



Tips & Trends

Autumn marks a great time to clear away clutter

Clutter is a concern for many homeowners. Clutter can gradually accumulate, and over time a home can turn from a welcoming respite to a claustrophobic place overwhelmed by items of little or no value.

Homeowners who have battled clutter in the past often find that it is most likely to accumulate over the winter, when frigid temperatures outside drive more people indoors. Spending more time indoors means more trash indoors. Newspapers and magazines might be easy to discard when the weather is warm, but a trip outside to discard such items takes less precedence when it must be made in below freezing temperatures.

The likelihood that even the cleanliest of homeowners might accumulate some clutter over the winter only highlights the importance of clearing a house of clutter in the fall. While clearing clutter can seem like an arduous task, the following tips can make the project much easier.

- * Clean one room or area at a time.
- * Invest in a paper shredder.
- * Decide to donate some items.
- * Put seasonal items away.
- * Tackle the hall closet.

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idea just what path their sixth daughter, one of their 12 children, would take along her own faith journey.

As Martha notes, she had to make her own personal commitment to follow the example Jesus provided for God's people before she could make plans to be in God's service. By the age of 10 she was well aware of the need to understand what it meant to be saved.

"When I was a child we had big tent revivals each year," she explains. "Inside the tent it was completely filled and two or three tiers of people stood around the tent, too. The year I turned 10, I waited for those revivals because I had determined to make my decision to follow Christ during the revival."

Martha remembers well the moment she was drawn to the front of the tent by the evangelist's invitation to surrender her life to God's will. Quietly going forward, she knelt beside others who sensed the same call.

"There might have been 20, maybe 30 of us kneeling at the front of the tent. I don't remember for sure," Martha says. "I do recall my aunt coming up behind me, saying, 'Pray, Martha! Pray!' I didn't know what to say. I couldn't think of anything to say, so after a few minutes on my knees I went back to my family and we went home."

For two or three evenings Martha and her family returned to the tent revival meetings. In spite of the fact that she felt ready to experience the salvation she had heard so much about, she found no change in her heart or her life.

"I had some girl friends who were chattering all about how they gave their life to Jesus and were saved," she tells. "I went forward each night, but just really didn't sense any change."

To Martha's surprise, her moment of salvation didn't take place in the revival tent. Instead, on a quiet evening at home, she found herself meditating on all she had seen and heard during the revival.

"My sister Alvina and I were washing dishes," Martha recalls. "We weren't talking. I was just thinking over all the things the preacher had said and thinking about the scripture verses he had used. Romans 10:9 and 13 had really caused me to stop and think. Those verses say that whosoever confesses with their mouth and believes in Jesus will be saved. In my 10-year-old heart I realized



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