



GIANTS ALONG MY PATH

ALLISON SPEER honors FAYE SPEER

Grief is a powerful thing. It has a strange orchestration to it that leaves you in *decrescendos* or *retardandos* based on an ever-changing whirlwind of memories.



Faye and Allison

I write this while in the tempest of grief over the loss of a giant of Christendom, Faye Speer. It is hard to say the name Faye without the name Brock. They were a set like salt and pepper, left and right shoes, and bookends. But though they came, for most of their lives, as a set, Faye was certainly one of a kind.

She was a Nazarene pastor's firstborn. She was unapologetically Christian. She made her life peaceful based on a continual watch over her godly worldview, ever with the filter of Christ's love.


Faye woke considering the needs of others. At first her beloved Brock was her concern and then her children. Then she was asked to carry the burden of a traveling, singing mother. I can only imagine how her pure heart was torn by the desire to support her husband in his time of need and her desire to be a mother to her children, but she seemed to be able to shoulder both the burden of travel and motherhood with a quiet resolution that spoke, "Here I am Lord, send me."

When her assignment as a gospel singer was finished and her life brought her to the grave of her love, Brock,

Faye said, "I have to learn what it is that I like. I have lived my life for others for so long that I don't even know what I like to eat." She had decreased and Christ's purpose in her had increased so completely that she had few desires for herself.

I watched her discover a new social group at the YMCA swimming pool. I saw her learn to volunteer at the Vanderbilt Children's Hospital and enjoy helping mothers who were given the hard road of a child with a disease. After her death, as I cleaned out her dresser drawer I found her hospital name tag and ID along with four medals that she received as a volunteer. The pins she did not display, the prayers for the mothers and kids she wore like a warm sweater that you wear every day.

I see her now as a blueprint or a moving sculpture, which I can study and mimic. You see, Faye knew the letter of the Master's orders to us for our life and work here. Like the faithful servants in the parable of the talents, she understood that the blessings of obedience and holiness were established for our protection and our prosperity. But Faye also knew the spirit of the Master's design for us, how the rich, sweet honey of communion flows when love becomes our most significant task.

You see, sorrow is sometimes how God blesses us. Our soul moans and He heightens our ability to articulate His praises. We shed tears and our eyes see more clearly how to live according to the Spirit of the Master's heart. I pray for folks more. I call people more. I hug children longer and look them in the eye when they speak. I invite people in for a glass of tea more frequently. I move with a more purposed desire to give myself away for love, to spend my soul only on what is everlasting. I will steadily find the grief is eased with the presence of the Balm of Gilead, but I will never again walk a step here below without considering what Faye Speer would have done. 

Daughter-in-law and mother-in-law share a laugh

