

Movers & Shakers

**Martha, Martha.
Did You Move the Furniture Again?**

by Beth Foreman

I like routines. I like the structured schedules of life simply because that makes me feel comfortable. But every so often, it's good to move the furniture.



Okay, you know the story in Luke where Mary sits at Jesus' feet while her sister Martha scurries around serving fruits and drinks, wiping tables, and scooting chairs? I've often imagined the scene before Jesus and his disciples arrived ...

"No, Lazarus, scoot the table just a little to the left," Martha probably frowned with the seriousness of it all. He obeyed, huffing and puffing. Martha studied the setting for a moment. "No. On second thought, I think we need the table moved to the other side of the room, up toward the doorway where there's more light."

Lazarus sighed. He grabbed one end of the heavy wooden table while Martha grabbed the other end. Together, they shuffled across the room. "Hmmm ..." Martha wiped her brow and contemplated the new placement while Lazarus prayed silently that she would be content.

"Just ... grunt ... a touch ... grunt ... more to the ... grunt ... right," she mumbled as she shoved her hip against the table. "That's better," she declared as she scanned the room again to be sure.

Lazarus slipped on his sandals and started to retreat. "Wait a minute, dear brother," Martha stopped him. "I still want to move that plant and those two chairs and the footstool ..."

Yes, indeed. If you're one of us — a Mover and a Shaker — you'll be chuckling right about now and recalling your furniture-moving experiences. You'll be reminiscing about the time you moved the silverware, the love seat, and the rocking chair all in one breath.

And if you live with a Mover and Shaker, you're shaking your head and bumping into the furniture in the dark.

It's genetic. My mother moved furniture seasonally. I move furniture monthly. My daughter wants to rearrange her bedroom weekly. We can't help it. Oh, I'm sure psychologists would love to analyze the cause of this behavior. Perhaps it's a need for control?

Nah, it's just a cheap way to redecorate. Like all Movers and Shakers, I like a little change every once in a while. It makes everything look new and different.

When I pull the sofa away from the wall, it doesn't look so faded and rumpled. Suddenly it's fresh and new. Gran's rocking chair is fun to have in the family room, but next spring maybe I'll try it in the kitchen. Last week the silver vase was on the kitchen table. Now it's in the bathroom. Sometimes it's big things. Sometimes it's little things.

Inside the comfort of my home, I'm a pretty good Mover and Shaker. But get me outside my home? *Ouch*.

In the past year, I've been Moved and Shaken. I'm the old sofa that was moved to another room since we relocated 1,500 miles from what had been our home for twenty-plus years. It was where my kids lost their first teeth, memorized their multiplication tables, raced down the stairs on Christmas morning, and learned to love Jesus. It was where my husband and I built a home, a business, a life. It was where I could shop, laugh, cry, and pray with dear friends. It was home. It was comfortable.

Now, I'm a bit uncomfortable.

But it's not a bad thing. For the first time in years, I'm taking a fresh look at everything from grocery store aisles and dentist chairs to next-door neighbors and church pews.

When I walk into church, I don't see many familiar faces yet, but I look around and wonder who might become a new friend, a prayer partner. I read the bulletin and see fresh opportunities for service in ways I've never before considered. I've been sitting on different sides of the church — gasp! — and after I get over the initial fear that I might be usurping someone's regular pew, I bow my head and pray to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit because *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever* (Hebrews 13:8 ESV).

Don't get me wrong. I like routines. I like the structured schedules of life simply because that makes me feel comfortable.

But every so often, it's good to move the furniture.

It just might give me a new view of His perfect throne, His grace, His peace. **Q**