

There's a Lion in the Streets

by Jack Hyles

The sermon emphasizes the importance of following God's will, even in the face of obstacles and challenges.

Duration: 52:23

Scripture: Genesis 22:13, Proverbs 22:13, Proverbs 26:13, Isaiah 31:4, Matthew 6:33, James 4:15, James 4:17

Topics: "Satan"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares personal anecdotes and encourages listeners to overcome obstacles in their spiritual journey. He emphasizes the importance of taking action and not waiting for the perfect conditions to follow God's calling. The speaker also references a verse from Proverbs about the lazy man who uses the excuse of a lion in the street to avoid taking a journey. He concludes by affirming that a spirit-filled child of God can overcome any obstacle, including the metaphorical lions in their path.

Transcript

Here's an interesting verse. The slothful man says, or the lazy man says, there's a lion in the street, and I shall be slain. A chapter passes, another chapter passes, still another chapter passes, and another chapter approaches, and the same verse of that chapter says, there is a lion in the way, and a lion in the street.

Now there are a few things I want you to notice about this lion and this man. Here's a fellow who needs to go somewhere. He has a journey to take.

Perhaps he needs to go to work. Maybe he needs to go to the store. Maybe he needs to go for a walk.

But there's something that causes him to need to take a trip. He goes to the door. He begins to open the door.

Maybe he opens it. He shuts it quickly and says, I can't go. There's a lion in the street.

Now I'll be honest with you, that would discourage a journey, and I think I'd feel led to pray for a while in the house. But he said, there's a lion in the street, and I can't go. Now I'm not sure whether there was really a lion in the street.

The Slothful Man said it. The Bible doesn't say there was one there, young people. But the Bible says the Slothful Man said there's a lion in the street.

I checked some commentaries, and some said that there really was a lion in the street. Others said, no, there was no lion at all. The Slothful Man just makes it up.

He has a straw enemy, and he suspects there's a lion in the street. Now I rather think God wants to use in this story the truth that there is actually a lion in the street. But I also think he wants us to realize that we ought to go take the trip anyway.

I wrote a song a while ago about being in the will of God, and tonight we've had several things said about being in the will of God. We're supposed to do what God says if there is a lion in the street. If God says take a trip, take a trip.

If there's a lion in the street, just go ahead and lick the lion and go right on. You say, well, what if a lion licks me? It'll be licked by a lion. Then not to do the will of God.

Most dangerous place in the world is outside the will of God. It was more dangerous for Daniel to have been safe that night than to have been in the lion's den. It was more dangerous for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to have been at home in bed than to have been in the fiery furnace.

Safest place in all the world for the Israelites when they came to the Red Sea was to cross the Red Sea. Safest place in all the world for Daniel was to be in the lion's den because that was the will of God for Daniel for that night. Safest place in all the world for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego was to be in the fiery furnace because the fiery furnace happened to be the will of God for them.

There's no place that is safe unless it's nestled right in the middle of the will of God. Now if God's will for you is to fight a lion in the street, then go fight a lion in the street. That's one reason why I hate this stuff that says I'd rather be red than dead.

Not me. I'd rather be dead than red 10,000 times so because it's not the will of God for communism to conquer a nation. God is not in communism.

It's of the devil. It's satanic. It's not God's purpose, and we ought to fight it.

We can always know we're in the will of God in fighting communism. So here's a fellow who had a lion. It was God's will for him to go out and take a trip, but he had a lion standing in the street.

And he said, I'll be killed. I'll be killed. Well, let me say this.

Anybody that goes forward is going to find some kind of lion in the street. I've been preaching for 28 years. Next month I've found every day and every week of every year of my life lions lurking in the street.

Every man of God that's ever amounted to anything has had lions to fight and enemies in the street. Moses had an impediment of speech. He could not talk plainly.

Paul said, the people at Corinth said his speech was contemptible. Jonathan Edwards, that great man that preached that sermon, a sinner's in the hands of an angry God that caused people to fall on their faces and beg for mercy. Jonathan Edwards was voted out of his first pastorate because he preached against unconverted folks taking the Lord's Supper, the theater, against the theater, and against dancing.

And one time, George Whitfield, for example. Did you know there's still a case against George Whitfield in Georgia now to this day? You know why? Because they were taking the Lord's Supper and there was an

unconverted lady about to take it and he slapped it out of her hand. And they indicted him and he went back to England before the trial came up.

And if we can ever get him back over here, we're going to try him. But George Whitfield had a lion in the street. Charles G. Finney was disowned by Pastor Dale, his first pastor.

He had a lion in the street, but he went on, fought the lion, won the battle, and served God and was a faithful servant of God. Billy Sunday was never ordained because he couldn't pass the ordination test. He had a lion in the street, but did a pretty good job.

He fought the lion. Dwight L. Moody was turned down by the Congregational Church in Northfield, Massachusetts. When he tried to join, or Boston maybe, when he tried to join the Congregational Church, he couldn't pass the entrance exam and Dwight Moody could not join the church because he had a lion in the street.

But he licked the lion and they did pretty well. I'm not sure if he ever joined the church or not, but I'm sure the church has been sorry ever since and he hasn't cared a great deal. Lee Robertson had a lion in the street when a little girl named Joy was taken when she was a little baby.

He overcame it and had a lion in the street recently when his voice seemingly was gone for his lifetime. But he overcame the lion in the street. Dr. Monroe Parker, the well-known evangelist, was driving one night.

Late at night he and his wife were driving over a hill. A drunken driver got on his side of the road, met them head-on. His wife was killed immediately.

He had a lion in the street, but he became a great preacher for God. Harold Sightler, Dr. Harold Sightler, had a lion in the street. His nine-year-old daughter was walking across the highway one day near his home, and the drunken driver hit that little nine-year-old girl.

She was killed immediately. He had a lion in the street, but he overcame the lion and became a great servant of God. Dr. Bill Rice had a lion in the street when he got over here to Chicago.

One day his little daughter, Betty, became ill. They discovered she had spinal meningitis and the eardrums were burned out. And she's been deaf and has since a little infant.

She's been a little girl. She's been deaf. He had a lion in the street, but he fought the lion.

Didn't run from it. Didn't cow. Wasn't a coward.

Didn't retreat. He went right ahead and faced the lion, and from that lion and victory over that lion, there has become the greatest deaf work or work with the deaf this world has ever seen. Dr. John Rice had a lion in the street when he was six years of age.

His mother died, and Dr. John Rice was without a mother all of his life and had a lion in the street, but he overcame it and other lions he's had. In fact, he has a whole den of lions down in his place. Charles Haddon Spurgeon had a lion in the street.

The day of the dedication of the great tabernacle in London, England, there was a fire and killed seven of his people. Spurgeon thought it was his fault. He took the blame, and yet in spite of that lion in the street,

he fought the lion.

He won the lion. He kept on going. He didn't let the lion stop him.

Oh, I detest this thing of stopping because a lion's in the street. Did you come to Hal Sanderson College and you found a lion in the street? Let the lion! Don't you turn back because you see a lion. Have you take a Sunday school class or take a department or take a bus route and you see some opposition, some enemies? Did you get saved and go home and your dad made fun of you and the folks back at work made fun of you and laughed at you? And there's a lion in the street? Go ahead, fight the lion.

Defeat the lion. Would you rather be defeated by the lion than not fight the lion and leave the will of God to your life? If you find a lion right in the middle of God's will, just keep on going. If the lion kills you, go to heaven and praise God forever.

If you kill the lion, praise him on earth until you go to heaven. But don't run from the lion. There's a lion in the street.

Who says there's a lion in the street? I'll be killed. I've got to turn back. The slothful man says that.

The lazy man says that. Oh, B.B. Crimm used to say God hates the lazy devil. I'm not sure.

I don't think God hates the lazy devil, but I think God hates the laziness of the lazy devil. And I am... But there's a lion in the street? Go ahead. If it's God's will, take a trip.

Take a trip. You say, Brother Hiles, I don't know how I'm going to do it. Okay, then go ahead and do it anyhow.

Brother Hiles, I'm afraid I can't make it. Okay, go ahead anyhow and do it. I was asked not long ago to give my five favorite jokes.

Some fellow is writing a book on the favorite jokes of preachers who, I'll start to say well-known, but they've got some of us unwell-known people in there too. And that's for five favorite jokes. And I think the first one I put, well, I'll say the first or second, was the one that I've told and you've heard about the fellow down south.

He was dark, complected. He was walking across a graveyard. I don't mean to be unkind to Negro race, but it happened to be this fellow was a Negro.

And if you knew the Negroes and loved them like I loved them, then you wouldn't call me a racist when I tell the story. But he fell into an open grave, walking across the graveyard about midnight one night. And he was scared to death.

Can you imagine falling in an open grave? He tried to get out. He jumped, and he jumped, and he tried to get out, and he couldn't, and he tried, and he thought, good night, I guess I'd better wait till morning. I guess I'm just not going to make it.

And so I think I'll just go to sleep and sleep the rest of the night. And tomorrow morning I'll holler for help when somebody comes or when some of these folks wake up out here. But anyway, I'll holler for help.

And so he laid down at the bottom of the grave, went off to sleep. And another fellow of the same persuasion was walking through the cemetery. And he fell in the same grave.

Well, he thought he was on the body of a corpse, and so he was scared. How would you like to fall in an open grave? Good night. I don't care if you're black or white or short shoes.

That wouldn't be much fun. And so he fell in the grave. He tried to get out.

He jumped. He tried. Scared to death.

He hollered. He screamed. And the first fellow who was lying there motionless said, Fella, there's no need to try.

You can't get out of this grave. But he did. Now if somebody says to you there's a lion in the street and you can't lick the lion, do it anyhow.

God uses men who are lion lickers. That's the degree you need. LLD, doctor of lion licking.

God uses folks who won't quit. God uses folks that if they see a lion, if God says take off toward that lion, do it. The safest place in the world is fighting a lion if that's the will of God for your life.

George W. Truett was out hunting one day with a friend, the best friend he had on earth. They're crawling in Texas through a barbed wire fence. And in so doing, Dr. Truett suddenly, accidentally hit the trigger on his gun and the gun went off and killed the best friend that he ever had.

Oh, it almost killed his ministry. He wanted to turn back. He was ashamed to even face his people.

There was a lion in the street, but he overcame the lion in the street. John Milton, I think it was, became blind, the great Milton. And yet there was a lion in the street.

In his latter years, he overcame it and didn't give up. I think it was Beethoven, wasn't it, who became deaf in his latter years. Lion in the street, but he didn't give up.

Fanny Crosby had a lion in the street, but she didn't give up. And time and time again through these years, I've learned this. I've learned that lions are highly overrated.

They're highly overrated. A lion in the street, keep on going. Here's a fellow who wouldn't go because he had a lion in the street.

Hey, you know what that lion symbolizes? Don't you recall what the New Testament says? That Satan is a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. That means anything you decide to do for God, there's going to be a lion in your way. And it's going to be your adversary, the devil.

Always will be. Don't run from him. Don't hit him in the teeth.

Fight him. Kick him. Claw him.

Knee him. Gouge him. Pull his hair.

But fight the devil. Fight him. Lion in the street, keep on going.

Listen, you've got to build a college, you'll have some lions in the street, but don't quit. Got to build a bus ministry, you'll have some Chicago policemen in the street, but don't put the brakes on, just plow right into them. No matter what it is, keep on going.

Just don't quit. There's a lion in the street. Number two, number two.

This man was selfish about the lion being in the street. He said, there's a lion in the street, I shall be slain. Now isn't that an unselfish way to look at it? Think how many folks out in the street needed help.

He said, I shall be slain. He didn't say, there's a lion in the street, get those little kids out of the way. There's a lion in the street, let me at that lion and save the life of that old lady out there.

He didn't say that. He said, there's a lion in the street, I shall be slain. Now tonight or tomorrow, I suppose, that's one of these busy streets in Chicago, in Hammond.

I looked out and we saw a lion in the street, and there's some old people out there tottering and with the canes or crutches, and that lion is in the street. There's some little children playing out there, playing hopscotch or playing ball of some kind. There's a lion in the street.

And I sit in here and I say, oh, there's a lion in the street. I shall be slain. No, that's not what to say.

I ought to have said, there's a lion in the street and somebody's going to be in danger, and I've got to go out and help those people. Think of the children. Think of the aged.

Think of the crippled. Think of the women. Here's this fellow in the comfort and luxury and safety of his own home, and out shouting in the street, there's a lion running loose.

And ladies and gentlemen, there's a lion running loose all over this great Chicago area, and we're not supposed to say in the luxury and comfort of our home, we're to get outside and help the people who are about to be ensnared by the wicked lion in the street, seeking whom he may devour. Think of the children. Think of the aged.

Think of the crippled. You know what? All of this area tonight, there are 40 and 50 and 60 people gathered in some little church building somewhere, and they're gathered around the Word. They're studying the beast and the leg on the beast and what it stands for and the foot on the leg and what it stands for and the toes on the foot and what they stand for and the nails on the toes, what they stand for and the polish on the nails and what they stand for and the dust that gets in the polish and what it stands for while the lion is running up and down the streets of Chicago.

You know what our churches ought to do? Our churches ought to get outside the own comforts and luxury of our so-called worship services and get out there where people are who are in danger of being destroyed and attacked by the lion, roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour and help the poor people in need. There's a lion in the street. You know, I had a wonderful thought yesterday, about late yesterday morning, almost noon.

I had a blessed thought. Doctor, I learned that I'm going to be happy the rest of my life. Oh, I always suspected I would.

But honestly, now don't think that I am an altruistic kind of an unselfish person that gives away everything he has. I'm not that. I wish I were.

But I tell you what I do. I tell you what I do do for fun. I help people in trouble for fun.

I mean, I enjoy it. It's the most fun I ever have. I used to play golf for fun.

But they wouldn't mow the yard out where my ball went. They showed partiality to other players. And they were unfair to me.

And where I played, the grass was high, and they wouldn't cut the grass out there. So I quit because they were unfair to me. And I played a little tennis, but I couldn't stand the racket.

Get that? Get that? Couldn't stand the racket. And, but... Louder, choir, a little louder. That's good.

No, laughs. Don't groan. But I did that for fun.

Now, you want to really have fun? Give yourself to other people. Just give to others. Live for somebody else.

Don't live for yourself. Anybody's need, that's your opportunity. And don't just stack it in the bank and stack it and stack it and stack it and tear down your barns and build big ones.

Live for somebody else. Yesterday, and I won't go into it to tell you enough. So I want so that anybody will know except the young lady.

Young lady came to my office, and she had some needs and some problems. And I helped a little bit. And she left, and she was so happy.

And she came back again, and she was so happy and so pleased. And she was weeping for joy and thanking me and thanking God and thanking me for God and thanking God for me. And as she left, I thought, isn't that a wonderful way to spend a life? What joy and what happiness it brings to just do something for somebody else.

And then it dawned on me, the Scripture came to me, the poor, the poor we have with us always. The poor. You know, if you're happy, this is getting something from somebody who's rich.

The Bible doesn't say the rich we have with us always. It says the poor. But if you're happy, and I check that word poor, it means more than the folks that need food.

It means more than the folks that need clothing. It means the needy, those who have needs, we have with us always. Well, that's all I've got to have to be happy.

If somebody's in trouble. If I can find somebody in trouble, I can be happy. And I think some of our folks are getting the idea.

Al Chandra in the street, there's a lion, and the fella needs to go on a trip. It's the will of God that he go on a trip. He's got to go right down that street.

He said, I can't. There's a lion in the street. Forget yourself.

Forget yourself. If I could say one thing to my people I want you to have more than any other 10,000 things I know of, I want you to forget your own self and bathe your life in service for somebody else. There's no person so wretched as that selfish one.

There's no person so miserable as that selfish one. Last week I was preaching down in Hollywood, Florida. And I was preaching a little sermon to a luncheon, a new luncheon to about 400 or 500 people on others.

And I said, you know what your trouble is? You folks are going from one psychiatrist to another all shaken up. The ladies come and men come sometime now too. But I'm about to crack up.

Every lady I know I've said to, they're having a nervous breakdown, just gotten over one, or has one planned as soon as she can work in her business schedule. And I said, I said, if you just live for somebody else, get outside yourself and live for others. I said, you could tell the psychiatrist to drop dead.

I didn't know there was a psychiatrist there. And for the first time in my life I sat a psychiatrist down. I've always wanted to.

He stood up and said something and I sat him down. I said, what you need to do is go to a psychiatrist. But he apologized to me after service.

We got together and we agreed that he was wrong and I was right. But we made friends. But I'm saying this, do you know that the psychiatrists are getting rich on you folks that live for yourself? What's wrong with me doctor? What do you think my trouble is? I can tell you, I know psychiatrists.

Self, self, forget yourself. I'm just not happy. I don't have peace of mind.

Well, if you've got a piece of bread, you ought to be rejoicing. And then, I mean, in fact, you've got a place to eat, some food to eat, a place to eat, a place to sleep, and clothes to wear. Okay, so you don't have peace of mind.

Rejoice because you've got bread and a bed. There's a lion in the street and I'll be slain. Oh, let me tell you, ten thousand times worse than that.

There's a lion in the street and these young folks will be slain if we don't go out and kill that lion. There's a lion in the street and our kids will go to the devil. We've got to take off our coats and roll up our sleeves and say, we'll charge the lion.

We'll fight him. We'll go to the street corner and hound him. We'll defeat him if we can.

If we can defeat him, we'll fight him as long as we have strength to do so. Forget about yourself. And so, if you've got to be killed by a lion in the street.

Did anybody here ever see a lion in the street? Mama, where are you? Do you recall, we lived on Britton Street. Do you remember up there on Denley Drive, across from that store, those folks had a lion? No joke, they did. And I, they kept it in a case.

It belonged to Ginger Rogers. Ginger Rogers was our, I don't know the names of any of them. Who's some popular movie star now with a fist? You don't know? I'm trying to think of somebody.

I don't know any. The last movie I went to, Tom Nix kissed Jean Harlow. But anyway, Ginger Rogers was a movie star and she had a lion and she knew these people and they kept it in a cage.

And all, at night, and all over our neighborhood. Not quite that ferocious sounding, but all over our neighborhood. And one day, I was riding my bicycle up Elmore Street and coming right toward me.

I mean, look at me, eyeball to eyeball, was Ginger's lion. They called the lion Ginger. Do you know I still hold the all-time record for turning the bicycle around? I want you to know, boy, if they'd have just had a track there and given a prize for the winner, I'd have retired with the money I'd have made on the race.

Most of us are concerned about ourselves. Ourselves. Number three, the street's the best place in the world to meet a lion.

Now, if you'd have said, there's a lion in the woods, I'm sorry, but I'd rather meet a lion in the street than a lion in the woods. You know why? Well, there are people in the street. I'd a lot rather meet a lion down here on Holman Avenue than out in the woods somewhere in the south of this area.

I mean, suppose you went over to the woods at the Forest Preserve over here, just inside Illinois, and you're walking down the street, and you say, hello there, a lion meets you. Now, I'd a lot rather meet one right down here in front of Jack Fox. You know why? There are more people there.

I mean, he can have his choice about whatever he's hungry for, you know. He can have white meat, dark meat, yellow meat, any kind he wants, you know. But out in the woods somewhere, it's me or he's hungry.

And if he's hungry at all, he just chooses me, that's all. But there's a lion. We may have to send you to the nursery before it's over.

But that's the wonderful thing about this roaring lion. Did you know if you face a lion in the street, God has people there to help you? That's what the church is all about. You know, that's one reason you young folks met a lion in the street.

We built the Hammond Baptist High School. Your children met a lion in the street. We built the Hammond Baptist Grade School.

You met a lion in the street. We built the Baptist City Grade School. You young folks met a lion in the street.

We built the Hiles Anderson College. You met a lion in the street. We try to get the best teachers we can here at the First Baptist Church.

Have a lion in the street. We try to fight that lion for you and show you how to fight him day after day, week after week, Sunday after Sunday. And so I'm saying, if you've got to meet a lion, the best place in the world to meet him is in the street.

God's people are there to help. And by the way, God's people ought to help. That's what the church is really all about.

You know, one of the things that encourages me the most, some of our people are getting the idea about helping people who are being attacked by the lion. You do not realize, neither do I, but I know more than you, only heaven will reveal the people in our church that are secretly and quietly helping others in their problems, in their burdens. Did you know there are college students in this room right here who have had most of their tuition paid already this year by somebody in this church that never saw them before just a few days ago? You know, all over this building, we have young people going to Hammond Baptist High

School because some anonymous person, I know who they are in many cases, but some anonymous person is sending someone, some child, to Hammond Baptist High School or the grade school.

Little bus kids going out to our school, never could go except it were for some person. A lion in the street, and that person said, let me help you defeat the lion. And that's what it's all about.

A lion in the street, a lion where people are. We should help them. But known as that, that's where we can get help.

Funny thing about it, when folks need help, they come to the First Baptist Church or come to some church. People, I don't care, they can spend all week long in the tavern and get in trouble and come to First Baptist Church wanting some help. Why don't you go down to old Gus's Guzzling Group and get something down there? You know he doesn't care.

You know the devil's only after all he can get out of you. You know he'll leave you to die and go to hell. He's not interested in helping.

And by the way, the devil's crowd is not interested in helping you either. If the devil's crowd were interested in helping you, we wouldn't have to send our money to Washington and then bring it back down here to feed the poor. Folks are going to help you are God's people.

Now brother, if you're going to get help from God's people, you ought to be one of God's people. If you're going to expect us to help you when the lion is attacking you, then you better help others while the lion is attacking them. There's a lion in the street.

But let me tell you something else. In the 22nd chapter, verse 13, there's a lion in the street. In the 26th chapter, verse 13, there's a lion in the way and a lion in the street.

Hey, that old mama lion had little babies since I was there last. Did you know the longer you put off fighting that lion, the harder it's going to be to lick him? The longer you wait, the harder it's going to be. He waits, and now there are two lions.

And the longer you wait, the more lions there will be. Here's a young man. God says, I want you to preach.

I want you to go off to school. You don't do it. There's a lion in the street.

Can't afford it. Don't know how he can pay tuition. I've got a wife.

I know. Yeah, there's a lion in the street. Not no personal reference to your wife.

But there's a lion in the street. So you wait until next year. What you got? And you got a wife and a little lion.

Now, you really have a hard time going to college, don't you? So, I can't go to college this year. I got a wife and a kid. What happened? Next year, if you like the streeters, you got wife and two kids.

Ten years later, wife and ten kids. Now, let me tell you something. Whatever God tells you to do, if you do not do it immediately because of difficulty, when you do decide to do it, the difficulty will be infinitely greater when you decide to do it.

I mean, the time to attack the devil is the first time he sticks his head up. How many people, the devil said, I will attempt to, and you said, I'm going to quit smoking one of these days. But you don't quit.

Now, next time, it's harder to quit smoking. I'm thinking about some young men in this church, splendid young men. God called him a priest.

Think about a young man, one of the finest men in this church, and he knows it's true, and he'll tell you if he could stand up here, and I'd let him do it. He'd tell you. God called him to preach when the first year or two I was pastor of this church.

I told him to go off to college and prepare himself to preach. He didn't do it. He had some bills to pay.

At one time, I myself helped him \$2,000 worth to get his bills settled up. Now, I'm not saying I gave him the \$2,000. I may have or may not have.

That's none of your business. But I helped him get \$2,000, get his bills settled up. And God said, I want you to preach.

He said, I can't afford it. I'm in trouble financially. And for 14 years, that fellow has been called by God.

And do you know what? He's got a dozen lines where 14 years ago he had one line. And right now, after 14 years, he's in Hiles Anderson College preparing for ministry, and I'm glad he is. But if he had gone 14 years ago while there was only one line in the street and one line to fight, he could be pastoring a great church somewhere for God tonight.

Now, when God says, do it, do it now. Check your Bible sometime, beloved, and find out when the great patriarchs and defenders of the faith, when God said, Abraham, arise early in the morning and take thy son. Not only son Isaac took place, but I will show thee.

