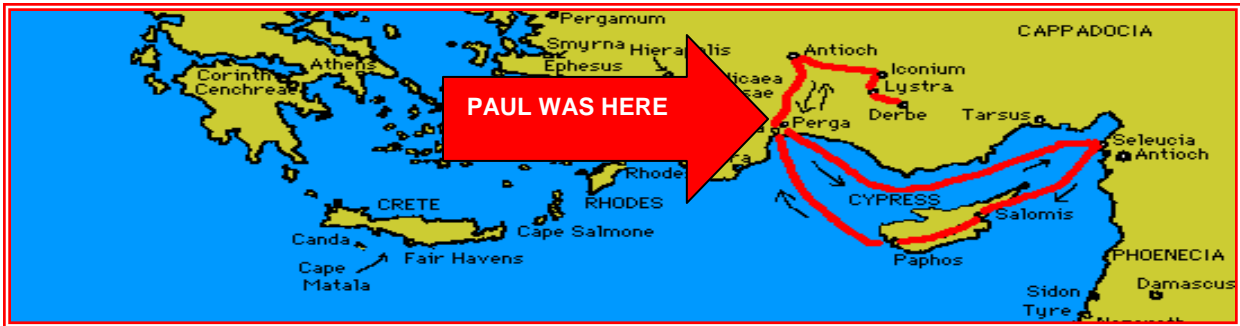


Networking Newsletter: April 2010



Strengthening souls, and encouraging them to continue in the faith. Acts 14: 22



David & Elizabeth Chotka located at the water entrance to the city of Perga.

Dear Friends,

National Assembly in Antalya, Turkey was an amazing time. Well over 800 of us attended and experienced a small slice of life in a culture quite different than our own. 90% of Turkish society is Muslim. This week, approximately 450 people will make their way back to Canada after visiting our International Workers who live in the Silk Road, Desert Sands and Asian Spice regions of the world. We've been given the opportunity to *retrace* the roots of the early Christian church, catch a new vision to *renew* our focus so as to continue to reach our world with the message of the Gospel and *rebuild* methods used share God's love in our world today.

There's nothing like seeing history first hand. *Retracing* the roots of my faith back to the beginnings of the Christian church has *renewed* my spirit. I was reminded that the word "Christian" was first used by those who heard Paul preach in this region. During a tour of an archaeological site called Perga, I walked on the road that Paul and Barnabas traveled during his first missionary journey. (Acts 13:13) (Acts 14: 25) Paul's travels took him through Perga on two occasions. Acts 14: 22 and 23 records that Paul spent time: "strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith and saying: Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in who they had believed."

It's struck me that the "work" of the church is much the same in 2010, as it was in A.D. 46 when Paul first began to plant churches. Day by day all of us in ministry families here or in the many nations we touch, are working at strengthening, encouraging, nurturing and organizing the body of Christ. Fervent prayer for those who lead our church communities here or abroad is just as crucial today as it was when Paul "commended" the

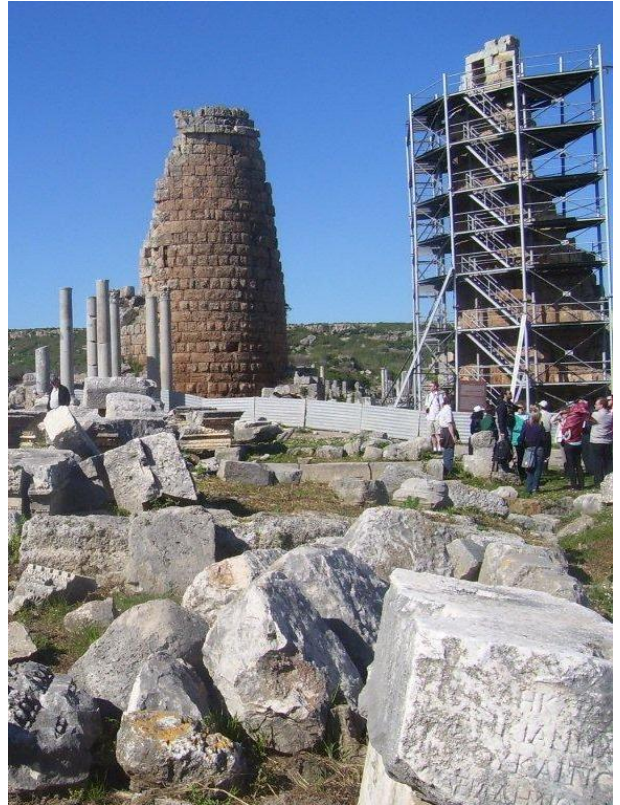
elders of those first churches. After spending just a few hours in Perga, I have a new appreciation of how incredibly difficult the task of establishing Christian faith must have been in a Roman ruled city. Considering the sophistication of the Roman Empire, Paul’s message was truly “counter-cultural.”

As you face the challenges of your day, I wonder if any of you are in a place where you need “strengthening and encouragement”? It’s a great comfort for me to know that you and I are “the church” together! I’ve returned home with a renewed understanding of how important it is to pray for all of us in ministry. Our spouses, our children and each of us are dependent upon those prayers. Know that I’m praying for each of you! As Easter approaches, let’s renew our calling to reach out and encourage each other. Make a call, write an email, plan a coffee time with a ministry spouse and tell them you are praying for them!

Each of you are invited to a special day set aside simply to encourage each other. This month I look forward to seeing you at Alliance Community Church in Sylvan Lake on **Saturday April 24th for our Spring Ministry Spouse Retreat**. If you haven’t received your invitation, please be in touch with me or the District Office for all the details.

Blessings in Christ,

Elizabeth Choḡa



Main entrance tower gate to the city of Perga currently being reconstructed.