



When I surveyed my home at 9:30 pm on Tuesday, after a busy day of work followed by after school sports and church activities, this verse came to mind.

**“Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun”. (Ecclesiastes 3:11)**

I went to bed on Monday night with a relatively tidy home and now, less than 24 hours later, it was a complete disaster. *Everything* I had toiled to achieve the day before was destroyed, nothing was gained. I was chasing after the wind. **“Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless!” (Ecclesiastes 1:2)**

I got in motion to once again attempt to make sense of the chaos. As I loaded the dishwasher, signed permission slips, and dealt with the various piles of “stuff” on our Kitchen Island, my son came in and started telling us about some words which had been spoken at school that day, and how they had affected him and his friends. As we talked with him, my husband and I recalled several things which were said to us almost 30 years ago. Some of the comments, we realized, **STILL** have the power to make us feel angry, now, 3 decades later! Other words, which were spoken to convey hope and affirmation, continue to shape our faith, our personalities, our ability to cope and to dream and to set goals.

As I got ready for bed and mulled over our discussion, God gave me a new perspective on what had occurred in the last 24 hours. Some of the things which I put my hand to were definitely impermanent and would never last. Reality check to all of us women ... the house will never **STAY** clean and we shouldn't find this so surprising! On the other hand, I know that I said a lot of words in that same time period. Will some of them last in people's memories forever?

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that every word I speak is earth-shattering and profound. I'm sure that many of things which came out of my mouth were frivolous or simply factual and will be completely forgotten. Other comments, however, may be subconsciously absorbed by others because they expose my attitudes and opinions, and reveal how I live out my faith or lack of faith in God's goodness in all situations. Some words could have built people up and encouraged them to carry on. Others could have made them feel less loved, less secure, and less precious. How terrifying.

I don't want to forget this lesson, so I'm going to experiment with an idea. There are obviously many regular things that need to happen for my family to function, so I can't ignore the necessary but temporary items on my to do list. What I'm contemplating, however, is adding a new component to remind me of what is really important. I think my list could have three columns: "TO DO"/ "TO BUY"/ "**TO SAY**". What do you think?

As I create this, I'd love to hear some of your ideas for Column 3. How about starting with some of the words highlighted below...

"**Rejoice** in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by **prayer** and petition, with **thanksgiving**, present your requests to God. And the **peace** of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever is **true**, whatever is **noble**, whatever is **right**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **admirable**—if anything is **excellent** or **praiseworthy**—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you." Philippians 4:4-8

May the God of Peace be with You!

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