

Balcony People

Years ago, I read a book called “Balcony People” by Joyce Landorf. It was about those people in our lives who cheer for us. It could be a parent, a teacher, a friend, a pastor, or anyone who wishes us well with all their hearts. I was blessed with such people in my life. Those who said the words I needed to hear. My brother who gave me life lessons, an older friend who talked to me about self-worth, a teacher who pointed me toward a purpose and a path, a pastor who said the tough words I needed to hear and in doing this helped me see my value as a child of God. I found most of these people in a church. In church I was welcomed and accepted from the moment I walked in until we moved too far away to attend. They mentored me and taught me kindness and love by example. They were for a long time, my balcony people. I learned some valuable lessons from their example. Look for the loner, the distressed, the new people. Sometimes we become so wrapped up in seeing our friends we neglect to make new ones. I am as guilty of this as anyone. Say the kind things. Tell the Pastor what you liked about his sermon or the service. Look around for the those we haven’t met.. I write a devotional a week and sometimes wonder how it will be received. Hardly a week goes by that someone doesn’t comment on something I’ve written. This lifts my spirits like nothing else, do this for your Pastor. Encourage and support him. Cheer him on in his work. Yell to him from the balcony that you appreciate him. I learned a very valuable lesson from a Pastor I had had a “tiff” with. I went up to him and asked him how he was doing. He looked startled but went on and he told me of some physical problems he was having. The next week I went up to him again and asked him how he was doing and told him I had been praying for him. I then suggested something I thought it might be and he agreed and promised me he would see a doctor. Our relationship did a complete turnaround. Sometimes we just need to care. We need to be the “Balcony people” for each other. This week I was introduced to someone with a very flattering description of my abilities, and I felt my heart warmed. Their very kind words filled me with joy and lifted those spirits that had been sunk. Let us be “Balcony People” for each other as John urges us to do.

1 John 4:10-12 This is love; not that we love God but that he first loved us and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear Friends since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God but if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is made complete in us.

Dear Lord, we thank you for this day, may we use it in your service. We thank you for all the days you have given us. Forgive for those times we have disappointed you. Lord, may we be encouragers to each other, may we love and protect each other remembering you and the sacrifice your Son made for us for the forgiveness of our sins. May we go where you lead us to help the hungry, the homeless and the lonely, the ill and those that grieve. May we be your instrument here, now, in this place. May we be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in this world. Forgive us for the times we have been unkind and judged others. Be with our Pastor and bless his ministry. Be with his family and with this family of worshippers. Bless our staff and leaders, guide and protect them. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson