

"Writing the truth  
as I see it;  
trying not to  
offend  
those who will  
disagree."

# The truth as I see it™

Idaho Common Sense™



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## Perspective

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We are facing another new year, the time to reflect on the past while anticipating the future. This is the time of promises of changes we wish for the next year. This is the time to remember the good and the bad of yesterday. This is the time to remember the successes and failures of the past while maintaining optimism for the future. How wonderful was yesterday? How great may tomorrow be?

Do we really remember what was important last year? Was it the ten pounds we lost? Was it the raise or the new job? Maybe it was the new car or the bigger house? Maybe it was the better whatever? Are these the things of genuine joy? How are we measuring our lives? How do we decide what really matters? Could there have been other things less visible, less remembered which were much more important? Where do we find peace, blessings, and the understanding of what really is important?

Take a few minutes looking back at 2007 seeing those episodes of real contentment when you just knew it was all worth it? Remember that chance family gathering where everyone laughed and relaxed? Remember that day you spent time with a co-worker or neighbor allowing them to tell you of their difficulties. Remember that day you and your wife had breakfast in the back yard, just the two of you? Remember that day you spoke to the person no one talks to, the look on their face when you noticed them? Remember that day you took just a few minutes to hug the person whose life was falling apart, letting

them know they were not alone? Remember the day you reconciled with your friend who had wronged you long ago, not even able to remember what caused the rift? Remember that day your child, way past the age of saying I love you actually did so, and in public for everyone to hear? Can you remember all those brief moments that are life at its very best?

What are the blessings we have that we don't remember because they just are, the blessings the rest of the world desires? What are those things that have become an expected part of our life rather than a gift begging a thank you? What have we had for over 200 years that makes us the envy of the world? We have had no wars on our soil in 150 years! We have not had to live with mine fields in our communities. We have not had to fear for our lives each time we leave our home. We have had the freedom to go to church or not and, if we did, we could attend whatever church we chose. We have had the right to pick our political leaders. We have been able to speak freely, criticizing our government without being executed. We haven't, on a daily basis, had to go to bed afraid or wondering.

What really is important in life and what is a nuisance, an inconvenience? Years ago I cared for a woman in her 90s who had a stroke leaving her markedly weak on one side of her body. After spending what I thought was an appropriate amount of time with her, I left her room to attend other patients. When I returned she was crying very quietly to herself. Her

husband of some 70 years was sitting in the corner not sure what to do. I sat down asking her what was wrong. She said she was thinking about this stroke and wondered if she wouldn't rather just die! I was unsure what to say but decided to take a chance. I suggested there was a possibility she was right but we should first analyze the situation to see if she was right. She looked a bit puzzled. I asked her if I told her this stroke would kill her or destroy her brain. She said no. I asked her if I told her husband was going to die or that he was going to divorce her. She said no. I asked her if she was going to lose her home or heat in the furnace or food on the table. She said no. I suggested to her that I had not given her a problem today, only an inconvenience! She began crying harder and I feared I had offended her. Before I could question her, she looked up through her tears and told me that everything important in her life "was just fine" and a perfectly working arm and leg simply weren't that important at her age.

Do we have perspective in our lives? Do we take time to consider what is really important in our lives? When we look back to yesterday what do we see? When we look forward to tomorrow what do we anticipate? My New Year's wish for us all – perspective!