



I remember Caitlin's first weekend at home after she started college in Charlotte. I remember the excitement of having her home, of cooking her favorite foods, and cleaning like we were welcoming an honored guest. The meal I served was akin to a Thanksgiving feast. **Caitlin** remembers coming home, taking a nap and waking up to find me irritated at her for taking a nap! Obviously we remember that first weekend in two distinctly different ways. Perspective...

Was I really irritated at her for taking a nap? Probably. You see, I expected her to have missed her father and I so much, she wanted to spend every available minute with us. When in reality, she loved us but she was tired and she was home. She felt comfortable and was able to find the rest she needed. Perspective...

One of the definitions of perspective is ***"a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view."*** In other words, our perspective can be formed by our attitude or what we see. Caitlin and me. Two different people, two different views or angles on the same situation. It was how we chose to see and feel about the situation that made it different.

If we are not careful, our perspective can lead us to form judgements or opinions about someone else or a situation. Their perspective may be totally different from ours because of the way they feel or the way they see things. In my life, I can be quick to get angry at someone without taking into account why they feel or act the way they do.

One of my favorite passages to pray in the morning in Colossians 3:12-15...

"Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember The Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful." (NLT)

I pray this passage because I **need** this passage. Caitlin and I remember her first weekend at home and laugh about it. But sometimes it not so easy for me to "laugh" at someone else's perspective. Sometimes their perspective, or viewpoint, makes me angry and bitter. Sometimes their actions disappoint me. But then I remember God's command to be merciful, to be kind, to be humble, to be gentle, to be patient. I remember I must make allowance for their faults (note the each other part, meaning I have faults too.) I must



forgive as I have been forgiven. And above all, I must love. In this passage it doesn't say I am excused from doing these things if my perspective is different from theirs. And I must pay attention to the part that says love "binds us all together in perfect harmony."

In the world today, there are many different "perspectives". Many are different from mine. I may not agree AT ALL with the way they feel or act. But even so, I must respond the way God would have me respond - "with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience." I must forgive them even when I don't want to, and above all I must love them. Why? Because Jesus said to his disciples, "Your love for one another will prove to the world you are my disciples". (John 13:35) And, "we love because he loved us first." (1 John 4:21)

If we really desire the right perspective, we must look to the example of Jesus. Despised, and rejected, beaten and crucified, He still loved. So must I. So must we.

"Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God."

(Ephesians 5:1,2)

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