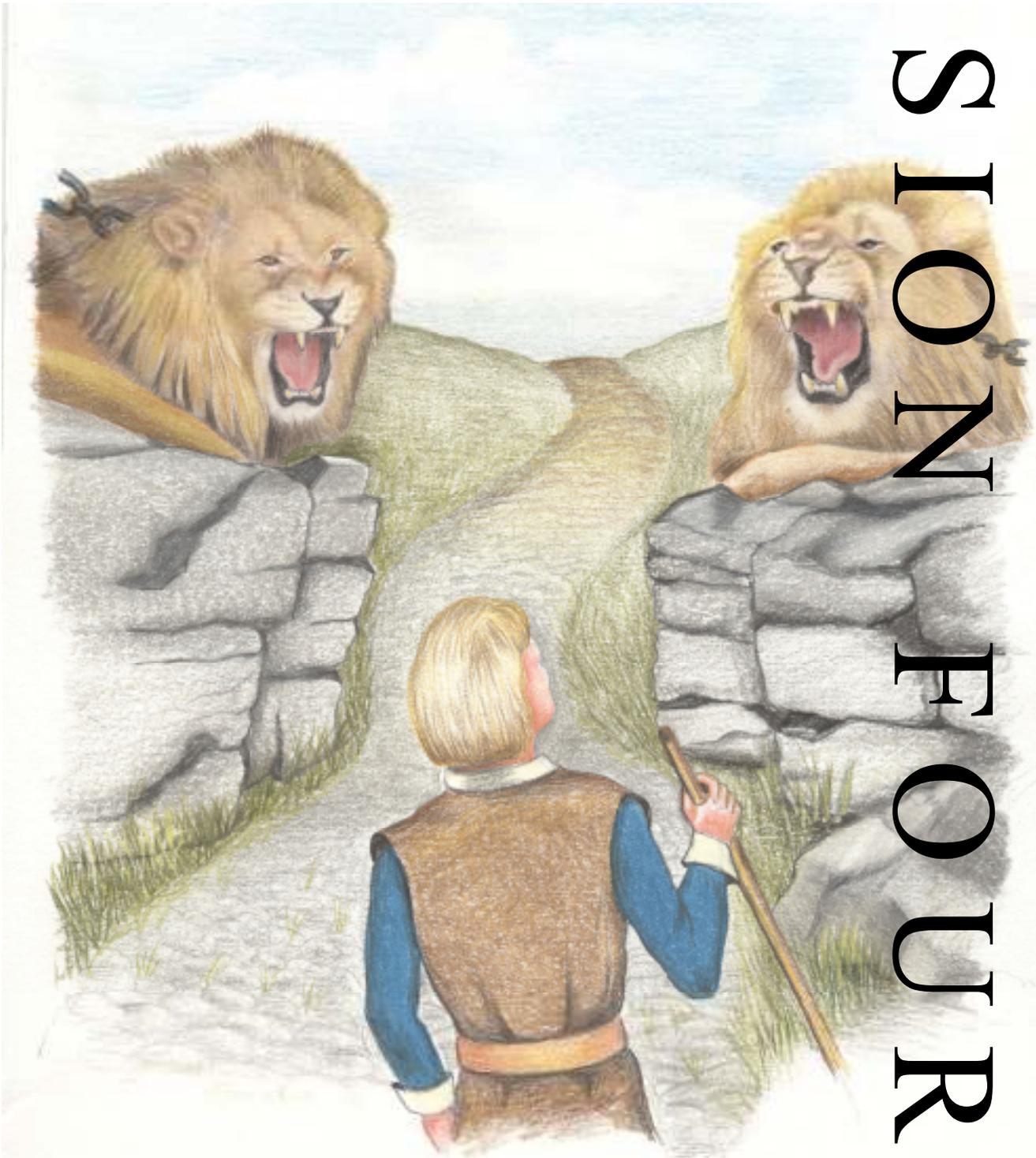


SESSION FOUR



SESSION FOUR

Outline: Sleeping Lions

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER FROM LAST TIME?

MAIN POINTS:

Pick out the main points in chapter 4. You can use the ones I provide, but feel free to change some of them to relate better to you and your group. Prepare the flipchart as directed.

