

Some of the photographs were so funny I almost peed my pants; some of them were so sweet they had me melting; and some of them touched me so that I just pressed them against my heart. The memories those shots created had me thanking God out loud that I had taken them.

That was my afternoon recently while going through my photo boxes to fish some out for a little project I'm doing for mom. Ahh…the power of a photograph. I love it. How it transports our minds in a flash to relive a moment so vividly, while leaving our bodies there, motionless and sometimes, it seems, in a state of unconsciousness. Okay that's a bit melodramatic, but you get the effect, no?

That afternoon I literally went through hundreds of photos of family and friends. And although the digital era now allows me to take an unlimited amount of pictures, which totally appeals to my wallet, I do miss the days when film would put me "in touch" with an image. For me it's like print books versus digital books. There's a certain element of touch missing. But anyway, neither photography nor reading is what I wanted to write about here. It's people. The people in our lives.

The images through which I sifted the other day and the bit of spring cleaning I've been doing lately (seasonably so) reminded me of Brian A. "Drew" Chalker's poem wherein he talks about people coming into our lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime. Like those who creep in solely to get us from one job to the other; or those whose job is to subliminally and patiently bring us to God; or those who remain a permanent figure even when they are not physically close. Sort of like a phantom limb, you feel them even when they are not there. So of course, all that thinking about the people in my life set off the analytical monster in me (those of you who know me well have experienced this character…I apologize, 'cause when it's good it's okay but when it's bad it's ugly).

But however good or ugly this analytical character, I think it's useful. Take for instance this people/reason/season/lifetime thing. Understanding and keeping in perspective the roles

people play in our lives could help us deal. You know so when those people we thought were lifers turn out to be temporary, for example, we don't get so bogged down by bitterness or disappointment and instead look at it with thankfulness. To see the greater picture. Something like that. Except nowadays with technology that facilitates the adding, deleting or even putting on hold of people in our lives, we tend to be too quick to judge these human connections, not realizing that at the end of the day, nobody does networking like God. Sometimes no matter what we do….

I for one have experienced Chalker's poem plenty. I've seen the purpose of certain people in my life as well as mine in theirs unfold right before my eyes, in due time, but when I least expected it. Leaving me there nodding my head and saying "Oh okay, I get it." Those revelations are heaven-sent no doubt, and they can be truly humbling. As I look back I clearly recognize and appreciate those who were there for a reason or a season. And treasure the ones who have been there for most of my life, or for what seems a lifetime.

Still, there are others whose use has not been brought to light yet. I wonder about them sometimes, "Tell me again, why exactly am I supposed to keep this person around?" On those over-analytical days, that can be like waiting for the ketchup to come out of the bottle — the anticipation kills me. But then I remember that timing is all His, so I just say "Okay God, You'll tell me I guess."

And so today, on the eve of Spring, I thank YOU for being a part of MY life…for whatever, whenever or forever. :)
"Reason, Season, Lifetime"

People come into your life for a reason, a season or a lifetime. When you figure out which one it is, you will know what to do for each person.

When someone is in your life for a REASON, it is usually to meet a need you have expressed. They have come to assist you through a difficulty; to provide you with guidance and support; to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually. They may seem like a godsend, and they are.

They are there for the reason you need them to be.

Then, without any wrongdoing on your part or at an inconvenient time, this person will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end. Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away. Sometimes they act up and force you to take a stand. What we must realize is that our need has been met, our desire fulfilled; their work is done. The prayer you sent up has been answered and now it is time to move on.

Some people come into your life for a SEASON, because your turn has come to share, grow or learn. They bring you an experience of peace or make you laugh. They may teach you something you have never done. They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy. Believe it. It is real. But only for a season.

LIFETIME relationships teach you lifetime lessons; things you must build upon in order to have a solid emotional foundation. Your job is to accept the lesson, love the person, and put what you have learned to use in all other relationships and areas of your life. It is said that love is blind but friendship is clairvoyant.

Thank you for being a part of my life…….

~ Brian A. "Drew" Chalker

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