

Engaging Gospel Doctrine (Episode 85.1)

LESSON 8 (CORE)

[Living Righteously in a Wicked World](#)

Hook	There is plenty of wickedness to go around in this lesson, but close reading challenges expectations. We will see the dark side of “The Good Book” If we take the Bible as a moral guide, how do we distinguish the “do’s” from the “don’ts”?
Goal	Class members should use the “challenge and be challenged by the scriptures” approach to engage authentically and constructively with difficult ideas and life lessons brought up by the assigned scriptures.
Overview	(see below)
Conclusion	

This is going to be one of the edgier episodes even in the Sunday School portion, because with the assigned passages more harm is done by ignoring or glossing over the challenging, even disturbing content.

Clarify and define the focus of the lesson “living righteously in a wicked world”, so focusing on what influences around us make it difficult to live according to our principles and how we can overcome those influences. The same themes will be focused on in the reading.

I. Faith: Sunday School (Hook: Make a joke about the “Good Book” containing some pretty horrible behavior, even by the protagonists. If we take the Bible as a moral guide, how do we distinguish the “do’s” from the “don’ts”?)

- Talk a bit about how this lesson will likely go over in most wards (drawing the hoped for lessons without batting an eye at the messiness) (challenge it)
- Review assigned reading
- What we can learn from the characters in these narratives (Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Lot, Pharaoh, Ahimelech...)
- What theological conclusions do we make about prophets?
- Discuss Abraham’s intercession for Sodom (challenging God) (Agitating)
- Discuss the ideas of “being righteous in a wicked world (what do members need by that, then push back as needed)
- **How do we make good decisions even in challenging circumstances?**
- Discuss repentance and change
- Concluding thoughts

Character	Positive	Problematic
Abraham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Trusts God something fierce -Devout, worships -Covenants with God, faithfully fulfills responsibilities -Excellent host (his guests are God and angels) -Gives up possessions, avoids conflict with Lot -Rescues Lot -Gives up his portion of the spoils and gives tithes -Powerfully yet circumspectly intercedes with God on behalf of Sodom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Passes off Sarah as his sister, twice, resulting in her being put in Pharaoh's harem. God curses both kings (Abraham gets rich as a result) -takes concubines and other wives -laughs at promises of God
Sarah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -is part of the covenant (credit to her?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Deals harshly with Hagar -laughs at promises of God then denies it -Offers her slave as a concubine (in accordance with accepted practice of the time)
Hagar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Obeys the angel -seeks the welfare of her son 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Scorns Sarah when Hagar gets pregnant
Lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tries to save his family -but "lingers" in Sodom (foil to Abraham) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Greedy and short sighted -Offered up his daughters to be raped! (in order to be a good host)
Lot's wife		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -"looks back"
Lot's daughters		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -rape their father
Pharaoh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Protests Abraham's deception and gives Abraham much wealth 	
Ahimelech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Protests Abraham's deception, is warned by God not to sin 	
Melchizedek		