

Genesis 18:16-33—Abraham’s Intercessory Prayer For Sodom And Gomorrah

Memory Verse

Genesis 15:6 NLT—*Justification by faith*

And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith.

Outline (Genesis 18:16-33)

1. God reveals to Abraham the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:16-19)
2. Abraham Intercedes for Sodom—God will not judge the righteous with the wicked (Genesis 18:20-33)

Introduction

In Genesis 18:1-15, God again appeared to Abraham and reminded him of His promise that he and Sarah will give birth to a son, Isaac, stating that Sarah would give birth in 9 months time. Abraham had prepared a meal for God (Jesus), as well as two accompanying angels. They are about to leave and then God tells Abraham what He is about to do concerning the wickedness of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the surrounding towns of the plain (at the south east end of the Dead Sea). We pick up the story from here.

Genesis 18:16-33 NKJV

Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. ¹⁷ And the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸ since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹ For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.” ²⁰ And the LORD said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, ²¹ I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”

²² Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. ²³ And Abraham came near and said, “Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴ Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? ²⁵ Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

²⁶ So the LORD said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.”

²⁷ Then Abraham answered and said, “Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: ²⁸ Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?”

So He said, “If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it.”

²⁹ And he spoke to Him yet again and said, “Suppose there should be forty found there?”

So He said, “I will not do it for the sake of forty.”

³⁰ Then he said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?”

So He said, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.”

³¹ And he said, “Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?”

So He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty.”

³² Then he said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?”

And He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.” ³³ So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

1. God reveals to Abraham the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah

Genesis 18:16-19 NKJV

Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. ¹⁷ And the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸ since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹ For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”

v 16 Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way: Abraham continues his generous hospitality. It was customary for the host to accompany his guests for a while on their journey.

God reveals His will to His friends so as to include them in His plans

v 17 And the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing?: This is a rhetorical question, with the answer being “no”. There are a few exceptions to this, like in Revelation 10:4, when John heard the seven thunders speak, but was told not to write down what they said. However, the Bible is basically God revealing to man what His plans are, from creation to eternity. In the Bible we call it progressive revelation, where we get more and more details as time goes on. God delights to involve us in His plans—He loves to work with us—this is such a privilege!

Amos 3:7 NLT

Indeed, the Sovereign LORD never does anything until He reveals his plans to His servants the prophets.

John 15:14-15 NKJV

You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

Friends confide in each other. If we are faithful to obey God, and therefore remain in fellowship with God, then we can expect God to communicate to us His plans for us and those around us. Even though we are servants, God treats us as friends: Again, the more trustworthy we are, the more we love God and seek to do what He wants, the more of His plan for our lives he will reveal to us. Abraham was called the friend of God several times (see 2 Chronicles 20:7, Isaiah 41:8, James 2:23). The more we make ourselves available for God to use, then the more God will share with us—we don’t work *for* God, but *with* God.

2 Corinthians 6:1-2 NKJV

We then, as workers together with Him [God] also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you."

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

What we will see today concerns God's plan for both the towns of the plain (including Sodom and Gomorrah), as well as Lot. We will see that God desires Abraham to intercede or pray on their behalf. God is giving Abraham the opportunity to serve as a priest and pray for them. Lot is both Abraham's brother in the Lord, and his nephew. This is a good lesson for us. If we are not walking in fellowship with God like Abraham was, as a servant of God, then we will not be sensitive or available to God's still small voice indicating who and what we should be praying for, talking to, and helping etc. Just imagine if Abraham had refused to entertain his guests... then this conversation would never had happened.

God invites us to join Him in His work as fellow workers so that He can prepare us for what He has planned for us in the future

vs 18 **Since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him:** This is God's plan for Abraham's life. Abraham was the first leader of the nation of Israel (**Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation**), the nation through whom the Messiah would eventually come (**and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him**).

v 19 **For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him:** This is what Abraham needs to be able to be and do to fulfil the plan God has for his life. This is very important. We are all leaders in some way, whether of family as a father or mother, of people at work, or at church, or in a club etc. This applies to all of us.

To be a good leader, we must grow in maturity or character. Here are three things we can learn from the words of God in verse 19:

1. God gives us opportunities to learn to lead people (in order that he may command his children and his household after him)

Like Jesus demonstrated, we need to learn how to lead humbly and by example.

Matthew 20:25-28 NLT

But Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. ²⁶ But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. ²⁸ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

To "**command his children and his household after him**" is also one of the attributes of a mature man given in the New Testament. Notice that being a good leader starts at home—the home is where we practice and learn how to humbly lead.

