



**QUIT
PLAYING
WITH
LIONS**

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS!

Lions are right outside our doors, and they are looking to devour men one at a time.

Men have become passive and complacent, and our families and world are paying the price.

It's time for men to become godly leaders in our homes, in our churches, and in our communities.

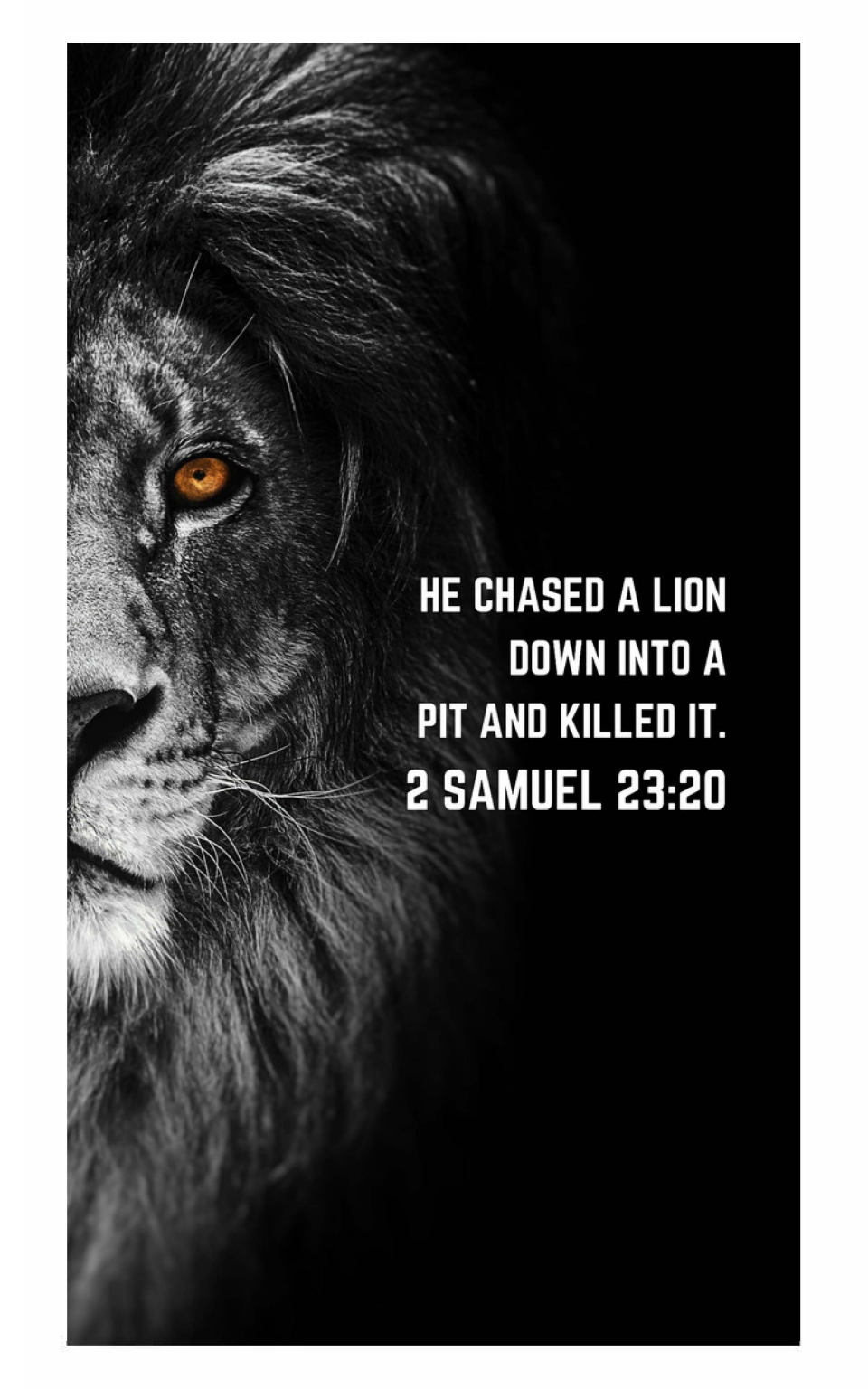
We will no longer stand idly by.

We must rise up together.

