

Lately, I feel like I've been living in the Twilight Zone, as I wake to each day, not sure how I'll respond to my own reality. I've always been an open book on this website, and I think that's better than pretending that I don't feel what I feel. Since my grandsons have been visiting with their grandpa for the summer, I have experienced what true loneliness feels like, more than ever before. I am most definitely feeling the pain that comes from having an empty nest, to be sure.

Days before the 4th of July, neighbors had been setting off their fireworks all around me, and my poor little dog, Lucky, had been hiding in the corner, shaking like a leaf. Just when I thought the noise had died down, he sensed the sounds before I even heard them. I was thinking he was crazy, and then I started to hear the faint explosions too. This poor little guy must have been through something traumatic in his first few years of life. I've never had a little dog so fearful of fireworks. He is by my side constantly, like Velcro. I confess, I am grateful for his company.

We left what I considered to be 'home' for over twenty years to live here, and it has not been easy. I do believe it was time to make a change, but when one has been alone for what seems like forever, I can't help but wonder if I made another terrible mistake by moving. Then again, after a childhood of moving way too often, I know firsthand, you can't go back either. I know I need to make the best of it, but the child in me wants to hide in my room and cry.

To my own dismay, I feel like I'm complaining all the time. Perhaps I am, but my friends, the struggle is real, and sometimes it feels like it will never end. I know there are many others who understand what I'm saying. The irony is knowing there are so many others in the same boat, if we could just find each other and possibly provide comfort to one another, things wouldn't seem so hard.

I know how truly blessed I am, so to feel anxious or even unhappy with my circumstances, makes me seem ungrateful. I am so very grateful for how God has blessed me. I know our life-lessons will keep coming until we're taken home. One recent lesson that I have repeated to myself often, is that **if the Lord does nothing more for me on this side of Heaven, because of the cross and his sacrifice, I have all that I need, and I will still praise Him.** He owes me nothing, and I owe Him everything. I hope you will pin this on your heart, and not my expressions of woe.

Last night, for about the third time now, I watched season 4 of "The Chosen", and in the last episode after Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, the two of them were discussing Jesus' future. Jesus' heart was so heavy because of the disciples still 'not getting it,' and because of what he knew he was going to endure very soon. They quoted scripture from Isaiah, how the Messiah will be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; despised and rejected by men. I imagine there was a tremendous heaviness in Jesus' heart during that time, yet he laid it all aside and pursued the Father's will anyway.

My dearest friend once shared with me how she thought in her own circumstances, things have not turned out as she would have hoped, and she believed there would always be a heaviness around her life. Her words described exactly how I was feeling. She loves the Lord with all that she is but honestly expressed the reality of her situation. I guess that's what I'm trying to convey here.

Just this morning, another dear friend shared with me a very similar description of her current life events. She too is having to endure circumstances beyond her control but is also certain of her eternal home. My heart aches today for me, and my dear friends. We will endure, we will wake tomorrow if God allows, but we will continue to carry our heaviness as well. That's just the way life goes, isn't it?

In Jesus' last days as a human on this earth, he carried a tremendous heaviness with him, but he pressed on. I feel honored to be in the company of my precious friends, and our Lord and Savior. The cross and His sacrifice will always be enough, and yes, I will still praise Him.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo



He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. (Isaiah 53:3 NIV)