

PERSPECTIVE

1) The technique of representing three-dimensional objects and depth relationships on a two-dimensional surface.

2) A mental view or outlook.

When talking about **communication**, which definition applies?

Obviously, the second definition of a mental view or outlook applies. The origin of the word comes from the **Latin meaning “to look.”** How did we go from using the word to talk about drawing to talking about communicating?

We started by going from **“to look” with the physical eye to looking with the mind’s eye.** For example, if I showed someone from a culture, who did not know much about the U.S., our quarters on the “tail” side only and asked him what he thought the United States was like, he might say that we were many separate states who valued our state over our national identity. Then, that man would filter all that he heard about the U.S. after that time through that belief. So, **his physical perspective created his mental view.**

In an example more common to our life today, if a woman grows up in a home where her father left her mother for another woman, her physical view might determine her mental view. In her marriage, she might be fearful that her husband would leave her for another woman if they disagreed or if she thought she wasn’t pretty enough. Her husband may be the most loyal, faithful husband around, but her “perspective” was already in place and would determine how she interacted with her husband.

In the series *Love & Respect*, Emerson Eggrich tells the story of a man with several kids who were all together on a bus ride. The kids were running up and down the aisle, being loud, and the dad did nothing. All of the other passengers were unhappy with the unruly kids; they were scowling at the dad. Some of them prodded the woman sitting

closest to him to say something to the man. The woman begins to say, “Sir, your kids are running around ...,” the man draws to attention from his stare out the window and says “Oh, I am so sorry. We were just coming back from my wife’s funeral and I wasn’t paying attention.”

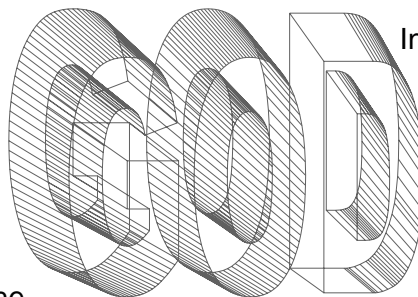
Then what happened to the attitude of everyone in the bus? Instead of being upset and scowling, they were compassionate, caring, and understanding.

Nothing in the physical circumstances had changed, but **everything** had changed in their perspective. They saw the situation completely differently. Their thoughts about the man and the children changed. Their attitude towards their behavior changed. They might have even tried to help the man and try to take an interest in the kids.

Our everyday communication is impacted tremendously by our perspective — how I interpret what my husband says to me or his behavior and how I respond to what I hear.

Perspective has everything to do with what and how we see physically. **Perspective also has everything to do with our mental view.** Often we could mentally and emotionally see relationships differently if we were willing to look at the situation from a different perspective.

When I was in college, I had to learn to draw in perspective. Before I could draw the building, I had to decide which view of the building I was going to draw and where the vanishing point was. The vanishing point was the point that everything was tied to. The reason buildings are drawn in perspective is so that we can see them in a more realistic way.



In communication, the same principle applies, I determine which view I am going to see mentally and where the vanishing point is.

Let me suggest that **in communication we can choose to see God’s perspective and He can tie it to eternity, so that we can see the heavenly reality of the situation!**