

Balcony People

I read a book many years ago about the people we have in our lives. Some are “balcony people.” Those people who are waiting to cheer us on, to congratulate us when we do well and when we do not, they will be the ones who tell us to keep trying or to tell us what we did right. Other people in our lives are just there to tell us what we did wrong, how we really messed that up, or that we were not cut out for the job. I have had my share of balcony people, those who tell me that a devotional really spoke to them, or that they enjoyed them all, or that I did a decent job on a project. Some will say nothing and that is okay, but others will indicate they could have done whatever it was, better. I ran into a young Mother while waiting to get my Flu shot at the Drug Store. She was waiting for a prescription to be filled with a toddler. Now this toddler was active. The Mother would be answering a question or just turn her head for a second and off the toddler would go. We were near the rows and rows of Vitamins and Pain medications in their colorful bottles and that is where he would run. I was wearing a mask and she could see my eyes watching but could not see my expression and I am sure she felt it was one of disapproval. As I was leaving, she came over to pick up my cane which as I often do, I had dropped. I thanked her as the toddler ran off in another direction and I said, “You know, you have the patience of a Saint!” Her whole face changed, and she thanked me. As she once again corralled the toddler, I told her of my times with two toddlers and the older one taking off with the younger one in a stroller and then hiding both and she told me of her little son hiding in the dress racks also and how frantic she felt. What I did not say to her was “You’ll wish they were this age again when they’re teenagers” or “they grow up so fast” because I also remember the feelings of fear that I was not doing motherhood well, that their actions were proof of my inadequacy and not only normal behavior. Everyone needs Balcony People in their lives especially a young Mother with an active toddler. I look at them and see amazing women, women with the patience of a Saint.

1 Thessalonians 2:7 But we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.

Lord, give me gentle and smiling ways, keep my lips from hasty replies, so in years to come when my house is still, no bitter memories its rooms may fill. Anonymous.

Lord, be with those who are stressed but want your patience, those who strive to do well but need your strength, those who love so much but feel inadequate and need your comfort. Be with our church, may we practice kindness to others, be with our Pastor, bless his ministry, be with our staff and leaders, guide and direct them. Be with our country Lord, may we be united. We thank you Lord for your love that does not cease, for your strength that gives us courage, for your guidance that directs our days. In Jesus name, Amen

Grace Epperson