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## Clutter Kills Order

Some of us need a total overhaul in our homes, and others just need a little fine-tuning. Most of us are probably in between. Whatever the case, establishing and maintaining order has to begin with getting things organized. We must get the clutter under control in order to have order. And we have to order our days (starting now!) to make that happen.

How often have you been frustrated and how many hours have you wasted looking for missing items because you weren’t able to find what you needed amidst the piles of junk? Establishing and maintaining order in your home brings peace, joy, and extra time!

Take a look around your home. If there are cluttered tables and countertops, corners stuffed with piles of unhoused items, and the closets, cabinets and drawers are stuffed with items you aren’t sure you’re using, then it is time to commit to bringing order to your household.

Start with one room. Decide it will be de-cluttered and organized in a reasonable amount of time (depending on how bad it is- a few hours or a few days). I have found a project often appears to be much bigger than it really is. Once I get in and start, it becomes easier to see progress and to keep going. Here is a good strategy to keep in mind:

* Grab a trash bag, and plan to be ruthless with throwing stuff away- this stuff is destroying your order!
* Choose one area of the room to begin in- a drawer or a closet or a shelf.
* Setting a timer can help you stay focused- start with 30 minutes- you can do SO much in 30 minutes!
* Start by throwing things away that are obvious trash
* Set up 3 piles
  + One to give away
  + One to keep in that room
  + One to move somewhere else in the house
* Pulling out each item, decide what pile it goes into
* Once you are done with everything in that area
  + Put the stuff that stays in that area away
  + Move the give-away items into a special box or area where that stuff will eventually get out of your house
  + Put the items that go somewhere else in your house where they belong
* Completely finish that area of your chosen room before you move on to the next
* Move around the room until you have done this process to the entire space
* Once you have finished one room, move on to the next, making sure to maintain the order you have just created in the first space.

I encourage you to add time to your master schedule for maintaining order in your “most likely to be a mess” areas. (Example: My bathroom drawers and cabinets are notorious for being disorganized. We get in a hurry and shove things back into places they don’t belong, and suddenly, I’m looking in the hair products for my nail cutters, or I find jewelry mixed in with the dental floss. My solution has been devoting my hair dye processing time to organizing the bathroom. I dye my hair every 10 days (yeah, I know…). I use the 25 minutes the dye is convincing my white hairs to turn red and I put the stray hair ties and bobby pins in their place and wipe the residue toothpaste out of the drawer.)

Order takes discipline. Order takes work. Order takes diligence and prayer. Your home didn’t get cluttered in one day. It’s not going to be ordered in a day, and it is going to take effort to keep it that way. But order in your home is entirely possible through seeking obedience to God’s call to be a keeper of your home.