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HCC Sermon

No one is Righteous, not even one.

INTRODUCTION

1. Image: My friend understood the gospel but refused to believe in the gospel.
 2. Need: We know people who understand the gospel but refuse to believe in it.
 3. Subject: What should we do when people refuse to believe in the gospel?
 4. Text: Genesis 18:16-19:38
 5. Preview: In this morning's text, we'll look at a problem, solution, and application.
- I. [Problem] No one is righteous, not even one.
 - A. Not even one Sodomite was righteous.
 1. Sodom and Gomorrah resembled Eden, but it was not paradise (13:10)
 2. The sinful behavior of Sodom reached the ears of God (18:20)
 3. Sodom failed to show hospitality to the angelic visitors (19:2)
 4. Sodom practiced sexually immoral behavior (19:4-5)
 5. God's judgment of Sodom resembles the flood (19:24-25).
 - B. Not even one of us are righteous.
 1. We prefer to live according to our own way rather than God's way.
 2. Even if we desire to live according to God's way, we don't do so consistently.
 - II. [Solution] God allows a righteous person to intercede for the unrighteous
 - A. God allows Abraham to intercede for the Sodomites.
 1. Abraham acts as proto prophet by interceding for the nations.
 - a. God reveals his plans to judge Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham (18:17)
 - b. God expects Abraham to teach Israel righteousness and justice (18:19)
 2. Abraham's understanding of God's justice (18:25) shapes his intercession.
 - B. God allows Jesus to intercede for us.
 1. Jesus is the ultimate prophet.
 - a. He knows God's plan to save the Jew and Gentiles
 - b. He teaches his followers righteousness and justice through the Spirit.
 2. Jesus's understanding of God's justice shapes his intercession.
 - a. Jesus paid the price for our sins.
 - b. He intercedes for his followers (Rom 8:34)
 3. Do you wish for Jesus to be your intercessor?
 - III. [Application] Pray for unbelievers you know because you never know whom God will save.
 - A. God saves Lot because of Abraham's prayer.
 1. Lot behaves more righteously than the Sodomites.
 - a. He extends hospitality to the angelic guests (19:1-2)
 - b. He confronts the wicked behavior of Sodom (19:6)
 2. But the influence of Sodom on Lot's family is quite strong.

- a. Lot chooses to go to Sodom and Gomorrah rather than remain with Abraham (13:11)
 - b. Lot serves on the leadership of Sodom (19:1)
 - c. Lot offers his daughters to protect his guests (19:8)
 - d. Lot would have stayed in Sodom unless the angels intervened (19:16)
 - e. Lot's wife turned into salt because she looked back to Sodom (19:26)
 - f. Lot's daughters commit incest with him to produce children (19:31)
3. Despite Lot's immoral behavior, God saves him because of Abraham's intercession (19:29)
- B. We serve as intercessors, but only God can save a person.
1. We serve as intercessors for the lost (1 Tim 2:1-4)
 2. But only God can prompt a person to understand and believe in the gospel (Eph 2:4-5; Col 2:13; Titus 3:5).
 3. (I will probably need to provide some examples of how we might be able pray for unbelievers).

CONCLUSION

1. Summary: Pray for unbelievers you know because you never know whom God will save.
2. Closing Image: My mom's profession of faith surprised me even though I prayed.

MANUSCRIPT

Although someone understands the gospel, it doesn't mean that they will automatically believe. I remember catching up with a high school friend at a Starbucks while we were still in college. She shared that she had been attending church and fellowship. This comment piqued my interest. I asked her what she thought about church. This prompted her to share this story. She recalls attending a fellowship event where she listened to a friend's testimony. This testimony moved her to tears. She couldn't bear listening to all of it. She left the sharing early. She wandered to her university's chapel. As she sat in a pew, she conversed with God. God, if you exist, then give me a sign. For her, she believed that a sign would be a white light. After she gathered her thoughts, she decided to walk home. As she walked home, she looked up to see a shooting star white as light. I'm thinking in my mind: "Wow! If she's looking for a sign, then there it is." I asked: "So what did you do afterwards?" She shared that she didn't return to church or fellowship. Perplexed, I asked why not? After all, she received her sign. She said: "If I were to become a Christian, then that means I would have to acknowledge that I'm a sinner and that I need God's help. I'm not ready to acknowledge that." My friend understood the gospel but refused to believe in the gospel.

Many of us have probably encountered people like my friend. **They understand the gospel, but they refuse to believe in it.** They give different reasons for why they don't want to believe. Some refuse to believe because of hypocrisy that they see in the church. The church preaches love your neighbor, but they note the unloving things that Christians do. Some refuse to believe in the gospel because they don't want to acknowledge that they're sinners. Compared to rapists, murderers, and thieves, they're pretty good people. Some refuse to

believe in the gospel because they simply don't want to live under God's rule. To believe in the gospel means to submit their lives to God. Instead of contributing to their personal checking accounts, they must contribute to the kingdom of God. No thanks. People understand the gospel but refuse to believe in it for a variety of reasons.

What should we do when people refuse to believe in the gospel? What kind of action can we take when a person understands the gospel and says: "No, thanks."? What should our response be when people reject the gospel?

To answer this question, we'll turn our attention to the passage John Hsieh just read to us. If you have not turned there already, please open your Bibles to Genesis 18. Now you may be wondering... wait a second... John just read Genesis 19. Yes. I know. This morning's sermon covers material before Genesis 19 and some material after verse 22 which John just read.

As you know, this summer, we're going through a series on the Life of Abraham. In the passages we covered thus far, we studied passages that focused on God's relationship with Abraham. In this next section that includes this morning's sermon and next week's, we'll be in a section that shows Abraham's relationship to the nations.

Now to answer the question what we should do when people refuse to believe in the gospel, we must do three things. First, **we must think about a problem that affects everyone.** There is a dilemma we face. There is a quandary. A plight. Second, **we'll look at a solution.** What is the way out? What is the key to solving this problem? What is the answer to this quandary. Third, **we'll look at an application.** Considering the solution found in the text, what do we do? How do we apply the solution in our lives?

Let's look at the problem. The text shows us that there is an issue with people. **No one is righteous, not even one.** We all have an issue. We fail to live according to the righteous standard of God. In fact, we don't even try. We have an inherited corruption that prevents us from acting and thinking righteously. We all struggle with this. From the youngest to the oldest. No matter the life stage. No matter the background. We all struggle. **No one is righteous, not even one.**

Now where do we see this in the text? We see this problem manifest itself in the city of Sodom. **Not one Sodomite was righteous.** Everyone acted wickedly. They all lived immoral lives. Let's talk about Sodom a little bit so that you can understand why this is true.

John read to you Genesis, chapter 19. But even before the two angels visit Sodom, **the sinful behavior of Sodom reached the ears of God.** God has received reports of their morally corrupt behavior. Turn your attention to Genesis, chapter 18, verse 20. *Then the LORD said, "Because of the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave, I will go down to see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me. And if not, I will know"*. I want us to focus on a word that is repeated twice. Outcry. Why is that important.

The first time we read the word outcry in the book of Genesis occurs when Cain murders Abel. The blood of Abel cries out for justice. God hears the cries for justice against the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Its innocent victims cry out for justice.

Now note the adjective that describes the outcry. The outcry according to verse 20 is great. This language resembles another time when God carried out judgment on the earth.

Before the flood. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great. This causes God to send the flood. The sinful behavior had reached pre-flood proportions of wickedness.

Also note the wording in verse 21. *I will go down to see*. This should sound familiar. When else did God go down to examine the sinful activity of man? The tower of Babel. Now Babylon serves as a metaphor for a wicked city. The use of similar language equates the two. The sinful activity at Sodom was on par with the sinful activity at Babel.

Well... what sinful behavior did the Sodomites engage in? What sinful activity did the Sodomite participate in? There are two sinful activities that I see in the text.

