

Different but Together

By Bethany Bartholomew
(Based on a true story)



*“Let them worship how, where, or what they may”
(Articles of Faith 1:11).*

Ellie and her family were going to visit their cousins who lived far away. Ellie was so excited! She hadn’t seen her cousins in a long time.

Before the trip, Ellie’s parents said they wanted to talk about something.

“When we get together with family, we always say prayers at meal time. And sometimes we talk about church, right?” Dad asked.

“Right!” Ellie said.

“Well, things will be a little different on this trip,”

Mom said. “Your aunt and uncle don’t go to church anymore. And they don’t like it when people talk to them about it.”

Ellie frowned. “Why not?”

“We don’t know all the reasons,” Dad said. “But they love us very much. I think they don’t want to argue with us or hurt our feelings. So they’ve asked us not to talk about church things with them.”

Ellie nodded.

“We can still read our scriptures and pray while we’re there. But we’ll do it in private,” Mom said.

“What about when we eat?” Ellie’s sister asked.

“Let’s wait and see,” Mom said. “If they don’t pray before we eat, we can each say a prayer in our heart.”

“OK,” Ellie said. “I can do that!”

The next day, Ellie’s family piled into the car. They drove until late at night. When they finally got to their cousins’ house, Ellie’s aunt and uncle helped them get their bags out of the car. Then everyone went to bed.

The next morning, Ellie said a prayer before going to the kitchen for breakfast. She felt a little nervous about seeing her family. But then her aunt sat down next to her with a warm smile on her face.

“Some of us are going to your cousin’s salon later

today. Want to come?” she asked Ellie.

“A hair salon?” Ellie asked.

“Yep! You and your sister can get your hair done if you want.”

Ellie smiled and nodded. That sounded fun!

After breakfast, they took a bus to the salon. Ellie loved watching her cousin work. Her fingers flew back and forth as she combed and braided. After everyone’s hair was finished, they had a pretend fashion show in front of the salon mirror and giggled at their new looks.

The next day, it was raining hard. So everyone decided to stay inside and play board games. Ellie and one of her cousins were on a team against two of the older boys. They teased each other as they raced their game pieces around the board.

“We won!” Ellie yelled as she moved her game piece to the end of the board. They all gave each other high fives—even the older cousins, who pretended to be grumpy about losing.

After only a few days, it was time to head home. As Ellie climbed in the back of her family’s car, she heard her family saying goodbye.

“We’ll miss you!”

“Come back soon!”

“We love you so much!”

Ellie smiled and waved as their car pulled away. She had had a lot of fun. Even if they believed in different things, they could still be a happy family. ●

The author lives in Georgia, USA.

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