

**Small Talk – March 1 2021**  
**Required Facial Covering When in Public – Day 224**  
**By Michael Small**

Question, I wonder if waking up to a temperature of -4 is March coming in like a lion or a lamb on this very sunny morning?

Yesterday, during the virtual coffee hour I raised the subject of “wisdom”. How does one gain wisdom, how does one access wisdom, how does one practice wisdom? What is wisdom? First, we must see and know clearly.

Do you remember the Jimmy Cliff song released in 1993 “I Can See Clearly Now”. I can still hum the tune.

*I can see clearly now the rain is gone.  
I can see all obstacles in my way.  
Gone are the dark clouds that had me blind.  
It's gonna be a bright (bright)  
Bright (bright) sunshiny day.  
It's gonna be a bright (bright)  
Bright (bright) sunshiny day.*

Oh, how I yearn for those “bright sunshiny days”. Seeing clearly depends upon your viewpoint or point of view. Those many years ago when I stood on the top of Mt. Rainer, I could clearly see for 100’s of miles – then the clouds moved in and I could only see a few feet in front of me.

Seeing clearly depends upon where one stands, what one believes to be true, and all of one’s life experience. We all view the life, the world, this time, and this day through a lens. When I was first prescribed my trifocals my optometrist said, “For you reading without glasses – that ship sailed a long time ago.” Over the years my viewpoint changed.

My glasses allow me to see more clearly, they improve my viewpoint. But there are other lenses we look through that cause a potential and likely distortion of our point of view. Some of the lenses one looks through that distort or alter one’s viewpoint are sexual identity, economic status, where one lives, rural or urban, who one associates with, faith or lack of faith, racial status, political beliefs, education, family status, and many more. Think about the many lenses you look through.

Richard Rohr has written - *Every viewpoint is a view from a point. Unless we recognize and admit our own personal and cultural viewpoints, we will never know how to decentralize our own perspective. We will live with a high degree of illusion and blindness that brings much suffering into the world. I think this is what Simone Weil*

(1909–1943) meant in saying that **the love of God is the source of all truth**. Only an outer and positive reference point utterly grounds the mind and heart.

*One of the keys to wisdom is that we must recognize our own biases, our own addictive preoccupations, and those things to which, for some reason, we refuse to pay attention. Until we see these patterns (which is early-stage contemplation), we will never be able to see what we do not see.*<sup>1</sup>

Long ago I learned a simple phrase “Awareness cures”, especially when followed by action. Self-awareness enables one to see more clearly. When I am aware of my biases, the lenses through which I see self, stranger, the world, and life – and when I am willing to set aside the distortion those lenses create – I can begin to see more clearly. Awareness cures when we are able to understand and see more clearly. And maybe then, and only then will all be able to experience that “bright sunny day”!

In the spirit and agape love of Jesus, Michael

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Rohr Meditation: How Difficult It Is to See Clearly