Published on *Happily Whole* (https://www.livinghappilywhole.com)

Prepare for a New Season with a Pure Heart

September 23, 2016, written by katie



Whether we're setting ourselves up for **success in the kitchen** [1] or readying our hearts and homes for a new life season [2] (ah hem…) preparation creates confidence, peace and far more productivity.

Benjamin Franklin once said, ***"By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail."*** I love that! Real, simple and sweet (just like these little treats).

When it comes to matters of the spiritual realm, God urges us to prepare diligently for things of life on earth and in eternity. By all wisdom in His Word, we can safely assume He's not sanctioning procrastination when it comes to answering our Biblical call to prepare for what's to come. I've gathered a bit of evidence from God's very breath:

- Proverbs 24:27 *"Prepare your work outside; get everything ready for yourself in the field, and after that build your house."*
- 1 Peter 3:15 *"But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,"*
- Mark 13:32-33 *"However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows. And since you don't know when that time will come, be on guard! Stay alert!"*

Wonderful words to urge us towards a *living an equipped life*!

Personally, the essence of me longs for living prepared. It's built into my beating heart. By nature, I need it. Certainly sometimes flying by the seat of my pants is much more fun! But mostly, my tendency to plan ahead and offer organization errs on the edge of driving those close to me crazy.

Logistically, life with a coordinated calendar, kitchen stocked for clean eating and **home systems offering** [3]greater sanity create opportunities for success for everyone living here. And, let's be honest, preparation makes for more joyful mornings and abundantly better bedtimes with kids of any age!

Now… I'm not living perfectly prepared. Just open certain closet doors and drawers to unleash my inconsistencies (or, familial lack of cooperation!). But there's one other area I must confess I was ill-prepared. And I felt the ramifications rear up against the consistently messy part of my heart. Problem is, when it comes to matters of the heart sometimes you just can't be ready for what's coming.

And recently I stood caught by surprise in my new season. After all the hard-heart-work I'd already done in healing and mustering up new hope, I got lost in **my second chapter** [4] living a life as a second-time wife. I thought I could walk into my wedded bliss equipped with old armor.

Now, I adore my sweet husband! I often experience moments of knee-buckling awe at how God introduced our souls in a way so smoothly neither Matt nor I could deny we were each other's match. In fact, this morning as I laid with my head on his chest and his arm draped around my shoulder, I felt God's grace and goodness in his embrace***. I still can't fathom how THIS happened to my heart and I was gifted a new start!***

But new starts don't remove old wounds or past walks. So when you're starting a new season, you must shake out the dust and get a little dirty! I didn't consider how our old lives would creep into our new home. (Thankfully those wonderful moments are powerful and often enough to remind me our blessings are far bigger than past burdens.) When I realized our bumps and bruises were coming from banging our wills and expectations together, we cracked open our independent hearts and began the process of post-wedding-preparation.

For me, I needed to surrender some [5]of what I brought with me. ***I'm not the same wife because this is a whole new life!*** I can't parent exactly as I'd planned. My home won't always look and feel the way I'd become independently accustomed.

Even more, I was UNPREPARED for blending our baggage. Do realize, not all baggage is bad! ***It's just the real deal of life all culminating into who we are today.*** It's the heavy stuff we carry from hard times, our outlook and attitudes established over years. It's patterns of parenting, methods of making schedules work, routines for filling self and soul needs, and unique approaches to creating calm in a culture of chaos.

So, yeah, I'm guilty as charged: ***Unprepared to surrender*** **both hand and heart ways** in a new love with a man filled with grace as he gives this second-time-wife all sorts of second chances.

Instead of backtracking I'm taking back my passion for preparation by prioritizing heart and soul coordination. ***Sometimes this simply means being prepared to let the little things go amidst all this bliss and blessed blending.***

Have you ever entered a new season with old expectations? Have you tried solving new stress with stale, old strategies? Ladies, please don't procrastinate! Instead, prepare in matters of the heart so you don't hit your head hard on a wall your baggage built up. ***This kind of heart and soul preparation will always require practice!***

I'm starting my post-wedding-preparation on my knees in prayer (LOTS AND LOTS of prayer), simplifying life by extracting unneeded activities and searching for ways to reclaim parts of me I want to keep. It's in those self-defining pieces of me where I find God's hand hard at work, showing me how I'm new and pruning other areas away.

I'm approaching my marriage from a different angle, knowing we're blessed even by our baggage! After over a year, I'm no longer procrastinating. I'm releasing old ideas and expectations to mold my life as a different wife. I'm giving God the coordinating job to prepare **what's happening in my heart** **[6]**.

Now, think about your life. Where can you prepare better prepare your heart for what's to come? Do tell....

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