



What Is Your Perspective?

By Marilyn J. Dominick, Retired Public School Administrator

Look around – it is everywhere! Every person working in education has a different perspective. It is a reality that everyone comes from a unique past that defines his/her perspectives. That can provide some interesting situations. Our schools bring so many unique individuals together in an environment where we not only teach curriculum but also learn so much from each other.

Different Perspectives

We form perspectives based on our experiences, and these experiences can make us different from one another. When conflict arises, whether it is between students and teachers, teachers and administration, or administration and government, the perspectives of the involved parties must be considered.

This concept is so real to Americans. We have just concluded primary elections and will soon go into the presidential election. Tempers may flare and words could be hastily spoken as we live through the pre-election days.

So how can educators use this concept of perspective to improve our teaching and our relationships in schools? Forming our own perspectives through the eyes of God and His Word can help us understand other people's perspectives and experiences. Only then can we show compassion and understanding for those with whom we interact in our schools.

Knowing God Affects Our Perspective of Others

As with so many things, if we seek God's direction for ourselves, our relationships with others will only get better.

Here is an important insight from God's Word on the topic of perspective. In the Book of Genesis, we read that Joseph was subjected to a great deal of pain, loss, and hardship. When the opportunity came to confront those who had caused much of his trouble, Joseph responded: *"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives"* (Genesis 50:20).

So when people wrong us, can we view our struggles as part of God's larger plan for us? We may encourage others with the story of Joseph.

The Old Testament records the problems David faced, too. Some problems were self-inflicted because he made bad decisions, and many times, his very life was in danger. In the middle of all of it, he chose to trust God for forgiveness and protection. And ultimately, he had an eternal perspective. No matter what he faced, he knew that one day he would dwell with his God!

"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (Psalm 23:6)

"O Lord, you took up my case; you redeemed my life." (Lamentations 3:58)

"'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" (Jeremiah 29:11)

WOW! It's so much better to gain our perspective through the eyes of God and what we mean to Him!

Finally, this power-packed verse from Romans 8:28 can get us through many difficult times:

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

God's got this. There is NOTHING we experience where He is not with us. Praise His holy name!

In fact, Romans 8:37 says: "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." I know that makes me feel better and more confident. God's got my back! Instead of being afraid, we can know that God is in everything, and we WIN!

To sum it all up, be careful about the source of your perspectives. Matthew 6:33 (NIV) says: "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

God's Perspective

Look at every situation through God's eyes. You will be a positive, confident Christian ready to help others realize they, too, can have this.

God bless you as you work to educate – it truly is a God-given ministry, no matter where you are placed. You may be teaching at school or from home. You can still have a major impact on the lives of your students and their parents. Look at your situations from God's perspective, and know that He will provide opportunities to showcase His love through you.

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All Scriptures quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV.