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Proverbs 3:6 ESV.  Sometimes, even with the best intentions, our paths are not straight. Twenty or more years ago, my husband lay new flooring in our son's bedroom. It looked amazing when he finished, and we all rejoiced. However, unknown to me and I assume him, there was a problem. Unbeknownst to either of us, two major flaws would create a very big headache down the road for me. The room had a door that led to the outside, but there was no eave covering that door. Over the years, the rain caused the door to deteriorate, and the house began to settle. I didn't realize it at the time, but dampness began to erode the subfloor through the door casing. Not only that, but moisture was continually wicking up from the concrete to the subfloor as well. Long after Darryl passed away, this room became my private nightmare.  At first, I lived in denial. I kept the door shut, and with life happening, I tried to forget the problem. The room felt damp, so I borrowed a dehumidifier, and it worked for a while. Then I found earthworms crawling around inside the room! Denial was definitely not working. My friend Bill came to visit to fix issues in my bathroom. Tiles were loose in the bathtub area and we discovered mildew and rot 1/2 up the wall! I was so blessed as those areas were fixed and celebrated as this load was lifted. In Bill's last days of visiting, he replaced the outside door, but unfortunately didn't have time to put the trim back, so I thought we are good, I don't have to worry about the room now. But inwardly, I knew it probably wasn't really fixed, so I asked many handyman/contractors if they would come and check it out. But none of them had the time or inclination to do what I described as a minor job. Our friend David Freeman also fixed one moldy area. We celebrated, thinking things were finally fixed. But alas, it wasn't enough.  Years went by and I knew we still had a problem. I kept praying, asking the Lord for help. I knew this room needed help before it affected the rest of the house. This past December, I asked a young contractor from our church if he would come and check it out. To my joy, he accepted the challenge! So much demolition took place to fix the problem that began years before. Apparently there was not enough or the right vapor barrier installed when Darryl put in the subfloor. Over the years, the wood absorbed moisture from the concrete. It took a while for the dampness to work its damage. It reminds me of the subtleness of sin...causing death in increments!  I had to move from denial to acknowledgement. It was hard. I think it is the same with our personal weaknesses. We try to cover up the problem. (I used a lot of damp rid, tea tree oil and baking soda!) But these only delayed the right solution. I finally told Ryan, my contractor, "we have to do whatever it takes to remedy the problem." It was devastating to watch the deconstruction. I realized part of my delay was having to admit that Darryl might have made a mistake when he put the floor in. He was long gone, so I couldn't ask him. I couldn't remember what or how it was done. All I knew was we were in a mess. I had to forgive him for leaving me this mess! Ryan used his knowledge and experience to make sure we did not have a repeat of the situation.  He took out the door and replaced it with a slider. He tore out the outside brick siding after he discovered there was no vapor barrier between it and the wall to prevent continued dampness wicking in. We polished and sealed the now exposed concrete so no more water damage can occur. It took him several months and ate into some of his other job commitments because there was so much more work that we expected we had to do. He told me upfront he didn't tape, mud, or d0 finish work. I appreciate every bit of his expertise, time and energy he spent on this project. I am grateful for God's provision to cover the labor and expenses.  I had to figure out the next step. The damage was corrected, but the room was still not usable. More prayer and crying out for His help. A new fellow, Kenny, started attending my daughter's life group. He was a handyman/contractor needing work. He was God's provision, along with Becca's dad and sister, who painted the interior. My grand girls painted the new exterior and last Saturday, we re-located my office. It is so bright and amazing. You would never know its previous state.  Friends, is there any area in your life where denial is trying to cover up areas of damage? Emotional? Spiritual? Or even physical? We often follow Adam and Eve's cover up plan, don't we? Maybe it's shame or fear that keeps us from acknowledging the true situation. Part of my fear had to do with I didn't know what to do. Ignorance and fear of the unknown costs or hiring the wrong person who would take advantage of that ignorance helped me delay dealing with the situation. I am so grateful for God's prodding to deal with the mess. It took courage and ownership to look at how bad it really was to keep seeking solutions. The emotional cost of living with the fear of the unknown was worse than the truth of the situation. I am free from that fear and it is wonderful.  As I leaned into Him, He led me to the straight path of correction. He does that with our soul as well. Acknowledging Him in this situation was the best thing I could ever do. Listening to the Holy Spirit prompts, no matter in what area, always pays off. The sooner we respond, the better and easier it will be. Learning to listen in the physical can help train our understanding of spiritual and emotional ways as well.  Father, thank you for helping us walk on your straight paths. I am so grateful you knew how to help bring solutions to this overwhelming (to me) situation. I ask you to help us learn how to acknowledge you in every path, not just the overwhelming ones. Your ways are always best. In Jesus' Name, amen. |  |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | | | |