

MEN'S MINISTRY

Servant
Warrior
Ministries™

REAL · RADICAL · RELENTLESS · RELEVANT

Proverbs 27:17

Detours & Forks By: Jeff Searcy

Happy April! Spring is in the air (as well as the pollen), and the weather is absolutely perfect for a ride with the top down, sunroof and windows open, or your head out of the window (please not while you are driving). I certainly do not want to forget the motorcycle enthusiasts and their two-wheel chariots. You guys are right in the mix. Bottom line: It's time to hit the road!

A few months ago we talked about getting prepared for the trip. That preparation is essential for us to be able to handle the detours and forks God allows to happen. Last month we talked about action and that action, on our part, is required if we are to experience all that God has in store for us. Now this is really where the rubber meets the road. We've planned, prepared, acted, and now we're on the road headed to wherever it is we are wanting or being led to go.

What happens now? Let's set it up: Above you is a sky so bright that it hurts your eyes. The temperature is about 80 degrees. The car, or motorcycle, is washed, waxed, and loaded with essentials for a ride. You drop the top and/or windows, and off you go. There is nothing but open road, fresh air, and ... well, you get the picture. All of a sudden, you see brake lights up ahead ... and they are not moving. As you get a little closer, you see a flashing light and an orange sign that says "Detour Ahead." "Man, oh man. Just when I thought everything was going great, this happens." Sound familiar? By the way, I was referring to your life. How about this? You are driving ... same blue sky, same fresh air, same shiny machine, and you come to a fork in the road. It's decision time. What makes you take one way or the other? Past experience? Knowledge of one road or the other, or where they end up? Knowing what you will come across if you go one way? Not sure what will happen if you take the other way? No need to answer now. I'll ask many of the same questions later.

On the road, you never know what you are going to experience, and you never know when you will have to take a detour or come across a fork. Sometimes God gives us forks, where we are given the opportunity to choose a direction. One way is the direction that will take us toward Him, another way takes us away from Him, and another takes us back home. Other times, He will drop a detour in our path, where we lose a directional option leaving us to go either

forward in the direction He has determined or back to where we were. If you are like most of us (hey girls, if you are reading, this can apply to you as well), turning around and going back, or retreating, is not an option anyway — nor is stopping the car in the middle of the road. That is, unless you don't mind a whole lot of irritated people behind you. Can you say "road rage?" Sorry.

In all fairness, however, sometimes turning around and heading back or even pulling the car over on the shoulder, out of traffic, is the right move. We call the former, in the words of the United States Marine

Corps, "fighting in a different direction" or "living to fight another day." And the latter, God calls it waiting on Him. Any directional decision we find ourselves having to make puts us in a position to either move closer or further away from God.

Think about some of the detours and forks you have come upon in your life. Each one impacts us differently and causes us to go in one direction or another. Depending on the severity of an event, occurrence, situation, or decision, it is oftentimes very difficult to choose the road that takes us close to God. If something has happened that really turned your life upside down, or hurt you significantly — an experience that if you ever revisit it again, it will be too soon — choosing to go in a direction that we know will inevitably bring us face to face with whatever it is that caused the pain is, in many people's eyes, on the side of being a couple of sandwiches short of a picnic. God says different.

What are some of the reasons we don't take the road that leads us to God? Don't want to relive the pain? Fear of confrontation? Sense of helplessness? Fear of isolation or having to face whatever it is all alone? Feel like no one understands what we are going through? Feel that no one knows how bad it hurt? Yes, guys, I am talking to you. Feel like we can't forgive? Feel like we can't be forgiven? Feel ashamed? Feel like there's no way the other person, or anyone for that matter, can love us? The list can go on and on. I am here to tell you that in His Word, God speaks through the Apostle Paul in the book of Romans and tells us that "in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." (Rom 8:37 NIV) Paul goes on to say that "neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 8:38-39 NIV) Christ told us in the book of John, "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33 NIV) I'm not the sharpest knife in the drawer, but it sounds like to me that Paul covered most, if not all, of the detours or forks I will come to in my life and that the Creator of the heavens and the earth, Almighty God, the Beginning and the End, has my back. Dude, if that doesn't get you jacked up and encouraged, nothing will!

When you come to a fork in the road ... take it. Take the way that will bring you close to God. He wants you to come to Him. He is your refuge and fortress. (Psalms 91) When a detour is dropped on you, relish it. Pray about it. God is likely pointing you in the direction He wants you to go. Keep it real ... and Armor Up! **PS**

Jeff Searcy is a highly energized and radical husband, dad, executive, speaker, strategist, minister of opportunity, out-spoken and motivated servant of the Almighty, and an average golfer. For more go to www.jeffsearcy.net.