First, **Sodom failed to show hospitality to the angelic visitors**. Now just to clarify, the men of Sodom didn't know that the two men who entered Sodom were angels. We do because the author tells us. But per Ancient Near Eastern custom, people extended hospitality to guests and visitors. Let's read again what happens when the two guests arrive in the city. Look at chapter 19, verse 2. *The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed himself with his face to the earth and said, "My lords, please turn aside to your servant's house and spend the night and wash your feet. Then you may rise up early and go on your way."*

Let's think about the location. The angels enter by the city gate. This is where the leaders of the city gather to decide civil matters. Ideas would be exchanged. One would expect that there are many people present.

Think about the time. The angels visit in the evening. This means that they can travel no further. They need to turn aside to rest. They require shelter.

The text shows that only one person extends to the angelic visitors hospitality. Lot. Now you might say: “Well... isn’t Lot a Sodomite?” If you recall, Lot was a sojourner in Sodom. He was an alien. He’s the nephew of Abraham. We’ll talk about Lot later in the message. But the important thing to get here in the opening verses of chapter 19 is that the Sodomites failed to extend hospitality.

Now one might think: “Is inhospitality a punishable offense?” An inhospitable environment is a symptom of a deeper issue. Let me give you an example. Recently, I was in southern California to take doctoral classes. My classmates and I decided to go to Japan town for some ramen. For those of you who have lived in LA, Japan Town is near another apart of town called: Skid Row. LA natives informed us to avoid the area. It’s inhospitable. It’s a place marked by lawlessness and danger. People warned us to avoid the area. You don’t want to stay there.

Well... what is the deeper issue? Sexual immorality. **Sodom practiced sexually immoral behavior.** As you heard the passage read earlier, Lot hosted these two angelic visitors. Before the visitors retire for the evening, a mob assembles at Lot’s doorsteps. Let’s look at verse 4. *But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house.* The contrast words: young and old serve as an idiomatic phrase to say: everyone came.

What did they come to do? Read further with in verse 5. *And they called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight?”* Sidenote. The men of Sodom though two men were staying with him. They didn’t know that they were angels. *Bring them out to us, that we may know them.*

A cursory reading might make one think: what's the big deal? The men of Sodom wanted to get to know Lot's visitors. Maybe they wanted to know their names. Where they're from? Where they're going? But that's not what the word: know implies. The word: know in the book of Genesis is used to describe sexual intercourse. If you recall, Adam knew Eve and they conceived a son named Cain (Gen 4:1). Whenever the object of the verb: know is a person, it has sexual connotations. And when one reads later about Lot's daughters who have not known a man. I'm sure that Lot's daughters knew men. I mean their father Lot was a man. But the idea there means that Lot's daughters were virgins because they had not had sex with any man.

The men of Sodom intend sexually abuse and rape the two male visitors. God condemns such sexually immoral behavior. Such sexually immoral behavior usurps God' design for sex.

Moses highlights the sins of inhospitality and sexual immorality of Sodom in this account. We discover in other books within the Old Testament (Ezek 16:49) that Sodom had committed other sins. Gluttony. Injustice. Pride. All these things caused God to bring forth judgment upon this city.

Now let's talk about God's form of judgment. **God's judgment resembles the flood.** God could not flood the city with water. But he could send down other forms of judgment from the heavens. Look at chapter 19, verse 24. *Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.* Think about the times that God sent rain from heaven in the book of Genesis. First, the rain brings life. Second, the rain floods the earth destroying everything. This third time, it destroys everything again. The

unrighteousness of Sodom equaled that of the time of Noah. This prompted God to bring again cataclysmic judgment upon the earth.

Sodom shows us that human beings have a problem. No one is righteous not even one. But this problem is not limited just to Sodom. It is not a dilemma for a people long ago. This problem faces us today too. **Not even one of us are righteous.**

Let's think a little bit more about this idea of righteousness. Many of us would identify a righteous person as doing good things. To be righteous according to the Bible means living according to God's ways. Righteous people sync up their lives to God's standards.

