

## Faith Alive Church

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### 2 Peter 2:7-8 NCV (New century Version)

7 But he saved Lot from those cities. Lot, a good man, was troubled because of the filthy lives of evil people.<sup>8</sup> Lot was a good man, but because he lived with evil people every day, his good heart was hurt by the evil things he saw and heard.

Peter's second letter dealt with a lie that was telling Christians that because of God's grace that it was ok to follow their flesh and be in sin - just as in Lot's day. These 'liars and deceivers' argued that we may as well do whatever we like because God will forgive us, and they called this freedom.

But Peter had already pointed out in 1 Peter 2:16, that freedom to do whatever we like is actually slavery to our fleshly and sinful desires. Peter described Lot as a righteous man who was horrified by the evil in the city. Now, the Genesis account doesn't make Lot appear to have been very "righteous" at all. This is because of some of the selfish choices he had made when traveling with his Uncle Abraham. And then later he allowed his family to settle into the wicked culture of Sodom. But for all his flaws, Lot stood out as a righteous man in an extremely evil society.

**Peter (1 Pt. 2:16)** and the other apostles also wrote that; God frees us from sin, so we can obey Him as his people and enjoy His blessings, rather than follow our sinful desires or our flesh and suffer trouble. God doesn't free us from the restraint to do good things, but from the rule of selfish 'appetites and desires' that brings us into bondage. I think people sometimes interpret this to mean that God is against fun or pleasure - but they are mistaken; He's only against letting the 'flesh and pleasure' rule our lives and once-again, enslave us.

Living in true obedience to God begins with knowing the difference between our 'wants and our needs'—and then making the right choices. Within these choices, it should be our 'heart's desire' to honor the Lord. I know it's not the easiest thing to do – but in Christ it's possible and it's worth it. AND I know it seems like everywhere we turn 'we see or hear things that want to flood our hearts with the exact opposite.

And because our hearts can be hurt by what we 'see and hear' **Proverbs 4:23, says; "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do - flows from it."** Our heart—our feelings of 'love and desire' - dictates to a great extent, how we live, because we will always find time to do what we enjoy. This is why Solomon tells us to guard our heart above all else, making sure we concentrate on those desires that will keep us on the right path. Make sure your affections lead you in the right direction. Put boundaries on your desire. Don't go after everything you see - Look straight ahead, keep your eyes fixed on your goal, and don't get sidetracked on detours that lead to sin.

If we don't take those thoughts captive, they will take root in our hearts and destroy our potential - but how do we do it? We need to put **2 Corinthians 10:5** to work, and take every thought or argument that brings itself against God into subjection, to the obedience of Christ – in other words, overcome evil thoughts with good thoughts and overcome evil actions with good actions.

As New Creations in Christ we are equipped to serve our Creator. But in the absence of God's 'word and its truth' - We will serve 'somebody or something'. Our only true choice is this: Who will we serve or give our hearts to? At one time, we all served sin and grew weak under its deadly power over us. But now, through God's grace, we have become 'servants of obedience' and are set right with; God, each other, and ourselves. We must daily decide whose servant we are and offer God; our hands, our feet, our hearts, our eyes. Remember, just as God rescued Lot from Sodom, so he is able to rescue us from the 'temptations and trials' we face in a wicked world. And though Lot was not sinless, but he put his trust in God and was spared when Sodom was destroyed. We likewise can do the same.