



SURROUNDED BY LIONS



PREVIEW

At times we find ourselves surrounded by difficulties, problems, and unknowns. Sometimes these issues are caused by the actions of others, sometimes by our own actions. In this lesson we will be discussing how God is the constant in a world of variables.

PRAISE

Listen to the song “Not Ashamed” by Passion and focus on the lyrics while you listen.

PARABLE

Here are some interesting facts about lions:

- Most male lions can grow up to ten feet in length and can weigh between 330 to 550 pounds; female lions grow up to nine feet and weigh between 265 to 395 pounds.
- Females do all the hunting for the group, while males guard the territory and fight predators and challengers.
- Wild male lions can live for approximately twelve years and females for fifteen years.
- A group of lions is called a pride. Prides can have as many as forty lions, which may include adult females, cubs, sub-adults and two other male lions.
- You can call them lazy. They spend around 16–20 hours a day sleeping or resting. So they are basically active only for the remaining four hours when they are hunting or protecting their territory.
- Although lions drink water every day, they can manage to live without it for four or five days if needed.
- An adult male’s roar can be heard up to five miles away!

PRESENT

Read Psalm 57:4. David found himself in a pretty dark and hopeless situation, surrounded by lions (hostile enemies). The lion metaphor used here describes his situation as being surrounded by things and people that, without the help of the Lord, would bring him down.

Saul was king of Israel and David was one of his servants. One of David’s jobs was to play music when Saul was in a rotten mood, which was way too often. David’s music would lift Saul’s spirits—or, as the saying is often misquoted, “soothe the savage beast.”

People liked David very much—much more than Saul. King Saul was well aware of the discrepancy, and resented it. At

times his rage would boil over and he would try to kill David, who had to flee for his life. Bible scholars believe that David wrote Psalm 57 while living in a cave, hiding from Saul.

Even though chased by enemies, David's heart was fixed on one constant: God would deliver him in times of trouble. He had faith that everything was under God's control, even though his future appeared uncertain. David was steadfast in his trust and faith in the Lord. He knew God would somehow deliver him even when surrounded by impossibilities.

We, as disciples, need the same steadfast faith no matter what we face. When the doctor gives a fearful prognosis, we should not doubt God or blame Him. If a family member's job is lost and the fear of financial failure seems imminent, God is still good, and He will work it out to His glory and our benefit. If our family has to move and we find ourselves in unfamiliar surroundings with many unknowns and "what if's," God is still on His throne. Our faith and trust should not waver. Reliance on the guidance of a loving God will keep us strong in times of doubt and uncertainty.

Being secure and firm in our convictions and trust in God's promises will keep us steady through unknown tomorrows. Be encouraged today; everything will be all right. God will work it all out as He has done many times in the past. He hasn't left you alone; He will always take care of you.

If you make up your mind to be a secure and anchored Christian, you will survive and prosper even through a frightening future. When all is bleak and uncertain, your heart will not surrender to the circumstances. You will ride out the storm and arrive safely where and when God wants you to be. There is not a lion out there that is a match for your Savior!

PRACTICE

Martin Luther said, "None can believe how powerful prayer is, and what it is able to affect, except those who have learned it by experience." The truth is you are in trouble if you wait to pray until you are in trouble. God is willing and able to deliver you from whatever problem you are facing. You are doing yourself a disservice if you wait until you're in trouble to talk to your Father. Make it a daily habit. Let Him hear your voice so when you cry out for help, He will know who's calling and will move on your behalf.

PRAY

Jesus, thank You for hearing me when I call! You are there for me even when all of my friends and family desert me. Your Word promises You will stick closer than a brother. God, I thank You that when I'm surrounded by lions You will deliver me, even if it looks impossible. You hear me, You know where I am, and You are an on-time God! I love You and thank You for who You are. In Jesus' name, amen.

PLUS

Share a time when God made a way when there seemed to be no way. Encourage each other and remind your group that nothing is impossible with God.