Now someone might argue, but that's not fair. Some people do not know God's standards. The Bible talks about how human beings are made in the image of God. This means that all of us have a sense of how God wishes for us to live. This explains why most people believe that things like murder are wrong. It's not right for someone to take another person's life. This is a result of common grace. But none of us choose to live according to God's standards all the time. One might say that we live according to those standards when it suits us. We will tell the truth only as long as it benefits me. When lying might prove beneficial, then I'll twist the truth. **We prefer to live according to our own way rather than God's way.**

Now you might say, but I'm a Christian. I am a follower of Jesus Christ. I am righteous before God! That is true. You're positionally righteous before God. But we all struggle with sinful behavior. **Even if we desire to live according to God's way, we don't do so consistently.** As believers, we feel the tension between doing what we think is right versus what God says is right. As I thought about this tension, I think about how in my "ideal" world: I could somehow live according to the ways of the world and the ways of God. If you imagined the ways of the

world as one circle and the ways of God as one circle, then it would be great if they overlapped. But they don't they are two distinct circles. You can only choose to live according to one circle – the ways of the world. Or you can choose to live according to the other circle – the ways of God. You cannot live in both. This is why we all struggle with living righteously.

Well... that's kind of a downer. Let's talk about the solution. What will help us to resolve this problem of everyone being unrighteous?

God allows a righteous person to intercede for the unrighteous. God permits someone to serve as a mediator for the unrighteous. He invites someone to make a case for him to show mercy. He grants permission for a person to stand in the gap. **God allows a righteous person to intercede for the unrighteous.**

Who is this person? The person in the case of this story is Abraham. **God allows Abraham to intercede for the Sodomites.** Why? I thought you said that all people were unrighteous. And I've been here for these sermons. Abraham doesn't live the most righteous life. True. But remember what happened in a previous narrative. Abraham believed God it was counted to him as righteousness (15:6). God accounted to Abraham righteousness. This qualifies him to serve as an intercessor.

Now an intercessor within the Old Testament is known as a prophet. **Abraham acts as a proto prophet by interceding for the nations.** He is the first of his kind. What makes Abraham a prophet? A prophet has three qualifications. First, he knows the plans of God. Second, God expects his prophets to teach his people his ways. Third, he intercedes for people. We'll see that Abraham exemplifies all three qualities.

First, **God reveals his plans to judge Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham.** Look at chapter 18, verse 17. *The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?"* The question is worded in a way that the expected answer is "No". God will not hide his plans. This fulfills the first qualification of prophet. Abraham knows the plans of God.

Abraham also fulfills the second requirement. **God expects Abraham to teach Israel righteousness and justice.** Look at chapter 18, verse 19. *For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.* Many think that the task of a prophet is prediction. Prophets predict what will happen in the future. While prophets do predict the future, they have primarily the responsibility to call the people of God back to covenant obedience. Here in the text, we see that God expects Abraham to be an instructor of God's ways. Israel would learn how to follow God. Abraham fulfills the second qualification of prophet. God expects Abraham to teach his people God's ways.

Let's talk about the third qualification. Intercession. Abraham intercedes for Sodom. Why? Abraham knows that God is just. Would a just God wipe out a city of wicked people even if there exists within the city good people? That doesn't seem right. **Abraham's understanding of God's justice shapes his intercession.** God's just character causes Abraham to intercede. Look at verse 25. *Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?*

Now we don't have time to discuss the entire intercession. I'll summarize the exchange between God and Abraham. Abraham asks God: would you spare the city if there's fifty righteous people in it? (18:24). God replies: Yes. Abraham continues to negotiate with God. He reduces the number from fifty to forty-five (18:28) to thirty (18:30) to twenty (18:31) to ten (18:32). Why does Abraham stop at ten? According to rabbinic literature, a group of ten people within a city would come together to pray. Surely, there would be ten people in Sodom praying for the welfare of the city. The conclusion of the negotiation taught Abraham that God will do what is just. God will be fair. His judgment will not be unjust.

Abraham is not our intercessor. He foreshadows a future intercessor. One of his descendants will be. His name is Jesus. God allows Jesus to intercede for us. Now what qualifies Jesus to serve as a prophet?

