

## **HOW TO USE THESE LORDSHIP SERMONS FOR STEWARDSHIP**

### **STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF OTHERS**

First of all, I am indebted to Dr. John Maxwell for much if not most of the content of these sermons and how to use them in a local church. Also to Elder Glen Maxson, Carolina Conference Stewardship Director, who provided me with these sermons and encouraged me to use them in my local church. Next, I want to thank Rusty Williams who has updated the power point presentations that go with these sermons. He also modified the sermons for his own use, so you will see the power point presentations sometimes have illustrations/stories or some approaches not in the sermon notes provided. You can readily see what he has done and incorporate them into your own notes or adjust the sermons and power points to fit you and your gifts. And there are 2 alternate power point presentations that go with sermon 3 and sermon 4.

### **4 IN A ROW**

Plan a time in your church year when you can preach all 4 sermons on 4 consecutive Sabbaths. Time and again, across many denominations and all sizes of churches, it has been documented that the best effect for stewardship is to have 4 sermons preached right together. People have so much input and there is so much media and activity, that your message and its impact will be lost if you preach these 1 time per quarter, 1 time per month, or even every other week. If you have a multi-church district, make every effort to spend 4 weeks in a row with each church, just for this series. (By the way, the churches will love having you all to themselves for this 4 week series, so that will be a win-win!).

### **WHEN TO SCHEDULE ON THE CALENDAR**

As much as you can, it seems to work best when you can get this scheduled as early in the year as possible. Of course you will want to take into account weather conditions and how it might affect your attendance since you will want everyone there. But the earlier in the year, the better it will influence your members start practicing good stewardship habits with regular and consistent giving.

### **CAST SPIRITUAL GROWTH VISION BY FAITH**

Tell your members ahead of time that the dates of \_\_\_\_\_ (Your 4 week schedule) will be a time of spiritual commitment. That these 4 weeks will be a time of great spiritual growth. Growth in faith. Growth in joy. The Holy Spirit will be drawing close during these 4 weeks. And they may be the best 4 weeks of the year in your church. (Say this by faith and with confidence, even if you are not yet sure yourself. I said it with faith, and then I found my church did grow in a mighty way in their spiritual walk. We even have several baptisms and re-baptisms as God worked through this very Lordship series!)

### **PLAN BASIC LOGISTICS AHEAD OF YOUR SERIES**

Notice a couple of weeks ahead to be sure and plan for a few logistic things.

You will need to design and print a "Consecration Check." Invite people to fill in their copy of the "Consecration Check" and then keep it with them, not hand it in.

This is described at the end of sermon 2, "Why is Lordship Necessary – Part 1"

Also, I found it helpful to have a soloist in my church sing the same song every Sabbath just before the sermon, "Jesus Be the Lord of All." And after sermon 2 and 4 you will want them to sing it for the

“Consecration Check” process you will use at the close of your sermon and for the appeal song with the commitment cards at the close of sermon 4.

So you will want to find the words and music to that song and make it available to your soloist.

### **COMMITMENT TIME AT THE END**

At the end of sermon 4, “Four Signs of a Sensible Steward,” is the time for a spiritual commitment and appeal. I have included 3 versions of a commitment card. Feel free to use whichever you like, or design and pass out one of your own. It is important to use a commitment card at the end of sermon 4. This card you want your congregation to hand in. Even those who are not yet members but are attending will be impressed by the Holy Spirit and return it.

### **AFTER THE SERIES – HEAVEN’S POWER THROUGH STORY**

Personal stories and testimonies have power. Ellen White affirms this many times over. So in a smaller church, at least one time per month, invite one of your members to be interviewed by you up front during the worship service about their commitment to the Lordship of Jesus in their life and their commitment to returning God’s tithe and their offerings. If you are in a larger church, you can have this every week. You want to do it as an interview so that you can control the timing and gently direct the content with your questions, your follow-up and re-direct, and your breaking in to the testimony if it gets off course or takes too long. A great way to include this in your worship service, is to title this, “A Sacrifice of Praise,” and you can do it a couple of places in the order of service. It could come right before the call for the offering. Another very effective time, is to have this take place right after the call for the offering while the deacons are collecting the offering. If you do it then, your musicians do not need to provide an offertory. A testimony/interview does 2 things powerfully. It strengthens the person who tells it. And it encourages the other lay members who see someone like themselves and leads them to think, “If God has done that in their life, He could do it in mine!”

### **HOW TO USE THIS YEAR-AFTER-YEAR FOR EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP GROWTH**

You need to preach/teach stewardship every year. One of Satan’s greatest efforts is to re-enforce his life of selfishness and separate people from the joy of giving to mission and the blessing of receiving God’s answer to their faith commitment in returning His tithe.

This series of sermons on Lordship now gives you a model/guide/template for writing and preaching your own 4 part series on Stewardship every year. You don’t have to be quite as elaborate, but take the concept and then develop your own. Each year you can do a series on one of the following themes:

STEWARDSHIP IS LORDSHIP (This is the series you just did)

STEWARDSHIP IS LOVE

STEWARDSHIP IS FAITH

STEWARDSHIP IS OBEDIENCE

STEWARDSHIP IS GRACE

STEWARDSHIP IS MISSION

STEWARDSHIP IS GROWTH

STEWARDSHIP IS PARTNERSHIP

STEWARDSHIP IS HEALTHY

STEWARDSHIP IS MENTORING

Following this approach, this gives you 10 years of having a Stewardship series each year.

You take the theme. Choose one for the year.

Then follow the template of how you saw the Stewardship is Lordship series develop that you just preached. In the template series on Lordship, notice how the theme of Lordship is developed over the first 2 sermons. Then progressing on sermons 3 and 4, that theme is developed and tied to Stewardship. You can do the same with the other 9 themes listed above. Begin with a solid foundation on the theme topic and show through progressing into your sermon series, how that theme topic is a foundation for and directly tied to Stewardship. Before ending your series, have a strong, direct appeal to faithfulness in Stewardship and how faithfulness in tithes and offerings is a direct part of your theme topic.

So, try it out the next year after preaching on Lordship!

Write your own series of 4 sermons in the style or similar approach of developing the Bible theme listed in the key word/concept. And through the 4 sermons, move toward how that key word/concept leads to Biblical Stewardship, our life of commitment and our dedicated giving of offerings and returning to God His tithe.

### **IMPACT**

You will grow your people. In faith. In joy. In Christian service. In appreciation of God's word.

Your local church giving will increase and continue to increase.

In my local church, where we previously struggled to make local church budget, when we started having a Stewardship commitment month each year, we begin to have an increase in local church giving. And the time came when our budget giving was meeting our monthly goals beginning in January and continuing through the year.

People will begin to have faith stories and will be amazed at what God does to bless them and reward their faith.

Right along with that, they will have a testimony to tell and will be eager to share what good things they have seen God do in their own life. And that is contagious.

### **GROW TOGETHER AS PEERS**

As we experience God working through us as spiritual leaders here in GCC, it is exciting to be able to share with each other, just what God has done, how He has led, and the resources He helped us to develop. It will be powerful for each of us to share with each other, the sermon series He inspired us with after preaching the Lordship series. So, share with me your new sermon series and I will share with other pastors through our website and office resources what God has done through you.

Together, we grow and together we do more!