

A Nice Surprise

This Monday I went to a doctor's appointment then had to get gas as the car was running on fumes and traffic was heavy, then out to eat before a meeting at church. The restaurant I wanted to go to was closed on Mondays, no tacos for me. So, I went to my other favorite restaurant. I went in and was seated in the same booth I sat in before. The waiter came over and we both recognized each other. He mentioned he remembered me, and I thought it was probably because I had eaten so much and included dessert. I told him I recognized him also. He took my order and brought me my favorite flavored iced tea. I ate my meal and realized I needed to get going as I was expected in about 15 minutes at the church meeting. The waiter came over and offered dessert and I told him I needed to go and to just bring me the bill. He said it's been taken care of. I asked him what he meant, and he said it was his pleasure to pay my bill. I remembered that I had tipped him well the last time I was there because the restaurant was so empty, and I realized that he was not going to make much money that day. So, I had tipped him a substantial sum at least the same as my meal. Now the money could have been used by me, but I felt it could be used more by him. I have enough to get along and it feels good to reward someone who needs it. My first job was at a theater in Royal Oak. I was almost 16 but had working papers and was hired to work at the candy counter. During intermission which can be quite hectic a gentleman and his young son had purchased candy and as he walked away, I realized I had given him too much change. I gave him 50 cents too much. I looked at him and knew he realized it too. He was yelling at his son to hurry up and as he made eye contact with me, he rushed off back into the theater. 50 cents was an hours work for me. I was upset but most of all I felt sorry for him, that he was such a man that he would cheat someone out of an hour's pay. I told the manager of the candy counter what had happened and that they could take it out of my pay. She told me not to worry about that it happens to everyone at least once but to be more careful and that as I became accustomed to the rush of intermission, I would get better. Also, that the newest person had to clean the popcorn machine. I could hardly wait for the next person to be hired but I learned that if you made a lot of popcorn in the last batch you could take the leftovers and go up in the balcony when it wasn't being used and watch the movie and eat free popcorn that we dumped the leftover melted butter on. Then when they brought in a small freezer, and we could serve ice cream I was in heaven. I knew what it was like to work for a pittance but the experience of earning money to pay for my own way was worth the effort and I worked there two years and became a cashier and earned more money and saved enough to pay for my tuition for Nurse's Training. I know what it is like to have little and what it is like to not be rich but to have enough that it can be used to help someone else. It is returned to you in so many ways. A month ago, I brought a gift to a young waiter, today that gift was returned to me, and we both knew the joy of giving.

Matthew 10:8 Freely you have received, freely give

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of each day and for the gifts we have been given. Be with us in our coming and our going. Protect us with your loving hand. Be with those who are sick, those who grieve and those who are alone and those who are weary. May all find their way to you. Be with our country Lord as we go through an election time. Calm those who are angry and be with those who carry hate, calm their fears, and give them peace in their hearts and minds. Be with our church Lord may we find your mission in our lives and may we make this church your church. Be with our Pastor. Bless his ministry with us and grant him health and safety. Be with our staff and leaders, guide and bless them in their work. We pray in the holy name of Jesus. Amen

Grace Epperson