The Bible says in the next verse, so Abraham rose early the next morning. Soon as God said it, they did it. God said it, they did it.

Has God told you to be saved? Well, you say, well, how is it so hard to be saved? I've got some battles, some things got to get straightened out. You'll have more things crooked the next time you have a chance to get saved. It'll be harder the next time, and harder the next time, and harder the next time.

Has God told you to go off to college? That's one reason. I never advise a young person to graduate from high school to work a year and then go to college. Never do.

Don't come to my office and ask me. I'll tell you right now. No, no, 10,000 times no.

But there's a lot of industry. Get in! You know why? Because you'll get the taste of what it is to make your own living. You'll get the taste of driving your own car.

You'll get the taste of buying your own clothes. And after years of... By the way, do you know what? I could point... I could close my eyes and just point to people who've done this. Is broker a good word? Broker? More broke? Less unbroke? These people that wait a year to go to college are in less shape to go to college after the year than they are when they first start.

You know why? You've got two lines. Here's a fellow who said, I can't take this journey! There's a line in the street! So he waits. He gets up a little while later.

He goes to the door. See, that line's gone. You know, lines... Hey! Good night! There's one here at the door now, right in the way.

Yeah, I know. Not only are there two, but one's closer than the other. The Bible says about this line, that the first line in the way is a little lion.

What it really says is, there is a little cub lion in the way and a big roaring lion in the street. What happened? Not only are there two lions now, but the lion in the street is madder than he was before. And the devil gets you on the run.

He's worse than he was before. I've told our people so often about a fellow named Hugh Brewer down in Texas. I'll never forget him.

I've tried to, but I'll never forget him. He was the sissiest guy in our class. He never could play ball or anything else.

He shot a basketball like that, threw a baseball like that, and caught it like that. Big, tall, red-headed fellow. Sissiest guy in the class.

He was always the last one chosen. All the boys were chosen, then the girls, then Hugh Brewer. And he always played right field on whatever team.

And he played for, never a big assist in the class. Everybody beat up on him. One day I was on the junior high basketball team and Hugh was out there shooting a basketball like that, you know.

And I walked out and I said, Hugh, ball. Ball. That's all our area had to say.

But Hugh had been fed up with that. He didn't give me the ball. I said, Hugh, ball! And Hugh didn't give it to me.

Hugh, I'm asking you one more time, give me the ball! He sat the ball down, walked over to me, and knocked the fire out of me. Don't say amen when I talk about getting a fire. Three said amen, 14 said praise the Lord, one thought talked in tongues, and I said the fire got knocked out of me.

I had never seen Hugh looking up before. And I was lying on my back, looked up to Hugh, and Hugh said, you want some more? I said, Hugh, would you like to have the ball? And I went over and gave Hugh the ball, shined it for him, and the next time I got the ball, I shot like that. You know why? I'll tell you why.

Listen, I learned something years ago. The fellow who waits to hit is too weak to fight after he's been attacked for a while. You take a fellow playing football, stands around on the field, he'll end up injured.

I learned years ago, I'm not a great athlete, but I learned years ago when I used to play some football, I learned that if there's a pile of people, jump right in the middle of them. And if there's a fellow standing around, just block him, tackle him, hit him, gouge him, do something. It's the fellow who waits who loses the battle.

And the dear Lord says, I want you to be saved. You say, not now. Lord, there's a line in the way.

There'll be two lines. And one in the street, one in the way next time. Our Lord said, I want you to go to school and study and serve me.

But Lord, there's a line in the way. There'll be two lines. And the first line, more ferocious the next time.

I want you to be a preacher. I've called you a preacher. Lord, there's a line in the way.

My mother and father, they'll get mad at me. My dad will disown me. My dad will whip me.

I can't afford to go to school. I haven't got, I don't have a good voice. I don't make good grades.

I'm not in a weak link. Okay, but if God calls you to preach, don't worry about the line in the way. Just do what God says to do.

And do it when God says to do it. There's a line in the way. James the fourth.

By the way, let me just say one other thing. The Lord says, I want you to tithe. And you say, I can't.

There's a line in the way. I can't pay all the bills. You just wait, brother.

Next time the Lord says to tithe, you'll have so many doctor and hospital bills, you won't, you really will have some lines in the way then. Now you make up your mind right now that when God says do it, the best time, the safest time to do it is immediately when God says to do it. Before the lines begin to multiply.

James the fourth. Many years ago, rebelled against his father and fought in combat and led an army against his father. He was so remorseful about it in years to come that every year, boys back in the back, hey fella, you sit up straight while I'm preaching.

You'll find a line in the way in a minute. Take your gum out of your mouth. Look like a cow in a pasture.

Take it out of your mouth. Fellas, take your gum out of your mouth. Yeah, you, looking that way.

That's you. That's right. Somebody said the only difference between a gum chewing flapper in church and a cud chewing cow in the field is intelligent look on the face of the cow.

I'm not, I'm not saying everybody's chewing gum, I want to spit it out. But if you can't behave, then spit it out. Very idea of acting like heathen when you come to God's house.

Trying to, by the way, I'm trying to warn you there's a line in the way. There's a devil after you. Roaring like a lion seeking to be made of iron.

You better sit up and listen. Trying to find out what to do about it. James the fourth rebelled against his father.

And he was so remorseful about it that he got an iron belt and he wore that iron belt around his waist to carry the burden for remorse and shame of rebelling against his father. It is said that the next year he added another iron link to that belt and made it heavier. And every year of his life he added another iron link.

So as an old man he was walking around with that link. The iron was heavier to bear than it ever had been before. And the belt was heavier than it ever had been before.

And that's the way it is. Sin is always that way. When you let the devil have one little inch that gets heavier the next year.

And when you start off to take one little cigarette after a while you're a chain smoker and there's a whole herd of lions in the way. Or one little drink or one little wayward night or one little sensual activity or one little necking and parking and necking somewhere. Before you know it there's a whole herd of lions and you're so wrapped up and involved in it there's no way to get out.

And you look out some day and say I wish I'd have gone while there was only one lion. Anybody here like me you're waiting for it to quit raining before you go somewhere? Anybody like I am? You've got to go to the car or you've got to get out of the car and go in the store. But it's sprinkling a little bit and so you sit there and wait until it quits raining? Huh? And then there comes a flood that makes noise arc at the time looks like a little drizzle somewhere and you end up just getting soaked.

I've had appointments in five minutes and it's just drizzling I don't want to get my hair wet. When both of my hairs stick together I look bald-headed. And so I want to get my hair wet and so I stay in the car until it quits raining quits drizzling and it does quit drizzling and it begins pouring and after a while you just get drenched.

I was down in Hollywood Florida the other day and I sat in the car waiting for it to quit raining. It never quit. When I got in I'm telling you what I was drenched.

It took me an hour to primp to get my hair back to cover the tithe of my head that it covers now. I'm simply saying the longer you wait the longer you wait to do right the longer you wait to fight the lion the stronger he gets and the weaker you get. But something else they multiply.

One writer said that this scripture says I looked out of the house there's a lion on one side I went back and said I can't go now looked out after a while there's a lion on both sides then now there's no way out. Now what are you supposed to do with lions? First place supposed to tread on lions. Psalm 91 13 says Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder the young lion and dragon shalt thou trample under feet I say again the most dangerous place in the world if there's a lion in the will of God for your life the most dangerous place is the safest place.

The safest place. Do God's will that's the safe place. There's a story in Amos chapter 5 a very interesting story let me just get you corrected out a little bit.

In Amos chapter 5 it tells about a fellow walking down the street he left his house he walked down the street and he comes face to face with a lion young people you're on the yellow dress over here he comes face to face with a lion in the street. What does he do? He runs from the lion. Amos chapter 5 says verse 19 I think it is and what does he face the Bible says he comes face to face with a bear.

Now that is a revolting development. A lion over here a bear over here and this fellow he looks at the lion and says I can't go that way he looks at the bear and says I can't go that way he looks at the lion and says I gotta run that way he looks at the bear and says I gotta run that way What does he do? He takes off for his house He runs and he runs and he runs and the lion is chasing and the bear is chasing and he huffs and he huffs He leans up against the wall and a snake bites him and kills him. Amos 5, 19.

Huh? Would be better off if he'd have fought the lion, wouldn't it? Snake bites him and kills him. Runs to the lion, finds a bear. Runs to the bear, gets back to his house, snake bites him and kills him.

By the way, did you know that's what's happened to America? Listen to me for a minute, I'll be a little political. That's what's happened to America. If we weren't so afraid of Soviet Russia and Red China and quit running from them.

Listen, the problem we have in America is not our enemy from without, it's our enemy from within. We run from China, run from Russia. We ought not to run from any nation in the face of God's green earth.

And what happens? America's being destroyed not by the lion without or not by the bear without. America's being destroyed by the dirty serpentine communism and socialism and paganism and sensuality from within. And Russia doesn't have to destroy America because the serpent on the inside is doing the job.

That's what happens to denominations. Did you know that John Wesley said when Methodism was at its peak in England? John Wesley said, I do not fear the enemies that lurk from without, but I fear the day when from within Methodism shall be destroyed by complacency and liberalism of its people. And by the way, that's the way it got destroyed too, from the inside.

That's where, what happens to churches. You know that all the hordes of hell can't defeat this church? If that's the case, we've been defeated by now. Everybody in this area has lost an attack against, well not everybody, but many folks against this church.

Every weapon the devil has, he's lost against this church. We had to pack the folks in tonight. Folks said years ago, you can't pay your bills.

Well, that's true. But we, except when they said that, our offering is running about \$1,500 a Sunday, and our offering runs a total \$20,000, \$25,000 a week now for everything. And this church will take in, oh, for total everything, this church will take in \$2.5 million this year.

Now you say, well the house, what does that mean? That means that the thing that we've got to watch for is the enemy on the inside. Not the lion in the street, not the bear in the street. They cannot defeat us.

The Bible says the gates of hell will not prevail against the church that's on the march for God. But what will hurt us? Hurt feelings on the inside. Somebody gets their feelings hurt, gets his feelings hurt.

I wasn't treated right. Somebody tried to, did me wrong. That's what destroys churches.

What destroys churches? Laziness from within. We have enough folks working. They won't need me anymore.

I'll quit my bus route. I'll quit my Sunday school class. There are this many workers here in the church.

They don't need me. I know. They don't need, they do need you, but you need to work.

And the church is destroyed from within. That's what happens to schools. How's Anderson College never be destroyed from in and from without? It'll be destroyed, and someday it will be destroyed if our Lord tarries.

It'll be destroyed if some professor on the inside wants to take the fire out of the desk and the fire out of the pulpit. It'll be destroyed if some fellow comes in and wants to make the school more scholarly than she is fiery and destroy the school from within. It'll be destroyed when somebody will come in and teach

homiletics.

He'll say, don't thunder out against the devil. Don't holler when you preach on hell. Don't stomp your foot when you talk about liquor.

That's not scholarly. And so we'd stand up and say we heavily oppose whiskey. We do not lean with favor thereward, and we'll be destroyed from the inside.

The devil never has destroyed a church like this from the outside. He's destroyed from the inside. You get a nice building, carpet under the fuse, padding on the carpet.

Ah, amen. Amen, you've got enough padding already. But padding on the carpet.

Oh, no, on the carpet, on the fuse. Oh, shut up. If you got as much out of the spiritual part of my sermons as you do the mistakes, you'd be all right.

If you can't fix your brakes on your buses, don't laugh at me. At least my teachers can find their way to church. Huh? Let him have it.

The Lord is the way. No, you'd be destroyed from within. Somebody says, I just think we laugh too much in the house of the Lord.

Why don't you go to some of these denominations and quit laughing and see how many folks they have. See how many conversions they have. I'm simply saying we've got to guard it all the time.

Churches are destroyed from within, not from without. Schools are destroyed from within, not from without. Nations are destroyed from within, not from without.

Denominations are destroyed from within, not from without. What do the lion? Tread on it. Tread on it.

March over it. Defeat it. That's what lions are for.

David killed a lion and a bear. What do the lion? Rest on them. I could relive, in closing, I could relive my ministry.

I was thinking last night of the lion that had lurked in the way. When God called me to preach, I couldn't speak. I could not make a speech in public.

There was a lion in the way. I recall one night at midnight, my first full-time church, the three deacons of the church met me at midnight and said, if you walk in that pulpit, or you'll never walk in that pulpit. They said, this church has called you, but we pay all the bills in this church, and we have the money.

And you will not walk in that pulpit. Those three men stood up and told me that. There was a lion in the way.

The next Sunday, I walked in that pulpit and pastored that church three years and three months. Tread on the lion. Rest on the lion.

I recall when some denominational big boys decided they were going to try to ruin my ministry because I ran with John Rice and Lee Robertson and Lester Roloff. They said, if you preach for Lester Roloff one time, we'll see to it that you never have a place to preach again. There were some lions in the way, and a

skunk or two, too, by the way.

Some lions in the way. I went ahead and preached for Lester Roloff, and I've been preaching for Gregory ever since. Lions are highly overrated.

Highly overrated. We came to First Baptist Church of Hammond. There were some lions in the way.

Look at this great church tonight. Just stay in the will of God. Just keep on going.

Just don't quit. Just don't turn back. Just keep on going.

One night we, and you folks don't know it, but the phone rang, and I answered the phone two minutes past one. Fire chief said, Reverend, said your church is burning down. I got in the car and drove up here, and the building over here that was going up in flames, the building right over here on this lot was going up in flames.

This building right here was three months old. Three months old. I stood behind this pulpit, and I couldn't see hardly back to that wall, the smoke.

Water was that high on this floor. Three months old. Just three months old.

We'd given our life's blood almost to build this building. And three months old, I saw the firemen take axes and chop holes that big around the wall back there so they could get the holes to shoot on the building next door. I saw them literally chop this building up.

I leaned on this wall over here, and it was almost too hot for my hands. It got so full of smoke in this room that I could hardly see my hand in front of me, and I could hardly breathe. There was a lion in the way.

God wanted there to be a great First Baptist church here, but the devil put a lion in the way. If that lion had chased us backwards, there wouldn't be any Howells Anderson College tonight. If that lion had chased us backwards, there wouldn't be any Hammond Baptist High School tonight.

If that lion had chased us backwards, there wouldn't be this great influential church that's influenced churches all over the country. I'm simply saying I've been facing lions for 28 years, and brother, there never was a lion that can lick a spirit-filled child of God. Never was.

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