1 Timothy 3:4-5 AMP

He must rule his own household well, keeping his children under control, with true dignity, commanding their respect in every way and keeping them respectful. ⁵ *For if a man does not know how to rule his own household, how is he to take care of the church of God?*

2. *A leader is always influencing people—God wants Abraham to influence those in his household to **keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice***

Obviously we can't lead people where we haven't been, or, to put it another way, people can't follow us where we are not going. If we want to lead or influence people to **keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice**, then we ourselves must first be keeping **the way of the LORD**, and doing **righteousness and justice**. Again, the New Testament explains more fully what it looks like to, "**keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice**". The Bible says that only mature or godly men should be in positions of leadership, just like God is teaching or mentoring Abraham to be.

1 Timothy 3:1-7 NKJV

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³ not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; ⁴ one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence ⁵ (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); ⁶ not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. ⁷ Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

3. *There is a good reason that Abraham should submit himself to God's "godly leadership mentor program", it's so **that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him—with privilege comes responsibility***

Abraham has the privilege of being the first prophet and leader of the nation of Israel. But with that esteemed role comes a lot of responsibility. Abraham must first grow in maturity and character before he can actually fulfil his promised role—**that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him**.

*Application: Our greatest responsibility—leading our families to **keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice***

The Lord didn't give Abraham information and revelation so he could increase in knowledge, but so he could communicate or share his faith with his family and live a godly life. Consider the following quote from Jon Courson.

"I will give Abraham understanding of what I'm about to do," said the Lord, "because I know he is a man who will teach his children."

The same is true today. The revelation God wants to give us concerning what He's doing, how He's moving, where He's going is based not upon our journal entries or our Bible Study notes. It's based upon whether or not we will share what He tells us with our children.

People often say to me, "If I could go back and do it all over again, I would not go into the profession I'm in presently. I would go into the ministry." And I understand that, for I have found the ministry to be absolutely delightful. It's a fabulous calling. But here's the fact: If you have children or grandchildren, you are in the ministry. No clerical collar or pulpit compares to gathering your family around you, giving a simple Bible lesson, singing songs, sharing with each other, and praying together. That is the ministry. And anyone who takes seriously this call will, like Abraham, receive fresh revelation. I know this to be so, for the most wonderful insights and sweetest revelations of God to my heart have not come as I have prepared sermons, but as I have simply shared in worship with my family." (Jon Courson)

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NLT

“Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵ And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. ⁶ And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. ⁷ Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. ⁸ Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. ⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Question: Do I share with others what God has shown me? Am I leading (encouraging and influencing) others, especially my family, to **keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice?**

God will see if Sodom and Gomorrah are deserving of judgement

Genesis 18:20-21 NKJV

And the Lord said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, ²¹ I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”

Genesis 18:20-21 NLT

So the LORD told Abraham, “I have heard a great outcry from Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sin is so flagrant. ²¹ I am going down to see if their actions are as wicked as I have heard. If not, I want to know.”

Why did God explain the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham—what lesson was God teaching Abraham that He wanted him to share with his family? The destruction of Sodom was to be a great warning of the certainty of God’s ultimate judgment on all sin, just as the Flood in Noah’s day had been (see 2 Peter 2:4–9). God wanted Abraham to understand this truth and to pass it on to his children and his children’s children. Understanding the fact that God judges sin in nations discourages us from individual sin—we learn that God hates sin and will judge all sin.

2 Peter 2:4-6 NKJV

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; ⁵ and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; ⁶ **and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.**

This is the message that we not only need to tell to our families, but to all who will listen. Why is this message so important? *Because the law without consequences is just good advice.* When setting rules and boundaries with our families, there must be consequences associated with them, otherwise those rules and boundaries mean nothing. What we see here is God demonstrating that He enforces His rules—there are consequences if we overstep the moral boundaries that God has put in place for humanity.

2. Abraham Intercedes for Sodom—God will not judge the righteous with the wicked

Genesis 18:22-33 NKJV

Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. ²³ And Abraham came near and said, “**Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?** ²⁴ Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; **would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?** ²⁵ Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

²⁶ So the LORD said, “If I find in Sodom **fifty righteous** within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.”

²⁷ Then Abraham answered and said, “Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: ²⁸ Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?”

So He said, “If I find there **forty-five**, I will not destroy it.”

²⁹ And he spoke to Him yet again and said, “Suppose there should be **forty** found there?”

So He said, “I will not do it for the sake of forty.”

³⁰ Then he said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose **thirty** should be found there?”

So He said, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.”

³¹ And he said, “Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose **twenty** should be found there?”

So He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty.”

³² Then he said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose **ten** should be found there?”

And He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.” ³³ So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

v 22 Then the men [the two angels and the Lord] turned away from there and went toward Sodom: These include the two angels that go to Sodom and rescue Lot and his family. We’ll see what happens to Lot and what they do in Genesis chapter 19.

Abraham draws near to God to pray

vs 22-23 **But Abraham still stood before the LORD.** ²³ **And Abraham came near [to the LORD]:** Abraham understands that God desires him to pray. Abraham knows that Lot lives in Sodom, and if God doesn’t either change His mind about punishing Sodom and the other towns of the plain, or rescues Lot, then Lot will die along with the wicked men and women of Sodom. Abraham could have said to himself, “Well, that’s just the consequences of Lot’s many bad choices, to bad so sad...” But instead, Abraham cared enough, both about believing Lot and also the unbelieving people who lived in the towns of the plain, to plead with God that they would be delivered from the coming judgement. Abraham had eternity in mind—Abraham did not want to see anyone go to Hell (the Lake of Fire), even the wicked people of Sodom. Abraham was demonstrating the same love and concern for people that God has—He wants everyone to be saved—this is why Abraham’s prayer was so powerful.

1 Timothy 2:4 NKJV

[God our Saviour] desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Like Abraham, for believers today to pray effectively, we too must choose to draw near to God. What does this look like? We choose to love the things He loves, hate the things He hates, share the same love and concern for the individual or individuals that God has prompted us to pray for, and usually have some understanding of what God's will is for them. Abraham literally approached close to God. For believers today, it means that we must separate ourselves from the world, repent of any sin, and set our hearts to seek the Lord. *If our lives lack purity, then our prayers will lack power.*

Application: The importance of prayer

While the people of Sodom were absorbed in their sinful pursuits, utterly oblivious to anything around them, Abraham stood with God on the mountain overlooking the plain and interceded for the wicked people who lived there. This is also our calling. Our main work is done on our knees, even if the people we are praying for don't appreciate the effort we expend on their behalf. Jesus lead by example, spending much time alone with the Father, with probably a lot of that time spent praying for people.

Matthew 14:23 NKJV

And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.

Mark 1:35 NKJV

³⁵ Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

Luke 22:31-32 NKJV

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

And what is Jesus still doing in heaven, even now? Praying and interceding for us:

Rom 8:34 NKJV

Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Hebrews 7:25 NKJV

Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

And what does the bible tell us that we should be doing now?

1 Tim 2:1-7 NKJV

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. ³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, ⁴ **who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. [This is Jesus's prayer and should be our prayer as well]** ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time **[This is our message]**, ⁷ for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

Knowing that prayer facilitates God's work on this earth, and that he delights to hear and answer the intercessory petitions of his saints, should encourage us to pray. *We are never more like the Lord Jesus Christ, or more pleasing to God the Father, than when we choose to spend time praying for others.*

Overall, Abraham's prayer of intercession was effective because of at least 5 reasons:

1. Abraham was humble in prayer—he recognised his own powerlessness, and God's complete control over every situation.
2. Abraham was persistent in prayer—Abraham kept on praying, right down to only 10 people.
3. Abraham's prayer was powerful because he was walking in fellowship with God—if there is any sin in our lives that we have not yet repented of, then our prayers will be hindered (see Micah 6:8, James 5:16). Again, purity equals power.
4. Abraham was concerned for God's honour and glory—Abraham's first priority was that God would be glorified in the situation
5. Abraham prayed according to scripture—Abraham simply took what God had already said or promised and "reminded" God of what God had already said. God loves it when His children believe and apply His promises.

Righteous Lot, an example of a very immature or backslidden believer

vs 23 **And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?":** It's easy to know who the **wicked** people were—the unsaved people who lived in the cities of the plain—we'll find out much more about just how wicked they were when we go through Genesis chapter 19. However, who are the **righteous**? From all outward appearances, Lot is just as greedy and evil as they are—he wasn't outwardly righteous. But the Bible gives us an important insight into Lot.

2 Peter 2:4-10a NLT

For God did not spare even the angels who sinned. He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the day of judgment. ⁵ And God did not spare the ancient world—except for Noah and the seven others in his family. Noah warned the world of God's righteous judgment. So God protected Noah when he destroyed the world of ungodly people with a vast flood. ⁶ Later, God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and turned them into heaps of ashes. He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people. ⁷ **But God also rescued Lot out of Sodom because he was a righteous man who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him.** ⁸ **Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day.** ⁹ So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while keeping the wicked under punishment until the day of final judgment. ¹⁰ He is especially hard on those who follow their own twisted sexual desire, and who despise authority.

Lot was either a "*backslidden believer*" (someone who had previously learned to trust and obey God, but had fallen back into a worldly lifestyle and way of thinking), or he was still "*a baby or immature or worldly believer*" (a believer who had never actually matured or grown up spiritually). Lot, like Abraham, had made a genuine profession of faith. However, unlike Abraham, Lot had chosen to keep on enjoying or benefiting from the world system instead of repenting of his sin. Lot was probably richer than Abraham, enjoying the much richer and greener pastures of the well watered plain. He was like a father who worked really hard and provided every material need and want for his family, but neglected their spiritual wellbeing—therefore Lot's family suffered greatly.

Consider some of the consequences that resulted from Lot prioritising money and wealth over his relationship with God:

- Lot never matured as a man of God;
- Lot lost any godly influence he might have had on the people of the plain;
- Lot could not lead his family into the ways of God;
- Lot he lived a miserable existence, being unable to fully enjoy both his sinful life choices, and his relationship with God;
- Lot and his family were very negatively influenced by the wicked people and customs around them; and
- Lot's family suffered greatly because of his compromise with the world (we'll read much more about these devastating consequences in Genesis chapter 19).

Why was righteous Lot miserable or "tormented"? Because a believer knows what is right—they have been given by God the desire to do what is right. If a believer chooses to continue in sin, even after receiving God's free gift of forgiveness, then they are grieving God, and they feel sad. This means that the enjoyment of worldly pleasures is only superficial—deep down they know that it's wrong, and that they don't want to live that way. Once a believer, you can not longer enjoy sin the way you used to as an unbeliever.

As believers, if we choose to remain under the control of (or be submitted to) our old sinful nature, instead of submitting to (placing ourselves under the control of) the Holy Spirit, then our lifestyle, behaviours, speech, and attitudes are no different to that of an unbeliever.

Romans 8:5-8 NLT

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. ⁶ So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. ⁷ For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. ⁸ That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NLT

Dear brothers and sisters, when I was with you I couldn't talk to you as I would to spiritual people. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in Christ. ² I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren't ready for anything stronger. And you still aren't ready, ³ **for you are still controlled by your sinful nature. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn't that prove you are controlled by your sinful nature? Aren't you living like people of the world?**

Summary of Lot's spiritual condition: If Lot was so sinful or backslidden in his ways and thinking, then how can the Bible say that Lot is righteous? Because Lot had, at some stage in the past, made the decision **to repent** (to choose to make God the most important part of his life, to give up what he wants and do what God wants instead), **and believe** in the promised Messiah, whose death would be the payment for all the sin of all people. Lot understood that he was a guilty of violating God's moral law, and had asked for and received God's forgiveness (most likely Abraham had a lot to do with this). Salvation is a gift that we must choose to receive, not something that we can earn by being good. Lot's issue is that once he was saved, he chose not to walk in the path of obedience to God, and so didn't enjoy the fellowship or friendship with God that his salvation had made possible. Put another way, Lot was at peace with God (Lot was saved by faith, see Romans 5:1), but Lot's choice to seek worldly pleasures meant he did not to experience the peace of God (see Philippians 4:7).

Ephesians 2:8-10 NLT

God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. ¹⁰ For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.

Titus 3:3-7 NLT

Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other.

⁴ But—When God our Saviour revealed His kindness and love, ⁵ He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. ⁶ He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Saviour. ⁷ **Because of His grace He made us right in His sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.**

Abraham's prayer to God: God will not judge the righteous with the wicked

Genesis 18:23-25 NKJV

And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" ²⁴ Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? ²⁵ Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

This principle of God being a just and fair judge is so important for us to understand. We'll talk more about its implications when we cover Genesis chapter 19. However, we need to understand two things regarding God's absolutely perfect and fair justice:

1. All people who have not chosen to receive God's forgiveness will be punished by God—they will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire when they die, regardless of how outwardly morally good they are.
2. All people who have received God's gift of forgiveness (by grace through faith) are guaranteed to go to heaven and be accepted by God when they die. Why? Because the sin that once separated them from God was paid for by Jesus, and so they have now been adopted into God's family. Of course, God will discipline His children when they disobey Him: But this is an evidence of His love, not a reason for the child of God to doubt their eternal salvation.

John 3:16-18 NKJV

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish [spend eternity in Hell, the Lake of Fire] but have everlasting life.

¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

¹⁸ **"He who believes in Him is not condemned [is not guilty before God]; but he who does not believe is condemned [is guilty before God] already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**

Romans 8:1 NLT

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

Question: There are four types of people. Those who are saved and act like they are saved (like Abraham), those who are saved but don't act like they are saved (like Lot), those who are not saved and behave like someone who is not saved (like the wicked people of Sodom), and finally those who are not saved but act like they are saved (like the pharisees). Which one are you?