Cleaning Out Your Spiritual Closet:
By: Amanda Davis

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray in Matthew 6, one of the first things he told them to do was to go to their closets to pray.

“But when you pray, go into your [closet] and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” – Matthew 6:6

But you may be wondering, “What if my spiritual closet isn’t ‘clean?’”

As spring quickly approaches and flowers begin to bloom, many of us are starting to do what we call our “spring cleaning.” We are dusting, sweeping, vacuuming, disinfecting, washing and polishing our homes more than we have done all year, to get ready for our new season.

While cleaning your home and getting rid of unneeded junk is necessary for your spring cleaning, it is important to understand that this will last but for a season. Spiritual cleansing, however, could have an eternal influence on your life. So, don't just dust behind your bookshelves! Wipe the dust off your bible, shake yourself off and get ready for a spiritual spring cleaning. It’s time to get rid of the cobwebs that have been hindering your spiritual growth and clean out and declutter your spiritual closet. God wants to do a new thing in your life.

If you notice, as we do our spring cleaning in the flesh, we gather all of our “old” things, put them in a garbage bag and throw them out. Simple, right? Well believe it or not, this is one of the biggest areas of struggle for most of us, in our spiritual lives. For some reason, the garbage from our minds and from our hearts is difficult for us to let go of.

As the spring season is coming, it is a great time to review your spiritual life. It is the perfect time to acknowledge what is old and what needs to be released in order to bloom into complete fruition of who God called you to be. Take a second and think about what is not working for you and why you are allowing it to linger and hinder your spiritual growth.

Below is a “Spiritual Cleaning Checklist” to you started in the right direction:

1. **Ask God to Cleanse Your Heart:** The Bible encourages us to draw close to God but we must first ask him to cleanse our heart. Our hearts become so hard when we allow sin to build a wall around it, but confession is our invitation to God to purify us. This is the number one step in our spring cleaning project. We can clean ourselves physically but not spiritually—that’s God job. We must draw near to God and ask Him to do the cleansing.

   **Psalm 51:10:** Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

   **Psalm 51:2:** O God, we pray with David, “Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

   **Hebrews 10:22:** Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

2. **Clean Out Your Mouth:** And I’m not talking about oral hygiene! As your heart gets clean, your language should follow right after. Not just bad language and cursing but also negative talk and pessimistic thoughts that contradict the Word of God and faith—this could be negative self-talk, negative talk about your brothers and sisters in Christ or even negative talk about your enemies. This also includes the challenge to stop complaining.

   **Luke 6:45:** The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

   **Philippians 2:14:** Do everything without complaining or arguing...
3. Renew Your Mind, (Take Out the Garbage): This is one of the biggest areas of struggle for most of us—removing the garbage from our minds. Garbage in equals garbage out. We must feed our minds and spirits the Word of God instead of the garbage of this world.

Romans 12:2: Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

2 Corinthians 10:5: We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

4. Repent from Hidden Sin—Clean Out Your Spiritual Closet: Hidden sin will destroy your life, your peace, and even your health—whether that be unresolved issues within or holding grudges with people you already “forgave.” The Bible says to confess your sin. Pray and ask God for help—he will give you peace and understanding if you seek Him for it. When your spiritual closets are clean, the heaviness from hidden sin will lift and you will be free!

Psalm 32:3-5: When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD”—and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

5. Release Unforgiveness and Bitterness—Get Rid of Old Baggage: Out of all of the steps in this spiritual checklist, I will be the first to admit that this is the one I struggle with the most. Unforgiveness will hold you down and bind you up. It is like old baggage in the attic you just can't seem to part with. You are so familiar with it that you don't even realize how it is hindering your life. Once you get rid of those garbage bags full of unforgiveness and bitterness, you have space for the things of God, like love and peace!

Hebrews 12:1: Therefore, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress.

Ephesians 4:31-32: Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

6. Involve Jesus in Your Daily Life: We hear it time and time again at church—What God wants most from you is relationship—Friendship, partnership. This is true. He wants to be involved in the big and small moments of your life—not just when you need something from Him. You must welcome Him into your life, submit to him and let the light of His presence shine into every part of your life. Once you do this, you'll have no need for a yearly spiritual cleaning. Instead, you will experience a daily, moment to moment refreshing of your spirit. How awesome is that?

1 Corinthians 1:9: God… is the one who invited you into this wonderful friendship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Psalm 56:13: For you have rescued me from death; you have kept my feet from slipping. So now I can walk in your presence, O God, in your life-giving light.

7. Learn to Laugh at Yourself: This spiritual journey is not boring. Live a little! Some of us take life too seriously, or we take ourselves too seriously. God just wants you to enjoy yourself and learn to have some fun. God made you for His pleasure. Like an old church mother would say, “You better act like you know!”

Psalm 28:7: The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song.

Psalm 126:2: Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

Today’s Prayer: Lord, as the spring comes and I do my usual spring cleaning, I ask you to help me clean out my spiritual closet, as well. Today, I let go of worn out things, worn out conditions and worn out relationships. Today, I throw out my grave clothes and dead things that I have been holding on to and have not had the courage to let go of and allow you to take complete control of my life. I’m ready to see what you have in store for me in this new season. I appreciate, I love you and I thank You. Forever and ever. In Jesus’ name, amen.

With Love,
Amanda Davis