

These past few weeks I've been more purposeful about spending time outside, either to sit still and take in the sights and sounds around me, or to play ball with Lucky. I spend a lot of time inside since I work from home, and it is so easy for time to pass without coming up for air. Now that my backyard is fenced, I don't walk Lucky as often as I used to, but I know even he needs a change of scenery every now and then.

I cannot underestimate the benefits of taking in a bit of fresh air and feeling the sunshine on my face. If even for ten minutes, I have noticed the positive effect this has on my heart, mind, and my soul. I've even started a short exercise routine where I set my alarm for the same time each day, so I won't forget. I'm really trying to take baby steps toward being a better version of myself.

Yep, I said a better version of myself. I believe I have spent most of my life trying to be someone else, anyone else, but who God made me to be. Perhaps this is a normal rite of passage as we grow older. When I think of the countless hours spent fretting over my weight, or what others might think of me, I am ashamed. I'm not ashamed of those feelings, since I think we can all relate in one way or another. I'm ashamed for the wasted time.

Time is precious, and I would concede that it seems to be more precious than it used to be. Knowing I'm on the other side of life, closer to my death than my birth, time does hold more value to me. Of course I'm aware that caskets come in all shapes and sizes, and death has no respect for age, race, or position. And on the flip side, I am so ready for the Lord's return, I can taste it. Assuming I grow to be an old(er) woman, I hope to show more gratitude to my Creator.

God has been working on me in amazing, yet subtle ways. I have often referred to these past four to five years as my desert of testing. I have experienced bouts of loneliness that hurt so badly, my bones ached. My family has quirks, just like everyone else's family, and the drama flows in and out with the tide. But God has recently shown me that I'm okay, right where I am. He knows my deepest hopes and dreams, but he has truly shown me that I am allowed to be content in the here and now.

I also believe he is preparing me for the time to come. In my gut, I think we are about to experience major spiritual battles that will affect everyone around us and beyond. It won't just be about our own personal struggles. I believe we are about to face some hard things, including being faced with life-altering choices and decisions. Perhaps it's just me feeling this way, but I don't think so.

With these thoughts and potentially fearful things to ponder, I suppose that's why I'm treasuring time a bit more. The things I have usually taken for granted are becoming the things I cherish the most. Today has been one of those days. Now that we have made it to October, the temperature is coming down so the days are so pleasant. Today, Lucky and I enjoyed the sunshine and cool breeze. He always barks at the birds who swoop and tease him overhead, as if he could do anything about them! He just makes me laugh.

Oh, God. How can I thank you? Please forgive me for wasting time. Please forgive me for not being satisfied, especially when I know I have been so richly blessed. Yes, life has been hard, and I imagine it will continue to be, until you call me home. But the knowledge that you are always by my side makes me feel so grateful. I praise you today, Lord, with all that I am.

Blessings,  
Lisa Jo