

Bible Studies in Genesis

Sodom and Gomorrah – Judgment and Mercy

READ Genesis 18:16-19:29

1. As always, begin with discussion any things that strike you or puzzle you in this passage.
2. What do we know about the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah ...
 - a. From within this passage? [And what do you make of the fact that God has already declared their sin to be great *before* the events of chapter 19 take place?]
 - b. From other places in the Bible? [see Genesis 13:13; Ezekiel 16:43-51; Jude 6:6-8]
3. Sodom has become a by-word for a particularly evil and corrupt place (and therefore, by implication, the kind of sin they committed must have been worse than any others). Was Sodom particularly evil? Worse than us?
 - a. See how these passages compare the cities and cultures they are addressed to with Sodom (in each case, what is the nature of their sin, and what is its consequences?): Isaiah 3:9; 13:19; Jeremiah 23:14; 50:35-40; Lamentations 4:6; Amos 4:11; Zephaniah 2:8-9; Matthew 10:9-15; 11:20-24; Luke 17:26-30; 2 Peter 2:5-7
 - b. What does this say to us, and our culture today?
4. How would you define sin?
 - a. Discuss the difference between the heart of sin and its outward expressions (it may help to think of a disease and its symptoms).
 - b. Read the following passages and identify the different expressions of sin that are mentioned. Are any of them highlighted as being worse than the others? Matthew 25:41-45; Romans 1:21-32; Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5-6; James 4:17
5. Why does the Bible highlight our sin? To make us feel bad about ourselves, or something else? [See John 3:16-21; Romans 3:19-24; Galatians 3:24] What does this tell us about the message we – as a church, and as Christians in the workplace and broader society - should be giving to the world we live in?
6. Why do you think God engaged Abraham in the conversation they had in Genesis 18 about Sodom and Gomorrah? What does it teach us about how we should engage with God?