



The standard Youth Sabbath School materials contain a Student Lesson and a Teacher's Guide. In addition to these materials provided by the General Conference Sabbath School Department, the North American Division Youth Department is providing supplemental materials you can choose to add to this lesson. Think in terms of your specific setting and the young people at your Youth Sabbath School. As you seek to involve them in the study and application of the Bible for this week, prayerfully pick and choose the components that will form the Youth Sabbath School for your young people. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit as you make your plan and continue to be sensitive as it guides you during the Sabbath School.

# Session 9 No Laughing Matter (March 2, 2019)

## SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

- Genesis 19:1–29

## OVERVIEW

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah reveals God's personal interest, investigation, warning, mercy, and judgment.

- Influencer or Influenced? Pitching one's tent toward Sodom
- Sins of Sodom
- How do you compare with Sodom and Gomorrah?
- Is God just or merciful?

You can obtain the Student Lesson as well as the Teacher's Guide with a click by visiting [YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org](http://YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org), which will provide everything you need for your Youth Sabbath School

real solid stories LESSON 9  
**CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS**  
 MARCH 2, 2019  
**no laughing matter**  
 key text  
 The Sodomites...  
 Highlight  
 The Sodomites...  
 Genesis 19:1-29

Student Lesson

LESSON 9  
**CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS**  
 MARCH 2, 2019  
**no laughing matter**  
 Preparing to Teach  
 I. SYNOPSIS  
 Genesis 19...  
 II. TARGET  
 The Sodomites...  
 III. EXPLORE  
 • Purity  
 • Worldliness  
 Teaching  
 I. GETTING STARTED  
 Activity  
 Ask the students...  
 Illustration  
 A man who lived...  
 75

Teacher's Guide

The following are multiple components you can pick and choose, use as is, or adapt to fit your specific Sabbath School lesson. These supplemental ideas provide more options for this topic. Here's a brief description of the seven supplemental materials:



### 1. **Opening activity**

An icebreaker or something to get people focused as you begin.



### 2. **Video clip and follow-up questions**

A short video clip and an idea for you to create your own video on this week's topic, plus a few questions to follow up with discussion.



### 3. **Music**

It's best if you create your own and choose what's best in your setting. We are not endorsing a particular style or even a specific song. Select songs related to this week's lesson. We'll suggest several different songs with lyrics that relate to the topic for this week. Sing along with a prerecorded track (YouTube is a good source) or better yet, ask youth with musical talent to play instruments and lead the singing.



### 4. **Bible study guides for Scripture for this lesson**

This is another approach to the same topic found in *Teacher's Guide*, but approached from a different angle. Expect activities to illustrate the topic, followed by some questions.



### 5. **Application ideas for living out this lesson this week**

Let this spark your ideas to move from talk to action by living out the lesson in practical ways in your life this week.



### 6. **Youth leader tip for the week**

This bonus is just for the youth leader—a quick tip and an illustration to enhance your youth leadership. You may already know this, or you may learn it through trial and error. Here's a way to get it with a quick infusion.



### 7. **An Outreach or World Mission Component**

If Sabbath School is just for us, we will spiritually die. We must share what we've been given. This can be done locally and/or globally.

And here are those seven supplemental materials in more detail for this week's lesson: "No Laughing Matter."

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## Opening activity

### OPTION 1: EYE C (OR: I SEE)

If you have access to an optometrist or an ophthalmologist, ask for their help with this activity. The purpose is to help people realize that our eyes often need help in order to see clearly. Also, what one person sees clearly might appear unclear to another person.

Get a few eye charts. You can print something off the internet, purchase an inexpensive set, or borrow from a doctor or nurse. The major equipment isn't usually something that can easily be transported out of an office. Just use a simple eye chart and test for correctness at a given distance. Put the chart at a distance from which most people can read at least the first or second row. Test with one eye covered, then the other, and then with both eyes. Alternate between several eye charts to prevent over-familiarity or cheating.

You can choose to give a prize or simply let the testing and results be their own reward.

For a bit of variety, provide several sets of glasses and see how people do looking through the glasses that aren't meant for their eyes. You don't want to give them a headache by having them spend a lot of time doing this (a brief exposure at the start of Sabbath School won't hurt their actual eyesight), but you do want them to see how looking through someone else's lens can terribly distort their perception. Point out later that the glasses that distort the chart for some people actually bring the chart into focus for others. Different people certainly do see things differently.

