

Danger In Looking Back - Remember Lot's Wife

Luke 17:32 - Remember Lot's wife.

- **Remembering the lives of secular history** is important,
- But those in church history Should be even more important to us.

I would encourage you to remember:

- **The Patriarchs**—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- **The Prophets**—Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, and Jeremiah
- **The Apostles**—Paul, Peter, John, James, and the others
- **The Martyrs**—Stephen and eleven of the Apostles and a host of others

Given time, I would encourage you to be thankful for those who brought the ridiculed and mocked at Gospel message to where it is even today.

Jesus told His disciples to remember Lot's wife, it comes as a startling command.

The reason that it is so startling is because this was the only person recorded in Scripture that **Jesus ever told anyone to remember.**

- **He did not** tell them to remember any of the Old Testament giants of men.
- **There wasn't** any mention of patriots, heroes, or nobles.

Jesus wanted his disciples to remember someone who started but did not make it!

If the Lord commanded for us to remember her, we must ask ourselves, "What is there to remember about this woman?"

When you look back to remember things in the lives of people, invariably there are historical associations that surround them that made them what they were.

- People are somewhat ***defined by the circumstances*** under which they are forced to contend with in life.
- Other People that the only real thing ***that is known of them*** is when they were **born** and when they **died**.
- **In reality**, birth, name, good works, evil deeds, devotion to God or vile sinfulness, **people gain attention because of actions of their lives**.

=====

Remember Lot's wife!

When we get to Lot's wife, it appears that her birth, past, and existence really means nothing at all.

- There is never a name given to her.
- We know who Abraham's wife is and
- We know who Nahor's (Abraham's brother) wife is, **but Lot's wife is never identified**.

She makes her appearance in **Genesis 19**.

- **It is a once and for all appearance.**
- ***We know nothing*** of her family, her habits, her friends, and her background.
- How could we remember someone with such a vacuum of information?

Yet, I interject this small but important fact about our Bible:

- All through biblical history unnamed characters mattered greatly!
- Looking at **unnamed women**, like Lot's wife, in scripture we find much food for our spiritual life.
- The widow of **Zarephath** (1 Kings 17:9-10)
- The woman of **Shunem** (2 Kings 4:8)
- The woman of **Samaria** (John 4:7)
- There are **others** the Lord healed in the Gospels.

Lot's wife fills this category.

- **We don't read of her** in Lot's movements through scripture in Genesis.
- **Even in the conversation** that Lot had with the angels who were telling him to leave the city of Sodom and Gomorrah, **they do not mention her:**

Genesis 19:12 - Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

¹²Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—**take them out of this place!**"

She appears for the first and last time in a brief but vivid picture of the hurried run from Sodom.

While **Lot can't seem to make up his mind**, scriptures interject this tense statement:

Genesis 19:16-17 - ¹⁶And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. ¹⁷So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed."

That is half of the history of Lot's wife in two verses!

With **Lot's wife**, no further details are given to us about what took place that fateful day in Genesis 19 except the other half of her history in a single verse.

Genesis 19:26 - ²⁶But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

Suddenly she appears and just as suddenly she disappears.

- She is like a fast-moving cloud that appears and in minutes has disappeared from the sky.
- **Lot's wife** has no beginning, no middle, but a **terribly fearful end!**

There on the roadside leading to Zoar is a pillar of salt. That pillar of salt has a fiery, burning backdrop of two cities and this is what the Lord wanted His disciples to remember.

There are many who **escape their sin and fall into the snare** of indecisiveness or waver in their faith.

- And they consequently play a losing game all along.
- **All the good** they seem to be in the world is to be a **permanent warning of how not to do it.**

=====

Three Troubling Lessons

There are three troubling lessons that come tearing from the Scriptures concerning her life.

- 1. She Was Almost Saved - The first lesson was that she was almost saved.**

Imagine with me, the warning has come, and she has responded to it.

- Notice the pattern that his in her life.
- The security of a home followed by a great warning of approaching danger
- Then the miraculous deliverance that gets under way and suddenly an instant death!

This pattern has been played out far too many times for us to be able to even number. People come in and are **given words of warning of how to get out.**

- **Leave** this world behind.
- **Come** and be converted today.
- Today is the day of **salvation.**
- **Hear** while you may hear.
- **Repent** and be converted.
- Or a thousand other **variations.**

Lot's wife is escaping, she is leaving Sodom behind.

- Zoar is in front of her!
- If she would have ***never left Sodom,*** she would have been ***nothing more than a suicidal victim of her unbelief...***
- ***She started out*** on the path ***but did not make it.***
- For that, the Lord tells us to remember her.

She was almost saved! - We may also fall into the same trap.

