

Squelch Loneliness and Confusion With This Sacred Truth

"Are you okay?" he said. "You seem down."

Daaaaaah! How does he do that? I was going to keep my blues to myself, so I acted all cheerful, but he knew. I don't know how, but he knew after three seconds. "Seems like you're carrying a weight," he said.

"Yes."

"I like you," he told me. "I think you're awesome."

His comments hit the target of my I'm-a-failure-at-most-everything heart. Of course, way up north in my head, I knew I wasn't a failure at most everything, but somehow in the more central region of my soul, there was a pervasive uneasiness that I was disappointing the Lord and my people in most directions.

Matt said he knows. He feels that way lots of times, too.

Well, after he left for work, I put something away in the pantry and spied a leftover fortune cookie from Panda Express. In a show of no self-control, I picked it up and cracked it open.

My fortune (which I don't believe in but childishly enjoy reading) said:

YOU WILL BE HAPPILY SURPRISED BY A LONG-TIME FRIEND

I popped the cookie in my mouth and threw the fortune in the garbage. A few minutes later, I was fishing the fortune back out of the garbage.

“Happily surprised by a long-time friend.” Hmmm.

Friends are people who like you. Just 'cause.

I've been thinking about this a lot, because Matt and I have been watching *Andy Griffith* in the evenings. Is there any better show of friendship than what Andy and Barney have? I told Matt flat out that he is Andy and I am Barney. Night after night we watch Andy endure Barney shooting a hole in the floor of the jail house with his gun. Andy puts up with a whole lot, and he works to protect Barney's dignity like nobody's business.

So the Lord spoke to me, while I was standing over the garbage with the fortune paper in my hand. He said to me, “I'm your friend.”

I no longer call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master does. But I have called you friends, for everything that I have heard from My Father have I made known to you (John 15:15).

I thought about Matt seeing my heavy heart and mending it with the simple words, “I like you.”

Yessirreee (in voice of Andy Griffith), on our blue days, when we keep using our one bullet to shoot a hole in the floor, we shore do need a friend.

I've got your long-time friend right here. His name is Jesus. He likes you, and he puts up with a whole lot. {eoa}

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