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## CLEANING UP THE MESS

Our ministry used to have a thrift shop. There were clothes, tools, toys, housewares, furniture, kitchen stuff and a lot more. Every day those things would get “messed up”. They might get put out on the wrong shelf, or someone would take it from one place to another and they didn’t put it back. When God said we came from dust he must have looked at the shelves in that thrift shop, for they were always full of dust! It was a challenge to keep things in order. When we closed the thrift shop last summer, we found things that had been stored for years. It was a challenge cleaning it all out. We had 30 days to remove it all, because we lost our lease. Did we get it done? Yes, because we were put in a position that we had to do it.

As I was thinking about all of that work and what it entailed, I am reminded how often we put things into our lives that just don’t belong there. Some of those things are envy, jealousy, hatred, revenge, fear and much more. The list is so long that I could fill this page up with those things. How does this happen?

We know we shouldn’t hang onto have these things, but the little things creep in, and we don’t take the time to remove them. Once they creep in they like to take root. Once the root goes down deep into our soul, it is harder to pull it out. Then, after the root is there it likes to grow, and eventually takes over the good things within.

There are those people that like to live in clutter, but when something happens to them it is really difficult to go through their “mess” and clean it up. I have had to do that. Just like the shelves in that thrift shop that got cleaned up, we must keep things in our lives “cleaned up” if we are to live our lives without chaos.

God wants our physical house and spiritual house to be in order. We must daily inspect our lives to see if there is anything that needs to be removed. It is so much easier to do it daily than to let things grow and get out of hand. A bitter old person or an angry person didn’t start out that way. It gradually happened over time when the sin wasn’t dealt with.

We have to ask the Lord what is causing problems in our lives. Once we realize where these things started we must pull them out at the root and then ask God to forgive us. Then and only then can we go forward. We must replace the void that is left where these things were with things of God or it will fill up again with what was there and many things worse. Yes, it is a constant thing to do this, but your life will be much happier when you do. Remember, God wants us to live a holy pure life.

Do I miss the thrift shop? I miss the people we met every day, but I don’t miss the work. I am glad that part of my life is “cleaned up.” What about you? Is there something out of order in your life that you need to deal with? Today is a good time to begin.