He lingered

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Date: 01 January 2000

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[0:00] Will you turn with me now to the chapter in which we read, the book of Genesis, chapter 19. Let us read again verse 15.

When the morning arose, then the angels hastened, Lord, saying, Arise, take thy wife and thy two daughters which are here, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.
And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand and upon the hand of his wife and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him, and he brought him forth and set him without this city.
And we'll send it out attention especially upon these two words in verse 16. He lingered.
While he lingered. By God's grace and with God's help, I want to speak to you tonight and to speak to you with all the solemnity that I can command on the subject of lingering Christianity.
[1:25] The Bible with men whose lives are detailed for our learning and for our example.

Men such as Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and David and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Peter and John and James and Paul.
The story of these men is there to help us. And to help us by God's grace to live in the peace of God and to live lives that will be purposeful and useful and glorifying to God.
And we rejoice that our Bible is full of such men. Lives that bring us a shining example of how man may, by the grace of God, live for God.
And the Bible brings us other kinds of men as well. The Bible sets before us the story of some lives that are there not merely as an example but as a warning.
[3:04] And such is the life and the story of this man. It seems to me that Scripture takes the life, the story of Lot and that it writes his story in these two words.

He lingered. And my friends, how true it is today as we look around us in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. How true it is perhaps as we look around our own congregation of how many people we would have to write the same story.
Perhaps this is your own life. He lingered. Or she lingered. A lingering Christianity.
To linger. Well, it can be very pleasant to linger, can't it? It all depends on the kind of place you're lingering in.
We can think of days, when it was just the greatest thing we could do to linger around and be lazy and enjoy yourselves.
[4:38] To linger can be very pleasant. Not always. To linger sometimes can be just a little bit foolish.

I remember once having to take a little boat out to an island in one of the bays of Ardmelton Point because some people had walked out when the tide was out.
And they sat down in the nice warm rocks on the wee island and they lingered there and they lingered for just a little too long. And so we are to get up and bring the lingerer, the malingerer back ashore.
To linger sometimes can be foolish. And there are times and places and to linger then or there is positively dangerous.
And I would suggest that Sodom, on the morning when God had come to destroy us, was not the place for a Christian man to linger.
[5:57] And that is just precisely what God did. What God did when God had come to destroy us, he lingered.

He was foolish. More than that, his foolishness led him into danger. But I would suggest that there are countless men and women today who are just as foolish as ever long was.

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I want us to look at this strange fact that a man like Lot should linger under the threat of eternal judgment.
and may God help us to learn from it. Now I want to do, first of all, two things.
I want us to see from this fact that Lot lingered in Sodom on the morning of the destruction of Sodom. I want us to see something of Lot's character from that fact.
[7:17] and then I want us to see the link that there was between his character and his conduct.
And my friend, these two things are inevitably and irrevocably linked.

Character dictates conduct. Conduct displays character. As you are in your heart, so you will think in your thoughts.
And as you think in your thoughts, so you will act in your life. So let's look at these two things that are closely interwoven.
Character, conduct. And what sort of man was this who lingered in Sodom? Lingered under the hands and the eyes of angels.
Lingered under the warning voice of a God who loved him and cared for him. What sort of character was he? And we would immediately say, well surely he must have been a very bad man.
[8:27] He must have been very wicked to linger under such circumstances in the city of Sodom.
He certainly could not have been a Christian man.

My friend, if we said that, that's just where we will be wrong. Do you know what the Bible calls Lot?
Do you know what God's Holy Spirit has written about Lot?
It says, he says, the Spirit says through the word that Lot was a righteous man. what was a man in whom God had worked salingly and graciously.
He was a man who had come under the power and the teaching of God's Holy Spirit. Let's make no doubt about that. He was a righteous man.
It may be that there are some in our church this evening and they have never come under either that power or that teaching.
[9:38] And my friend, you know, more still than Lot was, but in all his estate was. If you're not a Christian, Lot had something that you don't have.

In God's grace and his heart, what can we say about Lot? On the basis of the New Testament, we can say that Lot was a converted man.
He was a man who had been born again of the Holy Spirit. He was a man who had been taken by God and who had walked with God. He was a true believer.
And I want to confess that at this point in this earth because I'm going to go on and say some very hard things about Lot. He was a converted man.
Are you? He was a true believer in the living God. Are you? He was a man over whom the God of heaven could write this is a righteous man.
[10:58] Could heaven write that over you? He was righteous.

He was a believer. He was a converted man. The grace of God was in him and yet, my friend, he lingered. Some people linger because they have no thought or very little thought about spiritual things.
That was not true of Lot. We can see into his character through the eyes of the New Testament scriptures and we know one or two facts about Lot that help us to estimate his character.
There were good things in his character. He was a righteous man living in a wicked place. Let me just say that again.
He was a righteous man living in a wicked place. grace. And that tells me that the grace of God was upholding him. Do you think it is easy for anyone to live a righteous life in a wicked place?
[12:21] My friend, if you do, you don't know the human heart and you don't know the power, the malignant power of sin. It takes the grace.

Can I say this? It takes almighty power and grace before a sinner will ever live a righteous life in a wicked place.
It will take far more power than you can command or I can command to live for God in the city of Glasgow. It will take the free, sovereign power and grace of God before we will ever live righteous lives in this city or in this country.
God will live as a righteous man in a wicked place. That says a lot for him, doesn't it?
God will live as a righteous man in the city. And it says that Lot, the Bible says that Lot was vexed by the sin of Sodom.

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[13:33] Are you vexed by the sin of our city? Are you? Does it ever stab home to your heart and say, oh God, what's wrong with men and women?

God, pour out your spirit and touch them and save them. Go along any of these streets just out there at the door of our church and it's surrounded with three Christian churches preaching the gospel.
Go along there any Friday or Saturday or Sunday evening between six and ten o'clock at night and you'll see sights that will make you cry out in your heart to God or there's something wrong with you. Go 500 yards down the road and you'll see the same thing. You'll see men and women who are wrecks of humanity because of sin in our city.
Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the word of God. And just look at the streets of Glasgow in 1975. time. Are you vexed about it?
[14:45] Does it ever send you to your knees to pray for these poor lost people that are going out? Bible tells us to a lost eternity. Does it vex you?

Maybe it doesn't. Well my friends, Sodom. And our cities are becoming very like Sodom. Sodom vexed. It disturbed the soul of righteous Lord.
And more than that, it vexed him day by day. It wasn't just when he drove along these streets on a Friday night. The sin that he saw on Sodom affected him every day of his life.
We have to grant all that to Lord because the Bible says it all. But he lingered.
He not just lived in Sodom but when Sodom was under the curse of God, the final judgment of God, he lingered there. He was righteous and yet he must have been a weak man.
[16:07] He was a true believer but he must have been a very foolish believer. He was God's man and yet he was often disobedient to God.

He was disobedient to God he is. He was I think slothful and many Christians are.
Some just don't bother to think. They don't use their eyes and they don't use their mind and they course through life. I think this is a sort of passion not was.
God keep you from being not kind of Christian. He lingered. His character and his character dictated his conduct.
He lingered. Let's just look at his conduct for a moment. He knew the sort of place he lived in. He knew how wicked the people in Sodom were.
[17:25] Look what happened when God's messengers came. Angels from heaven. We read that chapter. I don't have to spell it out.

It stands out there clear what the men of Sodom were prepared to do to the messengers of God the angels of heaven. What a sad, sick place Sodom must have been.
What a sad, sick country our country is becoming with the same sin. He knew what had happened through the hours of that night and yet when morning came and when angels had hold of him by the hand, he lingered.
He knew the fearful judgment that God had pronounced on Sodom. God will surely destroy him. The angels have said it. What knew it and yet he lingered. He knew the faithfulness of God.
[18:53] He believed God this man. He believed there was danger. He tried to take others out of Sodom with him. He spoke to his sons-in-law and yet he lingered.

That tells me this, that it is possible for us to live in the midst of a great deal of sin and yet never raise a standard against it.
It's possible for us to be working with a man all our lives who perhaps for example is foul-mouthed and blasphemous and we never say to him friend, do you never stop to think about your language? There might be something else. We are content to live in the presence of sin and never raise a standard against it. Is that the sort of man or woman you are?
Then you're very ignored. He knew that judgment was coming from God.
[20:05] And I believe that there is not one of us in the church tonight that believes that God will yet judge us and that he will judge every secret thought and every secret action.

the things that we've done in the dark corners, God says, will be brought out onto the housetops. Everything will be made open.
You know just as I know that we are offering towards judgment. And you know just as I know that God must judge sin if he is to remain.
a holy and a just God. God knew that too. Is it true that you know that and yet you linger? You're a half-hearted Christian or you're not even a Christian at all?

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He believed what the messengers of God said. God said to him. He was spoken to by angels and still he lingered.
[21:22] He saw the angels, he heard them, he entertained them. And my friend, perhaps it's never been shining angels but it's been messengers of other kinds.

There is not a man or a woman or a young person in this church this evening but God has spoken to you often again and again and again.
Perhaps it's through the life of our godly father. Perhaps it may even have been the peace that he had in his deathbed that spoke to you and told you of the reality of the Christian faith.
I don't know what it was. But I know that God has spoken to you just as he has spoken to me. And just as he spoke to Lord, has God spoken to you and still you are a lingering unconverted unsaved passion?
My friend, how long will you linger? Let's put the question another way, how long will God allow you to linger?
[22:29] can I speak to Christians for a moment, to those who are converted?

What a message this man Lord has for you and for me. There are many Christians like Lord. They know God's word when it comes to them in power.
They believe the word of God and the word has a power in their life. They love Christ. They like sound preaching.
They would never sit under a man who didn't preach the whole counsel of God. They like to read good books and they can distinguish between points of theology. theology. And yet their Christianity is a lingering one.
When you ask them when the last spoke to a person, a man or a woman about their shores, they say oh well I don't find it easy to speak to people. Well neither do I.
[23:37] Who does? There are some Christians and they think that a life of real holiness and a life of real zeal and God service is for the privileged few.

The top ten percent. Yes it's alright for the ministers and the elders and the deacons and the old ladies to be spiritual. It's wonderful to be in a congregation like that.
Where you've got these good people that will pray for you when you're too lazy a Christian to pray for yourself. It's wonderful to be a member of a congregation where there are people that will go to the prayer meeting and God help them even if you don't go.
Oh yes it's good to have spiritual people around us. Amen. So it is. My friend you should be one of them. There is nothing in my Bible from Genesis to Revelation that says that there is one standard for the top ten and another standard for the rest.
The standard for every man and woman who has found Christ and whom Christ has found is this standard. Be ye holy for I am holy and without holiness no one shall see God as the standard.
[25:11] There's no thick lingering spirituality preached in the Bible. My friend you've got to be all or you're nothing.

conduct.
He lingered in Sodom. He stared in Sodom until the last possible moment. Can you understand it? A righteous spiritual converted man.
Ah yes we can understand it because we see it in others and sometimes we see it in ourselves. We will be as friendly with the world that is crucifying our Savior as it is possible to be.
And we will even sometimes delude ourselves that we are being friendly with them in order to win them to Christ. No one has ever won them to Christ in that way.
[26:13] we know Christ that we are willing to compromise. So was Lord. And he compromised until the last moment.

Do you know what is wrong with the church of the Lord Jesus in our country today? It's a compromising church. I think this is one of its greatest and most dangerous maladies.
When the church in Scotland and when the church of Scotland and the free church in Scotland and all the other churches in Scotland are willing to stand up and speak out against sin then God will maybe begin to bless us as churches.
We've allowed Christian legislation to be swept off our statutes and our church, the professing church of Christ has raised its voice.
It's left all the agitation to a little group of humanists. This is true. Why?
[27:27] Because we're cursed with our lingering type of Christianity. character, conduct.

