

Garage Sale

By

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“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21

For the first time in our 23 years of marriage, my wife and I decided to have a Garage Sale. Our attic was getting to the point of being nominated for one of the hoarding reality shows, so we had to do something. The last time my attic looked this packed, I moved everything into a huge pile and paid someone to haul it all off. However, the last few years of economic difficulty have given us a greater appreciation for the value of money, so we decided to have a sale. I also thought it would be great to have people pay us to take away our junk.

I use the word “junk” loosely. As we sorted through so many items and memories, we actually had mixed emotions. Many of these items held sentimental value, for at one time, these were treasures to us. There was my late Great, great aunt’s favorite chair, which always reminded me of her and how much I loved her. There were baby items, fond memories of when our girls were small enough to fit in our arms. There were gifts we had received from loving family and friends and even gifts my wife and I had given each other. Then, there were many items which seemed worthless to us, but for some reason, we had felt compelled to save them in our attic.

Our garage and our driveway were filled with years of accumulated purchases. It didn’t seem possible that we could have this much excess in our life. Then, the people came. Masses of people from all walks of life descended upon our home. There were old and young, rich and poor, along with people of different ethnicities. They rummaged through our belongings, looking for something they needed or desired. Most could not afford to pay much and others were looking for a steal.

At first, we priced everything fairly high, trying to make some much-needed extra money for our family. Then, something special happened. We began to see the joy we could bring someone by helping them out. We helped one lady who was going to send a box of children’s shoes to Mexico. Another woman was a starving artist who was so

excited at some of the things she found in our driveway. Two brothers who own a remodeling business were elated to get some old paint and wood floor planks which we were going to throw away. One cute little chubby Mexican girl tried to pay me \$1 for a Strawberry Shortcake backpack with a big smile on her face. It took a while for her Dad to explain it to her when I told him it was free. One man, who had showed up early for the sale and had helped me move some tables out of the garage, was the recipient of several boxes of ceramic bathroom tiles. I saw such gratitude in this man's eyes. As we were giving one woman some free flower pots, we found out how she had lost her husband and brother-in-law within two weeks of each other. It was a story just like Ruth and her sister-in-law, Orpah, in the Bible. We got to spend some time talking about how God heals our broken hearts.

This was all so interesting to me. I was the one who never wanted to have a Garage Sale. "I don't want all these strangers coming to our house who don't want to pay anything for our stuff," my wife would have heard me say. Yet, in the midst of the people and the stuff, I saw a beautiful picture, worth more than anything we owned. As we opened our home and our heart these two days, many transactions took place. Many were blessed with treasures which hardly cost anything, and all were blessed with a smile and a friendly greeting. We were blessed by letting go of our belongings, even those which we held dear, and we were also blessed as we humbly received some money which people were glad to give.

It was a picture of community that I believe God intended. I often refer to Acts 2:42-47, where it talks about the Early Church. In verse 45, it says, "Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need." They met together often and blessed one another. They had everything in common, namely Christ. They knew He was the One who gave them everything they had to begin with, and He was the One who held everything together. So, they gave generously and loved freely.

After the sale was over and the remaining goods were taken away to Goodwill, it was wonderful to look at my clean, empty garage. I felt such a freedom in letting go of these items we were storing. More than that, I felt a warm glow as I thought of all the people who came in and out of our life those two days. I pray that they felt the love of Christ as they came to our sale. If they haven't found it already, I hope they find the greatest treasure one could ever find.

Many have been rummaging through life trying to find their treasure. They've looked high and low. They've been to sale after sale, looking for things only the world can offer. However, it seems to be a never-ending pursuit which never really satisfies. No

matter how much earthly treasure is amassed, it never seems enough and it never provides contentment. At the end of the street, at the end of one's self, there is a house. There is a sign in the front yard. It reads, "Jesus of Nazareth. King of the Jews." It is the home Jesus has prepared for us. He stands at the top of the driveway with His arms open wide. This is not a garage sale, but there is much treasure to be found. However, this treasure is free. Jesus offers new life to all who will come. This life is eternal, and is blessed with immeasurable abundance. This life provides peace and contentment. And this life is one which can be shared with others.

Lord, you are our treasure. Forgive us for looking for treasure everywhere else besides in You. Forgive us for making idols out of our earthly possessions, these things which will rot away. Lord, let us continue you to give our lives away to those around us, so we can find the true richness of life. In Jesus' name. Amen