

How To Make A Bad Decision

by Bubba Garner

It is not wrong to choose. That's the way God made us, to be creatures of choice. Life, in its very nature, is a series of decisions. Some prove to be rather insignificant, but others are quite crucial. Once they are made, lasting consequences flow from them. They include: *who will I choose for my friends, will I become a Christian, where will I go to college, who will I marry, what will I do for a living, where will I raise my family?*

In **Genesis 13**, Lot made such a choice, one that changed the direction of the remainder of his days. If you desire to have his lot in life, follow these steps on how to make a bad decision.

Step 1: Think for yourself. Think *about* yourself, that is. Take no thought as to how your decision will affect anyone but you. When Abraham gave him the first pick of the land, the text says that "Lot chose for himself" (**13:19**). There is nothing wrong with taking yourself into account when you choose. The danger is when you take nothing or no one else into account.

Lot didn't think about Abram. He wouldn't have even *had* any livestock and herdsmen to strive with were it not for his uncle. The Lord had blessed Abram greatly where they were in Egypt, and Lot was just a long for the ride. Not only that, Abram had been promised the land for his innumerable descendants. But Lot chose the well-watered plain of Jordan for himself.

Lot didn't think about his family. He didn't consider what would be best for his wife and daughters. He didn't imagine the influence that Sodom would have on his family, he just saw the affluence he could gain by moving near a city of renown.

Perhaps the only other thing Lot thought about, besides himself, was his livestock. He knew they would benefit from the lush, verdant pastures. But, as Thaxter Dickey once observed, "sheep don't have souls, daughters do."

Lot chose for himself. Any decision that does not take into account you and your family's relationship with God and the people of God deserves to be reevaluated.

Step 2: Show no regard for the subtlety of sin. Lot didn't plan to go as far as he did. "He settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom" (**Gen. 13:12**). While Abraham was building altars to the Lord near the oaks of Mamre, Lot was pitching tents closer and closer to a city where not ten righteous people could be found. And in the next chapter, he was no longer satisfied with building temporary dwellings, "for he was living in Sodom" (**14:12**). Yet he did not see the potential danger of that when he chose for himself the well-watered plain.

That's how the devil operates, working on us a little at a time. He doesn't just barge through the door; he sticks his foot in. Then, he inches his way in slowly but surely. And before you know what's happened, he's standing next to you in the room. Don't underestimate him.

We make his job a lot easier when we make choices that put us closer to him. Paul did not say to abstain from evil, he said to abstain from every appearance of evil (**1 Thess 5:22**), the very form of it. It's just about impossible to get burned if you stay away from the fire. Instead of staying away, we're straying away.

Step 3: Be more concerned about income than outcome. By his own choice, Lot lost a lot. If only he would have thought less about what he had to gain and more about what he had to lose.

He lost his peace of mind. Peter comments that "while living among them, he felt his righteous soul tormented day after day with their lawless deeds" (**2 Pet. 2:8**).

continued on page 302003