There is something about our society that promotes its own sense of salvation.

It goes like this:

- I go to **work.**
- I pay my **bills.**
- I fulfill **my responsibilities** to my family.
- I go to **church.**
- I don't say **bad words.**
- I don't do **bad things.**
- I love my **spouse and kids.**
- **I am not perfect,** I slip up occasionally, **but I'm ok.**

I must remind you that there is a vast difference between **being saved** and **almost saved!**

In the Christian life there must be a steady advancement because **nothing spiritual** is ever in a state of neutral and being static.

It is always pressing forward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!

Once you get started, you cannot afford to look back.

=====

2. **Almost Saved but She Perished** - The second lesson that comes from *the memory of Lot's wife* is that she was almost saved but she perished.

You might say that there is *not a lot of difference* to being **almost saved** and then saying **almost saved but she perished**. You may have a point of argument until you look a little closer.

Consider a man who drowns in the ocean after a ship sinks and he **has no lifejacket or life-raft to save him**.

Then consider a man who drowns in the lake but **has a** lifejacket that he was not wearing or could not reach a rope that someone was tossing to him. **It makes a great difference when you look at it in that way.**

Lot's wife escaped danger only to be swallowed up by another one.

It is like the traveler who begins the journey and **almost** reaching the destination, some tragic event takes place, and it ends.

People will be lost in the very sight of heaven.

- They have been convinced of the risk.
- They have been satisfied as to what the danger is.
- They have moved to be saved from that danger.
- They are **near** the haven of refuge.

It was looking back that finally got them! Whether it was curiosity or a lingering desire to go back to the old life, looking back capsized the soul!!!!

- There is something about human nature **that desires their old sins**, their **old playgrounds**, and their **old memories**.
- Far too many are **willing to make a deal with the memories of the enemy of their soul** at crucial times.

The rationale is that we will give our spiritual lives a rest, a vacation of sorts, for a while and **go back to our sinful ways, habits, and vices** for a short period and **then come back**.

Looking back is what destroyed Lot's wife and it will do the same to you also.

=====

3. Her Life is a Warning - ***The pillar of salt that Lot's wife became may have long since been eroded into nothing, but the moral of the story is not the pillar of salt but the warning that comes from this story.***

There are atheists who exult in the idea that this happened. However, the pride of science and the pride of ignorance are very closely related to each other.

As with every Scripture it is always good to remember the context of which the passage comes from. This one is no different. What was it that caused Jesus to say, **"Remember Lot's wife?"**

Luke 17:26-31 - ²⁶And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: ²⁷They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; ²⁹but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all. ³⁰Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

³¹ "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods *are* in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise, the one who is in the field, let him not turn back.

After the Lord had warned His disciples not to get mixed up with a sense of false security and self-indulgence as they had in Noah's day,

- He said, **"remember Lot's wife!"**

- In a sense, He was saying, ***“Don’t delay your flight from this world for any reason!”***

There is such a thing as **false-security and procrastination** that marks our times.

- **I will deal with** this sin another time.
- **I will pray through** Sunday night.
- **I will start reading** my Bible tomorrow.
- **I will turn over** a new leaf this coming year.
- **I will be more spiritual** and less lazy shortly.
- ***I will. . . I will. . . I will. . .***

The reality is that we have bought into the foolishness of looking back!

- You can perish right in the middle of deliverance, and you can backslide right in the midst of the outpouring of revival.
- There can be others around you *living with a heavenward focus* and **you can look back** and *be vaporized by hell!*

Their lives serve as a warning to the church.

- **Many of them have been *just like Lot’s wife*.**
- **They looked back** and became pillars of salt.

They had their seasons of spiritual awakenings.

- They had their tears in their prayers, spiritual vows, and resolutions.
- They fought through spiritual conflicts.
- They had some apparent revivals and victories along the way.
- They were involved in spiritual conflicts **with self and sin**.

But in the end, **they surrendered to their weaknesses and the corruption** of the *spiritual person* **giving way to flesh desires**.

The road to deliverance is loaded with pillars of salt along the way.

- ***Those who do not consent to glorify God willingly***
- Will in the end ***become milestones of remembrance*** for *other faithful travelers* who make their way toward heaven.

CLOSE:

The Words Of The Angels

If I could endeavor to tell you today **to remember Lot's wife**, I would take the same words that the angels used that day so long ago in Sodom.

Genesis 19:16-17 - ¹⁶And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.

¹⁷So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! **Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed.**"

- Escape for your life!
- Don't look behind!
- Don't stay in the plain!
- Escape to the mountain, lest you be consumed.

On. . . On. . . On. . . March On! No matter what! March On!

There is DANGER In Looking Back - Remember Lot's Wife