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We are lingering persons spiritually. My friend, you'll linger. Your conduct will show it. Now, I want to go on and look at two other things, briefly.
we ask ourselves, why? Why was Lot this kind of character, and why did he have such conduct? That brings me on to two other things that again are closely connected. And these are very simple. They are choices and consequences.
When I read back into the story of Lot, I find that very early in life, he made a choice.
[28:34] A choice which we can regard as wrong. A choice which we can regard as mistaken. At the very best, at the very highest that we can put it, it was the choice of the easy option.

What was it? Way back there, years before this, he had been working along with Uncle Abraham, godly old man.
God prospered the two of them. God prospered them so much, that they had to split up.
And what our Christian gentleman old Abraham was, you remember how he did it, was out there one day with Lot and he spoke so tactfully and so kindly, and in such a Christian way and he said, you know Lot, things are getting very difficult for us.
There's these fellows, these shepherds of Abraham are always quarreling and fighting. There's only one thing for it, Lord. Difficult as it is, we'll have to separate.
[29:56] Now, Lord, there's the plains, there's the plains of Jordan, great grazing, great place for all your flocks, you can't you can't have them, Lord.

Or if you prefer it, there's the mountains, Lord, you choose. If you want the plains, you have them, if you want the mountains, you have them, you make your choice, Lord.
And Lord sat down, they did out his pencil and his notebook and he looked out over the ruined plains of Jordan. And he looked up at the hills.
And he would have been not in his notebooks. And he closed to the british pocket and he said to Abraham, well, I'll take the plains. I'll take the big wide fields.
And Abraham said, all right, Lord, went for the easy options. Of course, it's easy to live in the plains, isn't it?
[31:10] Nice, smooth life. And it was the first step towards what was almost spiritual disaster for Lord.

The mountains, I didn't want them. Who took the mountains? Old Father Abraham. And my word, how he prospered in them. He was climbing up and down these mountains every day after his men and his sheep and his herds.
And sometimes it was dangerous up there in the mountains. Sometimes he had to call on God. And you know, there's something exhilarating about mountains, isn't there?
up there on top of the high hills. Abraham was often aware of the throb of the presence of God. I have felt the same thing and any one of you who's been on the top of a mountain, you've felt it too. It was a hard, rigorous life, but it made a tough sin to hold Abraham. And the fellow who went to the plains, how did he get on?
[32:18] Well, he got on just as he deserved to get on. Life was easier for him. He didn't have to depend on God in the same way.

We never do have to depend on God in the same way if things are going smoothly for us, do we? And then we need to very significant things.
He got out into these plains I suppose and his beasts stayed out the grass and they moved on and they moved on and all of a sudden the city was near. The wicked city of Sodom.
And we read this significant thing. Having chosen the plains, the next thing that we read about Lot is this. He pitched his tent toward Sodom.
Is there a Christian in here tonight? He was already pitched his tent or her tent towards Sodom. Oh my friend, be careful.
[33:28] Get a way back to the mountain where there's clean, fresh air. And then the next thing we read is this.

He pitched his tent towards Sodom and then he dwelt in Sodom. The two things will always go together.
You pitch your tent towards Sodom, my Christian friend, and I don't care what your spiritual experience is. I don't care how holy or how spiritual you are. If you pitch your tent towards Sodom, you will come to dwell in Sodom.

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And that happened with Lord. We don't know why he went there. What on earth took God's man lot into a city like Sodom?
We know this, there was no commandment of God. Maybe he thought he could witness in Sodom.
[34:37] Maybe that was the excuse with which he went into Sodom out when he will live for God. We'll talk about that in a moment. Maybe it was just his wife nagging him.

