

Our Old House Part 1 appeared in the Upper Room devotional books and e-mail devotionals in Oct. 2004.

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Here is the original version and Part 2 that was written in January 2005 and published later.

[http://www.upperroom.org/devotional/default.asp?start\\_pos=21&item\\_id=496135](http://www.upperroom.org/devotional/default.asp?start_pos=21&item_id=496135)

### Our Old House (Part 1)

I recently visited my childhood home that was in the final stages of being sold. The home was almost 70 years old and there were pipes leaking and other problems that required many of the inside walls to be torn down to make repairs. At one point the repairs were so extensive that we even thought of demolishing the house and just selling the bare land.

It was so depressing to see the home that was once so beautiful, filled with construction debris and with large holes in its walls and floors. It had taken a year to find a buyer and I kept thinking to myself, "Who would want to own such a sad looking piece of property?"

The new buyer arrived and began to show us all the things she planned to do to our old home. She had a vision of how it looked in its prime in the 1930's. The missing walls and floors that looked like expensive problems, to us, looked like simple repairs to her because she restored homes for a living. However, she explained that this home would not be a commercial enterprise but for her and her children to live in, so it would be a special project with all the loving care, financial resources and expertise she could give. She beamed with excitement and pointed out all the features of the home that we had taken for granted. Her excitement was infectious and she made us promise to come back to visit it when she had completed the restoration. As we left she thanked us profusely for selling the home to her. The restoration work that we had looked on as a burden and an impossible task, she accepted as a great adventure and a privilege.

We went away with a completely different attitude due to this woman's enthusiasm for our old home and the great potential she saw under the superficially gloomy surface.

I began to consider how similarly God sees our lives. He sees the great potential that is there. Our lives may have fallen into spiritual disrepair but He stands there waiting patiently to raise us to new heights of potential usage in His kingdom. He is the restoration expert. He is the master builder. He wants to take up residence in our lives, if we will allow Him. We may think things are hopeless and can never be fixed, while all the time He waits anxiously for us to give Him the opportunity to forgive, restore, heal, and bless.

1PE 5:10-11(NIV) "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen."

Prayer:

Lord, we know you were a carpenter here is your brief time on earth and are now the master craftsman of our souls. Take our lives and do your miraculous transforming work. Thank you for your love and forgiveness. Amen

Our Old House (Part 2)

Last year I shared with you a meditation about the home that I grew up in and the sad state of disrepair that it had fallen into. The new owner had been such an encouragement to us with all her plans to revive the home. Over the New Year's holiday, Sue and I had a chance to visit the house and when we left the house she turned to me and asked me when I was going to do the second part of the devotional.

The outside of the home was indeed changed with the weeds removed and the lawn looking neatly trimmed. Many of the trees and bushes had been pruned back and were already beginning to grow back even fuller. Some trees had suffered from neglect and disease had to be removed.

Inside the home, the changes were even more dramatic. Walls had new doorway entrances cut in them where no doors had existed before. One of the former closets was now a hallway with a door to the outside. Windows that had been covered with dark shades now had new window coverings that allowed you to see the sun outside. Like many older homes, our old home had rooms that had been periodically added on until you finally had a home that was really a disorganized patchwork quilt of rooms. Anyone looking around the home could see that there were exterior walls that were now interior walls and other architectural oddities that just did not make sense. When the home restorer was finished, you could not remember what the old house looked like as everything tied together just like it had always been that way. Truly no expense was spared in turning the sad old house into a beautiful home full of new possibilities. But she explained to us that the job was not really finished because although she had taken up residence there, she still had many more improvements planned.

It once again reminded me so much of my own life. Like most of us I would like to have the Lord work in my life but a complete restoration sounds too intrusive, too painful and too messy. I really wanted the Lord to maybe just add a patio cover, do a little remodeling of a bedroom or clean out a few closets in my life. I had hoped that I could just keep Him working in one end of the house and that He would be done in just a few days so it wouldn't inconvenience me too much and I could quickly get back to how things were before.

But the Lord said, "No I have something a bit more special in mind for you. I don't do patios, remodels or closet cleanings but only complete restorations. I'm going to do some

pruning on some areas in your life that have long been ignored and are not fruitful. I'm going to knock down some walls that you have put up and install some new doors beyond which you'll find my special plans for you. Then I'm going to put up some walls of protection for you. And I want to turn those hidden closets of your life into hallways where I can freely come and go. I'm going to tear down the dark curtains and open up the windows to let in the light of new life that I'll pour into your life and also so that others can see the work that I'm doing and marvel. I'm going to reorganize your entire life so it all makes sense and if you will trust me, I'm going to continue to do a good work in you until I come again someday.

PHP 1:3-6 I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Oh what a great Savior that is not content to just give us "curb appeal" but to do a great work from the inside out.

Prayer:

Lord, thank you for the good work You have begun in our lives. We know that even though You have taken up residence in our lives there is more work do be done. Have Your way in our lives and continue that good work. Thank you for your love and forgiveness. Amen

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