

Where the Rubber Meets the Road

By adminlen On March 8, 2013 · Add Comment

I've been enjoying the snow pictures friends in the Midwest have been sharing lately. The beauty of lots of snow is one reason I like living in North Idaho. Still, the storm has been a huge headache in many places out there, with accidents and closures galore. One friend (who shall remain nameless!) posted a picture of his pickup truck buried up to the axles with the comment that a two-wheel drive truck was worthless!

Owning an old two-wheel drive myself, I could commiserate to a certain degree. The last couple of winters, even with a lot of weight in the back, the truck couldn't really even get out of the driveway. I ignored the balding tires when the weather was nice. But my old tires were just too worn to have much traction, and I didn't have the money to buy a new set. There were times that I felt pretty much like my Midwestern friend feels about his truck. Hearing of my sad state of vehicular affairs, one of our members here remembered that she had a set of barely used snow tires she no longer needed that just might fit my truck. Sure enough, they fit, and now, even with the bed empty, snow presents little challenge to my forward progress.



It occurs to me that church planting can be a lot like a two-wheel drive truck with lousy tires in snow. At times it can feel like all you are doing is sitting there spinning your wheels, going nowhere fast. The difficulties pile up around you, further impeding your progress, and you can spend a lot of time adding weight, or shoveling, or pushing, or even whining, all to no avail because if you don't have *traction*, you don't have *action*.

There's a place for proper "weight," of course; sound theology, strong teaching, good governmental structure, and physical presence in a community are all things that you must pursue. And there's no doubt that sometimes "shoveling" is necessary in the various discipleship and outreach programs that keep you connected with your congregants and neighbors. The "pushing" of both preemptive and corrective discipline has to be done, no question. (Whining is just out, no matter what!)

Nevertheless, without "traction" you cannot establish a church (or maintain an existing one, for that matter). That traction is your connection with the Lord Himself. [Habakkuk 3:19](#) reads, "God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places." The idea, naturally, is that the deer have traction, being sure-footed in difficult places. Without the Lord's strength you will never keep your ministry firmly upon the "road" He has set before you. Everything may look great — engine running, transmission in gear, cargo full loaded, even extra hands to push — but without a good grip, you're not going anywhere. So, grip tightly to Him in prayer. Hold fast to Him in meditation upon His Word. Be tenacious in grasping His fellowship among the saints. Look to the Lord to make up your lack of grip (those old bald tires of self reliance, poor prayer, and poorer devotion have to go) with a renewal of His grace, and rejoice when He does so. And then, no matter what the weather looks like outside your door, you'll make some progress because the rubber truly is meeting the road.