

Terri McFarland Ministries

March 2017 Newsletter

www.terrimcfarland.org

Tension...What do you do?

Years studying math taught me a number is either greater than, less than, or equal to another given number. There are only three options. A trichotomy lesson is not very exciting, however, it describes how my mind was created to process.

I like resolution. Equations that are solvable, situations that make sense, a God I can understand, a neat house, a checkbook that reconciles, a destination at the end of a journey, a purpose in life (now I'm getting deep), and yes, numbers that are equal, less than or greater than...you get the drift. Chaos is not a comfortable place for me, in fact, I would prefer to avoid it all together. **Yet, it is in turmoil and uncertainty God has placed us, His people.** And here we feel an undercurrent of *tension*. How do we walk in it, or struggle against the pressure?

Recently, my husband Keith and I went on a ten-day trip to Biblical Asia Minor (modern day **Turkey**). Led by teacher Brad Gray, our group was thrown into feeling the *tension* our ancestors in the faith encountered daily. The persecution resulting from the choice to follow Jesus, ignited by Saul (*later Apostle Paul*), grew to encompass much of the Greco-Roman world. It wasn't long before it became very real to all believers - even to us.

How do I love those who reject and hate me; how do I worship in a church with graven images located next to a gymnasium where people exercise in the nude; how do I forgive those who are killing and persecuting my family and friends; how, as a slave committed to follow Jesus, do I serve my master; how do I live a life of purity in a culture of promiscuity? And, in the midst of the tension, how do I spur others on to love and good deeds?

Our world is messy and we don't need to see ruins in Turkey to know this is the space we walk in today. It is in places of deep brokenness where we get to know God the best. And when God meets us there it emboldens our spirit.



Hierapolis Theater



Travertine terraces - Hierapolis

What I grapple with now, is not the need for resolution, it is how to become more comfortable in the *tension*. I like to think trials are neatly resolved with a beautiful ribbon. When, in reality, healing may mean we now walk with a limp. The goal (I like goals) should not be to rid myself of the *tension* I feel in my faith, my relationships, and my journey with God - rather to grow to trust God in the disarray and the limp. For it is with Him my heart will truly settle.

Run Your Race

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1

One of our faith lessons in **Aphrodisias**, inspired us to lay down that which keeps us from an intimate relationship with our Father God, others, and ourselves. We may still have people in our lives cheering for us, while precious others have gone on before leaving us a legacy of faith in order that we too, may finish strong.

As a part-time runner, the pounding inside my chest accelerated as I took a lap around the ancient stadium. Through tears I could envision my mom, my dad, and my brother sitting in the stands applauding my efforts not to give up the fight. **It will be worth it all!** There are days it feels like more than I can bear...and with a breaking heart I must again lay my burden at His feet and choose to run as He desires...with *hypomone*...endurance to the end.

Never the Same

...And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me?' Acts 22:7

On the road to Damascus, Saul met Jesus Christ in a stunning encounter and his life was never the same. There are seven similar instances in the Bible where God says a name twice, each one occurring at an epic point in a person's life. **A time when there was about to be a radical change either in thought, behavior or calling.**

Saul's personal mission was to halt the influence of Jesus any way possible. And for years he struggled against God and against wisdom. Until he heard Jesus call his name - *twice*. And thus began in him a radical change.

In a single moment, the reality of Saul's world was altered. And during the next three years in Sinai (Arabia), he re-evaluated his impressive Rabbinical training in Jerusalem only to find his beliefs were flawed. He didn't know the story as well as he thought he did. And Saul began to follow Jesus. In the solitude of the wilderness he became impassioned to take the story further - more particularly into a Gentile world.



Brad Gray teaching in the Sardis Synagogue



Running in an ancient stadium at Aphrodisias

Praise Report:

- Safe travels in **Turkey**
- Continued health
- Open **Hearts** at Bible Study
- Encouraging growth for **Graham, Olivia and Austin**

Find our itinerary @
terrimcfarland.org



Disciple Philip's tomb...the sacrifice of a martyr.

As God's Word continues to be deposited in my heart, and I embrace my time with Him in the wilderness, the thought, behavior, and calling of my life will continue to be *transformed*. And ever so slowly, I will become more equipped to live life as a passionate follower of Jesus Christ.

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. II Corinthians 3:18

Bless God for His patience to change us from glory to glory while we remain in His presence. And as we pause to listen closely, we just might hear Jesus calling our name...*twice* :-)



Ministry Update

On Friday, April 21st, our Northwest Indiana **Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)** will host its first **Home Team Dinner** featuring Chicago Bears linebacker, **Sam Acho**. It is exciting to see huddles begin to pop up around the region and to be hosting our first *FCA basketball camp* in Gary, Indiana this July! We believe God will draw hearts to His as we endeavor to bring Jesus to coaches and aspiring young athletes in Northwest Indiana.

Throughout the fall and now this spring, I am grateful for the opportunity to participate on our *Worship Team* and to teach our *Women of the Word* Bible study. We will finish the book of John shortly after Easter. Our experience in Turkey, offered me wonderful new insight into the Word and has stirred in my heart the desire to more clearly share what I am learning along the way.

The Spirit is moving and we are in for a ride! LORD willing, our paths will cross again soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terri Michelle Farland".

For contact info, speaking details and audio teaching files go to:

www.terrimcfarland.org



FCA Home Team Dinner



We worship You, Almighty God!



Our weekly Bible Study

Please Pray for:

- A hearing heart ♥
- **FCA Home Team Fundraising Dinner**, April 21st
- **FCA Basketball Camp**
- Upcoming ministry opportunities

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