Small Group Guide

Genesis 18:16 - 19:38 | Intercession, Judgment, and the Heart of God

BEFORE YOU MEET

Encourage group members to read Genesis 18:16 through the end of chapter 19 before gathering. Ask them to come prepared to share one thing that stood out to them from the passage.

OPENING QUESTION

Think of a time when someone went out of their way to advocate for you -- a parent, a friend, a mentor. How did that make you feel, and what did it reveal about that person's character?

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SERMON

- God never forgets His children or their prayers. When Scripture says "God remembered Abraham," it means God acted on Abraham's intercession at exactly the right time.
- Abraham models bold, humble, persistent intercession -- pressing forward in prayer on behalf of others while maintaining a reverent awareness of who God is.
- Lot's life illustrates the danger of gradual compromise. He moved from pitching his tents toward Sodom, to living in Sodom, to sitting in the gate of Sodom -- each step deeper into the world's grip.
- God rescues the righteous from His judgment. His heart is that all people would be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.
- Prayer is a powerful weapon. The enemy knows this, which is why keeping believers from prayer is one of his primary strategies.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Getting Into the Text

1. In Genesis 18:17-19, God says He has "known" Abraham and chosen to reveal His plans to him. What does this kind of intimate, relational knowing between God and a person look like in practical terms? What does it require from our side of the relationship?

2. Abraham intercedes for Lot by appealing to God's character -- specifically calling Him "the judge of all the earth" and asking whether He will do what is right. What does this tell us about how Abraham understood God? How does knowing God's character shape the way we pray?

3. Lot is described in 2 Peter 2 as a righteous man who was tormented by the wickedness around him, yet he continued to live there and eventually held a position of prominence in Sodom. How do you reconcile those two realities? What warning does Lot's story carry for believers today?

4. Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. Jesus references this moment in Luke 9:62 when He speaks about following Him wholeheartedly. What does "looking back" look like in the life of a modern believer? What makes it so difficult to leave certain things behind?

5. The men of Sodom, after being struck blind by the angels, wore themselves out groping for the door -- still trying to carry out their sin. What does this reveal about the nature of unrepentant pride? Have you ever seen this kind of spiritual stubbornness in yourself or others?

6. The sermon points out that Lot lingered when the angels told him to flee, and they had to physically take him by the hand. The text calls this an act of divine mercy. What does this tell us about how God sometimes works in our lives even when we are slow to respond to Him?

Going Deeper

7. The sermon draws a connection between Abraham's intercession and God "remembering" Abraham when He rescued Lot. Have you ever experienced God answering a prayer you had almost forgotten you prayed? What did that teach you about how God handles our prayers?

8. Samuel Chadwick is quoted in the sermon as saying, "The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray." Do you believe this is true? What evidence do you see of it in your own prayer life?

9. The sermon describes the sin of Sodom as encompassing not only sexual immorality but also pride, economic exploitation of the poor, and spiritual rebellion. How does seeing the full picture of Sodom's sin challenge or expand the way you typically think about this passage?

10. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 is referenced in the sermon, reminding us that Christ's redemption extends to every kind of sinner -- "and such were some of you." How should this truth shape the way we view and pray for people whose sin seems especially offensive to us?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

This Week, Choose One or More of the Following

- **Build an intercession list.** Write down the names of five people God has placed on your heart -- family members, neighbors, coworkers, or public figures. Commit to praying for them daily this week, asking God to move in their lives and bring them to a knowledge of the truth.

- **Examine areas of compromise.** Spend time in prayer using Psalm 139:23-24 as your guide, asking God to reveal any area of your life where the world has begun to seep in. Be honest with yourself and, if appropriate, share what you discover with a trusted person in your group.

- **Practice hospitality.** Identify one practical way you can show hospitality to someone outside your immediate circle this week -- a neighbor, a new family at church, or someone who is isolated or in need.

- **Strengthen your prayer life.** If prayer feels difficult or dry, identify one specific obstacle -- distraction, doubt, busyness -- and bring it honestly before God this week. Ask Him for the Holy Spirit's help to sustain a consistent prayer life.

- **Have a gospel conversation.** Think of someone in your life who, like Lot's sons-in-law, might dismiss talk of judgment and redemption as foolishness. Pray for an opportunity to speak with them this week, and ask God to give you the words and the courage to do so.

CLOSING REFLECTION

The sermon ends with this reminder: God's desire is for all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. Abraham's intercession was an expression of that shared desire. As a group, take a few minutes to pray together -- specifically interceding for people in your lives who do not yet know Christ. Ask God to remember your prayers and to act on them in His perfect timing.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Hebrews 4:16 -- The verse describes approaching God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace in our time of need.

This guide is based on a sermon preached from Genesis 18:16 through Genesis 19:38.