
MINUS40 REPORT

Newsletter of Steve and Lois Donley

Missionaries to the indigenous people of the Arctic

April 2018

I found myself dismantling an old oscillating fan and saving some parts from it. I put them in a ziplock baggie and labeled them with a permanent marker as, “fan parts”. I found a suitable place to stash them and threw away the rest of the fan. I had repaired, oiled, cleaned and babied this fan for quite a few years. Finally, it quit working and this time I couldn’t repair it. So as I said, I tore it apart and saved the valuable parts.

My first observation is that I have become my father.

Secondly, this reveals a mindset that has helped us stay on the mission field since 1989. Be frugal, don’t buy junk, and don’t waste anything. A little used part, labeled and stored comes in handy when something breaks. Sure, the part is only worth \$1 but the whole fan is worth \$20.

That leads to these final thoughts: Old things could be quite valuable. They might not be good as new, but they are too valuable to just throw away when a part breaks. The world we live in today is a throwaway world. This affects our theology and ministry philosophy. Christians give up on a church that struggles rather than try to be part of the solution to fix what is broken. Marriages are considered to be disposable after damage occurs, rather than work and accept the challenge of restoration. Missionaries who have spent their youth and health on the mission field will be categorized as obsolete rather than encouraged and helped across the finish line. Secondly, Bible doctrine, methodology, morals and church polity that doesn’t fit the politically correct world in which we live is thrown out as divisive, unrealistic and irrelevant to millennials. But this same Bible doctrine, methodology, morals and polity salvaged many souls from the music and sexual revolution of the 60’s and 70’s. The 20 and 30 something adults from the 80’s and 90’s who waded through the drug and hard rock era came to Christ with the same Bible, the same fiery preaching and the same new birth as every era before Y2K. Finally, there is a line of thinking that says, “New is better so cost is irrelevant if new is obtained.” Some things are just too expensive in the world I live in. That’s old fashioned - I know. And the old fashioned approach to my faith keeps me from compromising away the foundations of my fellowship with Christ. New format Q&A sessions which replace the preaching of the cross cost us which are saved the power of God, (see 1 Corinthians 1:18). New music standards cost a church significant movement away from time tested and proven classic song services and leave us wading in a pretty shallow pool of true worship. The whole idea of reinventing “Church” so that no one ever feels uncomfortable or “preached at” costs Holy Spirit conviction. That’s just too expensive in my book.

Our ministry report is fairly simple. We have been faithful to preach the Word of God in Tuktoyaktuk to a congregation of 15 or so folks on a weekly basis. Lives are being changed as people yield themselves to the Lord. Slow but steady progress.

We installed a new furnace in the Tuk building and added a direct vent, high efficiency heater in the auditorium. Our fuel consumption will decrease greatly and the upgrade will be safer as well. We have purchased new flooring to install on the apartment side of the building and have gathered some plumbing equipment. I hope to have running water by next winter. It will eventually be a comfortable place for us to stay while we work with the Stelzig family when they arrive. (They currently are just above 50% of their required support.)

FBBC in Inuvik is doing fine and I have filled in for Pastor Featherstone a couple of times recently when he was traveling. The opportunity to encourage and occasionally help Pastor Featherstone is truly an easy yoke and light burden.

Our health report is fair to middling. I've been diagnosed with Diverticulosis, and recently had a CT scan which confirmed that I have dodged a bullet concerning a hereditary kidney disease. I struggle with high blood pressure and a couple of other boring health issues. Lois recently received good news from a couple of tests to which we are very thankful for. Her overall health has been consistent for a while now and we thank you for praying and thank the Lord for answering those prayers with God's favour of good health. It all reminds me of a pastor friend who had this message on his old school, land line answering machine. "Hi, you've reached _____. We are either too busy or too sick, too tired or too deaf to answer the phone. Leave a message at the beep and we will call you back... if we don't forget."

Thank you for your faithful support, love and prayer throughout the years. Lois and I consider our supporting churches and friends as the most consistent, dedicated and knowledgeable supporters that we missionaries could ever have.

Steve and Lois Donley

