

**A Fresh Start Sermon Series**  
**“Starting with a Fresh Focus”**

**Luke 15:11-32**

**Summary**

Have you ever made foolish choices that led to days, weeks, or years of pain, sorrow, and depression? This sermon will focus on the story of the prodigal son who experienced what you have experienced. We will examine his self-destructive life of rebellion and selfishness that led him to the lowest point he had ever experienced. We will then see how his Restoration comes about giving us hope for our own restoration!

**Objective**

The main objective of this sermon is to motivate people to start the new year off with the right focus, focusing their heart, mind, soul, and strength upon living for Jesus Christ and His glory. This is the highest calling and the highest purpose that we can live for.

**Four Stages of Getting a Fresh Start with a Fresh Focus**

**Stage #1 – Reality Hits**

- **Luke 19:1-6** – Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. <sup>2</sup> A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. <sup>3</sup> He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. <sup>5</sup> When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” <sup>6</sup> So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.
- **Key Point** – The key point here will discuss the point where our reality catches up with and we recognize that we no longer desire to chase our tail for the rest of our lives and we choose to set out on a mission of seeking for hope and joy!

**Stage #2 – Humility Grips Your Heart**

- **Luke 18:17** – I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.
- **Key Point** – The key point here will discuss the fact that all life change begins with the simple starting point of humility. We desire to change things in our lives because we are not fulfilled or happy with where we are currently at which means that the way we have been doing things has not worked. Therefore let’s get on a plan that will work, a plan written by the Creator.

**Stage #3 – Restoration Takes Form**

- **Luke 15:7** – I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

- **Jeremiah 15:19** – Therefore this is what the LORD says: “If you repent, I will restore you that you may serve me; if you utter worthy, not worthless, words, you will be my spokesman. Let this people turn to you, but you must not turn to them.”
- **Key Point** – The key point here will discuss the point when we let go of our will and give it over to the Lord in order to experience His restoration of our lives. It is here where we begin being transformed into the instrument that He desires for us to be!

#### Stage #4 – Transformation Sets a New Course

- **2 Corinthians 3:17-18** – <sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup> And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
- **1 Timothy 4:7-8** – <sup>7</sup> Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. <sup>8</sup> For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.
- **Key Point** – The key point here will discuss the point when we begin living a transformed life with the right focus. We will discuss the fact that transformation does not happen naturally and it is a life-long process to be molded into the image of Christ.

#### Questions to Consider

1. What are my top three spiritual growth goals for 2008?
2. How can you accomplish these goals and who will hold you accountable?

#### Memory Verse

**Matthew 22:37-39** – Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

#### Challenge

Begin making your personal and family spiritual growth plan for 2008. List your mission, goals, and the core passage that will describe your focus for the year.