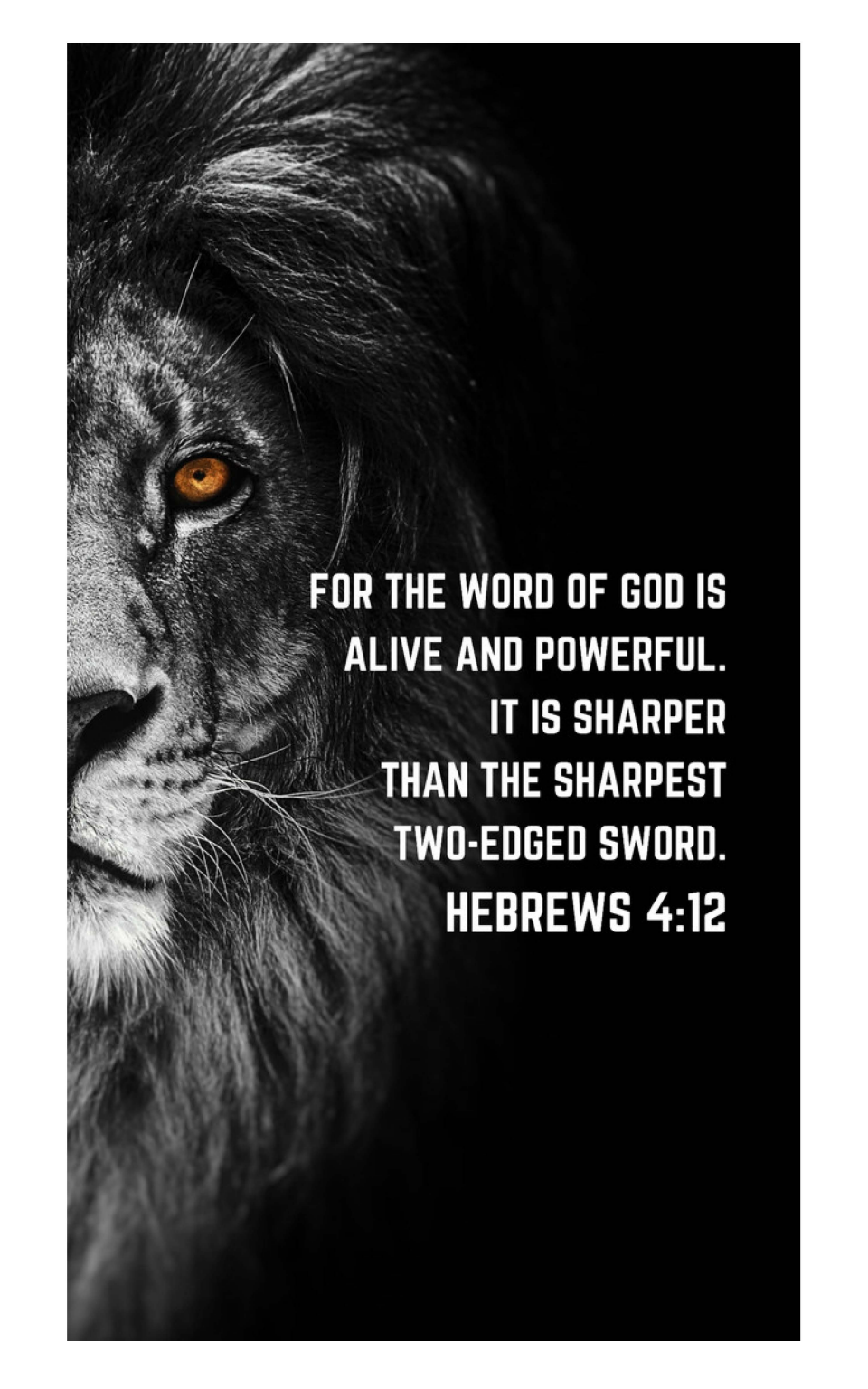
We must consecrate our lives to Jesus.

We must take a stand against the enemy.

It's time to quit playing with lions!



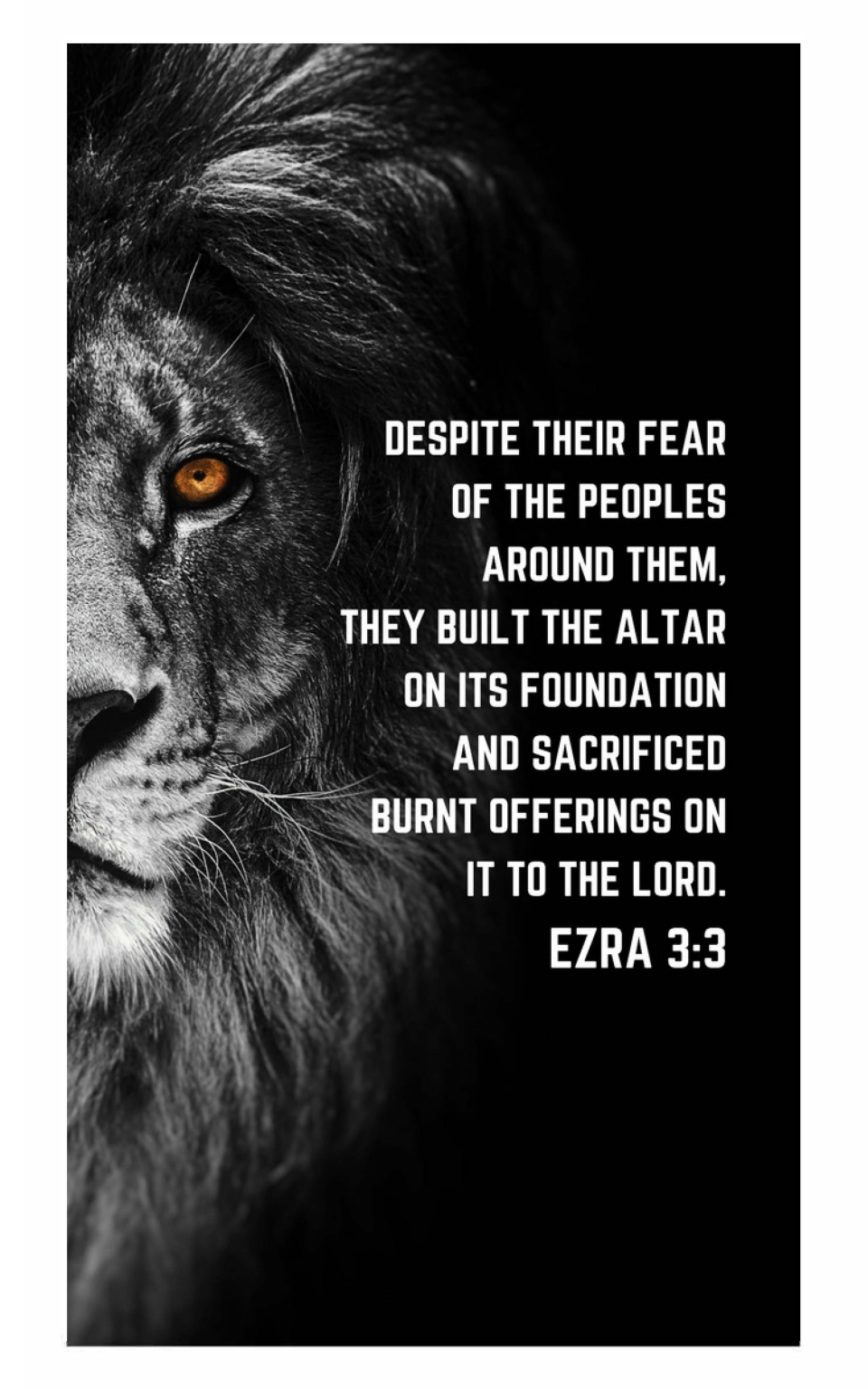
**HE CHASED A LION
DOWN INTO A
PIT AND KILLED IT.
2 SAMUEL 23:20**



