



## ***Renewed : Daily Practices for a Fresh Life***

### **Sample Sermon**

#### **Week 1 - Renewed Spirit**

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:10-12// Luke 19:1-10

**Write Up:** Beyond our physical body lies our spirit. This spirit has been placed within us by God and it must be taken care of. Sometimes our spirit can become weary and defeated because of sinful decisions we make. In order to renew our spirit, we must repent and believe the gospel. This gospel is put on display in the story of Zacchaeus. When Jesus meets him, he is a thieving traitor who is only thinking about himself. When he encounters the love of Jesus in his home, Zacchaeus' spirit is renewed and it is evidenced by his extreme transformation. He used to cheat and steal, but now, he becomes generous and eager to make things right.

**Think:** I am more than just a physical being. I have a spirit that can be altered based on how I live my life.

**Feel:** External change can lead to internal renewal. I do not have to continue feeling defeated.

**Do:** Begin doing the right thing before you want to do the right thing. A healthy spirit often follows healthy practices.

#### **Sermon:**

There are times in our lives when it becomes apparent that God is interested in doing a new thing within us. It can coincide with the changing of the year, the changing of the seasons, the changing of life circumstances, or the changing of a physical location. God is interested in moving each us, from time to time, into a deeper and more meaningful relationship with him. This can be scary. It can be hard. It can be confusing. Either way, if we can recognize these times when God wants to renew us, we can lean in and allow him to do his good work.

Today we begin a new sermon series called Renewed. In my experience, the work that God wants to do in us is wholistic in nature. God's renewal is as much for our physical being as it is for our inner being. We are all more than just physical. There is a depth to us that is soul and spirit. God desires for our spirit to experience renewal. Life can be hard and the trials they we face can cause our spirits to become weary. Relational conflict can cause deep sorrow. Financial woes can be stressful. Disappointments can be so discouraging. All of these and more have a way of affecting our spiritual state. However, there is one thing above everything else that causes us to need renewal within our spirit. That thing is sin.



**Illustration:** *(Have a large clear pitcher on stage full of water. Use multiple colors of food coloring to add to the pitcher as you introduce different sinful activity. The pitcher needs to be sitting in a basin that can collect overflowing water. Once the pitcher has become messy and a dark color from the food coloring, pour fresh water into the pitcher as you talk about renewal and let the dark water become clear again.)*

The Bible talks about sin as a missing of the mark. It is an archery term that suggests that when we sin, we miss the intentions of God for us. Sin comes in many forms. It might be overwhelming greed (drop color), it might be pride (drop color), we see it now in racism (drop color), sin is when we lie (drop color), sin can be a sin of commission or a sin of omission (drop color). The Bible tells us that each of us were born with a sinful nature that has been handed down from the fall in chapter 3 of Genesis. Since Adam and Eve disregarded God and decided to live for themselves, we have been following suit. When sin is in our lives, our spirit becomes dark and disconnects us from God. Sin is a rejection of God and without renewal we are destined to spend eternity apart from God. We have to be renewed. When we invite Jesus into our lives to forgive us and to give us strength to live differently, our spirit, our soul, is renewed.

#### **POINT 1: A RENEWED SPIRIT IS A CLEAN SPIRIT**

In the Old Testament, King David wrote a Psalm in the wake of his sinful actions with Bathsheba. After his adulterous affair and murder of Bathsheba's husband, David's spirit was dark. His sin harmed his relationship with God and it harmed his relationship with others. Sin always does. In Psalm 51 David cries out to God for renewal.

#### **READ Psalm 51:10-12**

Maybe you can relate to the words that David pens here. It is a desperate cry for forgiveness. It is deep repentance. David acknowledges that the state of our spirit has an effect on our connection with our creator. He is heartbroken over his actions. The thing David prays for is exactly what we have been addressing in this series. He asks for renewal. A renewed spirit within him.

This psalm and others are the very reason that David is referred to in the scriptures as a man after God's own heart. It was not because David was flawless. It was not because David was perfect. It was because David was willing to confront his sin and ask God for forgiveness and restoration. A person who has a renewed spirit is a person who longs to be right with God and is willing to repent of sin in order to be fresh and clean of heart. The question is are you heartbroken over your sin? Does it grieve you? Do you long for renewal?

**Story:** Not long ago, I found myself frustrated by the way my oldest son had treated my wife and the way he had been defiant toward me. I had tried to talk calmly with him about the mistreatment, but he doubled down on his disrespect. I lost my cool. I got angry. I got upset and I said some things that were hurtful. The worst part was it was right before dropping him



off at school. I had to go the entire day replaying my sinful attitude in my head. I could not wait for him to get home because I wanted to apologize and make things right. That night in his bed as I tucked him in, I told him how sorry I was. I apologized and admitted that the way I had treated him was wrong. I told him that even though his actions had made me frustrated, I had no right to retaliate the way I did. I asked for his forgiveness. I asked for God's forgiveness. I told him I loved him. I felt a heavy weight lift off of my shoulders and I felt my spirit at ease. *(This story needs to be a personal moment for you to share a way you have dealt with a heavy spirit and experienced renewal.)*

You see, my sin toward my son was breaking my relationship with God and it certainly, left unchecked, would break my relationship with my son. I needed to repent. We need to repent to renew our spirit.

There are stories all over the scriptures of individuals who, through repentance, experienced a renewed spirit within them. One story is of a man named Zacchaeus.

#### **READ Luke 19:1-4**

This man Zacchaeus is described in some pretty significant ways. First, he is a chief tax collector and also a Jew. This more than likely means he was at least viewed, if not confirmed, to be a sympathizer with Rome and a thief. Many tax collectors would overcharge individuals to take some off the top and become rich. Second, Zacchaeus was rich. This was likely true because of a practice of taking advantage of his clients. Zacchaeus may have been fully aware of his bad reputation and his corrupt heart. Sometimes we are fully aware of our broken spirit, but we ignore it. Maybe, for Zacchaeus, this is the reason he wants to see Jesus so badly when Jesus comes to town. The Bible tells us that Zacchaeus is so short he has to climb a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus.

#### **POINT 2: OUR DESIRE FOR JESUS IS SEEN IN OUR ACTIONS**

In the first four verses of this passage, we see a key component in experiencing a renewed spirit. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus. It seems simple, but many individuals never get here. Far too many of us never develop the desire to see Jesus in our lives. We certainly would not do the hard work that Zacchaeus goes through to climb a tree to get a better vantage point of the Savior, but people who know their spirit is weary are desperate to get a glimpse of Jesus. How much do you want Jesus to change your life? Would you be willing to do anything in order to have him renew your spirit? Not climbing a tree, like in the story, but drawing near to God through prayer, through good counsel or through honesty with Him.

#### **READ Luke 19:5-10**

A surprising twist happens in the story as Jesus looks up at Zacchaeus and acknowledges him and tells him to come down. Jesus intends to go to Zacchaeus' house and spend time with him.



Can you imagine this man's excitement? Maybe his fear? Maybe a mix of emotions as the Messiah that he had been hearing about wants to come to his house.

Suddenly a man who was too short, a tax collector, a thief, and hated by many, was going to be hosting Jesus Christ. This was God's way of saying, "no one is too far gone that I will not come to rescue them". Everyone who was standing there begins to mumble about how Jesus was going to spend time with a sinful tax collector. How could he possibly do something like this? They had utterly missed the point that this is exactly what God does: he goes after those who are far from him and who are weary in spirit. Maybe it is encouraging to know today that Jesus is coming after you today. You are not too far gone. Jesus extends his love and grace to you.

Zacchaeus' response to Jesus wanting to come to his house tells you everything you need to know about how eager he is to experience renewal. He repents. He does what David did in Psalm 51. The real question is how do we respond? If our sin has harmed others, we demonstrate our desire for Jesus by making it right. If our sin harms our relationship with God, we demonstrate our desire for Jesus by making a change.

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