



## **An excerpt from *Spring Into Action***

**by Beth Jones**

Some days we are teased with the signs of spring- warm days, new vibrant blades of grass on our lawns, sudden showers. Spring promises new beginnings, new life. We have been hibernating in our homes during long, snowy days and nights, and are antsy to get out in the fresh air and sunshine and enjoy life.

This is also the time of year that we think about spring cleaning. Just as we organize our closets and deep clean the rooms of our home every year, we also occasionally need a "spring cleaning" of the soul to enhance our lives. Spring into action to live a more productive, happy life.

- **Get rid of the junk.** Cluttered, filthy rooms are uninviting and unhealthy. So is "junk" in our souls. Bitterness, unforgiveness, anger, depression, anxiety, and greed all contribute to unhealthy thought patterns and wasted lives. But gentleness, forgiveness, loving-kindness, joy, peacefulness, hope and simplicity free us to have rewarding relationships with others. Get rid of what's holding you back from God's best for you - emotional and spiritual clutter and debris. Surround yourself with beauty. Live clothed in God's grace and humility
- **Rearrange.** Spring cleaning often means buying new linens, organizing closets, and planting brightly colored tulips. We can beautify our lives by rearranging our priorities and managing our time better. Is your life passing by too quickly - and you're not sure what you've accomplished or if you're making a difference here? Jesus commended Mary of Bethany for spending time with Him - choosing what really mattered. Learn to prune unnecessary distractions, things that cause you stress. Don't become enslaved to your to-do list. Get two or three of the most important things for work done each day, and then play and rest. Make room for what's beautiful and lasts.

- **Deep clean.** Some tasks during spring cleaning are common, everyday chores. Others are heavy duty jobs, like cleaning out a garage full of broken furniture, dusty books, and piles of assorted papers. We also have areas in our lives that need a vigorous scrubbing! Devote your special attention to relationships that are strained and distant. Replace unhealthy habits with new ones like a quiet time with God each day, an exercise routine, or healthier foods to eat. Bring order into your family by checking your daily checking account balance and working toward getting out of debt. These heavier jobs are exhausting, but well worth the effort.
- **Give up what you don't need.** Every spring, our family takes boxes of used clothes to the local Goodwill or thrift stores that our kids have outgrown or we no longer need. Similarly, we all have life-long patterns that we've outgrown and that don't fit us anymore because we're maturing in Christ and becoming (hopefully!) wiser. Give up destructive patterns that aren't working and that hinder you from achieving your potential - procrastination, overeating or other addictions, working too hard and not taking enough time for recreation, isolating from others, worrying, holding a grudge, watching too much t.v. These are weights you don't need. Be set free. Getting rid of this excess baggage will bring lightness to your soul. To travel to where you want to go this year, you need to pack light!

After we do our spring cleaning, our home is in order and we feel good. The house is clean and everything's in place. We have accomplished a lot, and we can celebrate. Today do some "spring cleaning" and enjoy what you have accomplished!

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