

Hi KC Parents!

My kitchen got painted a bright white this week and I am enjoying that feeling of a clean slate. The room is bigger, fresh, and spotless. It's as if I can even breathe more deeply. I love it!

As I was pondering the joyful feeling of seeing my kitchen sparkle, I was reminded of a time as a teen when I felt my soul was handed a clean slate.

There was a party I attended that took a nosedive and went south quickly. It ended abruptly when the police showed up and hauled us all off to jail. I promise I was innocent (kinda). Nonetheless, it was the worst, scariest, and the biggest trouble I had ever been in or experienced in my life.

My father picked me up from the PD, and as we drove home he pummeled me with questions. I lied my way through the conversation, and the more I lied the more convicted and miserable I became. As the day progressed, the Holy Spirit—yes sweet Jesus, was with me even in this mess. He was urging me to come clean, however, I was too terrified to approach my dad.

I finally told the Lord that if he really wanted me to just tell the truth, that he would have to open the door because I didn't have the courage to do so myself. Within seconds, I heard my dad calling my name to come to talk with him. He asked me point blank if I had been truthful with him. I broke down into tears and poured out my guts! I confessed everything I'd been involved in and all the wrong things I had done, including all the rules I had broken. I also told him that I had recently given my life to the Lord and that I truly wanted to change the course I had been on.

I held my breath with my eyes closed, expecting the worst—afraid of what would be my sentence of punishment. The room was quiet and I opened my eyes only to find my dad leaning so close to me, with tears in his eyes. He looked straight into my eyes and said, "I couldn't love you more than I do right now".

WHAT?? A rush of relief, love, and total freedom swept over me. My soul experienced the grace of God and the gift of having a clean slate handed to me, through my father.

It was a perfect example of the grace Jesus offers to us every day. My kitchen will not stay clean and fresh. Every day there will be splashes and spills marking the walls. My decor will break or get greasy. My grandkids will certainly do their damage as they run in circles around our dining table.

Our souls need regular refurbishing... and thank God, he knows and understands that so well.

"The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; **his mercies** never come to an end; they are **new every morning**; great is your faithfulness". Lam. 2:22-23

Every day, Jesus hands us a fresh clean slate of mercy, forgiveness, and grace. We get a do-over of all the messes we made the day before. As we receive this "white as snow" gift, we have an opportunity to pay it forward and offer that same grace to our families, friends, and church community.

With that in mind, who can you hand a clean slate to this day?

Blessings,
Viv Stone