**Origins (pt.2) - wk 9 – Set Apart**

**The LORD called an unlikely wanderer – fast forward, Abe is now growing in his walk with the LORD and settled in Canaan.**

**Today - one of the most debated and confusing chapters in the Bible.**

**Used to attack people – and attack God. Sodom and Gomorrah.**

**This chapter is Rated R – it covers some very difficult situations. It’s gritty – raw – and offensive. It’s a lot of sin.**

**Heads up - it will take a couple of weeks to get through.**

**Flashback: Lot & Abe parted ways - Lot picks land near a wicked city.**

**Gen 13:12 …Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. 13 Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.**

**Fast-forward: Lot and his family are living in the city. His daughters are engaged, and Lot is serving in leadership.**

**Chap 18 – God comes to Abe and warns him that He is going to judge Sodom for their wickedness.**

**Abe pleads to God to spare them if there are any righteous there. But – there were none (including Lot’s family)**

**Before we dive into the passage, we need to discuss -**

**What was the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah?**

**Some suggest it’s not the homosexual activity condemned here; it’s the way they were going about it… false.**

**Homosexuality was definitely part of the reason.**

**Ezekiel 16:49 “‘Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She (the city) and her daughters (the people) were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. 50 They were haughty and did detestable things (abominations) before me. Therefore, I did away with them as you have seen.**

**Jude 1:7 Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.**

**S&G sins were many: Pride, neglect, injustice, gluttonous, and the abomination of sexual sin. Homosexuality was part of it.**

**\*\* Love is love – as God defines Love**

**Genesis explains the design and purpose of God for sex and marriage.**

**Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (like rest of creation) / (God’s designs for marriage) Gen 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (repeated by Jesus in the gospels)**

**Jesus affirms it - Matt 19:4 “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”**

**One man, one woman – forsaking all for love and commitment.**

**That is God’s design. That is a biblical marriage.**

**\*\* Homosexuality and God**

**Leviticus 18:22 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. 23 And you shall not lie with any animal and so make yourself unclean with it, neither shall any woman give herself to an animal to lie with it: it is perversion. 24 “Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean… (applies to every nation) / Lev 20:13 If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them (both the alpha and the beta) have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.**

**The OT civil law (Death) is now judgment before God at death.**

**God says it is not lovely, wholesome, fun, cute, caring, romantic, normal or beautiful. God calls it an abomination and detestable.**

**This verse applies to churches and Christians that promote it**

**1 Timothy 1:9 We also know that the law (the OT) is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, 10 for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine.**

**\*\* There is no such thing as clobber verses – only conviction verses**

**People don’t like those verses – considered unkind and judgmental.**

**They go against one’s feelings and desires for self and others.**

**Rom 1:21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and (the result is) exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.**

**24 Therefore, God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.**

**(Echoed again and again in the NT – in a Roman culture that embraced it – he continues) 26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. 28 Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.**

**The sins of S&G were multifaceted, but homosexuality was a large part.**

**Back to Gen 19 - The two angels of the LORD are not headed to Sodom in the form of two men. It’s about to get wild…**

**Gen 19:1 The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, (human appearance) and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. (Lot working as a gatekeeper – a city judges) When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. 2 “My lords,” he said, “please turn aside to your servant’s house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.” (Lot recognized them as special – something stood out - but not as angels) “No,” they answered, “we will spend the night in the square.” 3 But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. (trust me, you do not want to sleep out here) He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. (That night, their reputation gets out – and it gets ugly.**

**4 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 shows how widespread it was and how acceptable it was.**

**Sin affects - every part of the city – rich and poor.**

**Sin affects - Young and old – every generation.**

**5 They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.”**

**They show up to have homosexual sex with the visitors – not knowing they are angels… You think our culture is messed up today? Read the Bible, baby.**

**Most of them would have realistically just watched… today, we call that the Internet.**

**6 Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him 7 and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. (Notice how one group can view it as wicked– the other group views it as pursuing pleasure – how do you view it?) 8 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. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.” (Unbelievable and horrific. We no longer have a hero in the city)**

**Lot was willing to sacrifice his children to save his reputation!**

**It’s expected that a guest should be protected at any cost - but not to this extent! In an extreme attempt to protect the visitors, he tries to compromise with sin – with another sin.**

**You can never reason with the mob. (Rom 1:20-21)**

**9 “Get out of our way,” they replied. (this is not just a rude unhospitable town or uncontrolled sexual desires – this is about men craving sex with men – get out of our way - no one is going to stop us!) “This fellow came here as a foreigner, (Lot) and now he wants to play the judge! (Who are you to judge us? Who do you think you are?) We’ll treat you worse than them.” (when we are done with them – we are going to do worse to you!) They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door. (they bullied and pressured him – they were militant in order to fulfill their flesh)**

**10 But the men (the angels) inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. 11 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.**

**They didn’t need Lot’s protection! Now, the physical blindness matched their spiritual blindness. Saving Lot & his daughters.**

**This was grace (Lot) and judgment (the city) in motion.**

**12 The two men said to Lot, “Do you have anyone else here - sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, 13 because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.” (Come with me if you want to live! Get who you love and get out!)**

**14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. (turns out his daughters are engaged) He said, “Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.**

**His spiritual credibility is gone – We now find there apparently were not even 10 righteous people in his household.**

**15 With the coming of dawn, (what! At dawn, still there messing around – this is urgent** **– they are offered salvation and they drag their feet) the angels urged Lot, saying, “Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.” (The daughter’s finances are a no show – you need to get out!) 16 When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them.**

**He lingered: So connected – they did not want to leave. Sin does that. You get to the point where you don’t want to leave it. It had a hold on them! The four were literally dragged out**

**\*\* Lot was in the worst of all possible places.**

**He had too much of the world to be happy in the LORD, and too much of the LORD to be happy in the world.**

**Genesis 19:17 As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, “Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!”**

**Then it happened… Fire rained down.**

**We will pick up next week – the story gets weirder and darker**

**We see here the primary theme of the entire Bible.**

**The LORD is the God of Salvation and of judgment.**

**\*\* What do we do with this?**

**Some highlights from S&G**

1. **Evil is not good because we think it should be**

**V7 “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing… V9 “Get out of our way! Who are you to judge us?”**

**You can’t come in here to tell us what is right or wrong!**

**Isaiah 5:20** **Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.**

**Well, I think it’s fine. What’s the big deal?**

**Proverbs 28:5 Evildoers do not understand what is right, but those who seek the Lord understand it fully.**

**In case you are wonder – sexual sin has been in the world for a long time. There are no “good old days” it’s always been here. It was not always celebrated like it is now - but it was there.**

**The shift in the last 20 yrs – all types of sexual sin accepted by many and even incorporated into the fabric of our nation/culture.**

**From ESPN to Disney, we are being shaped and molded into the image of the world. \*\* Unless we are committed to being shaped by the Word of God.**

**You're old-fashioned! If that means I believe the Bible, then okay. Isaiah 40:8 - The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God endures forever.”**

**\*\*\*\*\* What real tolerance looks like – it disagrees with respect.**

**\*\*\*\*\* Intolerance – demands acceptance and approval.**

1. **Compassion tells the truth**

**Abe tries to tell the boys – this place is wrong – judgement is coming. They laughed at him – and did not talk to them again – But he had to tell them!**

**I want to make it clear - I am not afraid of the LGBTQ community.**

**I am afraid for the LGBTQ community.**

**Statically, people who are LGBTQ – have a higher death rate / disease rate / depression rate / and suicide rate. They need hope!**

**Someone has got to tell them God loves them, and this is not God's design for them!**

* **Number of people who are born gay – 0%**
  + **No gay gene – zero scientific proof (identical twin issue)**
* **Number of people who identify as LGBTQ – 4.5% (Barna / Gallup)**

**3% identify specially as Gay/ Lesbian (not as high as many think)**

* **15% of Gen Z / 9% of Mil. / 4% X / 2% boom / 1% Trad**
* **Numbers for Gen Z are growing – then decline in 20s**
* **The lower the income the more likely to identify**
* **Number of people who battle with sexual sin – 100%**
  + **Gay gene or not - It does not make a difference - we are all born with a predisposition to sin – not a surprise that 4-5% of the population express this desire.**

**The truth is we all struggle with temptation – and sin. We are all in this together. We all need God’s grace and mercy!**

1. **The world is to be our mission field - we are not theirs.**

**Like these two messengers - we need to stand out.**

**We are to be different and not blend in – with the world.**

**James 4:4 You adulterous people, (Spiritually adults – two timing God) don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.**

**Romans 1:32 Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.**

**Like the messengers, we must go to difficult places to rescue!**

1. **There is nothing more urgent than dealing with our sin.**

**Abe and his family hesitated and dragged their feet.**

**Lot’s heart was in Sodom – no urgency – delayed obedience.**

**He knew what he needed to do – but didn’t want to leave it.**

**Know this! When you hear the word of the LORD, and it’s true – do! Today is the day to respond. Today is the day of salvation.**

* **S&G were blinded by their sin – they wanted it.**
* **Lot’s future son-and-laws – laughed at it and ignored it.**
* **Lot and family - were indifferent to it.**

**Jesus is serious about sin! What do we do about it?!!**

1. **God's mercy is still available through Jesus**

**Everyone of us has sin in our life – everyone. But there is hope.**

**1 Cor 6:9 Or do you not know (this is basics) that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

**Washed – sanctified – justified in Jesus by the HS.**

**God did not save Lot because he was a standup guy or a good father—he was not. It was God's mercy.**

**God was saving the abuser and the abused.**

**Lot was not seeking salvation; God took the initiative in his redemption, and he still is today.**

**John 6:44 “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.**

**El-kusē – draw = To drag and pull.**

**\*\* There is only one answer to our sin – Jesus Christ. In Him, love wins**

**Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!**

**Like those messengers – I urge you – I plead with you.**

**Turn to the LORD Jesus.**

**Statistic resources:**

[**https://news.gallup.com/poll/259571/americans-greatly-overestimate-gay-population.aspx**](https://news.gallup.com/poll/259571/americans-greatly-overestimate-gay-population.aspx)

[**https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/adult-lgbt-pop-us/**](https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/adult-lgbt-pop-us/)

[**https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2023-05/Ipsos%20LGBT%2B%20Pride%202023%20Global%20Survey%20Report%20-%20rev.pdf**](https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2023-05/Ipsos%20LGBT%2B%20Pride%202023%20Global%20Survey%20Report%20-%20rev.pdf)

[**https://news.gallup.com/poll/389792/lgbt-identification-ticks-up.aspx**](https://news.gallup.com/poll/389792/lgbt-identification-ticks-up.aspx)

[**https://news.gallup.com/poll/234863/estimate-lgbt-population-rises.aspx**](https://news.gallup.com/poll/234863/estimate-lgbt-population-rises.aspx)