

# A Good Spring Cleaning

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The trees are starting to bud. Little green blades of grass are peaking out where the lawn had gone dormant for the winter. People are beginning to notice pollen and mold spores and other allergens floating toward their nasal passages. March Madness is winding down and the baseball season is heating up. These are all signs of spring. Even our clocks have “sprung forward.” And that means it’s time for a good spring cleaning.

When I was growing up, I soon learned the difference between spring cleaning and just a normal Saturday straightening up. The curtains and drapes came down to be washed. The eaves on the outside of the house were swept for cobwebs and dirt daubers’ nests. Toys and clothes that were no longer used or seldom worn were piled up and hauled off. It was just a sign of spring.

Perhaps it’s time that we engage in a little spiritual spring cleaning, the kind that removes the buildup and clutter that sometimes goes unaddressed. While the world around us awakens from winter, we, too, can spring back to life. It is not just a sign of the season, but of seasoning, growing, and maturing.

As you gather your supplies and get ready, may I offer a few quick cleaning tips?

1. **Remember Whose you are.** The reason we must keep our body, our earthly house, in good shape is because we are borrowing it from the Owner. “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own” (1 Cor. 6:19)? Nobody has the right to say, “it’s my body, I can do whatever I want to with it.” You belong to God. Everything you have is from Him. That means you’re going to have to give it all back. So, “glorify God in you body” (1 Cor. 6:20). The best way to do that is by keeping it clean from all of the worldly impurities that defile and corrupt.

2. **Start at home, not your neighbor’s.** Spring cleaning sometimes doesn’t go very deep because we start noticing what bad shape everyone else is in. We’ll think, “I have weeds in my flowerbeds, but they’re not as high as his.” Or, “my shelves are dusty, but look at the cobwebs in her closet.” Jesus said that you don’t have the right to criticize other peoples’ imperfections when you have not even addressed your own. “Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye” (Matt. 7:3)? Stay focused on your own messes. If you’re like me, that ought to be enough to keep you busy most of the time.

3. **Clear out the junk drawer.** Surely you have one, don’t you? That’s the one where you put things that don’t have a place: twist ties, used batteries, expired coupons, and little plastic pieces that you have no idea what they used to go to. Isn’t it amazing how

we feel the need to keep things around that have no value or use anymore? But we do the same thing with our spiritual baggage. We are instructed to “run with endurance the race that is set before us” only after we “lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us” (Heb. 12:1). If it’s junk, if it has no use, if it’s a piece from the past, throw it away. Get rid of it. Just because you’ve found a hiding place for it does not mean that you’ve taken care of it.

4. **Get a good finish.** Discouragement is a big deterrent to spring cleaning. When you start pulling everything out, it can look more cluttered than when you started. Progress is often slow. Before long, you get overwhelmed and just put it all back where you found it. Paul commended the church in Corinth for the benevolent work they had begun. But a good beginning was not good enough. “Now finish doing it also, so that just there was the readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it by your ability” (2 Cor. 8:11). Any job worth doing is going to have its moments where you want to turn back. But we must press through the difficulties and press along to our destination. When we finish, we’ll wonder why we didn’t start sooner.

You won’t regret a good spring cleaning. It will bring seasons of refreshing. It will bring you back to life.