



*Friends come and friends go, but a true friend sticks
by you like family. Proverbs 18:24 (MSG)*

February 16, 2009

Dear Friend,

Randall and I were in Florida recently. We enjoyed two days of downtime before Randall's board meetings. I had a chance to get away from the stressful month of January, as you will see below. It was a time to rest, renew, and gain new perspective. I got my spark back! Following is an article I wrote on the plane on our return flight to Dayton:

The HGTV Thing

by Barbara Bach
February 8, 2009

When we begin a new year, we all have hopes that the past is gone and there are better days ahead. I don't know how

many gals I talked to who said, "I'm glad last year is behind me." One quoted 2 Corinthians 5:17, "The old life is gone, the new life has begun!" (NIV) We look for a new, fresh outlook.

Well, for me the month of January brought nothing but pain and agony. We have all heard the expression, "No pain...no gain!" My husband and I decided that, after 10 1/2 years of living in our house, we needed to update. I totally agreed that we needed to have all outdated wallpaper stripped and everything would be painted. Instead of all beige walls we would do "Color Splash." I was all for it, until I realized what was all involved. When my husband started talking about the closets being painted, I said, "OH, NO, that is something you do when you are moving out!" He is the type that you, "do it right!" He proceeded to drag everything out of closets. He learned about how many pairs of shoes I had, which is something I don't advertise! Some shoes, that I wore in the '70's, were in bags. I didn't know I was so nostalgic! There is a special dress that I wore in the early '80's that is a size 10. Oh, my! What a wonderful memory! OK, back to my point. Think about your closets and see if that does not stir up some anxiety. The anxiety level was as bad as when we built our house in Des Moines, Iowa when deciding what color to paint. There are so many shades and hues! We decided on a color and painted a sample on the wall. YUK! Back to the drawing board!

Finally, I decided I needed to go shopping since we were totally changing colors. January is good for sales and it's a good thing because, after three days of intense shopping, I brought home everything I needed to finally decide on wall colors. I bought throw rugs, wall hangings, towels, and accessories. That was the only fun part of this whole project.

It is amazing that we can get used to walking past stuff that piles up in corners, on desks, and shelves. I got to the point where I could not have anyone to my house. We travel so much that I don't take time to clean like I should so the dust piled up, too. You know how dust settles on swags over windows and areas one cannot see unless you are on a ladder. So, along with the paint project, over the month of January we did the H & T V thing. We DECLUTTERED and cleaned every inch! After 15 years with the same STUFF we bagged up clothes, rugs, towels, bedding, (some shoes-HA!), wall hangings, accessories, etc.

I said all of this to share how the same clutter can build up in our heart. We can ignore those little things that cause irritation and "walk past it." I could name a list as long as my arm of "pet peeves!" We can focus on those negative irritations, instead of the positive. I have to admit that I was angry with my husband for deciding to do things the right way. I focused on what I did not like instead of one of his good qualities. If we don't deal with

STUFF in our heart everyday bad attitudes can keep building. That brings me to a scripture that is powerful, "...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles,..." Hebrews 12:1 (NIV)

The scripture goes on to say in verse 2, "...let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross..." (NIV) It is in submitting all that stuff in our heart, daily, and keeping our focus on Jesus that brings joy. Now that my house is in order I can take joy in sitting in the uncluttered environment. As we sit in the "presence of Jesus" and have a pure, clean heart we can enjoy our surroundings and enjoy one another. A favorite verse to pray everyday is, "Guard your heart above all else for it determines the course of your life." Proverbs 4:23 (NIV) I am choosing a new, fresh outlook in 2009. It just started a month late.

Love to chat,
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