



Don't look back

October 7, 2019

LUKE 17:32-33 NKJV - (32) Remember Lot's wife. **(33)** Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.

Saving faith frees us from sin's power—it enables us to choose what God wants over what we want, and over time it aligns our wants with his. Instead of wanting to make much of ourselves we learn to want to make much of our Maker. But if we are honest, we still harbor places of self-worship in our heart of hearts. As we get better at setting aside one area of sin we often get better at concealing another. As much as we long to move forward in grace, we find our past still pulls at us.

But it's not enough to recognize and regret our sin. To leave it behind, we must learn to hate it.

What if God had shown mercy to Lot's wife? What if she had been allowed to flee the wickedness of Sodom to a better place, all the time harboring in her heart a love for her past? The virus of Sodom's wickedness would have gone with her to her new home, preserved deep within her, waiting its chance to emerge and infect other lives. Rather than allow her to preserve the cherished memory of Sodom in a new place, God preserves her as a pillar of salt. She becomes a memorial for the preservation of evil, a warning to all who might see her frozen in her half-turned gaze of longing.

If your spiritual gaze were frozen at this instant, on what would it be fixed? Every day is a choice to look forward toward life-giving grace or backward toward sin-saturated death. Will you choose self-focus or God-focus? How will you be memorialized? As someone who preserved the pleasures of sin or the profit of sanctification?

We're fortunate to receive similar warnings. **Ephesians 4:22-24** tells us to take off the old self that is ruled by sin and be renewed, putting on the new self that is in the likeness of God. Similarly, **1 John 5:16** says that willful, deliberate sin can lead to death. Lot's wife wasn't able to accept that. What she chose to value in her heart led her to sin, which led to her death. We must learn from this.

SCRIPTURE READING: PSALM 141:8

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Never look back, your future is before you.