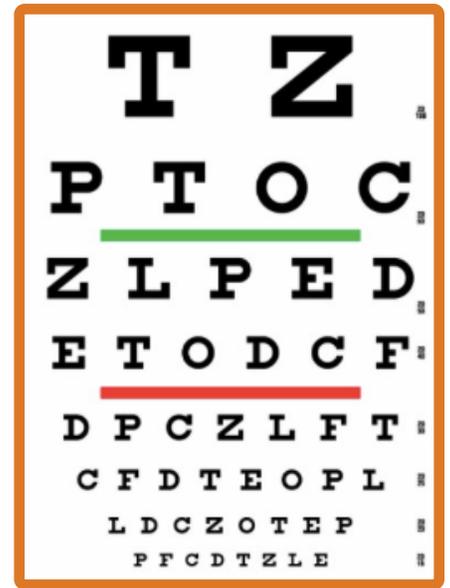
### OPTION 2: 5 JOKES

Pick out five jokes prior to Youth Sabbath School. Choose them based on the target group you expect will attend. Select five of the 10 jokes provided at the end of this lesson prior to Youth Sabbath School, or feel free to substitute your own. The PDF can also be downloaded at [YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org](http://YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org). Better yet, ask some of the youth to share a joke they think is funny. Practice telling the jokes in advance, as the way they are told often makes the difference whether or not people laugh

Prior to telling the jokes, have one participant preview them and guess which one will get the most laughs, which one will be #2, and so forth, all the way to #5.

Then register the laughter or have the youth rank the responses as they perceived them. Try to get a consensus or ask for individual rankings. The purpose is to see whether the laughter response is uniform or individual.

**TRANSITION:** As we consider today's lesson: "No Laughing Matter," one part of this tragic story includes laughter—when Lot's relatives thought he was joking when Lot told them to get out of Sodom before it was destroyed. Most of the story is a real downer. Because of this story, the terms "Sodom and Gomorrah" have special significance in other parts of the Bible, and they continue to carry a message today. This week we'll look at the original story from Scripture and consider how it might be helpful for us today.





## Video clip and follow-up questions

Create a video clip that illustrates some element of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Earlier this quarter we read about how Abram rescued Lot and those from Sodom who had been taken captive (see Genesis 14). This week's story describes God's investigation, warning, and judgment. It also includes angels physically escorting people away from danger. What will you emphasize in this story found in Genesis 19:1–29? What follow-up questions will you create to spark discussion following the video? Or you can watch this video clip that was already created:

### HOW BAD CAN IT GET?

On YouTube search for the video by Discovery titled "Is Society Getting Worse? Curiosity: How Evil Are You?" for a 2:19 video clip about a lady who chooses NOT to shock someone as punishment for a wrong answer. This psychology experiment repeats the Milgram experiment from more than 50 years ago.

### FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

1. What caused this lady to go against the organized plan for the experiment?
2. What would you do if you had been in the place of the woman in the experiment? Why?
3. Those leading the test indicated that when Milgram did this experiment 50 years ago one out of three people refused to do the shock punishment. This time it was one out of six. Do you think today's society is worse than previous societies, the same, or better?
4. How does the society you live in right now compare to what you read about Sodom and Gomorrah in Lot's day (Genesis 19)? How does that compare to the society when Jesus was crucified?
5. What influences you to follow society? What influences you to go contrary to society?



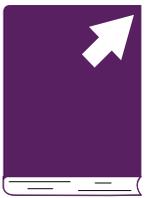
## Music

You have options!

1. It's best to do live music in your own setting, even if people are just learning.
2. Tap into Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) to access Christian music legally. Your local church might already be doing this. If not, we recommend that you start. Their website is [us.ccli.com](http://us.ccli.com).
3. Sing along with existing music. You can type in song titles into YouTube and see how others are doing the songs you choose. If you need lyrics, you can Google the song title and find them that way.
4. Here are 10 songs related to today's lesson: "No Laughing Matter."
  - Our God
  - I Surrender
  - The Lord Reigns
  - A Mighty Fortress is Our God

- Shout
- From the Inside Out
- Whom Shall I Fear
- Our God is an Awesome God
- Word of God Speak
- Your Love, O Lord

5. "Choose You Lord" is an original song, written specifically for Youth Sabbath School. Go to [YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org](http://YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org) to download the lyrics, music, and video to learn and teach this song in your Youth Sabbath School. The lyrics have been added to the collection of items at the end of this document. Learning new songs usually takes several times before people catch on. You may want to have a few get familiar with it in advance so they can lead the rest of the group.



## Bible study guides for Scripture for this lesson — "No Laughing Matter"

Another approach to the same topic as the *Teacher's Guide*, but just a different way of looking at it. Expect activities to illustrate the topic, followed by some questions.

### SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

- Genesis 19:1–29
- Genesis 22:1–14
- This Hurts—Genesis 19:1–29
- Where Did You Pitch Your Tents?—Genesis 19:1–14
- Practicing Hospitality—Genesis 19:1–29; Ezekiel 16:46–63

## This Hurts!

(BASED ON GENESIS 19:1–29)

Give each person in Youth Sabbath School a copy of the one-sheet (double-sided) "This Hurts" Bible Study guide. It's available at the end of this PDF, or as a download at [YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org](http://YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org).

There's an introductory question designed to "level the playing field" by making everyone equal in responding to the passage of Scripture—no experts versus novices. This Bible study depends on an active Holy Spirit to communicate to each person through the Scripture read and considered, as well as through the words of anyone in the group.

After the opening question, read the passage aloud as a group. Have each person read a few verses and continue with the next person in the group. Participants should have the

HERE'S ONE WAY OF STUDYING THE LESSON FOR THIS WEEK

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Handout of 2-sided Bible Study sheet "This Hurts" and pens
- Handout of "Tent" on colorful card stock for application
- Pens

option to pass if they want, but encourage everyone to read since the purpose is to share Scripture, not to be a professional reader.

After reading the passage, give each person time to jot responses to the questions on the Scripture sheet. These are designed to encourage thought and personal application as one listens to promptings from the Holy Spirit. After everyone has spent some time with the worksheet, open the study for group discussion, even if it's just two people in the group. If you have a large group of more than 8-10 people, divide into smaller groups of 5-7 people. Each question has an option of "other" in case the respondents have an insight not included in the options presented.

The last two questions are open-ended and may require more thought.

You can go through the questions one at a time, or have one person in the group choose one of the questions and give their response(s). Others can add their responses to the same question. After discussion ends on that question, either move to the next question or pick another person in the group to select another question. Continue for the time you have available.

Here's a good question to add for the last five minutes: What part of the lesson will you live out this coming week, and what will you do to live it out? See the next section for ideas for living out this lesson in the coming week.

## SUMMARY

The wickedness of Sodom (and Gomorrah and the other towns of the plain) resulted in lots of hurt. Sin always hurts. It hurts those who commit the sin and everyone else affected by it. God is grieved and hurt. He created all people. He died for all people. Those who choose against God hurt God. And they hurt themselves. In the story of the wickedness of Sodom, Abraham interceded on Sodom's behalf. Their sins ultimately hurt those living in Sodom, and it certainly hurt Lot and his family. He lost both of the daughter's fiancés and his own wife in the escape from Sodom. He lost his house and possessions. All living things in Sodom were destroyed. Sin hurts.

## Where Did You Pitch Your Tents?

(BASED ON GENESIS 19:1-14)

In Genesis 19 we'll read the true story of Lot's faith and obedience to God being tested. Although Lot initially failed his faith and obedience test, he ultimately passed—and saved himself, part of his family, and others—both physically and, more importantly, spiritually!

## BIG IDEA

When God tells us to do something—no matter how unbelievable it may seem—we are to obey. In our obedience, we also need to remember that we never make choices in a

## HERE'S ANOTHER WAY OF STUDYING THE LESSON FOR THIS WEEK

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- A copy of the "My Perspective" handout for reflection toward the end of this study
- Pen or pencil for writing.

vacuum. Our choices will always affect us, our families, and others as well. While we can't always imagine or control the unintended consequences, we need to consider potential outcomes as we make decisions.

Here's the story from Genesis 19:1–14 (NIV) with some accompanying questions for discussion.

1. The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.

### QUESTIONS

- Why did Lot live near Sodom?
- Why would he be hanging out at the gateway to the city?
- We won't find any mention of Lot's tents any longer. Why is that?
- Was moving to Sodom a good decision? Does it matter where a person or a family lives?

2. "My lords," he said, "please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning."

"No," they answered, "we will spend the night in the square."

3. But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house.

### QUESTIONS

- Why would Lot address these two strangers as "lords"?
- Was Lot showing basic hospitality, or do you think there was more to it?
- Why do you think Lot insisted so strongly that the strangers not spend the night in the city square?

He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. 4. Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. 5. They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them."

### QUESTIONS

- What is the significance of preparing bread hastily without taking the time to let it rise? (Hint: In addition to a quick meal on the spot, this will happen in the next book of the Bible as God's people prepared to depart from Egypt.)
- Do you think that Lot knew a mob would gather outside his home? Why or why not?

6. Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him 7. and said, "No, my friends. Don't do this wicked thing. 8. Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof."

### QUESTIONS

- What do you think motivated Lot to turn away the mob by himself?
- What influence did Lot have in the city of Sodom?
- Lot labeled the mob's demand "wicked." Do you think the men of the city considered their demand and intended actions as "wicked"?