Jesus is the ultimate prophet. Why? Jesus knows the plans of God. **He knows God's plan to save the Jews and Gentiles.** This fulfils the first requirement. Knowing the plans of God.

Second requirement, a prophet teaches the people the way of God. **Jesus teaches his followers righteousness and justice through the Spirit.** While Jesus was on the earth, he taught people what it looked like to live as citizens of the kingdom of God. An example of such teaching would be the sermon on the mount. After Jesus ascends into heaven, he sends the Holy Spirit to his believers to remind them of his teachings.

Remember before how I said before that we all struggle to live righteously. We all wrestle with living according to God's way. Believers have an advantage in this struggle. The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit creates an awareness of this tension. Believers by the power of the Holy Spirit gain a sensitivity to when they feel prone to sin. At that moment, when a believer

has choice to give into an angry outburst. At that moment, when a believer has a choice to give into their sexual temptation. At that moment, when a believer has a choice to slander someone. Their Holy Spirit warns them. The Holy Spirit not only warns them, but also empowers them to live according to God's way. He gives the believer an ability to refrain from anger. He enables the believer to refrain from sexual sin. He causes them to refrain from slander. The Holy Spirit is available to all who have placed their faith in Christ.

Thirdly, Jesus intercedes on our behalf. I mean... Jesus knows God's justice best. **His understanding of God's justice shapes his intercession.** What do I mean? He intercedes for his followers based on his work on the cross. **Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins.**

Imagine a courtroom scene. God sits where the Judge is. Satan sits where the prosecutor sits. Jesus sits where the defense attorney sits. Every time a Christian sin, Satan lives up to his name, accuser. He condemns the believer. He explains why God should pour out his judgment on this person. When he finishes, Jesus stands up and says: "Yes. But my death paid for that." The judge slams the gavel. Case closed. Justice was paid on calvary.

But this intercession isn't available for everyone. Jesus intercedes for his followers. He advocates for those who have professed faith in Christ. This explains Paul's words in 1 Corinthians, chapter 6, verse 9. *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were*

washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God.

Thank God that we have Christ as our intercessor! And for those who do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, the choice is before you. Do you wish for Jesus to be your intercessor? Do you wish for his death to pay for your sins?

Now let's move to the last point. Application. What are we supposed to do in light of all this?

Pray for unbelievers you know because you never know whom God will save. Believers should pray that God would show mercy to the lost. They should intercede for the souls of their unbelieving friends, family, and neighbors. We never know whom God will rescue. But we pray anyways. **Pray for unbelievers you know because you never know whom God will save.**

As I've said already that Abraham prayed for Sodom so that God might spare the city on behalf of righteous people within the city. But God destroys all the inhabitants of the city. He does save one person though. We see in the text that **God saves Lot because of Abraham's prayer.**

Let's examine Lot's life. When we read this narrative, **one might say that Lot behaves more righteously than the Sodomites.** Compared to the Sodomites, who thought of themselves, Lot thought of his guests. **He extends hospitality to the angelic guests.** Let's look at his invitation in chapter 19, verse 2. *My Lords, please turn aside to your servant's house and spend the night and wash your feet. Then you may rise up early and go on your way. They said, "No, we will spend the night in the town square." But he pressed them strongly, so they turned*

aside to him and entered his house. And he made them a feast and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

Not only does Lot extend hospitality to his guests, but **he also confronts the wicked behavior of Sodom**. Look at verse 6. *Lot went out to the men at the entrance, shut the door after him, and said, "I beg you brothers, do not act so wickedly"*. All the other men participated in the wicked behavior. But Lot calls it out. This is righteous behavior.