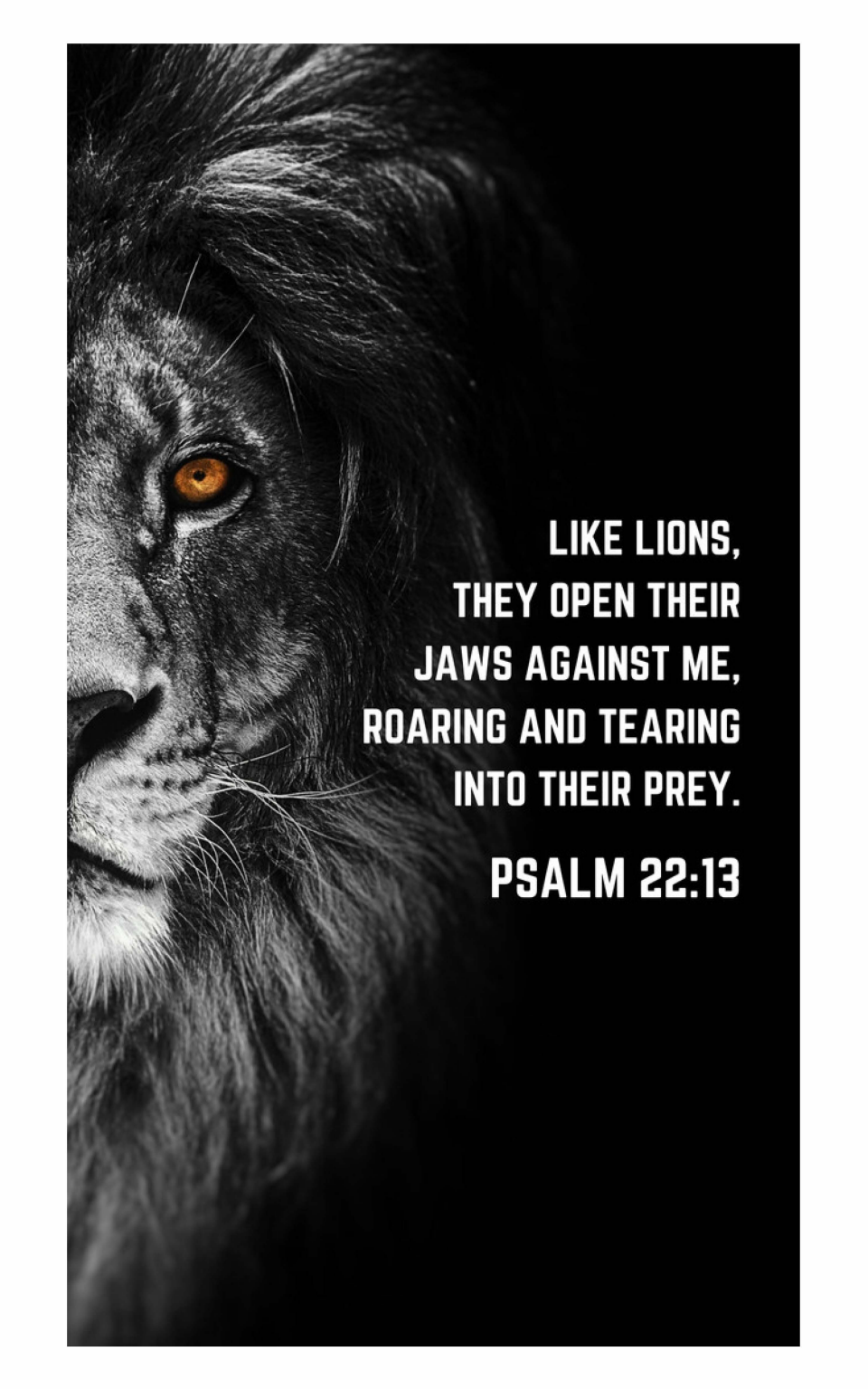
**FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS
ALIVE AND POWERFUL.
IT IS SHARPER
THAN THE SHARPEST
TWO-EDGED SWORD.
HEBREWS 4:12**

A close-up, black and white photograph of a lion's face, focusing on its eye which has a bright orange glow. The lion's fur is dark and textured, with some lighter patches around the eye. The background is solid black.

**COMMIT YOURSELVES
WHOLEHEARTEDLY TO
THESE COMMANDS.
WRITE THEM ON THE
DOORPOSTS OF
YOUR HOUSE.
DEUTERONOMY 6:6,9**



**DESPITE THEIR FEAR
OF THE PEOPLES
AROUND THEM,
THEY BUILT THE ALTAR
ON ITS FOUNDATION
AND SACRIFICED
BURNT OFFERINGS ON
IT TO THE LORD.
EZRA 3:3**

A close-up, black and white photograph of a lion's face, focusing on its eyes and whiskers. The lion's eyes are a striking orange color. The background is dark, making the lion's features stand out.

**LIKE LIONS,
THEY OPEN THEIR
JAWS AGAINST ME,
ROARING AND TEARING
INTO THEIR PREY.**

PSALM 22:13

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 1

Brad Farnsworth: Man-ifesto

DAY 1

Man-ifesto #1 – I will be a man of moral excellence.

READ

2 Peter 1:5-8 & Ephesians 5:10-11

REFLECT

As godly men, we have a responsibility to model Christ for others. This week, we will look at 5 Man-ifesto's from 2 Peter that help us become the man God created us to be.

Man-ifesto #1 – I will be a man of moral excellence.

Moral excellence does not mean moral perfection. Only Jesus lived the perfect life. We all sin, stumble, and make mistakes. God does not expect moral perfection. But He does ask us to pursue moral excellence. Moral excellence is the pursuit of holiness and living to please God.

Instead of walking in moral excellence, some men have slipped into a "moral minimum" philosophy. They compromise their standards, and as a result, their lives don't look much different than the world around them. They believe in a righteous and holy God. But they live as if He doesn't care how they live.

RESPOND

Paul tells us to "carefully determine what pleases the Lord." A great question to ask yourself before making a decision is, "Will this be pleasing to God?" Your choices, your decisions, and your actions should reflect the heart and character of God.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 1

Brad Farnsworth: Man-ifesto

DAY 2

Man-ifesto #2 – I will be a man of self-control.

READ

Galatians 5:16-17

REFLECT

No man wants to admit he has an issue with self-control. But every man struggles at times with unhealthy desires, impulses, & emotions. Whether that's getting frustrated when we get cut off in traffic, craving a late-night snack, losing our temper when our favorite sports team loses, or making that impulse purchase we just "had to have." We lose self-control when we feel overwhelmed, threatened, or helpless. When we lose our self-control, we often become out of control because of a situation we have no control over.

Self-control is an oxymoron. We have very little ability to control ourselves. We have no ability to master self-control because of our sin nature. Our sin nature is bent on being out from under God's control. The word Peter uses for self-control in 2 Peter 5 comes from a word that means "mastery from within oneself but not by oneself." We cannot master ourselves. It's God's Spirit, living within us, that gives us the power and ability to show self-control.

RESPOND

As a godly man, you must die daily to self and surrender control of your desires, impulses, and emotions to God. Allow God to guide you, heal you, and take control of every area of your life.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 1

Brad Farnsworth: Man-ifesto

DAY 3

Man-ifesto #3 – I will be a man of perseverance.

READ

1 Peter 4:12-13

REFLECT

Being a follower of Jesus doesn't exempt us from pain, struggles, and trials. Every man faces obstacles, challenges, and struggles in their lives, from broken relationships, difficulties at work, health issues, and financial setbacks. The scriptures are filled with stories of men who experienced difficult seasons of hardship and pain. Despite their struggles, they persevered and waited on the Lord, and God proved Himself to be faithful.

As you look at the struggles you are facing, it may seem that there is no way out. You may have doubts, fears, and questions. A godly man doesn't focus all his attention on trying to figure a way out. Instead, a godly man fixes his eyes on Christ. He perseveres and waits on the Lord.

RESPOND

As you persevere, God will renew your hope and strength. You will learn to trust God despite what you may see, think, or feel. God will make a way where there seems to be no way.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 1

Brad Farnsworth: Man-ifesto

DAY 4

Man-ifesto #4 – I will be a man of godliness.

READ

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

REFLECT

Some men associate godliness with following a set of rules. If I don't drink, smoke, cuss, or watch R rated movies I'm a godly man. Those might be good habits and practices, but they do not make us godly. The word godliness comes from a Greek word meaning "your inner response to the things of God which shows itself in godly reverence." Godliness isn't about following rules. It's about allowing God to rule in our lives. It's about being changed into the likeness of Christ from the inside out. We can't do this on our own.

When we focus on following a set of rules, we continually fall short, feel defeated, and live with guilt and shame. Christlikeness comes only as we submit ourselves in reverence to God's Spirit. When we allow the Holy Spirit to rule in our lives, we experience joy, peace, and freedom in Christ.

RESPOND

Instead of trying to change your outward behavior, allow the Holy Spirit to change your inward spirit into the likeness of Christ. As you submit your life to the Holy Spirit, He will change your spirit into the likeness of the Spirit of Christ.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 1

Brad Farnsworth: Man-ifesto

DAY 5

Man-ifesto #5 – I will be a man of love.

READ

1 Corinthians 16:14

REFLECT

The world talks a lot about love. Yet, we live in a world filled with division, hatred, bitterness, and anger. We see it, read it, and hear about it daily. It's become a regular part of our culture. As godly men, we are called to live counter culturally. We are called to love as Christ loved.