- Lot's offer to have the mob gang rape his two daughters is completely unimaginable today. Why do you think Lot made this offer at this time? (The second half of Genesis 19 explains how Lot's daughters pulled a reversal on Lot's offer for them to be raped.)
- What would Lot lose if he couldn't take care of his male guests?

## ACTIVITY

For the rest of this passage of Scripture, divide the group in two and have half face one direction in the room and the other half face the opposite direction. Ask them to look only in direction they are facing—not turning around. This is for the purpose of giving them a different perspective—a way to illustrate what happens when you "pitch your tent" one direction rather than the other. There will be follow-up questions after completing the rest of this passage and the questions that correspond with those verses.

9. "Get out of our way," they replied. "This fellow came here as a foreigner, and now he wants to play the judge! We'll treat you worse than them." They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door. 10. But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. 11. Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

## QUESTIONS

- What caused the mob to turn on Lot?
- What did Lot think when the two guests pulled him back into the house?
- What did the people in the mob think when the two guests pulled Lot back into the house?
- Can you think of any other time in the Bible when blindness created a change in circumstances? (Hint: 2 Kings 6:8–23 and John 9:1–41)

12. The two men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, 13. because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it."

14. So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, "Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!" But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

## QUESTIONS

- Why are the angels concerned about saving other people in the wicked city of Sodom who might be associated with Lot?
- Did Lot's family get word of Sodom's destruction prior to the destruction?
- If God mentioned in Genesis 18 that He had come to check if Sodom's wickedness was as great as He had been told, what had changed by this part of Genesis 19?
- How could two angels destroy an entire city?
- Why do you think Lot's future sons-in-law thought he was just joking when he told them of Sodom's soon demise?
- How does this story compare with the story of the flood earlier in Genesis? (How is it similar? How is it different?)

## ACTIVITY (CONTINUED)

This is the follow-up to having half of the participants facing one direction and the other half facing the opposite direction.

Hand out the "My Perspective" questions (available at the end of this lesson) to each participant and give them 3–5 minutes and ask them to answer these five questions:

1. What did you see/experience?
2. Do you think your experience was the same as somebody else's?
3. Do you wish you could have been in the place of somebody else?
4. How do you think your location in this room affected your experience of reality?
5. How do you think Abraham and Lot's locations were affected their experiences of reality?

Give them several minutes to write down their responses to the questions and then have participants read/discuss their responses. Then follow up with these additional questions:

## QUESTIONS

- Why is it important to think clearly and carefully about the consequences of a choice before you make it?
- What have you learned from Lot's responses to God's test of Lot's faith and obedience?
- And how does it change your mind about what kind of choices you have made to God in the past—or present?

## SUMMARY

When God tells us to do something—no matter how unbelievable—we are to obey. In our obedience, we also need to always keep in mind that we never make choices in a vacuum. Our choices will always affect us, our families, and others. While we can't always imagine or control the unintended consequences, we need to consider potential outcomes as we make decisions.

## Practicing Hospitality

(BASED ON GENESIS 19:1–29; EZEKIEL 16 )

Last week's Bible study included Abraham and Sarah's hospitality of three strangers who came their way. At the time they had no idea this was God and two angels walking near their tents. As a result, people often quote Hebrews 13:2 (NIV), "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." While this certainly isn't limited to Abraham and Sarah, it certainly includes them.

## HERE'S ANOTHER WAY OF STUDYING THE LESSON FOR THIS WEEK

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Balancing scale that can hold a heavy ball on one side and various other balls on the other side
- One heavy ball, such as a bowling ball
- 8–10 other lighter balls to weigh against the heavier one

This type of hospitality toward strangers can be rare in some parts of the world today. In fact, you may have grown up without experiencing it. If you ever go on a short-term mission trip, you are likely to experience this type of hospitality as church members often invite missionaries into their homes, perhaps even feeding them. It makes quite the impression if you're not accustomed to being invited into a stranger's home.

Many churches have potlucks, and visitors are included without being expected to bring any food. There might even be some people at your church who make sure visitors receive an invitation for Sabbath lunch and maybe even an afternoon activity. But others figure that visitors can just go to a nearby restaurant of their choice. And some visitors actually prefer that. Hospitality, as practiced in the Bible, often isn't the norm today.

With an awareness of hospitality, consider the story in Genesis 19:29—the follow-up to Abraham and Sarah's hospitality of God and two angels. Remember that God was checking out the reported wickedness of Sodom and had possibly come to eliminate this scourge. Recall Abraham's plea that God not destroy the righteous, and that He spare the wicked because of the presence of just 10 righteous people (see Genesis 18:32).

Take turns reading Genesis 19:1-29. You can do one verse or one paragraph at a time and rotate through the group. If you have a large group of more than 8-10 people, you can read it as one large group or split into smaller groups of up to seven people so more people get a chance to read Scripture. Read through the entire passage with a focus on the topic of hospitality noting who shows it, who doesn't show it, and the complications it can create.

## QUESTIONS

- Who showed hospitality? In what way(s)?
- Who didn't show hospitality?
- Did the two angels show any hospitality?
- What else caught your attention in this story?

There is where a key verse in the book of Ezekiel sheds more light on the lack of hospitality in Sodom. According to Ezekiel 16:49 (NIV), "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 the needy." Does this concept sound familiar? It matches what Jesus described for those who are either included or excluded from God's kingdom as told in the parable of the sheep and goats. How people treated the poor and needy, the sick and imprisoned, seemed to be the indicator of whether or not they will receive God commendation or God's condemnation (see Matthew 25:31-46).

## QUESTIONS

- How does this verse in Ezekiel change your view of this story?
- Based on Ezekiel 16:49, are you guilty of the sin of Sodom?
- How does this story change your view of hospitality?
- How can you show hospitality to new kids in your neighborhood, church, or school?

It might be helpful to look at the broader context of Ezekiel 16. The first part of the chapter tells an allegory about God's people and uses the metaphor of a castaway infant girl God rescued and nurtured as His own daughter. But His daughter left her rescuer/father and promiscuously chased after men.

The use of sexual promiscuity as a metaphor in contrast to faithfulness to God provokes strong emotions—both for God and for us. God's daughter, whom he had adorned with fine jewelry (another questionable lifestyle issue for some Adventists), he then strips in judgment, leaving her naked and exposed before her various lovers. Ezekiel is then told to compare the wickedness of the people of Judah with the wickedness of the 10 northern tribes of Israel, Samaria, which is labeled as Judah's elder sister. She was also unfaithful to her husband and children.

Another similar type of sister gets identified in Ezekiel 16:46. Surprise, it's Sodom! And then the message comes strongly to God's people in Judah: "You not only followed their ways and copied their detestable practices, but in all your ways you soon became more depraved than they. As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, your sister Sodom and her daughters never did what you and your daughters have done" (Ezekiel 16:47–48 NIV).

If you want to try one more curve in this study, consider the words of Jesus in Matthew 10:15. Here Jesus indicated Sodom and Gomorrah would be better off on the final day of judgment than those who rejected the Messiah.

## QUESTIONS

- Were the people of Judah just as wicked as those in Samaria? In Sodom?
- Did the people of Judah receive a strong judgment from God?
- Did God warn them in advance of Jerusalem's destruction?
- To what extent did the people repent?
- Who will be worse off on the final day of judgment than Sodom and Gomorrah? Why?

It might relieve some anxiety to feel innocent of Sodom's sin. But several things remain clear from our passage in Genesis 19:1–29:

- Sodom was wicked
- Lot was hospitable to the two strangers
- The men of Sodom, young and old, wanted to dominate and sexually abuse two men
- The angels demonstrated supernatural powers to stop the men of Sodom
- All of Sodom was destroyed except for those who followed the angels out of the city
- God is stronger than evil
- God is patient but does draw a line of "no more"

## ACTIVITY

Many people take the position that we need to make sure we aren't around evil, like Sodom, because we will become like our environment. This is why choosing friends is so important—you become like the people you're with on a regular basis.

But this makes a few assumptions that should be challenged by teens. First of all, it seems to make God impotent. Will people always be swayed by any and every evil influence? If so, then Jesus should never have come to earth. He would have given in to the many wicked influences on this planet. Yet God did come to earth.

The second is that human choice plays no role in our lives—we simply must go with the flow and never against it or in a different direction. Yet it's possible to get out of a flowing river by swimming to shore. Salmon demonstrate an amazing ability to go upstream, against the flow, before they lay their eggs and die. It may be easy to go with the flow, but we can also go against the flow.

We must also ask why Jesus told His disciples to go into all the world with the Gospel (see Matthew 28:19–20). Wouldn't they be overwhelmed by the wickedness of the world? Evidently, going in the power and direction of the Holy Spirit makes all the difference. Because God is stronger than evil, and because God wants to reach everyone, we should go wherever God leads us. We should take God wherever we go.

## QUESTIONS

- What do the various balls represent in your life?
- Which balls are bigger? Which carry more weight?
- Is Jesus on your scale or not? How do you get Him on your scale? How do you remove Him?
- Do you go with the current or against it? How does that work for you?
- Do you think there are places you shouldn't go because of the influence it might have on you?
- Where do you take Jesus?
- Where does Jesus want to take you? Why?

