

I write today's blog with a divided heart. My grandson, Alec, is turning ten years old next week but we're celebrating today so their momma could be here with us. We're also planning on having a lunchtime celebration so my other son, who works third shift, and his girlfriend can join us as well. Everything is ready, cake is bought, food prepared. But now that we've removed the jungle of bushes and plants from the front yard, and I can actually see the front porch, I would rather go to Hobby Lobby!

The lunchtime party just kind of happened for the convenience of others, but I can't wait to buzz on out of here after all is said and done. There is a clean slate out front, and the treasures waiting in one of my favorite stores are beckoning me to come and see what is new. I haven't gone to Hobby Lobby in ages, it seems. The house we just left was trimmed down to the bare minimum so I could sell it. I had to deny my 'shopping therapy' urges and stay strong. That was hard because I have dubbed Hobby Lobby my happy place. I can spend hours in there, just looking around. Unfortunately, I always seem to come out of there at least \$60 poorer than when I went in. It can be a danger zone for me.

I know the condition of our world right now makes the idea of shopping at Hobby Lobby insignificant in comparison, but I also know our Lord desires that we enjoy this life we have been given. He wants us to give to the poor, help our neighbors whenever we can. But in Ecclesiastes, King Solomon rightly said, "A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment?" (Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 NIV).

But Jesus also said, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19-21 NIV).

There is a balance to how we spend our time and money. Even in going to Hobby Lobby, I can still honor my Lord. I know there is nothing I 'need' there, but I believe making our home inviting and comfortable to others can be extremely important. If we put God first in all things, especially our money, his blessings seem to open up new possibilities, whether they be monetary or relational.

When shopping for my home, I seek out those things that bring me joy, but I weigh the cost and durability for future use. I also try to be frugal because nothing is permanent. If it would break my heart for something to be destroyed, say, from a tornado, then I don't want to buy it. Everything on this earth is temporary, my friends. Don't set your heart on the 'things' of this world.

So now, after my second cup of coffee, I need to get dressed for the day. It's time for breakfast, a few little chores here and there, then a birthday party lunch for a sweet little boy who has been looking forward to this event for 364 days. I will be glad to let he and his brother enjoy the company of their mom while I venture out to my happy place. I look forward to some time on my own, and enjoying the blessings I have received from THE ONE who owns it all anyway.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo

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