

I can't believe I'm back in the month of January so soon. It feels like it was just a few months ago when I was holed up with my grandsons from a heavy snow, feeling so close to going crazy. They say life turns on a dime, and I am living proof that this is true. Between last year and now, I have gone through numerous changes and milestones.

I wrote another book, and had it published; I found a new church home; my baby boy was married in October; I had a house built and the boys and I moved in on December 30th. Lots of 'stuff' filled the moments in between, but I can say with a full heart that God remained faithful to us throughout the year. The year had its bumps and detours, but I managed to stay on course somehow.

We're only three days into the new year, and I'm mourning the loss of Wayne Osmond. Wayne was the second oldest of the five performing Osmond Brothers, including Alan (the oldest), Merrill, Jay, and Donny. I'm not going to lie... I don't know how I'll react when and if Donny passes before I do. My love and respect for the Osmond family goes way beyond my adoration as a young girl. They were my escape from my own family, and their music was my sanctuary.

I don't know enough about the Mormon faith to support or dispute the idea that many consider it to be cult-like. All I can say is the Osmond family continually shared their faith in a God I didn't know, but they made me want to know him. They seemed to hold a very special secret for what is needed for a family to survive; to love each other. I wanted that too. Wayne's passing hurts like I've lost a brother.

Wayne was only seventy-three. I'm not that far behind him, so it tends to make one assess their life. I don't know... There's something about January that also makes me want to assess my life. "What did I do in the past year that was good? What did I do that could have been done better? Where did I fail?" Oh yeah, I always have kind of hated January as well, so I have to keep that in the back of my mind while I reflect.

I confess, I have been praying all December to not fear January. The grayness of the month has always been like a dark cloud for me. But this year, I've moved into my very own home. My job is good, and we have all we need, and most of what we want. I have been so blessed and have so much to be thankful for. I think what I fear most are the old voices lurking behind the clouds, just waiting to attack when I'm feeling vulnerable. The enemy knows my weaknesses all too well and has no problem hitting me between the eyes with them. I will continue to pray for strength.

I think my biggest regret from 2024 and moving into 2025, has to do with my relationships with my grown children. I've had some hard lessons this past year, trying to understand and accept how the family dynamic has changed from when I was younger. I moved to where I am to be closer to my grown sons and for my grandsons to be closer to their mom, my daughter. Things just haven't turned out like I thought they would.

I think we all see things from different generational standpoints, or at least that's what I'm trying to tell myself. After multiple disagreements, usually between me and one of my sons, I have literally become gun-shy, and I'm afraid to reach out to them, for fear of causing further misunderstandings. Ironically, I am told that I can contact them any time, or if I need anything, to just let them know. Past experiences have caused me to lay low and let them live their lives. Although I have discovered that I am much stronger than I ever thought possible, a part of this mother's heart is broken, because I can't help but feel like they could care less whether I'm around or not.

If God had allowed me to look into the future to see what my move here would bring, I probably would not have moved to start with. I believe there is a reason for my being here though. I really don't care 'where' I live, and I am very happy in our new home. My grandsons and I are just doing our thing. I would be lying if I said I don't feel lonely at times. I believe the loneliness I'm referring to has more to do with my grown children. The possibility of another mate is still on my wish list, but only if he has God's seal of approval. As time goes by, the benefits of being single are becoming more clear.

I have decided that my life is God's anyway. I hope to get the boys through school and to help them start their adult lives. After that, only God knows. A little cottage alongside the Irish sea is sounding better and better. I do have regrets that many things in my life didn't turn out the way that I had hoped. I believe I tried to do everything with the best of intentions. I sincerely have tried to do my best. Life just didn't always cooperate with my best laid plans. As I've said before, if I have nothing else, what Jesus did for me (and you) on the cross is enough.

I pray that your January is cloud/voice-free, and that you will have a blessed 2025. If you don't have a deep and personal relationship with Jesus, there is no better time than right now to change that.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo