

*“But [Lot’s] wife looked back [to Sodom and Gomorrah] from behind [Lot], and she became a pillar of salt,”* Genesis 19:26.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the LORD,

It has been over thirty years since my dear Mother slipped away into the waiting arms of her Savior. She was ready to go home as her life-long soul mate had preceded her in death less than two years prior. Mom and Dad were dear folks that loved each other almost as much as they loved the LORD. They served the LORD, others, and each other with their total heart as few couples do. I know of no other couple that could walk in their footsteps.

Mom was in a lot of pain the last few weeks of her life. We have very good friends by the name of Bill and Nancy Sharp, who stopped by to love on her with words and music in her final days. Pastor Bill asked Mom if she was ready for the crossing. Mom raised up a little from her bed, gave a giant smile and said, *“Pastor, I’ve come too far to look back. I’ve trusted upon the LORD all of my life for His Grace and Mercy. I can’t, and won’t turn back or doubt Him now!”* Just a few days later she slipped into eternity to be with the LORD.

At times, life is full of pleasures, joy, and even peace. Other times, not so much. If you were to put your life on a balance scale, would it tip toward the goodness and the blessings of God, or be weighed down with pain, regret, trouble, unhappiness, stress, failure, sickness, and disease?

As a kid, I can truthfully say that our lives were filled with all of the above, and more, much more than I can talk about here. However, in Mom’s last days, she knew and expressed the value of her life, it was in Jesus Christ. Her trials, problems, losses, hurts, and sicknesses could not hold a candle to the **Power, Love, Fellowship, and Blessings** of her Heavenly Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit! Nothing in her passing or even looking at her pending death could turn her away from her love, dedication, and commitment to follow the LORD, even to her dying breath.

There is no disputing that sin has its pleasures. It may even have a season of joy and may include fellowship and laughter. It is for sure, much easier to follow the crowd down the wide path than walking the straight and narrow for the LORD. In years gone by, there have been times that Christine and I had to attend company functions, as I was the Director of Advertising for a large international firm, where there was drinking and dancing going on without limits. Now understand that I am not judging or throwing stones, but we have noticed that so many

people felt uncomfortable around us because we did not have a hard liquor drink in our hands and weren’t cutting the rug under the influence. It truly bothered them more than it affected us. Good times and sin has its draw upon the flesh, mind, and even the spirit, but it is the flesh.

Looking at Abram’s nephew Lot, we see his desire for the easy life from our first encounter with him in **Genesis 13**. Lot traveled with his uncle Abram. Both were flourishing with goods and successful with flocks, cattle, herdsmen, tents, and stuff. Lot decided to travel to the garden-like green plain of Jordan when Abram suggested that they part ways because both of their herds together were too large for the land to support. Abram humbled himself and took the least desirable path west to avoid strife between their people.

Next we see Lot being captured and carried off with his family and possessions by four kings, the King of Elam, the King of Goyim, the King of Shinar, and the King of Ellasar in **Genesis 14**. Heroic Abram rallied his house of armed trained servants and attacked the kings, retrieving Lot and of his family and possessions [Read **Hebrews 7:1** – slaughter of the kings]. As a result of being rescued, Lot returned to Sodom where he lived, prospered, even became a town elder.

In **Genesis 18** we read of Lot again as the angels of the LORD first visited Abraham and then departed his camp and traveled to Sodom because of the cities’ very grievous sinful cries that were heard by the LORD. Abraham had made a deal with God’s messengers to spare the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for Lot’s sake if they found ten righteous men. They could not.

We won’t recapitulate that story here except to make note that the vile filthy language and life style of the town’s folks even grieved Lot, but not to the point of separating himself from that evil; life was too good. Once the die of destruction was cast, Lot tried to convince his married daughters and sons-in-law to leave the city with them before **fire** fell. However, they too had fallen into the trap of sin, mocked Lot, and chose to remain where it was comfortable. Lot himself had to be dragged out of his house with his wife and their two single daughters in tow by the two angels.

Here is the final kicker, the LORD gave specific instructions to leave and don’t look back! The intent was to burn that bridge with no regrets. Walk out of town without saying goodbye. Leave behind what you left behind and

## SEEDS FOR THE HARVEST FIELDS

Please be in prayer for the many programs that are in progress to reach the lost this summer. We have shipped thousands of Gospel Tracts – Gospel Comics – Gospel Books and teaching aids in English – Spanish – and Chinese Mandarin to New York City – Texas – and the Southwest area as God’s Servants are faithful to His Call to minister The Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost and needy. Pray for their protection, wisdom, and anointing of the Holy Spirit. Pray also that these anointed Gospel Words (Seeds) would end up in the hands of the hungry and that they would yield their life to God. We are blessed to be a small part of these outreach endeavors. To God be all the Praise – Honor – and Glory!

move forward to what lies ahead. Lot didn’t just leave the city, he left behind his home, some of his family, his wealth, his flocks, his cattle, his hired servants, his so-called friends, and his position in the government; he left town in haste with nothing but his wife and two daughters. But the lure of sin still gripped the heart of Lot’s wife as she disobeyed the LORD’s Commandment and turned to see the cities of sin one more time before they went out of sight as the family was crossing the mountain pass. In her disobedience she was turned into a pillar of salt.

There is a lady that I have known since I was a teenager. I have worshiped under her anointed ministry of music many, many times. You may have heard of her or seen her on TV. Her name is *Nancy Harmon*. I am sure that you have heard her music as she is a prolific songwriter. At one time her mother even worked here at GTS. Now, more than ever, it is important for the faithful righteous to stand strong in their faith and not look back, not turn back, and not grow weak in their faith but stay the righteous course. Nancy wrote a song that drives home the determination of standing strong for the LORD to the end, like my dear Mother did. The song title of which I speak is, *“I’ve Come Too Far To Look Back.”* If you have



a smart phone, just point your phone’s camera at this QR code, press the yellow bar at the bottom of your screen, then scroll down and click on Nancy’s video to listen to her singing this song.

Why talk about this now?

Have you really stopped and looked at and listened to the changing world around us? There is nothing the same as it was a few years ago; prices, quality, values, super computers, artificial intelligence (AI), privacy, politics, respect, commitment, or anything else. The real point is that **the LORD has not changed!** Nor His values! His commitment! His Word! His Covenants! His Call upon our lives! His Mission! Regarding God, the only change

is the shortness of time. This issue is addressed here because our families, churches, and leaders have and are changing to a more permissive – relaxed attitude toward sinful actions. What was once taboo in the church is now accepted common practice. So many saints are releasing their hold upon the LORD and relaxing in the stream of complacency of today’s lifestyle of compromise. It seems that a marriage covenant is nothing more than words spoken during the ceremony to please the ear. Integrity is something you expect other people to have but have lower your own standards. Honor and respect is something we want but are not willing to give.

**How far have we come?** Do we want to go back to the old life, the old ways, or compromise our Biblical values and lives’ standard just to make life a little easier? Or, have we come this far by faith in God to know that there is no better way to live, and die, and therefore **WILL NOT** turn (or look) back to what we have left behind? A friend told me last night of his local church’s Men’s Bible Study Group going to the local bar for their weekly Bible study (and not because the bar has a side meeting room). Sexual sins among church leaders seem to be in every day’s news. Pastors are afraid to stand on the Word, lest they offend their congregation. **Is the Church working in the Harvest Fields or turning back to Sodom?**

We have been blessed to walk in and know the goodness, the blessing, and the fullness of God, even (and especially) during the enemy’s attacks. What do we have to turn back to? **NOTHING!** What do we have to gain by looking forward? **EVERYTHING!** What do we have to lose by looking back? **EVERYTHING!** *We have come too far to turn back now for Heaven is ahead and awaits for those who stay faithful and righteous before the LORD.* We will stand true to His Calling and give the LORD our praise, honor, and glory!

**How about you? Will you stand or look (go) back?**

Your Covenant Brother in Jesus Christ,

*Phillip Buttram*

Phillip L Buttram

### PRAYER REQUEST

Please keep our Gospel Tract family and board members in your prayers as we face the trials and pressures of keeping God’s Gospel Tracts going out the door. We are receiving more requests for Gospel Tracts and Gospel Comics than we can publish and ship. The physical needs for the ministry are many. God has been our source for over 98 years. By His Grace, and with your help, we will meet all of the orders for His Printed Word. As my Dad said so many years ago – **“TO ALL THE WORLD – TO EVERY CREATURE THROUGH THE PRINTED PAGE!”** Please stand with us to proclaim the glorious Gospel Word of our Heavenly Father to the world.