

FAR ABOVE RUBIES:

Insights on living the Christian life – from a female perspective



SPRING HAS SPRUNG

I don't know about you, ladies, but I have always loved that feeling of a job well done, whether it is at home or in work! I can't say that I love spring cleaning, but I do get great satisfaction out of knowing that the house has been given a "deep clean." Nowadays many couples appreciate and attend to the need of sharing the spring cleaning – she does most of the work and he appreciates it! Seriously though, I find the annual ritual of "spring cleaning" a good time to give our lives a deep clean and put our spiritual houses in order.

Cleansing the Heart

Deep cleaning our homes means cleaning beyond what others can see and ensuring that each room is spotlessly clean. Deep cleaning of our hearts requires cleansing from within, which only God can do, as we see from Psalm 51:10 in which David writes: *"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."* The difficulty comes, however, in maintaining that spiritual cleanliness while under the attack of the world and the devil. As with our home, in order to keep our hearts pure and clean we need to make a point of examining our walk regularly, as Paul states in 1 Cor 11:28: *"let a man examine himself...."* When was the last time you examined your heart? Maybe you have been hurt deeply in the past and are finding it really hard to forgive those who hurt you. Deep inside you begin to harbour unforgiveness and, before you know it, anger and bitterness begin to take root as you continue to relive the wrong done to you. Do you know that, generally speaking, the only person that unforgiveness hurts is you? Most of the time the offender is going about their merry way totally unaware of how you feel, while you let feelings of anger and bitterness steal your joy. Jesus' words in Matthew 6:13-14 are very clear - you must forgive those who trespass against you. As you "deep clean" your heart and find areas that need cleansed, know that *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:9).

Cleansing the Tongue

When we do a "deep clean" we need to clean all of the rooms in our house. We wouldn't even remotely think that we had done a good job if the kitchen was still untouched. It's the same in our lives. If our hearts have been cleansed then so should our tongues be. In Luke 6:45 we read: *"The good man out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure produces evil; for out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaks."* If our hearts have been cleansed then so should our mouths be. I am reminded of the story of the pit ponies during the Welsh

Revival. Before the Revival, the miners would direct the ponies through the very dark coal mines using very “colourful” language. After the miners were saved the ponies couldn’t understand them because their language had been cleaned up. They had to re-train the pit ponies!

Can I say that it’s not just the bad language we need to be careful of, but also the negative and pessimistic words we utter that contradict the word of God. Have you ever heard Christians moaning and complaining, saying “I will never have any money, I will never be healed, I will never be happy?” With an attitude like this they most likely never will! Some people are very quick to blame God for their bad situation and even their sickness, when they should be placing the blame firmly on the shoulders of the one responsible – the devil. When you are really down the enemy will try to convince you that God doesn’t love you or care for you and you may start believing it. Don’t be deceived, God is good all the time and only wants the best for us. Speaking of Jesus, Isaiah wrote in chapter 61:1: *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”* We need to take God at His word, even declare it, and ensure that our mouths are cleansed from any negative or pessimistic words.

Clearing the Clutter

Do you have a spare room or cupboard in your house full of “stuff” you know you should get rid of but can’t seem to part with? Perhaps you’re just a “hoarder” and have kept things from way back – just in case you might need them someday. Well, why not take the bull by the horns and de-clutter this spring. Trust me, it will be very liberating! It’s the same in our spiritual lives. We hold onto things that aren’t good for us, hidden sin – addictions, jealousy and wrong relationships to mention a few. Like our cluttered cupboards we wouldn’t want anyone to see what was concealed in them. There are some Christians who believe that they can live lives cluttered with sin and have no problem entering into relationships which they know are wrong in the sight of God, but the truth is they are only deceiving themselves. It has been said that you get to be like the company you hang around with and this is so true, as 1 Cor 15:33 puts it: *“Do not be deceived; Bad company ruins good morals.”* It’s time to clear out the clutter and rid ourselves of those things which are sinful and which hinder our progress, as stated in Hebrews 12:1: *“Wherefore...let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us...”*

We also need to be careful that we don’t allow busyness to clutter up our lives. Sometimes we can be just too busy with all of the pressures of running a home and working, along with the all of the demands of family and friends, that we forget what’s important. I know Christians who, because of their “busyness,” have stopped coming to church regularly and, sadly, hardly ever speak of the things of God. I am reminded of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42, when “Martha was distracted with much serving”, while Mary sat at Jesus’ feet. Jesus’ response was, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion.” We would do well to follow her example.