

Your Heavenly Solution to Earthly Chaos

We've been in the process of moving to my mother-in-law's, ya know. That means chaos—a mess at our house and a growing pile of mess at her house. For this girl with strong obsessive-compulsive tendencies, it has often made me feel just a little crazy.

But today I type out these words to you from my 6-foot oak desk that now fills one wall in the guest room of our new residence. This desk has a rich supply of drawers and shelves, as well as a hutch above with more shelves and cupboards. It is glorious.

On Saturday, I spent a significant amount of time unpacking my office and arranging it “just so.” The pens are in the drawer, all facing the same direction, of course. A lovely basket is on a bottom drawer, with a neat arrangement of letter-writing supplies. Paperclips are in their compartment. Copier paper is neatly stacked.

Big, deep sigh. *Order.*

On the same morning I meticulously organized my desk supplies, I also sat on the bed, in the same room, spending time with the Lord. For weeks, I've been slowly working my way through Dallas Willard's book, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on The Character of Christ*. It turns out that when Jesus moves into our hearts, he begins a cleaning out and arranging of things—not unlike moving into a new house.

I'm learning that my heart and mind and soul are chaotic. I picture Jesus slowly, methodically organizing my thoughts and feelings and desires.

For example, as we've moved, occasionally I've had strong

feelings assault me, about getting rid of so many of our possessions. If I'm looking at shelves and drawers and cupboards inside of me, where do those feelings belong?

Dallas Willard says, "Feelings live on the front row of our lives like unruly children clamoring for attention." Isn't that the truth! So I imagined shushing those feelings and demanding that they be still, while I focused my mind on the very good reasons of why we were moving and purging so much stuff.

Thinking well brought calm. It's not as though my feelings evaporated, but Jesus helped me put them in their proper place. Feelings do not belong in the front-of-the-top-drawer position.

So imagine your thoughts and feelings and desires as office supplies. During the day, hold each of these up as they come along and ask Jesus, "Where does this belong?"

Paul tells us: "God is not a God of disorder but of peace ..." (1 Cor. 14:33).

The opposite of disorder is *peace*. There's an old saying, "A place for everything and everything in its place." As we spend time with Jesus, he can help us find appropriate places for everything that's jumbled up and in messy piles on the inside of us. Then we can experience peace, and it is wonderful.

Forgive me for bragging, but if you could see the perfection of my desk right now, you would say, "Yes! Come, Lord Jesus, and make that kind of order happen in my heart and mind."
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