

This has been one of those weeks where I have been full of questions... about everything. Take this blog, for example. I've asked God if I should keep writing and sharing my heart. When I go back to the beginning, to when I started, I felt led to write my thoughts and experiences, first of all, hoping to point others to Jesus. As the years have passed, I also want to offer encouragement to others, as we try to live our lives here on earth.

My motive hasn't changed, but I'm not sure about who is actually reading it. God expects me to plant seeds. He says he'll do the watering and growing. All I can do is be obedient to what I've been told to do. He hasn't given me reason to think he wants me to quit writing. I can't help but wonder why at times.

If I'm honest, I'm aware of other things in my life that are causing me to second guess everything I'm doing. My grandsons and I had some pretty good conversations this past week while driving them to school each day. We all agreed that each of us misses Tennessee very much. The boys loved their schools, and I have friends there that I've known over twenty years. I have never felt more physically alone in my life since we moved here. Ironically, and the boys don't understand this, I feel like we were supposed to move here.

I came at the beckoning of my son, who really seemed to need my help. I assured myself that I was ready for a new start and was needed by my son. I hadn't felt needed for a very long time. I was also hoping both of my sons could help with Cason and Alec; be good male role models for them and take them to places that men and boys like to go. The best laid plans don't always work out, so here we are. On August 5<sup>th</sup>, we will have lived here for two years. It has not been an easy road, but if I'm honest, I don't know what an easy road is.

There are things happening within my children's generation that I truly don't understand. I guess I really am getting old, sounding like my mother or my grandmother here. But truly, we have raised a selfish and entitled generation, haven't we? I can remember thinking how grateful I was to be hired for a job, hoping I could earn enough respect from my employer to be able to keep that job. This next generation is more inclined to express how their employers should be thankful that they are willing to work for them. And forget about giving any kind of notice before deciding to quit.

Differences in opinions has gone from having respectful disagreements to being the source of a toxic relationship. You are free to wipe that person out of your life, no matter the history involved, or consideration of what that 'emotional removal' does to the other person. If I don't meet your criteria of what it takes to be in your life, it is perfectly acceptable for you to sever all ties, because I am in fact, toxic to your well-being. There was a time when people could be forgiven for their mistakes, and honoring your parents meant something.

Personally speaking, I believe I have been removed from the lives of those I cherish so very deeply. I'm way past the broken heart. I have apologized and have tried to atone for the many, many mistakes I've made. I am still pleading with God to show me if there is anything I've missed, something else where I still need to seek forgiveness. I am at a loss. I am left with the only conclusion I know. I (reverently) fear we are living in the last days, as described in scripture:

***"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."***  
***(Matthew 10:21 NIV)***

***"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— a man's enemies will be the members of his own household."*** ***(Matthew 10:34-36 NIV)***

The world is a crazy place, my friends. There is a lot of ugly to be seen, but I choose to believe there is always hope, even when we are left to seek it out in our loneliness. For whatever reason, my Lord has chosen me to withstand many trials and life events that I may never understand. I'm not trying to say I'm special in that way. Far from it. I know many who have had worse ordeals than I could even fathom. I just believe it is my calling to share the hope He gives to all of us through Jesus, even while in the middle of our trials.

Today, my heart is grieved because I can't seem to resolve whatever is wrong within my family. But as I have said before, and I will say until the day Jesus comes or I die, this world is not my home. The things of this world are so fleeting and temporary. Yes, I believe I will know my children in Heaven assuming they will be there. But it won't be the same as our relationship here on earth.

After Jesus told his disciples ***"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth..."*** above in Matthew 10:34-36, he continued on with the following verses:

***"Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it." (Matthew 10:37-39)***

No matter what is happening in this world, or even in my life, I pray I will always choose Jesus.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo