



*“It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.”* – Galatians 2:20

Dear pastors and leaders,

May God give you strength as you look to lead your people to live the stewardship truths of God’s Word. That’s what “A God-Lived Life” is about. It’s a challenge designed to give you and your people an opportunity to put into practice what God’s Word teaches—to help us live a more God-lived life.

The title, “A God-Lived Life,” has a double meaning. The only way we can live for God is because he lived, died, and lived again for us first. Our “God-lived” lives are a response to his life and love for us. Living as *Christians*, little Christs, we have the privilege of demonstrating what God looks like in how we live our life, in living lives that show God. May God bless this program so that each of us grows in our lives of living for God. That encompasses *everything*.

“A God-Lived Life” challenge is set up with a slightly different design compared to previous stewardship series. There are four special Sundays (one per month) where the service, sermon, and Bible study all focus on one, single aspect of the God-lived life:

- A life of *being a disciple*,
- A life *lived for others*,
- A life of *hospitality*, and
- A life *lived shrewdly*.

A set of challenges accompanies each Sunday. They are to be carried out throughout the following month. These challenges ask people, moved by the grace of God and Jesus’ life and death in their place, to commit to acting on the encouragements to put the Word into practice. For example, the first month deals with the truth that a God-lived life is a life lived as a disciple of God’s Word. So, the challenges include attending a Bible study (Sunday, midweek, small group, etc.), home or family devotions, personal Bible reading, and the like.

We suggest using the program over four months, with one special Sunday each month. The rest of the Sundays go according to your normal calendar. Knowing congregations are different, there is flexibility to use the materials in a way that works best for your setting. Some congregations may choose to do it four Sundays in a row, condensing some of the challenges and newsletters. Others may want to try it for a year of stewardship training with one concept tackled each quarter. You are welcome to adapt and use it as you see fit.

Each Sunday, you’ll notice a worship plan with options for both a full service, or a shortened service to incorporate a 19-minute Bible study. You’ll find prayers, readings, hymn suggestions,

and a gathering rite that goes along with the theme. A text study and sample sermon are provided for each Sunday.

Three Bible studies are also included with each Sunday. They are written so that you can use them all (in other words, they don't overlap). Here's how we suggest you use them:

- The Sunday service includes a *19-minute Bible study* on one of the appointed readings, so that EVERYONE gets introduced to the concepts studied.
- The *Sunday morning Bible study* uses the study written on this week's concept of stewardship, with opportunities for a deeper dive into the concept.
- The *small group study* guide is used later in the week by small groups. A congregation that doesn't have formal small groups might invite people to a Zoom call to discuss the sermon and the week's concept on Monday evening.
- Each part of the series comes with *four newsletters* to encourage the congregation in completing their challenges and to keep the concept fresh in their minds.

As you look forward to making "A God-Lived Life" your own, take some time with your church leadership to brainstorm different challenges that make sense for your setting. A list of some ideas is included. You likely will come up with many others. It's a great activity to do together to create ownership of and excitement for the program. It will be good to have all your challenges prepared before you start so that you can send your members the full set of challenge cards along with your letter introducing the series.

May God bless your work for him.