The love of Christ is an "agape" love. It's a love that's unconditional. Agape love is a sacrificial kind of love that unites and heals. That kind of love can be tested when someone is unkind, rude, hostile, or spreads rumors about us. Our natural human response is to retaliate in anger, become bitter, or seek revenge. A godly man understands that agape love responds the way Jesus responded. The love that Jesus showed the world led Him to the Cross to die for us. This is the kind of love the world needs. We must look to Him to help us love in such a way.

RESPOND

As a godly man, you must lead the way for your family, your church, and in your community. When you walk in love, with the Spirit of God, you will grow into the godly man you desire to be and the godly man our world so desperately needs.



**SNATCH ME FROM
THE LION'S JAWS.**

PSALM 22:21

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 2

Keith Schubert: Man of the Word

DAY 1

Power of the Word

READ

Hebrews 4:12

REFLECT

When I was a kid, there was one person who was synonymous with power. He was an imposing figure with gold chains and a mohawk. Who was this man? You may know him as Mr. T! He was a powerhouse! Take a moment to think about some other powerful things. Maybe you are picturing your truck, your new chainsaw, or your zero turn, 52" deck, 27-horse motor, that can cut at 9 mph [insert manly grunt here...]. Of all the power-packed things you imagined, did God's Word ever enter your mind? It should! We read in today's Scripture that, "...the word of God is... powerful..." (Heb. 4:12).

My brothers, you've got some serious firepower at your disposal! We are told God's Word has power to demolish arguments (2. Cor 10:5), to set us free (John 8:32), to transform us (Rom. 12-1-2) & to guide us (Prov. 3:5-6). The question is, are you tapping into the power available? To quote the theologian Mr. T, "I pity the fool" who doesn't access God's powerful Word!

RESPOND

How did God's Word CUT you today? What did it EXPOSE? How can you UNLEASH His Powerful Word in your life today? Go to your Heavenly Father and ask Him to unleash His power to battle the lions you will face today.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 2

Keith Schubert: Man of the Word

DAY 2

Desire the Word

READ

Ephesians 6:17

REFLECT

When you're a little boy, some of the greatest toys are found on adventures outside. Suddenly, pinecones become grenades and every stick is a sword that can help you slay the dragon and set the princess free.

Have you ever seen a boy's eyes light up when they find the PERFECT stick-sword? As a dad of a young man now, I remember those journeys through the woods in our back yard in Michigan when the perfect sword was just laying there on the ground. You know what? I didn't have to tell my boy to grab it. It was instinctive! It drew him. He couldn't help but reach for it.

Men, the sword of the Spirit is here and available for you today. But did you see the first word in our passage you read? "Take" the sword. You've gotta want it. You've got to reach for it. You've got to desire it. So, do you? Do you long to hear from Him today? Do you long to know His Word more? If so, reach out with all you've got.

RESPOND

How did God's Word CUT you today? What did it EXPOSE? How can you UNLEASH His Powerful Word in your life today?

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 2

Keith Schubert: Man of the Word

DAY 3

Breathe in the Word

READ

2 Timothy 3:16

REFLECT

When's the last time you were really inspired? Think about it for a second...Finding inspiration can be hard. But when you do find it, it's hard to forget.

In our passage today, we're told the Scriptures are "inspired" which means, "breathed out by God" or more literally, "all Scripture is breathed into by God." Just think about that! The very words we read here in the Bible have the very breathed-out messages of God within them. And just like when you breathe your body finds life, so when you breathe in God's Word, so your soul and spirit find life AND inspiration.

Now, we know how important breathing is don't we? You can't live more than a few minutes without air. As it is in your physical body, so is it in your spiritual one. Don't settle for "just enough" God-inspired breath to get by. Take time and breathe deeply and often.

RESPOND

How did God's Word CUT you today? What did it EXPOSE? How can you UNLEASH His Powerful Word in your life today?

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 2

Keith Schubert: Man of the Word

DAY 4

Doer of the Word

READ

James 1:22 & Luke 11:28

REFLECT

When's the last time you looked in the mirror? Maybe just a moment ago. Have you ever looked at the reflection staring back and then said, "Oh wow! How long has that been in my teeth...I really need to shave...I might need to start coloring my gray hair...".

In those moments, IDENTIFICATION of a need is part one. But it shouldn't stop there, should it? No, if you find something that really needs attention, you don't need only to IDENTIFY it do you? You also need to actually DO something about it. Because at the end, it's what you DO that matters.

As you read through God's Message, you will no doubt IDENTIFY things that don't match up with His commands. In those moments, would you be brave enough to not only IDENTIFY what His Word says, but also DO something about it.

RESPOND

How did God's Word CUT you today? What did it EXPOSE? How can you UNLEASH His Powerful Word in your life today

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 2

Keith Schubert: Man of the Word

DAY 5

S.P.E.C.S. the Word

READ

Psalm 119:105

REFLECT

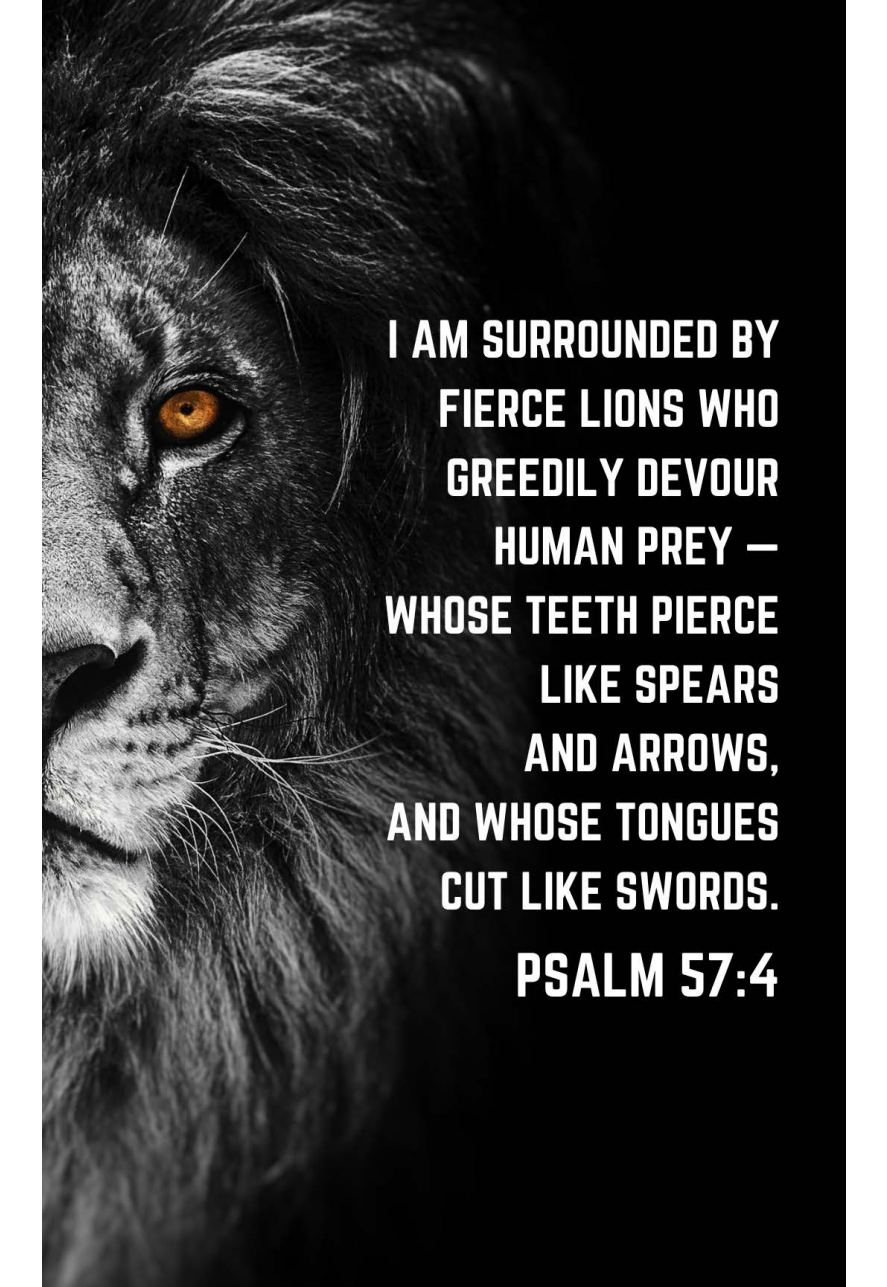
Any of you lived in the PGPS days? That's "Pre GPS"...I remember those days without much fondness. Why? Because I was CONSTANTLY getting lost. I needed guidance, direction and leading.

There's a much better Spiritual GPS available for you and me today: God's Word. Psalm 119 tells us His Word is a "lamp" and "light" for the path we are needing to take. But sometimes the road is treacherous, and the way can be challenging and even confusing. So, what do we do then? How can we approach the Word with wisdom and insight, so we don't miss his guidance? There's an approach to get the most out of God's Word that someone taught me a long time ago. It's called the S.P.E.C.S. Bible reading method. Here's what it means: every time you read God's Message look through your S.P.E.C.S. to make sure to look for...

- S - Sins to confess,
- P - Promises to claim,
- E - Examples to follow,
- C - Commands to obey,
- S - Summary thought for the day

RESPOND

How did God's Word CUT you today? What did it EXPOSE? How can you UNLEASH His Powerful Word in your life today?



**I AM SURROUNDED BY
FIERCE LIONS WHO
GREEDILY DEVOUR
HUMAN PREY —
WHOSE TEETH PIERCE
LIKE SPEARS
AND ARROWS,
AND WHOSE TONGUES
CUT LIKE SWORDS.**

PSALM 57:4

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 3

Ronnie Baker: Man of Your Home

DAY 1

Shooting Stuff

READ

Proverbs 22:6

REFLECT

My cousin is a well-known archer. He lives in the sticks of Kentucky; I think all you do is shoot stuff there. I remember the first time I shot a bow. Somehow the stupid thing popped me in the face, and the sting hit my hand so hard it left a mark. The point is I don't think we are ever really that good when we first try something.

The book of Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings. The idea of the collection of writings is that of a Father talking to a son. This is what he says about parenting.

RESPOND

Write down the name of your child(ren). Next to their name, list their 3 greatest strengths or abilities. Then, list 1 of their opportunities, an area they could improve: If you don't have children, apply this exercise to you personally.

Pray and pause to be still, to breathe slowly, to re-center upon the Presence of God.

Rejoice and reflect on the gift of your children. Ask the Father to use their strengths and abilities (listed above) for the Kingdom of Heaven. Pray that they would find their place in the Body of Christ. Ask that the opportunity that you see would become a strength that God could use. Pray that Jesus would come alive in their lives.

Ask, is there something in the relationship with your children that you need to give to God? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you yield that to Him.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 3

Ronnie Baker: Man of Your Home

DAY 2

Faith Walking

READ

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

REFLECT

A part of leading your home is to be heavenly aware. What I don't mean is that you are so super spiritual and heavenly-focused that you are no earthly good. What I do mean is that you live with the realization that life on earth is not all there is and that you do make decisions with an eternal perspective. When you serve, give, and lead your family, you are making eternal deposits. The Scripture reading today was being written to an underprivileged and persecuted church. They were losing life, family, and home for the sake of Jesus. To keep this in a global and eternal perspective, 1 in 7 Christians, roughly 365 million people around the world, are experiencing levels of persecution. In 2023, 4998 people were killed for their faith worldwide.

RESPOND

Circle or highlight the verses and what stands out to you. Why are they important to you? What are the verses implications? What do these Scriptures tell you about God? What do these Scriptures tell you about you?

Take a moment and write a brief pray for your brothers and sisters that are being persecuted...

Pray and pause to be still, to breathe slowly, to re-center upon the Presence of God.

Rejoice and reflect and choose to rejoice in God's generous provision.

Ask, what do I need right now? Is there something I am missing or that I am anxious about? Yield, is there something from the Scriptures, a particular word or phrase that the Holy Spirit is highlighting for me today...

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 3

Ronnie Baker: Man of Your Home

DAY 3

Powerful Prayer

READ

1 Peter 3:7-12

REFLECT

I like shortcuts. When the GPS tells me the time of arrival, I call that the time to beat. We live in a culture that wants it fast and now. We are always looking for the “silver bullet” to life’s problems. In this text, we see one ingredient to effective prayer is tied to how you treat your wife. One translation says, “not to be harsh” while other translations say to “be understanding.”

RESPOND

What verses from today’s reading are important to you? What are the verses implications? What do these Scriptures tell you about God? What do these Scriptures tell you about you?

Pray and pause to be still, to breathe slowly, to re-center upon the Presence of God.

Rejoice and reflect and choose to rejoice in God’s generous provision.

Ask, what do I need right now? Is there something I am missing or that I am anxious about? Yield, is there something from the Scriptures, a particular word or phrase that the Holy Spirit is highlighting for me today...

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 3
Ronnie Baker: Man of Your Home

DAY 4

As Christ Loved the Church

READ

Ephesians 5:25-32

REFLECT

I ain't sayin' it's easy but it is necessary!

RESPOND

Circle or highlight the verses and what stands out to you. Reflect on the verses. Why they are important to you? What are the verses implications? What do these Scriptures tell you about God? What do these Scriptures tell you about you?

Write a pray for your wife. Pray for who you need to become and how you see her.

Pray and pause to be still, to breathe slowly, to re-center upon the Presence of God.

Rejoice and reflect and choose to rejoice in God's generous provision.

Ask, what do I need right now? Is there something I am missing or that I am anxious about? Yield, is there something from the Scriptures, a particular word or phrase that the Holy Spirit is highlighting for me today...

Ask, what do I need right now? What will make life better?

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 3

Ronnie Baker: Man of Your Home

DAY 5

Dear Diary

READ

Habakkuk 2:1-3

REFLECT

Seriously, I am blown away that you are doing this devotional. Way to Go, Mighty Man of God! I know the majority of men don't capture their feelings well. I joke with the men I disciple, I am a man I never cry, and if so, it is in the car alone or while cussing in the shower. This devotional is hard but do it anyway.


Write it down. When you have taken your last breath and your children are remembering you, write down what you want them to say about you. Write down how you want them to remember you. When you have taken your last breath, and your children are remembering you, write down what you want her to say about you. Write down how you want her to remember you.

RESPOND

Pray and pause to be still, to breathe slowly, to re-center upon the presence of God.

Rejoice and reflect and choose to rejoice in God's generous provision.

Ask, what do I need right now? Is there something I am missing or that I am anxious about? Yield, is there something from the Scriptures, a particular word or phrase that the Holy Spirit is highlighting for me today...

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a lion's face. The lion's fur is dark and textured, with a prominent orange-gold eye looking towards the viewer. The background is black, making the lion's features stand out.

**SMASH THE JAWS OF
THESE LIONS, O LORD!**

PSALM 58:6

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 4

Daniel Surratt: "Man of God's House"

DAY 1

The power of the church

READ

Matthew 16:13-20

REFLECT

It's often emphasized that the top three rules of real estate are "location, location, location." Similarly, the setting of Jesus's conversation with his disciples holds significant meaning, taking place in the region of Caesarea Philippi, a pagan Roman area adorned with temples dedicated to Zeus, Pan, and other gods. Amidst this polytheistic backdrop, Jesus declares that his church will prevail over the kingdom of Hades.

In contemporary society, we find parallels to this cultural landscape. We construct monuments and temples to fulfill our own pleasures and desires, while the church appears to be in a state of decline, perceived by some as outdated and irrelevant. Yet, the timeless words of Jesus remain relevant—God's plan for the world is manifest through his church, which the gates of Hades cannot prevail against.

Reflecting on this, consider the state of your own church. Is it actively engaging in the battle against the forces of darkness, or is it primarily on the defensive?

