

January 29, 2024

the

Delhi Platter

Doug and Sherry



Thoughts

In the beginning of January, God directed me to these verses in Scripture, Luke 5:37-39, and I have been reflecting with God on these verses: *“And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for they say, “The old is better.”*”

New beginnings are something we all appreciate and maybe sometimes fear. I am not one to make New Year’s resolutions, but I do want to hear from God regarding what he has to say about the path my feet are taking. There is a temptation to stick with what we know, the tried-and-true paths in our life. Transitions are hard, letting go of one season and entering a new season is challenging. I (Sherry) turned 65 on January 25, and in this season of my life my physical strength to go fast has lessened. In reflecting with God and others, I am turning over much of the leadership of the Punjabi Ministry here to Arun and Anjana. They are faithfully persevering in this very hard ground within Abbotsford. In every way this “harvest field” — because this is what Jesus called it (Matt 9:37-38)—is challenging. The ground has been shaped by exclusion, rejection and a pulling away and into their own (Punjabi) community, which has grown in strength and numbers. Accepting Jesus, and following the Christian faith is still seen as a betrayal of one’s own community and adopting a foreign Western religion. So, when Arun encounters Punjabi folks here, he encounters a sense of betrayal from his own people. This is a hard “harvest field,” in fact every bit as hard as any of us going overseas.

Please keep Arun and Anjana and their boys in your prayers as they persevere in this challenging season of witnessing to God’s goodness, His salvation, building connections within the community, and their small fellowship gathering on Saturday nights. I (Sherry) play a coaching role in interpreting culture, even the changing culture of Punjabis here, shaping directions and strategies, as Arun becomes the up-front face of this ministry.

And as I press into God, and what he has for me in this next season, I begin to understand that God never releases us from serving in His Kingdom, the assignments only change. And maybe the greatest assignment is found in Mark 12:28-34. When a teacher of the law came to Jesus he asked, *“Of all the*

commandments, which is the most important?"
And Jesus responded by quoting from Deuteronomy 6, *"Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, The Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this, "Love your neighbor as yourself" "There is no commandment greater than these."*

Maybe this has always been the great assignment, the first assignment for followers of Jesus. He is all I need, he invites us, longs for us to seek Him and His righteousness. And when we do, his presence, his peace that passes all understanding, and his deep love for me, keeps my heart steadfast and fixed upon him. Where I might have been tempted to focus on what's next, has become a place of joy, an anticipation of God's "goodness that surely follows me all the days of my life" and becomes the path my feet take.

The second part of that verse is a big ask to love our neighbor as ourselves. My mother-in-law and father-in-law were the best examples of loving and non-judgemental posture, as I witnessed how they loved their grandkids (even though some chose different paths), they fed everyone, accepted each person with love into their home and held them in prayer. They demonstrated their love in action. And without exception every grandchild has amazing memories of their godly grandparents. That's the way of love that I want to learn and grow in with everyone God brings into my path as I walk.

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day.

2 Corinthians 4:16

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Prayer

Doug and I leave will be leaving for India soon. Doug leaves on January 29, as he will be doing training in the north with John Sankara Rao's church planting network. I will join him in Delhi on February 6. Then we head south to Hyderabad and Shamshabad where the Bible College is located. We will be travelling with Elton De Silva, the new Director of ICOMB. Elton just recently took over from Rudy Plett, and we are excited to visit the newly elected leadership in the India MB Conference who has joined all the church fields together. This is the result of your prayers and our prayers, and God's faithfulness in His timing of the "new wine" being poured into "new wineskins." We have prayed and hoped for this healthy leadership transition, along with our Indian brothers and sisters, for many years. Please pray as we travel on roads for safety, and being invisible to people and places that would oppose North American's presence that signals affirmation of a "new wine season."

God has been opening doors again for me to work more closely with Doug as he works within other countries providing Missional Leadership Training, (MLT). In March, we will be going to Thailand where I will conduct Trauma Healing camps, much like I did in Malawi with refugees there. I will work alongside Louise Sinclair Peters, long term global worker with Multiply, at the border of Thailand and Myanmar to work with Myanmar refugees.

Please Note: If you respond to this email update, please do so earlier than February 4, when I depart for India. After that time, I don't want to receive any emails that contain sensitive material while in India. Thanks!