I don't know. These girls are growing up. They haven't even a decent hat to wear. They've never been to finish in school. What kind of glasses are you going to produce?
Let get them into the town. This country life is no useful for promising intelligent girls like I wish. All right. So off they go.
Maybe it was something else. Lot had taken me to live in the town. You know how I love the shops. I haven't had a decent hat for the last five years. I just don't know what took Lot to Sodom.
God got there and he dwelt there. And my friend only you know what is taking you away from God toward your particular Sodom.
[35:46] God and one thing is sure if you or if I if we land in Sodom back sliding we follow.

Make a wrong choice and we are on to dangerous ground. Make a wrong choice and our profession will suffer. How important choices can be.
Can I just mention some things that it's very important especially you young people young Christians it's very important what kind of profession you choose.
Seek God's mind and God's will. It's very important what kind of home you choose and where your home is.
I wonder today how many Christian couples really choose their home in order to help their spiritual life. How many choose their home because it's within reach of a church for example where Christ to survive is preached.
[36:58] A young Christian man and Christian woman be careful of your choice of a partner in life. How many Christian lives have been wrecked because of the wrong choice.

Maybe our body face wouldn't but watch that as Christian half is under the body face. choices and consequences every choice carries its consequence in it and lots did.
What sort of consequences? Let me just name three. Here's one of them. He lived in Sodom and his life had absolutely no effect upon his sin or his souls of Sodom.
As far as I can see in scripture he lived his righteous life in vain. He had no effect on one other nation. You remember how Abraham played interceded for Gomorrah on Sodom.
God could not find ten righteous men in the city of Sodom after Lot had lived there for years. That's one thing.
[38:38] But worse than that, my friend, he won none of his own family for God and for heaven. We don't know how many of the family he had.

He may have had sons, we don't know. He certainly had more than two daughters, probably more than four daughters. He had sons-in-law and he came out of Sodom with two unmarried daughters. But as far as scripture tells us he won none of his loved ones. For God he spoke to his sons-in-law and he was unto them as one not not.
who would listen to you? Oh God he's been here for years and you know the world will never listen to a patient who lives an inconsistent spiritual life.
Never. You try and live in company with sin. You try and live in disobedience my Christian friend and you will be powerless to witness for God not was.
[40:00] That was the saddest thing of all. Wouldn't have been so bad that he hadn't won any from Sodom. Noah preached for a whole generation 120 years and he won none.

But it's sad I think very sad isn't it Christian people isn't it sad that Lord won none of his own family. You be careful too or you will know when you will find me either.
Where are your family today? Are they with you? Are they in your prayers? Are they trusting in your saviour? Why not?
Why not? they not? They left no witness behind him at all when he died.
I read the life of Abraham and the death of Abraham who's a blessed one. I read the life of Jacob the same thing.
[41:12] Read the life of David. David who plunged into the depths of such awful sin. And yet David had a blessed death. After Lot he escapes from Sodom.

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We scarcely hear anything more of him. And over his departure from this world scripture has drawn a veil. I sometimes think that it must have been a very sad cloudy kind of death there.
I think that the Holy Spirit was being gracious when he threw a veil over the death of this man who lived out in great spiritual life.
Woman woman woman who lives well will die well. Character and contact choices and consequences both these things are linked together and we see how easy it is for us to us to be lingerers to win.
Are you a lingerer? My Christian friend, are you a lingerer? Are you doing all your power, all your ability to walk with God?
[43:00] Are you doing all you can to further his cause? and my uncoverted friend, how long will you linger under the wrath and the judgment of God?

How long is going to come to you? Remember God, remember that his life is in scriptures as a warning for you and for me.
Let's pray. Our God, we confess how much we need thy grace. We confess how unfaithful we are. We confess how often we fail thee. And we pray thee that thou hast come to us, to each one of us in the church this evening. The new wave of power from the Holy Ghost make us new men and new women in Christ.
We thank thee, Lord, and even for those of us who are Christ's and have known failure, we found thee, that there is victory to be had.
[44:24] Make us good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Keep us room. to Christ's disease to yourself after shall antib die.

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