

With three grown children, and the youngest turning twenty-six this October, you would think I would be an expert on the 'empty nest' phase of life. These last two weeks I thought I was going crazy, as usual. As is normal for me, I feel great one day, and then without warning, I feel like my heart had been ripped out. I thought I had purged most of the garbage that has been my biggest barrier for the last three years, so I was really frightened that I was destined to be in despair forever.

But as is also the norm, my Lord interceded for me and showed me that for the first time in my life, I am truly experiencing empty nest syndrome. My grandsons who live with me are visiting with their grandpa, my ex-husband, for the summer. My three grown kids have their own lives to live, and I am finally coming to terms with being completely and utterly by myself. I don't make that statement with a "woe is me" attitude. On the contrary, I feel like I'm finally getting it. I am learning to be content in whatever situation the Lord places me, and I praise him with all my heart.

I have never experienced an empty nest until now. When we obtained custody of our two grandsons in June of 2017, my youngest son was just finishing high school and preparing for college. In September of the same year, my sister passed away, and was also raising her two grandchildren. Of course, my great niece and nephew came to live with us for a while. After about a year, they went to stay with family on their grandfather's side, but we still had two more boys in our home to raise.

Now that they are away for what will be about one more month, I am left to deal with the emotions of my chicks having left the nest. Granted, many couples can face this part of life together, learning how to live without children all over again. I am faced with doing this alone, by my own choice, and again, I praise my Lord for stepping in to be my comfort. As I am doing often lately, I feel like I have grown up just a little bit more. It is such a relief when I realize the cause of my troubled heart, making it so much easier to get past the hurt, and realize I am just experiencing more growing pains that are necessary for the next stage in my life.

I have found craft projects I love, so I've been working with those. I love to do small things around the house to make my house more of a home. And now, that same young man who was headed off to college earlier, is getting married in October of this year. I am enjoying looking for ways I can help and contribute to this exciting time in his future, and to embrace a new member into my family. Loneliness always finds its way into my mind, but I'm getting better about accepting it and pressing on. To my precious Jesus, be the glory.

Today, our church sermon was exactly what I needed to hear and reiterates exactly what I have taken on as my philosophy for my own life. I confess, I will never look at Tigger from Winnie the Pooh the same again. Please take a few moments and watch the sermon from my church from this morning, June 23, 2023. It is truly wonderful.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo

[THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH - SUMMER AT HIGHLANDS - CHIRS HODGES \(youtube.com\)](#)