CONTINUE WITH TODAY'S STORY: SLEEPING LIONS

DRAMA FOUR : SLEEPING LIONS

WHAT WE HAVE READ SO FAR

FEARS THAT WOULD STOP CHRISTIAN (OR US) ON THE JOURNEY

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE FEARFUL?

CONTINUE TO TELL THE STORY

QUESTIONS

DOES FAITH MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

WE NEED FAITH, HOW DO WE GET IT?

SOME BIBLE VERSES

THE MOST IMPORTANT TRUTH TO REMEMBER:

Faith is a gift, a gift from God and just like any gift, we need to receive it.

PRAYER

FOR YOUR TRAVEL GUIDE: Prayer Cards and Bible Verses

PREPARE BEFOREHAND:

Read Session Four resource material and chapter 4 of the book

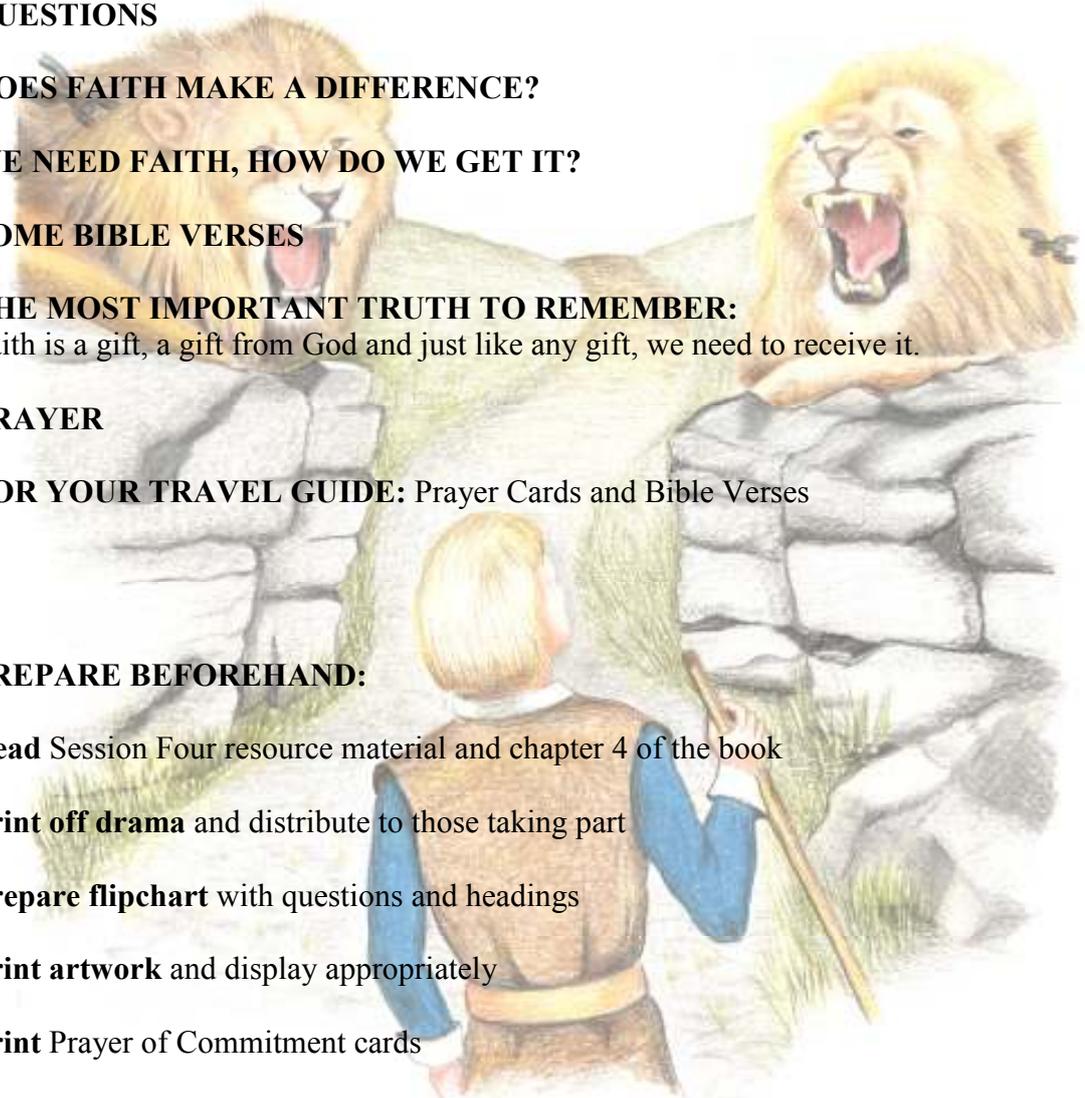
Print off drama and distribute to those taking part

Prepare flipchart with questions and headings

Print artwork and display appropriately

Print Prayer of Commitment cards

Print off insertion for Travel Guide



Session Four: Sleeping Lions

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER FROM LAST TIME?

(Questions in bold should be put on a flipchart before the session.

Leave room for answers underneath each section, but don't put them in just yet.

See what the group comes up with and guide them if necessary.

Add their comments to the ones listed below)

Do you remember where we left Christian at the end of our last session?

In a little arbour, halfway down the other side of the Hill

Can you remember anything else in the arbour?

(Help them remember if you need to)

A bench, a fruit tree, a little drinking fountain and a splendid view

(Comment): A lovely picture of God's special blessings of rest, refreshment, provision and beautiful spaces to enjoy. Take a minute to ponder this lovely scene....imagine you are there with Christian....relaxing in the sunshine and receiving God's blessings.

Think back a little further – do you remember what changed Christian's life so dramatically?

The cross on the hillside - as Christian kneels at the cross, his Knapsack rolls away and he realises that Jesus died on the cross to forgive him all his sins which made it possible for him to get rid of his burden.

He actually chases his Knapsack, forgetting for the moment that he had spent such a long time trying to get rid of it.

What happens next?

He finds the empty tomb with just a faint smell of frankincense and myrrh and a few strips of cloth inside

What does that mean?

Jesus was not there, He had risen. He had conquered death and we can have eternal life through faith in Him.

CONTINUE WITH TODAY'S STORY: SLEEPING LIONS

Christian had a lovely sleep. He had not slept so soundly since the Guidebook had been thrust into his hand. He wakes with a start...he's been dreaming again...but he hears voices – voices that wake him, but they are not in his dream.

(Drama)

SESSION FOUR

DRAMA: SLEEPING LIONS

Cast: Narrator, Christian, Tim Id, Miss Trust

Tim Id: Did you see the size of it?

Miss Trust: Did you see the teeth?

Narrator: Two shrill creatures, a man and a woman, come pelting up the lane towards Christian, hands flailing, feet stumbling, yelping and whimpering like puppies.

Christian: You're going the wrong way....the Golden City is that way.

Tim Id: You can keep your Golden City and everything in it! We're going back!

Miss Trust: That's right! You tell him Tim. Hardship is one thing but lions are another.

Tim Id: Yes, yes.... tell him, Miss Trust. Great roaring lions just lying there waiting to eat up Pilgrims like many plates of meat!

I'll do a lot....put up with a lot....but nobody....just nobody....can make me feed myself to a pair of hungry lions!

Narrator: And away they went over the Hill, Tim Id and Miss Trust, babbling and gibbering with fright....and they weren't lying either.

Within half a mile Christian could hear the roaring for himself and shortly afterwards could see them....two lions – one on each side of the path. They were fearsome....strong....threatening....and totally frightening.

All Christian's resolve, to dare all and to dare anything, evaporated at the sight of their teeth.

He would be ripped to shreds by them if he went three yards more and where was the virtue in that?

What good did it do anybody? What grand purpose would be served by walking deliberately to certain death?

Christian either had to go forward or go back.

(End of drama)

THINK ABOUT WHAT WE HAVE READ SO FAR:

Firstly let's think about the names of Tim Id and Miss Trust:

(Put their names on the flipchart if it would be helpful)

All along, in whatever chapter we are reading, we've noticed the names of the people are significant in some way to the story. What do you think their names are telling us?

Because they were timid and didn't trust anyone or anything, they didn't manage to stay on the Straight and Narrow Way and therefore did not reach their destination

Christian seems to meet many challenges on his journey and today is no exception.

He is faced with two choices: he can follow Tim Id and Miss Trust and go back to the City of Destruction or he can go forward, face the lions and continue his journey to the City of Gold. Slight problem with the second choice in the form of ferocious lions....

What do you think John Bunyan was trying to convey to us when he wrote this part of the story?

The Christian life is not an easy road - there are many dangers and surprises on the way that will frighten us

What do you think the Lions represent in this story?

Our greatest fears - things that stop us going forward

(Use flipchart and at the top of the page write:

FEARS THAT WOULD STOP CHRISTIAN (OR US) FROM CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

*Under this heading, have two columns one headed **FEARS** on the left hand side, and the other **FAITH**, on the right hand side)*

So what fears would stop Christian (or us) from continuing the journey?

*(Tease the answers out of the group giving them some help or suggestions and add them to the flipchart under **FEARS**)*

- **Fear of death**
- **Fear of pain or suffering**
- **Fear of the unknown**
- **Fear of circumstances being out of our control**
- **Powerlessness**
- **Being trapped with no obvious way of escape**

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE FEARFUL?

*(Put this heading on after the **FEARS** have been listed or, if you want to prepare beforehand, do so on a separate sheet)*

- **We cannot see a way forward**
- **Everything seems impossible**
- **We give up and lose hope like Tim Id and Miss Trust**

*(Add these and any others that come up under **FEARS**. For the moment leave the **FAITH** side blank, but be ready to fill in the **FAITH** column soon)*

CONTINUE TO TELL THE STORY:

Leader: *(If possible, a different voice would be good)*

It's at this point in the story...when Christian is terrified of all that he sees before him and wonders how on earth he can get past the lions, it's then he hears a voice saying to him, **"Have Faith....just have Faith, Christian!"**

At first Christian thinks the voice is his conscience speaking to him, but then he recognises Faithful, the young man who rescued him from the bog.

"They won't hurt you," calls Faithful.

Faithful has helped him once, so Christian **decides to trust him**. Why would he let him down now?

Very carefully and slowly Christian moves forward.

The lions roar and rise to their feet....tongues lolling....mouths open showing some fearsome teeth. Christian closes his eyes before taking a few more steps....the lions crouch ready to pounce....Christian can feel the heat from the lions' bodies....just a few more steps....but just as the lions spring, so two strong chains hold them back.

They couldn't reach Christian. Although they continue to roar and strain on the chain, they were bound and powerless! Christian walks through unscathed!

Seeing his friend was safe, Faithful turns to go on his way, but Christian runs after him, so pleased to see a familiar face and a travelling companion.

Faithful gives him news of home and tells Christian that his parents were preparing to make the journey to the City of Gold. Christian is overjoyed.

QUESTIONS: *(Encourage the group to find faith solutions to the list of **FEARS** and list relevant answers under the **FAITH** heading on the flipchart)*

WHAT DO FAITHFUL'S WORDS 'HAVE FAITH' MEAN?

*(Get ready to put answers on the flipchart under **FAITH**)*

Can you think of any other words to describe FAITH?

Trust and confidence

*(Add these and any suggestions under **FAITH**)*

DOES FAITH MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO CHRISTIAN?

*It gives Christian **confidence** and he is able to go ahead on his journey and doesn't need to turn back.*

*Because he **trusts** his friend's advice, and, even though he is afraid, he is able to take that first step and face the lions*

Faithful's name is significant – don't you think?

Faith full or full of faith – someone so full of faith he wants to share it

In the circumstances, what was Faithful really saying to Christian when he told him to have faith?

Have trust and confidence in what you know and have already experienced on your journey so far

Have trust and confidence in the guidance of your friends and in what they tell you

Trust what you read in your Guidebook (Bible)

Put this trust into practice and see what happens. Let your faith cancel out your fear

If we trust what the Guidebook and our friends tell us, it seems that Faith does cancel out Fear – would you agree?

(Look again at the list of FEARS on the flipchart and call them out. See if the FAITH list can cancel out the FEARS list. Allow time for comments. Before moving on, read out the FEAR list and the FAITH solutions as you go down the list)

JUST A WORD OF CAUTION:

Faith doesn't shield us from fearful situations, but it does equip us to face these situations in a different way. It is a challenge to us all.

SOME BIBLE VERSES (NIV):

Jesus says that faith overcomes fear:

Mark 6:50 “Take courage! It is I. Do not be afraid.”

John 14:27 “Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

1 John 4:18 Perfect love drives out fear.

IF WE NEED FAITH, HOW DO WE GET IT?

In the Guidebook (Bible) it says this: It is by grace you have been saved through faith and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

THE MOST IMPORTANT TRUTH TO REMEMBER:

Faith is a gift, a gift from God and, just like any gift, we need to receive it.

(To demonstrate this giving and receiving, have a small, closed box with some hand cream in it. Give the box to someone in the group. When they receive it, ask them to open it, to recognise what is inside the box, take it out and use it for its purpose)

This is a visual aid to show us how to receive God's gift of faith

If we believe what the Guidebook (Bible) says, this gift of faith is freely available to each one of us. All we have to do is ask and receive it. Then we need to use it and put it into practice.

So today, you have the opportunity to have faith and trust. You can receive from God all the wonderful things that He has promised and provided through faith in Jesus, whose death on the cross has made all this possible.

To help you, I am going to read out a prayer on the back of this card:

Lord Jesus Christ,

I have been hearing today about faith and how it is a gift from You to me.

I want to receive this wonderful gift and I know having faith will help me as I journey through this life. I am sorry for all the things I have done wrong and ask Your forgiveness. Thank You for dying on the cross for me. Please come into my life and fill me with Your Holy Spirit and be with me for ever.

Amen.

There is no pressure to do anything with this card if this is not the right time for you, or you don't want to.

But, if you are ready and would like to receive this gift from God, you only have to say this prayer and receive Jesus as your Lord and Saviour. I can promise you, He will help you on your journey through this life to the City of Gold.

Perhaps you would like someone here to say it with you? If so, please ask someone, who will be delighted to do so.

(Give each person a card)

SESSION 4: SLEEPING LIONS



Jesus says:

Take courage! It is I. Do not be afraid
Mark 6:50 NIV

Let not your hearts be troubled,
neither let them be afraid.
John 14:27 NIV

Perfect love drives out fear.
1 John 4:18 NIV

**THE MOST IMPORTANT
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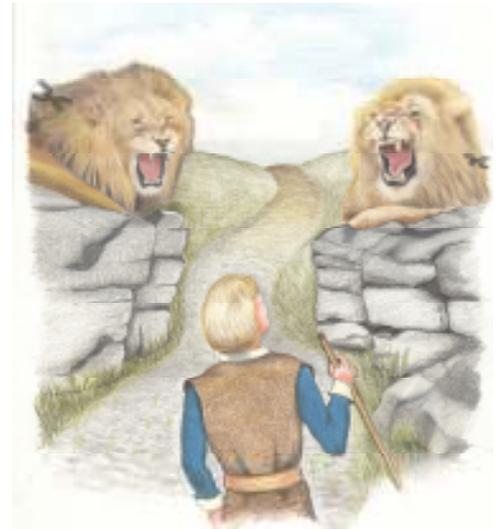
You could print this as a bookmark as well as an insertion for the Travel Guide.

PRAYER CARDS: *(print on both sides and distribute at appropriate time)*

Faith doesn't shield us from fearful situations, but it does equip us to face these situations in a different way. It is a challenge to us all.



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Make sure this prayer is printed in the middle for easy cutting. Sometimes printers are set up with different margins and printing both sides prove more difficult. If this happens, after printing page 87, fold it in four. Print and fold this page and cut into four sections. Paste sections on the back of page 87 and photocopy from there.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

I have been hearing today about faith and how it is a gift from You to me.

I want to receive this wonderful gift and I know having faith will help me as I journey through this life.

I am sorry for all the things I have done wrong and ask Your forgiveness.

Thank You for dying on the cross for me. Please come into my life and fill me with Your Holy Spirit and be with me forever. Amen

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