



Bo's Blog

When I was in college, I was still living at the house in which I had grown up. It was next to the elementary school I had attended, and one day I went for a walk through that school. No students or teachers were there that day, and as I looked into the window of my 5th Grade classroom I saw something that looked both familiar and different. The classroom looked pretty much the same as when I had been there years before, and yet it looked strange, because everything—the student desks, the counter tops, the teacher's desk, even the blackboard—looked smaller than I remembered. It surprised me that being older, and taller, made such a difference.

As we get older, that difference in perspective becomes less surprising to us, but usually only with things that stand out like that. We tend to forget that such a difference also applies to less tangible things. Our understandings about life and the world and the way things work grow and mature, and things we thought we already knew instead become new again, or gain a richness and depth we had not recognized before.

I particularly notice this when I teach a class, or prepare a sermon, or simply read the scriptures. Stories in the Bible that I thought I knew turn out to have another character in them I hadn't paid much attention to before, but who seems to stand out this time. The meaning of a sentence, or a word, may seem more complex or multi-faceted, or just simply different this time I read it. Or I might be reading it in the context of a new commentary or book which provides a different view of a familiar verse.

In a way, this is exciting, because it's like having something new to learn even when I work with something I've read before. As we celebrate Christian Education Sunday this month, think about the ways you are still learning, particularly from scripture. In the sermons you hear, or your reading at home, or your participation in classes, do you sense that feeling of familiarity and newness? Each time we come back to a familiar passage, we have the opportunity to learn something new because we come to it from a different perspective. Our Christian education is a lifelong journey, full of surprises, and new insights, and God's Spirit working within us.

Shalom,
Bo