



Scrambled

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Lately, order has turned into chaos. My neat plans have been disrupted. From the small to the big, my tidy way of addressing the world has been disturbed. As a simple example, on my computer desktop, I store documents that I will need to access frequently. I group them in little sections according to subject matter by dragging the icons together. Each time I unplug my laptop from the large monitor on my desk, however, it scrambles all the icons and puts them in no order at all. When I plug back into the monitor, the order is restored. For those times when I'm just working from the laptop though, I have to squint and frown at my jumble of icons to find the one I want. Let me know if there's a solution to that.

This past Sunday afternoon, I had great plans to run errands with my daughter. We discussed the list of where we needed to go and a route that would be efficient. We loaded the car in preparation. Intending to drop a bunch of discarded ceiling lights and sconces at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, we carefully placed each one in the back. Then, there was the ceiling fan...a big ceiling fan with long, attached blades. It wouldn't fit in the hatch back no matter which angle I tried. It wouldn't fit in the back seat either. I didn't want to detach the blades because that would mean more work to reattach them. So, I decided to simply hold the fan in my lap, while my daughter drove. Though I had the bulk of it on my lap, the motor housing rested on the car's gear box. One blade crossed my daughter's lap, and one crossed her upper chest, threatening to decapitate her were we to stop suddenly. Her arms had to go at a cockeyed angle to reach the steering wheel, but off we set, deciding to go to the ReStore first to get rid of this beast.



Did you know that all ReStores are closed on Sunday? Yup. We were met with an empty parking lot and a big sign warning that we were under surveillance and should NOT drop items after hours. So, we turned back and eventually found a thrift store willing to accept it. I only knocked the car into neutral once.

Every errand on the list had to be changed or abandoned for one reason or another (a forgotten receipt, a missed return deadline, early closing hours). We had a choice. We could have grown more and more frustrated and grumpy. Or, we could reset. We chose the latter and eventually all but one of our errands were done.

Next week, we will start our Lenten journey. For some, that will mean intentional plans for fasting, almsgiving, and prayer. Good intentions, like a car loaded with ceiling lights and a giant fan, will get us part way down the road. More planning, however, will increase the chances of getting to our destination. Shortcuts might seem expedient, but they won't be beneficial in the long run. I would have been much better off by taking the time to detach the fan blades. Along the way, we will likely need to reset and adjust. We don't abandon our journey, but we might need to go a different route. That's okay. Like Jesus, we will set our face toward Jerusalem, knowing the journey will not be easy, but it will be necessary.