

A 10 Point Theology for Getting Rid of Clutter

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A friend of mine lost nearly everything she owned in a house fire. About a year later, I asked her about what she had learned through that trial. Looking back, she was surprised to remember all the people who expressed envy. "Don't take this the wrong way," they said, "but I really wish this would happen to me."

What were they thinking? That the clutter in their homes was out of control, and the only way to be free involved the fire department.

I can relate. My husband and I have reached the point in our lives where having fewer possessions is an attractive goal. Clutter causes us stress. I can't protect my husband from workplace frustration or my son from traffic or either of them from a thousand other irritations in life, but I can get rid of excess clutter and organize my home so that they can find the scissors and the tape on the first try.



Still, though, I am often snared by the promise of a better life through consumerism. We never have a shortage of items to purge during my annual sweep through our home. How else can I explain accumulating three drip coffee makers and a coffee press?

Here's what I preach to myself as I'm combing the house for items to give away:

1. Jesus said that life does not consist in the abundance of possessions. Luke 12:15
2. Spiritual life can be choked out by clutter, which is part of "the cares and riches of this life." Luke 8:14
3. God is pleased when we give things away cheerfully. 2 Cor. 9:7
4. Sharing our excess goods is one way to bear fruit in keeping with repentance. Luke 3:11
5. One of God's names is Jehova Jira – God who provides. If we give away something and end up *needing* it later, we can trust God to provide. Phil. 4:19
6. Giving to those in need stores riches for us in Heaven, and is an expression of love for the church. Luke 12:33
7. Sharing what we have pleases God. Hebrews 13:16
8. Everything we own has been given to us by God. We are only stewards of our stuff. Psalm 24:1
9. God is not a God of confusion, but of order (think about how this is exemplified in creation). An orderly home reflects God's character. Genesis 1
10. Hoarding goods "just in case" can be a way of trusting my stuff to keep me safe instead of my God. Psalm 31:6

Sometimes it helps to remember that one day I will be called to give up everything. No physical item will go with me to Heaven. There's nothing I own that I need to be perfectly happy and at peace with God—certainly not three drip coffee makers and a coffee press.

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