RESPOND

Today, let's lift up our churches in prayer. Let's pray for their strength and resilience amidst a culture that opposes them, that they may steadfastly uphold God's truth. May our churches be infused with boldness to confront the darkness and advance God's kingdom. Let's specifically pray for our pastors and leaders, asking for clarity of vision and divine guidance in reaching out to a world in desperate need of salvation. And as we pray, let's also seek God's revelation on how each of us can actively contribute to fulfilling the mission entrusted to us by Jesus.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 4

Daniel Surratt: “Man of God’s House”

DAY 2

My Time & Talent

READ

Psalm 122:1-5

REFLECT

If you're a parent, you're familiar with the challenge of coaxing your kids to go somewhere they're not eager to go. Whether it's school or a doctor's appointment, you instruct them to prepare and put on their shoes, only to be met with sighs, eye rolls, and the inevitable question, "Do we really have to go?"

In contrast, David expressed his joy when it was time to go to the house of the Lord. Reflecting on this, consider your own reaction when it's time to attend worship. Do you approach it with anticipation and excitement, or do you find yourself reluctantly dragging your feet?

To truly embody the spirit of God's house, we must cultivate a genuine enthusiasm for being in His presence.

RESPOND

Let's invite God to ignite a new sense of excitement within us for His House. Let's acknowledge and repent of any apathy we may have allowed to creep into our hearts regarding church and worship. May we earnestly seek His renewal of our love for Him and His people. Let's pray for the ability to approach church with joy and eager anticipation, eagerly anticipating what God will accomplish in us and in others during our time together.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 4

Daniel Surratt: “Man of God’s House”

DAY 3

Find Your Place

READ

Romans 12:3-8

REFLECT

I have a passion for playing guitar. An electric guitar comprises various components: the body, the neck, the headstock, the tuners, the pickups, and more. When these parts synergize, they produce beautiful music—though sometimes it may just be average if I'm the one playing! But what happens when one string decides it's insignificant, thinking, "I don't serve a major purpose; you never even play solos on me"? If even one string neglects its role, the entire guitar suffers. What once produced harmonious chords now yields dissonance.

Similarly, each of us has a vital role in the body of Christ. Together, we create something remarkable and greater than the sum of our parts. If you fail to fulfill your role, the entire body experiences a setback. Though you might underestimate your significance, every individual possesses unique stories, gifts, personalities, and talents that God uses to enrich one another and the Church.

RESPOND

Take a moment to inquire of God whether you are effectively utilizing your time and talents within the church. If you find yourself not actively serving, earnestly pray for God to stir your heart to take that necessary step. Conversely, if you are already involved in serving, pray for His continued guidance in using you to bring blessing to others. And if you sense that you're not tapping into your full potential, humbly ask God to reveal deeper ways in which you can contribute to the body of Christ.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 4 **Daniel Surratt: “Man of God’s House”**

DAY 4

Worship Like a Man

READ

Colossians 3:15-17

REFLECT

I'll never forget the conversation I had with a man from the church I was pastoring at the time. He jokingly remarked, "I'd be just fine if we showed up, heard the message, and went home. I don't need all that singing." Yet, beneath his jest, there lingered a hint of sincerity. He simply didn't see the value in singing during church services and wished it could be eliminated.

Perhaps you resonate with my friend's sentiment. Maybe you view worship as merely a prelude to the main event—the message. While this perspective might be common among many men, I believe it overlooks a crucial aspect of our faith.

The Bible instructs us to sing to God. Throughout both the Old and New Testaments, we're reminded of the importance of raising our hands and voices in praise. Singing unites us and resonates with our souls in unique ways. You may forget the sermon, but a worship song can linger in your mind long after the service ends.

If we desire to witness revival in our churches, it's imperative for men to take the lead in worship.

RESPOND

Seek God's revelation concerning your genuine attitude towards worship. What obstacles hinder your complete engagement with God during corporate worship? Is it fear, pride, or perhaps adherence to tradition? Humbly ask Him to dismantle these barriers. Pray earnestly that your heart will once more be enraptured by the majesty of the Savior. Beseech God to unveil a captivating portrait of Himself that compels you irresistibly to worship Him.

QUIT PLAYING WITH LIONS – WEEK 4

Daniel Surratt: “Man of God’s House”

DAY 5

Protect Your Church

READ

1 Corinthians 1:10-17

REFLECT

The narratives of conflicts within the church are both disheartening and bewildering. Perhaps you've witnessed or even experienced such discord first hand—over trivial matters like seating arrangements, decor choices, or the timing of Bible study sessions. At first glance, these issues may appear inconsequential, yet they have driven individuals to leave congregations. Brothers, this should not be our reality.

Repeatedly in Scripture, we're urged to pursue harmony and unity within the body of Christ. Unity doesn't demand uniformity or the absence of personal opinions. Rather, it necessitates that we prioritize supporting one another and the overarching vision of our church over our individual preferences.

Men, it falls upon us to safeguard the unity of the church. When we encounter gossip, complaints, or negative remarks about others or our leaders, we must take a stand against such divisive talk. The adversary thrives on sowing discord, and a church divided against itself is destined for defeat.

RESPOND

Seek God's assistance in safeguarding the vision and unity of the church. If you've contributed to division through complaints or negative speech, humbly repent and ask for forgiveness. Pledge to be someone who promotes unity within the church community. Pray for the wisdom to facilitate resolution and reconciliation among those in disagreement. Lift up your leaders in prayer, seeking guidance on how best to support them and align with the direction that God is instilling in their hearts.

