

*Do not look back!*

I think a lot about Lot's wife these days, and about how God always wants us to be brave and move forward. Throughout the Bible, God separated the seas, Jesus fed his people from almost nothing and the Holy Spirit always encouraged people to move forward and to have faith. Every time people thought they were at the end of times, God pulled some unthinkable, divine stunt and everything turned out fine. I am trying not to forget that.

But there was a reason Lot and his family had to leave their world behind. The sins of Sodom and Gomorrah were lust, greed and gluttony, and of course there's some of that around today, but what I find much more prevalent, is pride and sloth; Pride in our intellectual ability to 'know things' and sloth in our will to understand, engage and think. There's currently a war on truth, and I'm going to be bold and say that by extension, that is a war on Jesus, as he is *the way and the truth and the Life*.

In the western world we have worshipped 'facts' with abundance. We've invented our own truths and opinions, which have often been mistaken for facts. We failed to recognise that what we call facts, are often a manmade, cultural phenomenon. We have been accepting 'facts', when we should have been thinking and questioning and engaging in communication among each other. We've seen science as truth creating, rather than a tool to widen our understanding and our knowledge of the world. We have failed to listen to and to communicate with our neighbours.

It was once a fact that the earth was flat. To a lot of people, it was once a fact that markets would regulate themselves. The press has been recognised as purveyors of facts. Statistics and polls have been seen as facts, even though we know how much they can be manipulated. Economic theories and maths have been seen as facts, people tend to confuse civil law with the truth. We have searched the natural world to conquer and control, rather than to understand and to marvel at its miracles and journalists and politicians have been feeding us simplified 'truths' at a steady rate.

In our pride, we thought we knew. Facts and truths were worshipped, as it gave us the feeling of control, when we should be letting go and let God. Meanwhile we failed to truly understand what was going on in our world.

One of the 'facts' which have been widely recognised, is that poverty is an economic problem and that poverty relates to the body. Poverty has been fought with money, food and healthcare. But obviously poverty is not just about keeping the body alive, and we have failed to recognise the dignity of the human mind as well. As the saying goes; if you think education is expensive, try ignorance. We have failed to educate ourselves and our peoples and we have failed to worship God's truths and the dignity of the human person, body and mind. This has made us extremely vulnerable to the flooding of 'fact' which we have seen in recent years. Facts have been pedalled like gold and now we even have alternative facts and fake news, like the derivatives we saw on the financial markets before the 2008 crash. 'Facts' are now used as weapons of mass destruction by hostile parties and nations.

But we can not look back. We must move forward with humility and make sure we are not fixated in the past. We need to be humble and let God destroy our inflated egos. We need to be creative in our solutions, and pray for a new intellectual renaissance. Only when we recognise God's truth as our base of operations, only then will we get our facts straight and truly discuss, engage, understand and build community for all.