship needs to have both praises and thanksgiving. In our prayer time each morning, Karen and I spend at least half of the time in thanksgivings and praises.

(Eph 5:18-20) “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, {19} speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; {20} always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

In Paul’s letter to the church in Colosse, he shares the same principle. He said, “let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

(Col 3:16) “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

We must be born of the Spirit. We must set our minds on the things of the Spirit, and that includes spending time in God’s word so that it richly dwells within us. It also includes worship with praises and thanksgiving. In Romans 8:12, Paul tells us another key to being led by the Spirit of God. He said that we are not under obligation to the flesh, to live according to the flesh, *“for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”* One of the ways that Christians know they are being led by the Spirit is if they are putting to death the deeds of the body.

I want to look at one more passage as we come to a close this morning. In Galatians 5 Paul talks about being led by the Spirit and walking by the Spirit. He says that if we will walk in the Spirit we will not carry out the deeds of the flesh. Therefore, it is critical to be led by the Spirit and to walk in the Spirit. He says that walking in the flesh and walking in the Spirit are in opposition to one another. There is a spiritual battle taking place. Then, in verses 19-21, he spells out the deeds of the flesh. In verse 24, he says, “Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” It is the same message as in Romans 8. To be led by the Spirit, we must put to death or crucify the deeds of the flesh.

(Gal 5:16-24) “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. {17} For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.... {22} But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, {23} gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. {24} Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

We looked at the fruit of Lot and his daughters. The Moabites and Ammonites were not good fruit. The deeds of the flesh bring bad fruit. But, the fruit of the Spirit is very different. In Romans 8 and James 3, we learned that when we are led by the Spirit there is life and peace. In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul spells out the fruit of being led by the Spirit. He said, *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, {23} gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”*

Conclusion

This morning, as you have listened, what has the Lord been speaking to you about? Are you being led by the Spirit or by the flesh? Are you walking in the flesh or by the Spirit? Are you

spending time in God's word? Are you setting your mind on the things of the Spirit? Are you spending time in worship?

You may be here this morning and you have never received Christ into your life. If you have not received the Holy Spirit, you can't be led by the Spirit. This morning, the application for you may be to receive Christ. Paul wrote in Romans 10 that to receive Christ, we must believe that Jesus was raised from the dead and we must confess Him as Lord or master of our lives. Do you believe that Jesus was the Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins and was raised from the dead? Do you want to place your trust in Christ this morning? If so, pray with me.

“Jesus, I do believe that You came and died for our sins, and that You were raised from the dead. I do believe that You are the Lord over all creation. I ask You to come and be the Lord of my life. Forgive me of my sins and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I ask You to help me walk by Your Spirit and be led by Your Spirit. I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.”

If you prayed that this morning, please let me or the person that brought you know that you prayed this prayer. We want to help you grow and learn to walk in the Spirit.

Introduction (Matt 7:13-14, 24-27, Rom 8:1-14,

1. **Led By The Flesh** (Gen 19:19-21, 30-39, Rom 8:14-15, Judges 17:6, 21:25, Num 15:39, James 3:13-18, Deut 23:3-4, Neh 2:10, Judges 3:28, 1 Kings 11:1-2, 5-8)
 - Benefits of Alcohol (Judges 9:13, Ec 10:19, Pr 31:6-7, 1 Tim 5:23)
 - Problems Associated with Alcohol (Gen 9:21, Eph 5:18, Pr 31:5, Pr 23:21-35)
2. **Led By The Spirit:** (Rom 8:1-14, Pro 3:5-6, Eph 1:13-14, Deut 8:3, Eph 5:18-20, Col 3:16, Gal 5:16-24)

My Application today: