

Happy Sunday night. It's the beginning of a new week, and I believe I'm ready for it. These days, I do a heart-check on myself every day. I mentioned my bag of stones last week...Well, I find it necessary to check my mind and my heart to make sure all is well. I carried that stuff with me for so long, it's like learning how to walk again after surgery, or how to chew food without braces. It's a good kind of different, but I never want that stuff to weigh me down again, so my daily checks are a necessity.

I was able to go to church today for the first time in a month. I've been watching services on my television each week. It's just not the same. I love my Jesus music, and I love to see God's people gathered together, lifting him up in praise and worship. Today I was especially blessed to learn how our church has been sending many to Israel, specifically to witness to the people there. Please continue to pray for peace in Jerusalem.

I know it can seem so hard to praise and find joy in everyday things. I get discouraged at times, especially at the grocery store lately. I cannot believe the prices of food right now. Doesn't the bible talk about a loaf of bread costing a bag of gold? Or was that DC Talk, in "I Wish We'd All Been Ready"? I think both. The birth pains that Jesus spoke about are happening all around us, I know. Raising my two grandsons scares me, being so unsure of what their future will be like.

If I choose to, I can get caught up in the 'what if's'. But Jesus has told us time and time again in scripture not to worry about tomorrow. Not to worry about what we will eat or what we will drink. Or what we will wear. He also said do not fear the one who can kill the body, because they cannot kill the spirit, or the hope that lives in us through Jesus Christ. I know that my hope has never been, nor will it ever be found in the things of this world.

I simply want to offer encouragement today. The holidays are upon us, so we may get lost in the hustle and bustle of the season, but do not neglect the things of God. Remember why we celebrate Thanksgiving, and yes, why we celebrate Christmas. Enjoy time with your family and friends. Be a blessing to someone else. Teach your children about our loving Father in Heaven.

But also, be on your guard. Be diligent in your faith walk, asking God for discernment in all things. Time is growing short, and the enemy knows this. The signs of the times are closer than they have ever been, so we must be careful, not only in spreading the Gospel with more passion and urgency than ever before, but to also prepare our hearts and our families for that glorious day when Jesus comes to take us home.

I can only say that God has pressed this message on my heart, and in obedience, I want to do what he says. I pray blessings upon you and your loved ones this week. Watch and pray, without ceasing. And remember, you are never alone.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo

