



GOD'S EXTREME LOVE

Life and Ministry in the
60/70 Window.



SEND
North

Vince was only a high school student, but he had a fiery passion for Jesus that drove him to witness to whoever would listen. One such day was on the track field with a schoolmate that ended with another soul saved. While Vince and his friend prayed together, the Lord spoke to Vince about going to Alaska. He never could explain this, but from that time he looked to Alaska as his field to serve. Vincent Joy went on to found the Central Alaska Mission in 1936 which then merged with Far Eastern Gospel Crusade in 1971 and was named SEND International. Today, SEND North is the name of SEND International's field office in the Far North.



Vince and Beckie Joy with son Jim stand beside their completed log cabin (1938).

Vince Joy was only one of many workers whom God sent to reach out to the precious, hurting people of the 60/70 Window. God continues to send individuals with a passionate commitment to love and serve. God takes ordinary people and infuses them with his sacrificial love for people virtually ignored by the rest of the world. He sends these people to an extreme environment to put on display the extreme love of the Father for His lost children. "Those of us who serve here have an extreme hope." We know as well as you do that the Gospel is the power of God.

Extreme Need

In the far northern reaches of Alaska and Canada, there is an overwhelming need.

Suicide rates up to four times the national average.

The reported cases of rape are up to three times the national average, and most cases go unreported!

The indigenous people of this land are losing their language and culture.

Drug and alcohol abuse is a runaway epidemic.

Worst of all, God is seen as the problem instead of the solution.



There are many pieces to this puzzle. Please allow us to share our insights into what contributes to these problems and how God is using us to be part of the solution.

Extreme Environment

Let's start with this question; "Just how vast is the North American Continent above the 60th parallel?" Let's begin with Alaska. At 663,300 square miles (1.718 million km²), it is 2.5 times larger than Texas. Alaska almost stretches from coast to coast when laid over the lower 48. Over 16,000 of those square miles are covered in glaciers. Alaska contains over 3,000,000 lakes that are 20 acres or larger. Alaska also contains over 3,000 rivers flowing in it. Much to the chagrin of Alaskans, 65% of the 49th state is owned and managed by the US Federal Government. This giant state has a mass that contains roughly six distinct geographical regions that generate about four different climate zones. This covers less than a third of what we call "The 60/70 Window" or "The Far North."



Northern Canada consists of the territories of Yukon, Northwest Territories (NWT) and Nunavut. All three combined have a total of 1,430,000 mi² (3.716 million km²). Yes, that is over two times bigger than Alaska! Put them all together, and you have just over 2 million mi² (5.434 million km²). Picture it this way; this is equal to well over half of all of the USA's contiguous 48 states. The natural question to follow is, "***How many people live up there?***"

Alaska has just over 730,000 people, and Northern Canada has just over 110,000. When combined, the total is roughly equal to the population of Albuquerque, New Mexico or Québec City in Canada.

Make no mistake about it; this is isolated living. Both Alaska and Northern Canada have villages and towns that are very spread out on the road system that covers only a relatively small portion of the area. The rest are in small communities scattered in the wilderness, accessible only by airplane. You can get around between some communities by boat in the summer or snowmobile in the winter.



Alaska's large land mass has a small road system.



Flying is the main mode of transportation.

Survival is a Full-Time Job

Now, seeing how remote and vast that land is, you won't be surprised to hear all that is involved in just surviving in the Far North.

You have to prepare for long, dark, cold winters. Northerners like to joke that summer and winter are the only seasons. Spring and fall are simply quick transitions from one to the other.



Got Milk?

\$16
Most expensive gallon of milk

\$7.50
Cheapest gallon of milk

It's a struggle to feed their families.

No surprise that the cost of living is much higher the farther north you go. The transportation challenges keep fresh food costs very high and the choices meager! Some remote villages charge up to USD 15 for a gallon of milk.

This is why subsistence living is a reality. Subsistence means living off of the land; you eat what you can hunt, fish, grow, or pick from the wild. Everyone outside of the main cities acquires, at least, a portion of their food this way. The wild berries contain high levels of much-needed vitamins and minerals. Salmon run up into rivers by the thousands and can be smoked or dried to make preservation easier. Seal, moose, whale, and caribou also provide a ready supply of protein.

People will use wood stoves to heat their homes in the winter whenever possible. If you never had to chop wood before, you are missing out on a fantastic workout. It takes a lot of effort in the summer to store up enough wood to get through one winter. However, this cost cutting measure is not available to everyone. Many locations are covered in tundra and do not have trees. Those homes are heated exclusively by heating fuel that is very costly. Also, due to its volume and weight, heating fuel has to be barged in using nearby rivers for villages off of the road system. If severe winter weather hits early, it can spell disaster. The whole community could freeze to death. In as recent as 2011 the world watched with bated breath as incredible efforts were made to bring in the winter heating fuel supply for the people of Nome, Alaska. Thank God they survived that winter!



Without a doubt, a big key to survival in The 60/70 Window is a community! Now, there are plenty of people up here who are completely isolated and survive. However, most people live in small communities that look out for each other. That interdependence can be seen in their cultural values around possessions. "If you have something I need, you will give it to me. If I have something you need, I will give it to you."

Watch out for the wildlife!

The wildlife is beautiful and can be safe if you are careful. However, there are regular reminders that one always has to be on guard. An eagle will make a snack out of your small dog. A moose is deadlier to a human than a bear. Moose especially have been known to attack little kids without warning. If you see a bear cub all alone, walk away quickly and calmly because mamma is not far off! When attacked by a grizzly, even a gun may not stop them due to their thick hides and robust, slanted



skulls. You will need a very powerful handgun or rifle and have to be an excellent shot! Some people use bear spray. Yes, that is a giant can of mace! It can be more effective than a gun if you are fast enough on the draw. If you use it, please be careful to stay downwind. If it can ward off a bear, it will most certainly cause you severe pain!

The People of the Land

Whenever one talks about culture and people groups, it is necessary to speak in sweeping generalities. The downside is that people don't always fit so neatly into those molds. So, please keep that in mind as we share the following:

The Far North has always been home to a Native American or First Nations people in Canada. There is so much to tell about these amazing people whom God deeply loves. Let me just hit a few high points. They have a very different cultural mindset. The majority in the U.S. and Canada have a western mindset. One essential



characteristic of the western mind is to process ideas linearly. Education is done mainly by a lecture from a teacher with some hands on work. Individual rights and possessions are prized. Time is prioritized over events which keep most westerners in a hurry. Those in the Native American / First Nations culture tend to have more of an Eastern mindset. An eastern mind will talk around the subject. That includes sharing stories or ideas that may not seem related to each other but do relate to the topic at hand. Education historically was done with children working alongside them while they observed and copied their actions. Storytelling is still an essential tool to pass on their traditions. Community rights and shared possessions are priorities. Events are prized more than adherence to the clock. There is value in simply sitting quietly without feeling the need to fill in the silence with talking.

Native American / First Nations were a semi-nomadic people. That means they lived a complete subsistence lifestyle and moved with the natural rhythm of the land. When the fish were running upstream, they moved to fish camp to catch and dry the fish. When the berries were ripe, they went to that area, set up camp, and gathered in enough for winter. In the fall, they set up hunting camp to get moose or caribou. Finally, when the cold hit they set up winter camp with all of their provisions. There is a lot of beauty and history within this culture. In villages, there is no homelessness, and no one goes hungry because they care for each other. Children are easily 'adopted out' to a relative if their parents can't care for them. Elders are treated with great respect and are sought out for wisdom.



Currently, about 15 percent of the population of the Far North is of Native American / First Nations descent. So what about the rest of the population? They came up to get resources and adventure!

Historically, outsiders came to Alaska in waves as indicated in the chart on the left (researched by Sarah Stewart). With each era, a wave of people came up, but when the resources dried up most people packed up to leave. Some people stayed. The war brought the most drastic change as the government built roads and bases that are still used to this day. Oil is still a big draw and income source for the state, but production has drastically declined in recent years.

Furs: 1740-1867
 Whales: 1848-1912
 Gold: 1897-1910
 War: 1938-1945
 Oil: 1968-1977

People still move to Alaska. As you can imagine, this kind of living attracts a rugged and independent person.



Yupik men processing the whale they caught for their village.



The creative use of a chain saw in building a home.

The Real Cost of Living

We are referring to the spiritual and emotional struggle for those living in the Far North. The long, dark winters can take a toll on anyone. Isolation, even in a small community, can begin to wear one out quickly. It is unfortunate that drugs and alcohol are used by too many to numb the pain. This has ripple effects on domestic violence issues and teen homelessness which even strikes the larger cities.

The Mat-Su Valley outside of Anchorage, Alaska is the size of West Virginia and is home to about 80,000 people, the majority of whom are Caucasian. Wasilla and

Alaska has a suicide rate four times the national average.

The reported cases of rape in Alaska are three times the national average.

Most cases go unreported!

Palmer are the cute all-American type of towns with the "Big Box Stores" and fast food galore. However, this area also has two times the national average of alcohol and drug abuse and has some of the highest rates of domestic violence. This results in the highest rate of teenage homelessness in the USA. These teens are completely on their own and are at a high risk of abduction into human trafficking. This is especially a problem in the nearby city of Anchorage where many young adults are

also homeless after trying unsuccessfully to leave their villages to better their lives. It breaks our heart to say that the situation in most Native American villages is even more of a struggle.

The biggest factor in this struggle is their loss of cultural identity. When the USA purchased Alaska in 1867, the process was begun to 'acclimate' the 'natives' to American culture. Unfortunately, in those days 'acclimate' meant to get rid of their language and culture. This was done in large part through boarding schools in Alaska as well as Canada.

Many horror stories have since surfaced about what went on in these schools on both sides of the border: beaten for speaking their language, humiliated, abused, and torn away from their families. These traumas have fueled much alcohol and drug abuse which led to domestic violence and abuse epidemic.



All of this gives way to very high rates of suicide and drug-related deaths. These villages are tight knit, so each death hits hard. With a significant number of deaths each year, one can honestly say these people are in a constant state of grieving.



Add to these struggles the losing battle to pass their language and culture onto their children when competing with the draw of technology and entertainment. These kids are between two worlds. Education can be challenging since they struggle to learn the western way while growing up in a very different village culture. These kids have very similar experiences to minorities in rough urban areas and consequently can relate very well to gangster rap music and inner city culture.

There are also strong animistic traditions that center on rituals of protection against and provision from various spirits. Native Americans who have come to accept Jesus as their Savior look back at these rituals as spiritual bondage to very real demonic forces that have a stronghold over their people!

The Good News

The Good News positively impacts the whole person. We ensure God's love gets expressed in word and deed to meet physical and spiritual needs. We are very sensitive to the fact that we are strangers to the culture of this land. We are constantly learning and work in relationship to bring the universal truths of God to people. Together we wrestle out how to live those truths in their culture.

Specifically, SEND North works to build up reproducing disciples of Jesus. As we make disciple-makers local churches will

naturally develop. Our people move into small communities for the long haul, to live life, and demonstrate the difference that Jesus makes. This is very powerful when you realize that most people have only experienced the unhealthy, 'religious' side of Christianity. They desperately need to see in flesh and blood the love of their perfect Heavenly Father. We want to spread God's perfect, healing love across the 60/70 Window.



We have our sights set to reach the all of the vast, northern region of the North American Continent.



It is our prayer that the following story from Northern Canada gets repeated many times over in the years to come:

“I wanted to let you know what is going on. The Holy Spirit has been poured out here, and we have been involved in some awesome ministry opportunities this weekend. I have seen the Holy Spirit displayed in powerful ways, and God has touched/impacted some desperate lives this week. The MAJOR challenge we have is getting all these people discipled and connected to Bible studies. Brad (a new believer himself) has become the point man in all of this, and we are just running around behind him. Brad’s dad received Christ as Savior. He is a very influential person in our village. This is a big deal!*

Brad showed up at my house with a lady who wanted to pray and get saved. Since I wasn’t home, my wife took them to my office. She told Brad he knew what to do, and that he should lead the lady to Christ. So he did. I was glad that I wasn’t there to get in the way.

One of the town’s drug dealers received Christ. The next night he brought his partner, so she got saved. This morning he led one of the least likely people to Jesus Christ. This weekend, 11 people came forward for prayer or salvation, while some others from our village got saved at another location. I can’t say what will be the result of all this, but we know that this town will be changed at the least.” (real names not used)*

To replicate this kind of life changing impact takes more than just front line workers living in remote villages.

It Takes a Team Effort

We've just given you a little taste of how living in this environment is incredibly difficult. How much more difficult is it for those who pour out their lives in service to the hurting? It is more difficult than most people can imagine.

We have seen the unfortunate results when well-intentioned believers rush into ministry unprepared and inadequately supported.



This is why SEND North has a Logistics & Support Team!

We provide encouragement, ministry oversight (not control), mentorship, training, retreats, and financial bookkeeping. We also maintain a fleet of small aircraft, facilitate ministry networks, and acquire additional resources. You received this free report through our L&S Team's online marketing efforts. Each member of the body does its part.

We at SEND North realize we are a part of something that is beyond us. The Lord has placed us in a strategic position for ministry impact. He has given us a “God-sized vision” of reaching the 60/70 Window with the Gospel. Our hearts are burdened to see the lost come to faith in Christ, and lives transformed by the Holy Spirit. The result is to see communities filled with local disciple-makers who meet regularly and have established regional leadership. This is our **big dream**, and frankly, it's beyond our reach. We can serve as a catalyst in reaching the 60/70 Window, but we cannot do it by ourselves.

We need you!



“Partnership is essential to Kingdom Ministry, especially in the North. You can help advance the Gospel by sharing this report with those who might be interested.

- *Are you intrigued? **Follow us** on social media.*
- *Are you burdened for these people? **Pray** and push back the darkness!*
- *Are you someone who loves to network? **Invite** your friends, family, and church leaders to sign up for our e-newsletter, *Extreme Hope*, at www.sendnorth.org*
- *Are you a 'hands-on' kind of person? **Volunteer** your time.*
- *Are you convinced of the need? **Give** financially.*
- *Are you deeply gripped by God's love for these people? Perhaps God is calling you to the North. Take five minutes to fill out our “Getting Started” form at www.send.org/pq*

God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things to put His Extreme Love on display. Please reach out and ask any question about our work. We look forward to hearing from you.”

-Jim Stamberg, Area Director

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**Making
Northern
Disciple-Makers**