

How Does God Make A Difference Maker? (Part 2)

Dealing with Strife

Purpose: to show that in order to become a “difference maker” we must allow God to shape our character.

So far we have been learning from the example of Abram how one man can make a difference. So far this is what we have seen:

- God gave him a task (get out of your country) and a promise (I will bless you)
- Abram obeyed God and when without knowing where he was going
- God led him into places where he learned to trust Him and to overcome the devil

After Abram returned he found that he had to deal with strife –

Read Genesis 13

What caused the strife?

- Abram was very rich – his wealth was the catalyst of this problem

Matthew 13:22

Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

Proverbs 11:28

He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will flourish like foliage.

- The land was not able to support them – this was a fact, something that they could do nothing about
- There was strife between the herdsmen – this was something that they could do something about

How was the strife resolved?

- Abram initiated peace –

Genesis 13:8

So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren.

- Abram gave up his right to choose –

Genesis 13:9

Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."

- Abram did not have to do this –
 - He was clearly the leader

- He was older and more experienced
- The promise was give to him and not to Lot
- He had power to do whatever he wanted to do
- Lot chose the plain of Jordan for *himself*

Genesis 13:10,11

10 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar.

*11 Then Lot chose **for himself** all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.*

- They separated from each other

Pay close attention to the character of these two men:

- Lot is selfish – he chose for himself
- Lot is greedy – he wants what seems to be the best
- Lot is unwise – he failed to realise that his prosperity is linked to his connection with a godly man
- Abram is unselfish – he did not think of his own rights or interests
- Abram is generous – giving Lot the option to chose
- Abram is wise – understanding the need to separate and to simply trust God

They were both rewarded:

- Lot received exactly what he wanted in this life

Genesis 13:12,13

12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom.

13 But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.

Abram received confirmation of God's promise to him again -

Genesis 13:14-18

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward;

15 for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.

16 And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered.

17 Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

18 Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.

What can we learn from Abram's example?

- Wealth often produces conflict among relatives

- Our character can often be seen during times of prosperity
- Sometimes we need to simply take the wrong
- God will reward us for whatever we do in this life