



A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

I've shared some of my recent and not-so-recent accidents, which by the way, have usually happened because of either a sense of pride, invincibility, or yes, stupidity. ☹️ I wouldn't wish any of these things on anyone. HOWEVER, there have been a number of lessons that have come out of these incidents, not the least of which is:

It's not just me that these things affect.

My wife and others are, in a sense, "punished" because of Mark's foolishness... and that foolishness is self-centered.

Every decision has consequences.

My "punishment" for my foolishness has been pain, limited activity, and long periods of convalescence. Is this suffering? Is it punishment? Has my perspective on things like suffering, sacrifice, and punishment changed as a result of these accidents? YES!!

I've learned that IT isn't all about me.

I've learned to have empathy for others who suffer, sacrifice, and even for those who are punished.

What if sacrifice, suffering, and even punishment don't get the final word?

Is there something GOOD that can come out of these things? And, while we're at it, might a sense of SOLIDARITY, and an experience of true COMMUNITY be by-products of the "bad things" we endure?

Can the things we would prefer NOT happen to us and those we love actually bear good "fruit"?

In the end, what draws us together? What unifies us? Yes, a sense of purpose and the common good do. What about what we consider negative? Might those things be occasions that produce fruit like unity, reconciliation, forgiveness, real listening, empathy, and real understanding? For someone else's take on this topic, take two-and-a-half-minutes and watch this video on YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u663u-SLljq&list=RDLVKf6Z_m6HhoA&index=5

Given AWARENESS, HUMILITY, GRATITUDE, and a different PERSPECTIVE on what we experience, might "the bad" be re-shaped into "the good"? Might this different perspective be one of the keys that could turn things RIGHT-SIDE UP in what often seems to be a turbulent world that looks more upside-down than right-side up? Then there is LOVE... without sounding all *kumbaya*, I believe that there is no force more powerful in the cosmos than love. Our fear of "the bad" can hold us captive, and as a friend says,

Fear causes us to self-protect and self-promote.

Fear DIVIDES and SEPARATES. Love can win the day. Love CONNECTS and UNIFIES. And love covers over a LOT... We don't get hung up on the "small stuff" when we live in love. We let things go that would normally bother us and yes, divide us from those we love. When we love, things like joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and humility BLOOM. I dream of the day when

ALL that is not of LOVE will one day cease to exist!

How about you?