

VICTORIA BAPTIST CHURCH –YOUTH WORK

Sunday morning teaching plan

Date: 27th April 2025



TITLE:	Sodom and Gomorrah . Genesis 19:1-26 (Warning sensitive content)
THEME:	The influence of culture on our behaviour and the need to be aware of God's justice.
AIM:	How can we protect ourselves from the godless influences of culture

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This is a controversial story with many complex and difficult passages, not least the godless behaviour of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, but also the willingness of Lot to give up his daughters to the mob. It raises questions about personal sexual behaviour, hospitality, and our acceptance of cultural norms that oppose God. God will only go so far in allowing sin to thrive. Hence His appearance to Abraham in ch18 and Abraham's plea for God to have mercy because of Lot. God's wrath and justice were tempered by His mercy, yet if we choose to ignore Him, it will always lead to destruction.

WARM UP Cultural quiz... discovering the weird and quirky things people do ...

MAIN TEACHING

Activity one: read Genesis 19:1-29. Set the scene first. God had visited Abraham and told him of His plans to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham pleads with God to spare the cities if there are at least 10 good people there. Lot, Abraham's nephew lived in Sodom. (he assumed he was a good man!) God still plans to destroy the city but has plans to rescue Lot!

1. What is shocking about this story? (discussion may lead to homosexuality /Lot willing to allow his daughters to be abused) *Some sensitivity is required here, as we have 11-12 yr olds*
2. Why do you think Sodom and Gomorrah had become such wicked places?
3. Why do you think God wanted to destroy the cities? Was He right to?

Key teaching point: This story is about culture, a godless culture. The cities had become so far removed from God's ideals that their immorality and dubious personal behaviour had become the norm. Everyone thought it was okay. It was a "rape" culture, this means a culture of self gratification whatever the cost. Not everyone in the cities were homosexual, but they were all selfish, self gratifying and sexually immoral. They were not concerned about the vulnerable or strangers, they were commodities to be used. We see similar behaviour in wartime and in prisons and to some extent in societies that have rejected God. The basest human emotions are let loose.

God's holy and perfect nature demands justice be done. People are held accountable for their actions. When whole societies reject God, His actions in the OT have been severe. (Contrast NT it is Jesus who pays the price. God reveals His merciful nature in offering a way out).

Activity 2:

1. Abraham believed Lot to be a good man, that's why he wanted God to save the cities. Was Lot a good man?
2. How had Lot become like the people he lived amongst?

Key teaching point: By living in the cities Lot and his family had become "infected" by the culture. They had assimilated into it and taken on some of the values. Hence Lot's offer of allowing his daughters to be taken by the Mob. He had given in to their level.

Activity 3:

1. What are the things in our world today that we see as normal that go against God's best for us?
2. How has our world changed from the world our parents or grandparents grew up in?
3. What do we look back at in History and say "why did Christians do that or allow that?"
4. What would Christians from the past see in our world and say, "why do they think that is okay?"

Key teaching point: Attitudes to how we spend our money, how we choose to live our lives, our personal, moral behaviour or even our sexuality and gender. Some examples of how the world has changed. For centuries the church allowed slavery, sexism, racism, child labour etc to exist. We would ask **why?** Our grandparents would have frowned upon divorce or remarriage. Today we take for granted that the shops are open on a Sunday, we think nothing of watching violent films with swearing or for some (hopefully not Christians) even pornography. Our ancestors would be shocked!

All of us over every age have accepted godless culture and we think it is normal . It is different in every age.

Activity 4:

1. How can we escape "infection" by our culture?
2. How was Lot rescued? Who can rescue us now?
3. How do we live godly lives in a dark and godless world? Matt 5:13-16, Ephesians 6:10-18, Phil 4:8-9

Key teaching point: Only Jesus can rescue us and protect us from the world. If we place our trust in Him and are obedient to His teaching we can "shine like stars" and be a blessing to others rather than being infected. Only divine intervention can protect us from the darkness and evil in the world .

TAKEAWAY

Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." **Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky** as you hold firmly to the word of life. Philippians 2:14-15

Extra information