

It's Not A Mess, It's My Creative Décor

By Dr. James L. Snyder

The greatest joy I have every morning is not only getting up but also stepping in my office. I step inside, pause for a moment, and look around at all the books on my shelves. I have almost 10,000 books. And yes, I read every one of them. Well, except for commentaries and dictionaries.

I love looking through all my books, and most of them, I know where I got them. Every once in a while, I'll take one down and spend some time reading it. What would I do without my books?

If you saw my desk, you would not be able to find it. My desk is such a mess of papers and folders, my laptop, and other things. But I love every bit of it.

When I retired, I had to have a room built at the back of our house for my office. I think it was one of the best things I've ever done. Walking into that office is a wonderful experience

for me.

Some days, I look at all of the books that I have written and remember working on that manuscript. I have over 30 books at the present time.

Every once in a while, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage will come into my office while I'm working. She will step in, pause, look all around my office and then say, "What a mess you have."

I will look up to her with a big smile on my face and reply, "Where do you see any mess?"

With sort of a grunt in her voice, she says, "Just look all around this office. It's a mess everywhere. I don't know how you can work in this environment?"

"It's not a mess," I respond to her, "it is my creative décor."

I'm sure she's never heard that phrase before, especially coming out of my mouth.

Several times, I walked into her Craft Room and noticed how pristine it is. When I walk in, I get a bit dizzy, and I'm not sure how to get out. Such organization is not my cup of tea.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is known for her organizing skills. If you want something organized, call her.

I caught her once in my office trying to organize some things. I had to gently calm her down and walk her out of my office and set her in her chair.

My philosophy is, if you can't find something, you don't need it. And if you need something, you'll find it.

I can tell how many times I couldn't find what I wanted at that time. I have learned to stop looking for it and get back to work. When I do that, all of a sudden, I find what I need. I'm not sure how that works, but in my office, it works.

Unlike The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, I do not have to have everything organized. And the word "messy" is not part of my vocabulary.

Often, I will ask The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, "What do you mean by messy?"

Oh, she will go on a long tirade explaining to me what she considers messy. I listen, but I do not comprehend what she's saying. Messy is a part of me.

Not too long ago, while she was in her Craft Room, I peeked in and said, "Would you like me to organize your Craft Room?"

She stared at me for a moment and then said, "I think I'm quite all right here. There is nothing here that you can do to organize this room. Just go to your messy office and get back to work."

I chuckled all the way down the hall towards my office. What would

her room look like if I organized it? I'm pretty sure she would not be able to find anything she needed for any of her crafts.

Whereas in my "messy office," I can find anything I want. If I can't find it, I don't need it. And if I don't need it, I'm not going to worry about it. Life can bring you a lot of lemons, but I would rather have ice tea.

Sometimes, as I walk around in my office looking at my library, I see a book I haven't seen for a long time. With great delight, I go to my chair and begin reading it.

All the books in my office have created a beautiful display that I enjoy every day. Since my retirement, I can go in and out of my office as I please.

Recently, both The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I had the flu. All week I wore my pajamas when I went into my office. I

could go in and out as I pleased, dressed as I pleased.

As I was sitting in my office, thinking about this, I was reminded of a verse of scripture that addressed it. The Apostle Paul said, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

According to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, my office may be a mess. That's not the important issue. The thing that must be organized is my service to the Lord. That is the only thing that is crucial in my everyday life.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail james-snyder51@gmail.com, website www.jamessnyderministries.com.

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