



“New Life, New Relationships” (Selected Scriptures)

Danny Hodges – TS2461

Intro: For some time now, I have felt led to do a topical series of messages covering what I consider to be some basics of the Christian life. These are basics that I have personally experienced, and without which I would not be where I am today as a Christian. As we spend a few weeks on these, please know that this series will not change the pattern of our teaching and preaching ministry here at CCSP. At the conclusion of this series, we will go back to studying through all of the books of the Bible, one at a time.

(Song by Fleetwood Mac) First time I heard this band was in 1972 (Power Point pics). I come from a broken home. Nevertheless, I had a godly mother and grandmother who taught me the truth about Jesus (the gospel). They also took me to a Baptist church just down the road from our house. I was 5 years old, and I can remember Pastor Milton Frazier at the end of his messages inviting people to come forward and receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. One Sunday, I did. This church later started an elementary school, and in 2nd grade my mother enrolled my brother and me in this school. I learned about the Bible, memorized all the books of the Bible, memorized key Scriptures from the Bible. It was during my fifth grade year that four other guys in our neighborhood and I formed a band. I was the drummer. Our first real gig was playing for a birthday party for Joanie Wildabor. Her mother worked for the local middle school, and there were kids at this party who attended public school that I had never met. I really like being in a band, and I loved when people would ask me to play “wipe out” (play a little). Next thing I know, our band was invited to play for another birthday party. We ended up playing for lots of parties, and I gotta tell ya, the girls at these parties were much prettier than the girls I was used to at my school. At one party, Curt Griggs, one of my new friends I had met at some of these parties, invited me to his church youth group meeting on a Sunday evening. I remember being surprised that Curt went to church. I went to my first MYF, and boy was I glad I did. To my delight, lots of the girls who attended these parties I was playing for also attended this Sunday night youth group. At the end of my 6th grade year at Emmanuel Baptist School, I convinced my mother to enroll me in Hartsville Middle School, because that’s where all my new friends were going to attend. Before long I was going to parties all the time. One night, I ended up with a group who knew an older person who could drive, and they took us to Smalley’s Service station. What I found out was we weren’t going there for gas or soda pop, but Vodka. Next thing I know the bottle is being passed in the car, and it quickly came to me. It was the first time I had ever gotten drunk. I only found out later how I had gotten home that night (Fred Wilhelm). I woke up in the front yard of my house, cold dew on the ground, staggered in, cried, etc. But the next day I went right back to my friends, right back to the same parties, etc. I ended up trying pot.

My friend Tommy Braddock and I heard about this music festival coming to Rockingham Motor Speedway (Peachtree Celebration). It was a two day festival, kind of like a mini Woodstock. We bought tickets, and amazingly my mother let me go! Over the next few years my drug use went from bad to worse, and I became a full-fledged addict. All I wanted to do was rock and roll all night and party every day, and that's pretty much what I did. I remember my mother talking to me one day about being around "the wrong crowd." I listened, then responded, "Mama, I *am* the wrong crowd!"

What happened to me over several years is simply explained by one Scripture verse: I Cor.15:33 Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character.

What happened to me is similar to what happened to Lot. See Gen.12:1-4a. Abraham and nephew Lot began the journey of faith together. But in chapter 13 Lot makes some decisions that would prove to be very detrimental to his walk of faith. See Gen.13:5-11. Lot made a decision that was not motivated by faith. Lot saw that the grass was greener in one particular direction, so that's the direction he headed. Read Gen.13:12-13. We know that homosexuality was rampant in Sodom, but homosexuality was but a by-product of the sin of Sodom.

- Ezekiel 16:49 Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. In Gen.14 some kings in the area where Lot had settled went to war against one another, and Lot is taken captive. See Gen.14:11-12. Lot is no longer living in a tent. This says volumes about what has happened to him. Read Hebrews 11:8-10. Lot has settled with the people of Sodom, and as a result, he has been taken captive by the enemy. By the way, the context of I Cor.15:33 is the resurrection (note I Cor.15:50-58). Lot is not living in light of eternity, has allowed bad company to corrupt good character, and has now been taken captive by the enemy. II Peter 2:7-8 lets us know that Lot was saved, but he nevertheless made some poor choices that cost both him and his family greatly. Abraham rescues Lot, but Lot still has more problems as a result of his poor choices. See Gen.18:23-32. Abraham's plea before the Lord is for Lot's sake. And Lot sure needed someone praying for him! See Gen.19:1. In this culture, the leaders of a city sat at the gate of the city and were called "the elders at the gate." Lot has not only gone back to Sodom after being rescued from enemy hands by his uncle Abraham, but he is now a leader in Sodom! See Gen.19:12-26. Note Luke 17:32. Lot's wife was not a godly woman. It appears that Lot met and married her while living in Sodom. Even if not, she did not want to leave Sodom, and that's why she looked back. Lot's story ends with his daughters having an incestuous relationship with their father, the result of which was the beginning of the Moabites and the Ammonites. The Moabite women would be the ones who seduced Israel into sexual sin (Num.25), and the Ammonites would lure Israel into the worship of Molech (sacrificing their children in the fire; I Kings 11:33; Jer.32:35).
- How could all this happen to Lot? (I Cor.15:33)

The wrong crowd can be extremely influential:

- First youth gang in the Bible (II Kings 2:23-24)

- Balaam and his neglect in listening to the Lord about going with the princes of Moab (Numbers 22).
- Acts 19:32b (blindly following the crowd)
- Pilate's decision because of the crowd (Mark 15:15)
- Matthew 7:13-14 Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

The wrong crowd may be religious:

- Matthew 15: 14 Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.
- Acts 2:42 These people had been part of a religious crowd, and now plugged into new relationships in the church.

The wrong crowd may be in the church:

- See I Cor.11:17-19; Approved = *dokimos (acceptable, pleasing)*; As a young Christian at Liberty University, I discovered firsthand that some people in the church do not have God's approval. Every freshman class was required to take a class called Christian Life with C. Sumner Wemp. I'll never forget our first test, writing from memory assigned Bible verses. I was absolutely shocked that some people cheated on the test! I would later meet people who lived the kind of lifestyle I had lived before I came to know Christ. I made sure those people did not become my closest friends.
- Some people in the church are lost (Matthew 7:21-23).
- Some people in the church are Lukewarm (Rev.3:15-16).

One may begin with the right crowd and over time end up with the wrong crowd:

- Lot and his gradual move to Sodom

CONCLUSION

- It is essential when one becomes a Christian to develop close relationships with other committed Christians (Heb.10:24-25).