Before we think that Lot is 100% percent righteous, there's plenty in the text that shows us that Lot has a lot of unrighteousness in him and his family. **The influence of Sodom on Lot's family is quite strong.**

Let me share with you the examples of Sodom's corrupting influence on Lot. **Lot chooses to go to Sodom and Gomorrah rather than remain with Abraham** (13:11). He chooses the riches of the Jordan valley rather than the promise of God. **Lot serves on the leadership of Sodom** (19:1). Moses hints at this by depicting Lot sitting at the city gates. He rubbed shoulders with the elite of the city. Lot has a twisted sense of priorities. **Lot offers his daughters to protect his guests**. Look at verse 8. *Behold, I have two daughters who have not known any man. Let me bring them out to you, and do them as you please*. He would allow his daughters to be raped and abused by the men of Sodom. **Lot would have sated in Sodom unless the angels intervened**. Look at verse 16. *But he lingered. So the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city*. Even though Lot knew that God would overthrow the city, he wanted to stay in the city. **Lot's wife turned into salt because she looked back to Sodom**. Look at verse 26. *But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt*. Instead of identifying herself

with God's people, she would prefer to be identified with Sodom. She then shared the same fate. Lastly, we'll turn our attention to Lot's daughters. **Lot's daughters commit incest with him to produce children.** Look at verse 31. *And the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come into us after the manner of all the earth."* The daughters would get their dad drunk and produce heirs. Moab and Ammon. They would be future adversaries of Israel.

One must rub their chin and wonder: Why did God save Lot? It's because of Abraham's prayer. **Despite Lot's family's immoral behavior, God saves him because of Abraham's intercession.** Look at verse 29. *So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow when he overthrew the cities in which Lot had lived.* Ultimately, this demonstrates God's grace. God chose to save Lot.

Why should we pray for unbelievers we know? **We serve as intercessors, but only God can save a person.** God puts us in the lives of people so that **we might serve as intercessors for the lost** (1 Tim 2:1-4). Have you ever about the idea that maybe God has you cross paths with unbelievers so that you might pray for their salvation? I mean people ultimately come to faith in Christ through relationships with people. Someone has to share the gospel with them. Someone has to answer their questions about the faith. Someone has to be there with them as they wrestle with tragedy. Evangelism requires people. It necessitates relationship.

Although we pray for the lost, we must realize the work of saving a person is God's alone. We have the responsibility to share our faith. Pray. **But only God can prompt a person to understand and believe in the gospel.** This should give us assurance and take the pressure off. Think about planting a plant. You put the seed in the dirt. You water it. You pull out nearby

weeds. But ultimately God will determine when it grows and eventually bear fruit. It's the same with sharing our faith.

What should we do when a person refuses to believe in the gospel? Continue to pray for them. Who knows? God might save them. The timing ultimately is in God's hands. Even in my life, there's a list of unbelievers that I pray for almost every day. On this list, are family members and friends. Many of them remain far from the LORD. But I continue to hope and pray that God would open their hearts and that they would believe. You never know what God might do.

This morning, we talked about a problem. No one is righteous, not even one. This seems like an insurmountable challenge. But God provides a solution. He allows a righteous person to intercede for the unrighteous. This should then prompt us to pray. Pray for unbelievers because you never know whom God will save.

After I became a Christian, I never expected my mom to come to faith. Of all my family, she was the most devout ancestor worshipper I knew. We had a portrait of my deceased grandparents in my living room. Underneath their photos was a small altar with incense. Every year, my mom would prepare for them a meal of pork belly, fish, and chicken. The meal would be offered three times a year. Chinese New Year's. Grave Cleaning Festival. Mid-autumn festival. She refused to believe in the gospel or even visit church. I confess that I didn't pray consistently for her. But I did pray. It just seemed so impossible.

A few years after my dad passed away, I received a phone call from my mom around the Thanksgiving holiday. I was living in Fort Worth at the time. My mom only called when there was trouble. This concerned me. I picked up the phone. Hey mom! How are you? We engage in the usual formal small talk. She then shared with me that she had been attending church and

planned to get baptized in two weeks. My jaw dropped. I asked her: "Why didn't you tell me earlier?" Yeah... my pastor said that if I didn't call you to tell you, then he would. Typical Asian mom. I flew out a few weeks later to witness her baptism. Now this may not happen with the people you're praying for. But my mom's conversion reminds me. Pray for the lost you know. You never know whom God will save.