

Alaska 2024 (Jon & Susan Preaching)

Title: Alaska 2024 - Part 1

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 4:8-10

Discussion Questions

1. Why go to Alaska in March? We were asked this a lot leading up to our trip. The answer was simple: tourists don't show up in March, family does. Winter was the best time to show them that we truly love them and care about them. Life in an Alaskan village is hard. Spring, Summer, and Fall are all spent fishing, hunting, and gathering what is necessary for survival. The only time when a little bit of downtime and visiting is an option is in the winter. Sure, the winter can be uncomfortable, but it's worth it. What is a practical way you could love the friends that God has called you to? What is a way you could show up in someone's life in a way that only family does?
2. We shared a story about the Russian sailors who put a cross on the hill in Scammon Bay. What stood out to you about this story of radical hospitality? How did the pastor's actions change his community? Could your actions impact those around you?
3. Imagine trying to build a meaningful connection with someone in just twenty-four hours. What would you do together? How would you spend your time? There is a famous quote that says: "*The shortest distance between two people is a story.*" That's so true! It's amazing how much we can learn about another person just by listening to their stories. How can you practice the arts of both storytelling and quality listening this week?
4. It was amazing to see the sled dogs of the Iditarod race. What incredible athletes these dogs are, pulling their sleds and mushers approximately 1,000 miles! They are amazing, what they can accomplish is incredible. Even with all that said, however, I take a lot of comfort in knowing that in scripture I am called a sheep, not a sled dog. Sheep are great animals, but their value isn't in what they can muscle through and achieve. We are valued by our Great Shepherd, not because of our striving and achievements, but simply because we are His. Take some time this week looking up bible verses about sheep. Do the sheep do anything to earn their value? What does that mean for us?