

Small Talk – May 14 2021
By Michael Small

Yesterday the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) announced that those who have been vaccinated (two weeks from last required shot) are no longer required to wear masks outside AND INSIDE! For those who have not been vaccinated or are less than two weeks from their last required shot – you are expected to wear a mask. And don't throw away those masks for there still is much merit in wearing masks in crowded areas such as a sports arena, in a casino, on an airplane or public transportation. And please note, as of today, according to Dr. Michael Osterholm, forty-two percent of adults in America have not yet been vaccinated and sixty-four percent have only received their first dose. Please, stay the course and get vaccinated and follow-up if needed – we are not completely in the clear. Encourage family and friends to get the vaccine. May we resolve to becoming healthier and find ways to share the vaccines throughout the world. For, ultimately, we will not be safe from this pandemic until the world has been vaccinated.

Can we all agree – it has been a long, long, long journey we all have walked during this Covid-19 pandemic. Along the way we have learned some things that will be lasting. We can adapt and change. Technology has enabled us to stay in touch, and it will only get better and be more accessible. Though distant, we can maintain, nurture, and grow strong relationships. Much of our work can be done from home. We don't need to drive as much or go to the office. We can prepare a homemade, nutritious, and tasty meals at home. We can develop new hobby's. And we also have learned a bit about our resiliency and creativity. Though it has become more sporadic, "Small Talk" was birthed early on in this pandemic – the first issue being written on March 16 2020. I have been willing to write, for better or worse. And, I have learned to be easier on myself, even laughing at the things I do.

After hearing the news of the general lifting of mask requirements for indoor activity, I thought I had misread the report – it is only for outside activity. Then I watched the news, saw the Cabinet and President, together remove their masks – and smiles abounded. Then, then I knew it was true.

I am thankful for these many months, though at times these months have been difficult, harder than I could imagine. I am thankful for the things I have learned, but more than that, I am thankful for all of you. You have been patient and kind. You have been willing to do things differently! You have stayed the course. You have even gone the extra mile. We have walked this journey together and I think we are all better for it!

I also know that this is a continuing journey, we still have more to learn. Covid-19 is still in the air we breathe and there will be more variants and mutations. I suspect there will be more pandemics. When in crowded closed spaces we will continue to wear masks. Thus, we need to be aware and diligent with safe and healthy behavioral practices.

Lastly – tomorrow is the Minnesota Fishing Opener. It should be a mostly decent day, not too cold, a little bit of rain. Sunday is going to be warm and sunny. Enjoy the outdoors and have a pleasant day with family and friends. But my friends, don't be fooled. The water is still extremely cold. Be smart, be safe, and enjoy. Keep the lifejacket on. Catch and release when possible.

Let us all enter this weekend with thanksgiving and gratitude!

In the spirit and agape love of Jesus, Michael

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