## SUMMARY

We considered the sin of Sodom being a lack of caring for others, or a lack of hospitality. And we acknowledged that God's people have been guilty of the same wickedness as Sodom. In a quick reversal, we closed with the challenge that avoiding sinful environments isn't the highest call of God's people. In fact, we are called to take Jesus to the whole world, including places of wickedness. But that's different than just going with the flow. It's following Jesus and representing Him wherever He sends us.

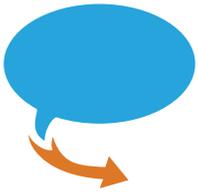
To illustrate this, set up a balancing scale with a heavy ball on one side and a variety of balls to weigh against it on the other side. If you want to make a homemade balancing scale, you can Google it or just search for "How to make a Balance Scale" by Ignited Innovative Indian on YouTube and ask someone to create one for you.

Place a very heavy ball on one side of the scale and then place another ball on the other side to see its impact. Choose from a variety of balls, such as a ping pong ball, golf ball, tennis ball, whiffle ball, softball, billiard ball, basketball, volleyball, soccer ball, Nerf ball, etc.



You can also start with the lighter ball on one side of the balancing scale. It will cause that side of the scale to go down. Then add another ball on the other side and see what happens. It's not always the larger ball that is necessarily heavier. There might also be a difference if you have more balls on one side than the other.

Have the youth come up with various influencers in their lives that could be symbolized by the various balls and how much "weight" they have in their lives. Be sure to have the heaviest ball represent Jesus. But if the ball representing Jesus isn't put on the scales, any of the other balls will have more influence.



## Application ideas for living out this lesson this week

Let these ideas spark ways you can move from talk to action as you live out this lesson in a practical way this week.

The following three applications relate to the corresponding three Bible Study Guides above.

A. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah created a sober notice that, in addition to natural consequences, there are sometimes judgments prior to the final judgment of the entire world. Question 6 in the Bible Study "This Hurts" deals with Lot and his family moving from a distance outside of Sodom to becoming inhabitants of a city so wicked that God chose to destroy it. God checked it out in person, provided warnings, and literally escorted Lot and his family outside of the city. A personal application could be the question: In which direction did Lot pitch his tents? There are different ways of rephrasing this question, such as: Which way are you pitching your tent? This has to do with your direction in life. We live in a world in which both good and evil are present. Which way do you pitch your tent? How do you orient your gaze, your interest, your investment, and which desires you feed? Fold a piece of card stock in half. Place it somewhere in your room so that it faces a direction that will symbolize where you want your focus to be. You might choose to place it facing your Bible, or a certain photo, or out the window, or toward books you need to study. Let this prompt your prayers for the coming week as you ask God to direct the focus in your life. You can download a PDF of this printout that is either a full sheet of paper or two half sheets you could cut. Printing them on card stock makes them a little sturdier.

B. As you leave today to start your new week:

**Head:** Read and think through this verse: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV). Reflect on the story of God's test of faith and obedience for Lot to choose God's direction to get out of Sodom and not to stay, and choose to respond in obedience to God's instructions—even if they don't make sense to you right now—or even if they are emotionally painful and cause you to have some anxiety or fear.

**Heart:** Ask God to forgive you when you have been disobedient to His commands and to give you a deeper thirst—not just for Him, but for others, too. Ask Him to give you the strength to serve Him more faithfully, and specifically to serve and minister to those who are non-Christians.

**Hands:** To reinforce your obedience to God's directions for your life, read and meditate on these two verses:

- A. Hebrews 13:2: "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it" (NIV).
- B. Matthew 25:40: "'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'" (NIV).

Then spend some this week ministering to/serving non-Christians in your own home and family, school, neighborhood, or community. Some ideas would be:

- Provide hospitality to a stranger this week
- Invite a classmate to spend the night at your house and get to know them better
- Stand up to bullies and provide safety for someone being bullied

C. Place a ball someplace where you will see it this week. Let that prompt your memory to ask: What is influencing me today? And to what extent is it influencing me? Ask this at the beginning of the day and then reflect on it at the end of the day. Turn to prayer at the start of the day and ask for Jesus to be the primary influencer in your life. At the end of the day, thank Jesus for His influence in your life, and ask for forgiveness for any time you may have chosen other influences in your life to carry more weight for you than Jesus.

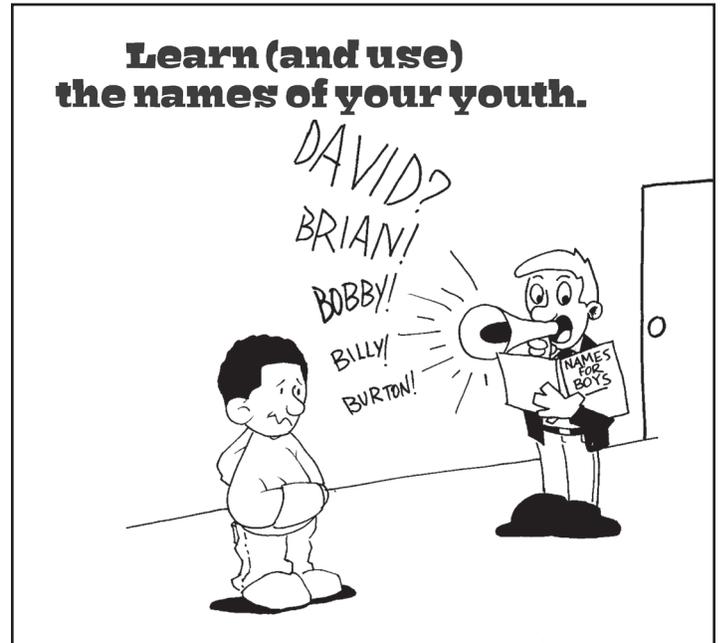


## Youth leader tip for the week

This bonus is just for the youth leader—a quick tip and illustration to enhance your youth leadership. You may already know this idea, have already learned it through trial and error, or maybe just need a quick reminder. Here it is in a quick infusion.

### A BIT MORE

With a small youth group, it's usually easy to learn the names of the young people quickly. The larger the youth group, or the more it changes, or the worse you are at remembering names, the more you need to practice. Because relational ministry is so important, calling a person by their preferred name is a "must have" starting point. Swallow your pride, and use their name as often as you can. If you don't remember, just admit it and ask again, and again, and again. Then you can go on to deeper things after you're consistent with the baseline of knowing the names of your youth.





# An outreach or world mission component

If Sabbath School is just for us, we will spiritually die. We must share what we've been given. This can be done locally and/or globally. We'll suggest several options over 3-4 weeks on reaching out.

Jesus told His disciples that they would "be witnesses" when they received power from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). Their witnessing would happen right where they were, and would spread out like the rings when you throw a pebble into a pond. Here's how that can happen, taking the words of Jesus and relating them to your Youth Sabbath School outreach and mission:

When you receive power from the Holy Spirit, you will be Christ's witnesses in:

## JESUS' DAY

Jerusalem

Judea

Samaria

To the ends of the world

## TODAY

Your Youth Sabbath School

The church where you attend

The community around your church

The world beyond your community

We'll suggest four options for these four target groups today. You may choose to follow all four or maybe start with one the first week of this month and choose several options over 3-4 weeks for reaching out.

When most people hear about "Sodom and Gomorrah" they usually think of wickedness, fire and brimstone, and final judgment. But most don't think about God personally checking it out, Abraham's intercession on behalf of the city, and asking for the entire city to be spared if only 10 people in the city would be righteous. For this month, the outreach and community service will be on active intercession, fueled by personal contact and a Godly heart of compassion.

### A. *Your Youth Sabbath School*

Before pointing a finger at wicked Sodom and Gomorrah, and before pointing the finger at someone else in Youth Sabbath School, start by looking in the mirror. Remember that Sarah lied to God during the heavenly visit (see Genesis 18:12-15). Pair up in groups of two and pray for each other. Before you pray, ask your partner to intercede on your behalf for something specific you're willing to share with your partner. You can choose how personal you're willing to let it be. Continue praying for your partner through the week and check in with each other next Sabbath.

### B. *The church where you attend*

Have one of the youth make an announcement sometime during the church service that the youth are making themselves available to pray for the prayer requests anyone in the congregation might have. Offer several potential examples you people in their church might have, such as illness, safety when traveling, making big decisions, people whose loved ones don't seem to be involved in church at the moment, etc. Acknowledge that the youth don't see themselves as being better than anyone else, but they are willing to pray for others because God is good and because God invites us to pray for mercy and forgiveness. Include in your announcement when the youth will be after the church service, such as one person in the front of the church and another at the right side of the lobby when you exit the sanctuary. Prep your youth in

advance and even practice praying for each other in anticipation of praying for others in the church. Be prepared to reach out to others if they don't come to you right away.

C. *The community around your church*

Do a prayer walk in the community around your church. Assign a block or two for each team of two or three people. Walk from door to door, whether that's houses or business or something else. Explain that you have come from the Seventh-day Adventist Church down the street and you are praying for people in the neighborhood. Then ask if there is something you can pray for on behalf of the people to whom you're speaking. That might take them by surprise! If they share a prayer request with you, go ahead and pray aloud for them on the spot. If they don't come up with anything or refuse prayer, graciously thank them, let them know you hope they have a great day, and move on. Feel free to pray silently for them as you move on to your next spot down the street. If people from your church haven't made any contacts in your community lately, this might be the start of increased involvement of your church in its community.

D. *The world beyond your community*

You're not able to walk around the world like you can your community (see above), but you can do it virtually by looking at Google Earth and zeroing in on some part of the world. Perhaps you can choose a place where someone in your church went on a short-term mission trip. Or you can pick a spot you've heard about recently in the news—whether that's another part of your country or another part of the world. Or read the news about some place beyond your immediate world and let those stories lead you into praying on behalf of those people. You might also have someone in your church who is sponsoring a child through Adventist Child India [www.adventistchildindia.org](http://www.adventistchildindia.org) or REACH International at [reach.org](http://reach.org) or another organization. You can also come up with plenty to pray about just by going onto the ADRA website ([adra.org](http://adra.org)).

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*Cornerstone Connections* is provided by the General Conference Sabbath School Department.

The supplemental materials for Youth Sabbath School found here are provided by the North American Division

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# Choose you, Lord

*Written by Werner Carrasco*

*Performed by Allison Padilla*

A fork on the road, I stare and wonder,  
Where do I go?  
No one can see the strain I'm under  
It's night or day

I've got to move,  
I've got to go,  
The way back home  
I've got to know

## CHORUS

But I gotta choose life,  
Yes I gotta choose love,  
I choose the way that comes from above  
And I gotta choose joy,  
I gotta choose peace,  
Where ever I go I will always  
Choose you, Lord

Everything's clear, no rain or thunder,  
I know where to go,  
There is no fear, no doubting wonder  
His Light will stay

# 5 Jokes (from a list of 10)

Choose five from this collection of 10 jokes—or use your own jokes.

1. How do you stay warm in an empty room? Go stand in the corner—it's always 90 degrees.
2. What do you get when two giraffes collide? A giraffic jam.
3. My email password has been hacked. That's the third time I've had to rename the cat.
4. SPOILER ALERT: That milk has been in the fridge for three weeks.
5. What did the leopard say after finishing a delicious meal? "That hit the spot!"
6. Did you hear about the monkeys who shared an Amazon account? They were Prime mates.
7. How do Earth, Saturn, and Neptune organize a party? They planet.
8. What do you call blueberries playing the guitar? A jam session.
9. Where did the music teacher leave her keys? In the piano.
10. If anyone needs an ark, I happen to Noah guy.

*The following jokes were taken from Reader's Digest ([www.rd.com/jokes/](http://www.rd.com/jokes/)).*

# This Hurts

Which hurts you more: physical pain or emotional pain?

Read Genesis 19:1–29.

1. Why did Lot insist the two angels spend the night at his house?
  - A. He knew they were angels.
  - B. He knew what the men of Sodom would do to them.
  - C. Hospitality was a very high value for him.
  - D. He hoped they would serve as his security guards in Sodom.
  - E. It was cold outside that particular evening.
  - F. The town square wasn't considered a safe place to spend the night.
  - G. He hoped these two men might be a good match for his daughters.
  - H. His wife was a great cook, although she used too much salt.
  - I. Other.
  
2. Why did Lot try to negotiate with the demanding men of Sodom?
  - A. Hospitality was one of Lot's highest values.
  - B. He was a horrible father to his daughters.
  - C. Lot's uncle had saved the people of Sodom previously (Gen. 14).
  - D. Lot considered gang-raping his guests to be wicked.
  - E. He felt desperately unsafe.
  - F. He had faced this in the past.
  - G. Because of his wealth, Lot was accustomed to negotiating.
  - H. His wife made him go outside and deal with the mob.
  - I. Other.
  
3. How would you describe the men of Sodom?
  - A. Wicked.
  - B. Sexually active.
  - C. Sexually deviant.
  - D. A bunch of drunks.
  - E. Hospitable.
  - F. Gang-like.
  - G. Ready to face God's judgment.
  - H. Other.



# My Perspective

By facing a certain direction and maintaining that focus, you get a perspective that is personal and unique. This can sometimes give great insight or maybe a bias. Reflect on this with the following questions:

1. What did you see/experience?
2. Do you think your experience was the same as somebody else's?
3. Do you wish you could have been in the place of somebody else?
4. How do you think the location of where you are in this room affect your experience of reality?
5. How do you think the location of where Abraham and Lot were affected their experiences of reality?

Which direction  
are you  
pitching  
your tent?

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Which direction  
are you  
pitching  
your tent?