



## Monday Matters

July 28, 2014

### **This World Is Not My Home**

Baby dedications are always special in churches. The baby's entire family shows up, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and maybe a cousin or two. The congregation loves it especially when the baby smiles or pulls on the pastor's mike. The pastor always has words of advice for the parents and will say something like, "You are dedicating your child to the Lord who gave him (or her) to you, surrendering all worldly claims upon their life in the hope that they will belong wholly to Jesus Christ."

It was almost 38 years ago when Pastor Jerry, one of the pastors in our family, dedicated our oldest son, Anthony. Though I can't remember the exact words, I am certain that he said something about giving him back to the Lord, helping him come to know Jesus as his Savior, and for him to follow after the calling God would put on his life. Then Pastor Jerry would ask us as parents if we agree with that statement. Of course we said yes.

Little did we know what the Lord had in store for Anthony. Over the past number of years he fell in love and married Kristin. Both went to college, Kristin to be a teacher and Anthony to be a pastor. We were thrilled. Since then the Lord has led them on an amazing journey that is far from finished. They served as missionaries and pastors in Alaska, some of which was in the bush of Alaska (the far western part of the state). They came home to Kentucky for a short period of time serving in a local church. The Lord never let them forget about the people of Alaska or their love for them.

A little over a year ago they moved back to Alaska and made their way to Bethel, a city of about 6,000 people with over 60% of the people being Native American. There are roughly 55 neighboring villages, primarily Native American, within 50 miles of Bethel. Anthony and Kristin are called to minister to those

people. They have established the Bethel Dream Center, a non-traditional approach to accomplishing the mission of Christ and the purpose of the church.

They recently spent a few weeks in Kentucky raising support to renovate a building that was given to them for this ministry. A week ago they left our house where they had spent a portion of their time while in Kentucky visiting numerous churches sharing their vision to head back home. It is always hard to say goodbye and this time was no different. They left for Bethel with our grandchildren. The night before they left I was telling Anthony that they were welcome to come home to Kentucky anytime. He looked at me and said, "You know we are never coming back here to live. This is not our home anymore."



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Wow! I knew they were called to Bethel and knew they would always be there as long as the Lord wanted but to hear it said out loud made me realize the commitment they had made. They gave up everything to serve Him in this remote region of Alaska. They understood what it means in Matthew 6 where it says, *"Don't hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or-worse!-stolen by burglars. Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it's safe from moth and rust and burglars. It's obvious, isn't it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being."*

The Message.

Anthony and his family are following after the call that the Lord put on their lives. Those were the words we heard when he was dedicated. Kentucky is not their home. It is temporarily 4,000 miles away. But even that is not their home, they are simply passing through as the song says on the link above. They are laying up treasures for their heavenly home by helping to rescue those in need of the Lord's grace and provision.

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**If you want to know more about this ministry in western Alaska, click on the picture below.**



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