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## THE POWER OF A QUILT

By Marv Murray



Our daughter Melissa called me on Sunday morning, April 8, 2018. I was in the church finance office between services and was able to talk. Melissa was extremely upset. Her friend Angie Wentz had just been sent home under hospice care with a life expectancy of about a week. Angie was only 38 and had a terrible condition involving her esophagus. Melissa is good friends with Angie and works with Angie's father Kevin.

I told Melissa that we would put Angie on the church prayer list and our personal prayer list. I also told her that I would see Teresa Heiselt and request a Prayer Quilt. I informed Melissa that it might take some time for the quilt to be made and I would let her know. As it turned out, Teresa had a quilt available. She presented it at the altar the next Sunday and it was anointed and prayed over. As soon as we received the quilt, Lana took it to the post office and express mailed it to Melissa to deliver to Angie.

Melissa took the quilt to Angie as soon as she received it. She told me that Angie loved the quilt and cried when she received it. Angie wanted the Patchwork Prayer Quilters to know how much she appreciated the quilt. I gave Teresa the message to share with the group. Every time Melissa visited Angie she had her quilt covering her. I believe that she took solace and was blessed by the quilt and the prayers that came with the quilt.

Continued on page 3



## - Our Mission -

### **To LOVE GOD AND LOVE PEOPLE**

with *all* our compassion, wonder,  
curiosity, and energy.

*Mark 12:30-31*

## - Our Core Values -

### **COMPASSIONATE RESPONSE**

We must respond to the *real* needs  
of people around us as the Lord enables.

□ *1 John 3:17*

### **PASSIONATE PROCLAMATION**

We must declare that Jesus is our Savior, Baptizer, Healer,  
*and* Soon-coming King,  
upholding the Bible as the Word of God.

*Mark 16:15*

### **NEXT GENERATION INVESTMENT**

We must reach the next generation,  
for they *are* the lifeline  
of AJ First Assembly of God.

*Psalms 78:4*

### **STRATEGIC CHURCH PLANTING**

We must cooperate with our movement  
in establishing new churches  
and winning new souls for Christ.

*Acts 13:1-3*

### **SKILLFUL RESOURCING**

We must equip believers to spiritually grow  
and to do every good work.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17*

### **FERVENT PRAYER**

We must commit ourselves to prayer,  
for it *will* determine our destiny.

*Isaiah 38:5*



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Associate Pastor: Bob Roche  
Worship Leader: Robin Rost  
Sr. Adult Pastor: Mary June Ficarra  
Youth Pastor: Nic Allen  
Children's Pastor: Leah Thomas  
Administrative Assistant:  
Leann Rogers  
Financial Assistant: Glennis Hefton  
Website designer: Rachel Birman

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David Bailie (Secretary)  
Ron Brackeen (Treasurer)  
Jerry Hayes  
Harold Worthen  
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Angie was given a week to live in April of 2018. She succumbed to her illness on January 2, 2019. Instead of a week, she lived days short of eight months. During those eight months she was able to be with her family and on October 5, 2018, she wed Bill wentz. In her last days, Angie gave instructions that the prayer quilt was to cover her in the casket and after her funeral, it was to be cleaned and stored for her niece Kaydence Boesel until Kaydence was grown.

The Patchwork Prayer Quilt Ministry of Apache Junction First Assembly of God has brought comfort and solace to many people over the years, both believers and non-believers. It is an expression of our church's love for all of God's Children and a way of showing those it serves that God does love you. His love is expressed by the Ladies of the Patchwork Prayer Quilt Ministry who though they may never meet the recipients of their quilts, the compassion and love of Christ is manifest in the ministry they perform.

Can I tell you that Angie left this life as a believer and with the forgiveness of Christ? Only God knows the condition of her soul but I can tell you based on what my daughter Melissa has told me, Angie was comforted and encouraged by the quilt and the scriptures that adorn it. It was important to her, so important that as the end drew near, Angie gave instructions that it was to cover her in the casket and that it was to be passed on at the appropriate time to her young niece. The quilt and the prayers of this church was a source of comfort to her. I am sure that the Lord is not through using that quilt because it will be an heirloom for Kaydence.

True Christianity is reflected in that these ladies pool their talents, skills and time to create these marvelous quilts, quilts that are a blessing to all who receive them and a testimony to the love with which they are created. Further, it is not only the beautiful quilt, but it is the prayers of the ladies and of this church that goes to everyone who receives the quilt. Only the Lord knows how those who are facing eternity are blessed and comforted by this marvelous gift.

WHAT A TESTIMONY

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## SCRIPTURE QUILTERS

### PATCHWORK PRAYER QUILTERS

3RD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH, 9AM - NOON

LOCATION: CE BUILDING

LEADERS: DONNA STARR & TERESA HEISELT

CONTACT: (480) 695-7804

*"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth." Psalm 34:1*



### **A Special Gift** by Fran Barbano

As we celebrate Mother's Day, there is joy in my heart for gifts received because I'm a mother. We watch our children grow from birth to adulthood as they learn about life and the world around them. We rejoice in their first words, first steps, and first moves of independence. We fear for them while they're growing up, realizing that life is seldom easy and the world's not always kind.

They don't realize that they face danger as they pursue enjoyment with reckless abandon. They teeter on the edge; we hold our breath. They laugh at our fear; we pray for their safety. We nurture, love, accept, discipline and, sometimes, do battle with our offspring. We rejoice at their victories and anguish but encourage them during times when they're not victorious.

When they grow up and have children of their own the meaning of 'mother' becomes apparent. They'll wonder how they took us for granted. As they are entrusted with a new life to shape and mold for tomorrow's destiny, I've seen fear and awe in their eyes. Once you are entrusted with the life of a child, you have been presented with a special gift and a tremendous responsibility. Your life will never be the same.

Sometimes, in this gift of life, God sends us an extra special child, one with whom we will share an experience so unique and so life-changing that we will be forever changed. This child will have us on our knees more than on our feet as we pray for direction and answers. It was that way for me and Lisa. When I became pregnant, I 'knew' something was wrong. Expressing that to my doctor he looked at me sympathetically, assuring me everything was fine. In my heart, I knew better.

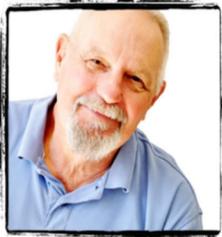
Perhaps when I say 'heart,' I really mean 'soul,' but it is a 'knowing of the unknown' that carries with it a certainty that what you sense is true and unalterable. I prayed for strength to face the inevitable. Nothing could have prepared me more than prayer, yet I was not ready for the reality when this child was born. Lisa had congenital, multiple birth defects; a condition called Klebatt-Schadel syndrome, so rare that at the time of her birth my odds of having a child like Lisa were 500 million to one. Only six other cases had been reported, worldwide.

Lisa, in critical condition, was taken to a children's hospital in a larger city. Hospital staff secluded me. No one came near, not even the nurses. God had been preparing me for this day for months, but here's where God's intervention became vividly apparent. Five weeks before delivery, I met a woman in the doctor's office whose due date was two weeks after mine. We became friends and spoke often on the phone. When her husband called to say she was in the hospital awaiting the birth of their third child, I knew I would be joining her that day. The next day, she looked for me. Nurses refused to provide information. "There were problems," they said. She asked what room I was in and was told I couldn't have visitors. Why? I don't know. This Christian sister searched until she found me.

If it were not for God's hand in bringing us together, I don't know what I'd have done. We cried and prayed together.



whenever possible, she'd be in my room consoling and comforting me. My heart was broken. Her prayers and presence gave me strength, courage, and hope. We, as mothers, faced the unthinkable together. I cannot think of my daughter without thinking of her, a 'sister' sent at a specific time for a specific purpose. To this day, the way God works always puts me in awe of his wisdom, guidance and power. There is no such thing as coincidence. God's intervention can be seen throughout our lives if we'll only look to God, Jehovah Jireh, our provider. May you always be aware of his hand in your life. †



### Wrong Road

I read this on Facebook and began to think about it;

"No matter how far you may have traveled down the wrong road, you can always turn around and begin the journey anew."

When we turn from the truth of the "Way" we tend to fall into the trap that the world has set for us. That trap is that we are no different than the world itself or even that we are worse than the world. We begin to feel that we are worse than the world because we begin to convict ourselves for what we have thought, said, or acted upon. After all, how can God continue to love a person like me?

We need to understand just a few simple truths about the God we serve.

The first truth is that God loves us so much that He sent His Son to die for us while we were still sinners.

When God decided to redeem sinful man, He did not start by sending an edict saying we all had to straighten up before He would be willing to move on our behalf. He acted and then gave us a choice; we could either accept the gift of His Son or we could deny Him all together. Even in the very beginning of His creation God made a way for the redemption of Adam and Eve by sacrificing an animal in order to give them a covering. Oh, sure He did ban them from the garden, and made their life a bit of a struggle but never did He break His relationship with them, and He will not ever abandon us either.

Even when God asks us to do things that are terribly hard for us to even comprehend, He provides all we need. I think of the command to Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac who was the promised seed of Israel. Just as Abraham was about to kill Isaac God stopped him and provided a ram for the sacrifice, just as He would later provide His own son as a sacrifice for us. For we can never redeem ourselves, we have only the power to repent and turn back to the right road.

The second truth is that God loves us too much to leave us where we are (or have come to);

1 Cor. 10:13

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to Man (women). And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."



We are told in God’s word that we are not to forsake the fellowship; That means the gathering together as a congregation for services as well as meeting on an individual basis for prayer and encouragement. We are meant to be mentors or accountability partners for each other.

So why is it important to have someone with whom we can be truthful about the things we struggle with in this world? It is because we can know and understand we are not the only ones going through these things whatever they may be. In fact, God speaks to this matter in 1 Peter 5:9 where He says; *"Resist him (the devil), standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers (and sisters) throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings."*

I feel it a great comfort to know that others suffer from the same temptations that I feel because it tells me that I am normal and that I don’t have to stay in the trap set by the world. I can go to others that God has provided to be lifted up and encouraged so as not to stay in that sin any longer.

The last truth I am going to look at in this article is that repentance and resistance equals restoration.

I opened the last segment saying that we serve a God that loves us too much to leave us where we are. That tells me that God is not only in the business of "Salvation" but is also in the business of "restoration". We read in 1 Peter 4:10 *"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."*

Did you see that? After we have suffered a little while He, God will himself restore us. I would say that with that promise His word has gone full circle from when he said he would leave us nor forsake us.

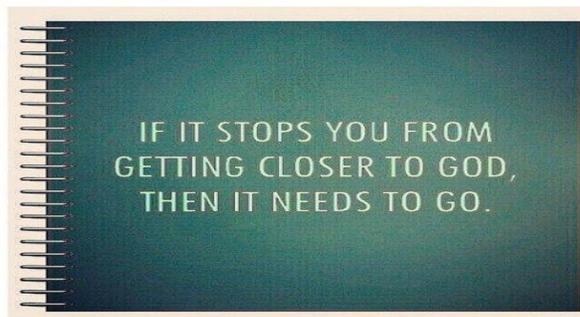
I am not sure what this may signify to you, but to me it says that my God truly does love me so much that he did give up to death his only Son so I could have life; That my God truly loves me so much that he will not leave me where I have gotten myself too; that my God loves me so much that he wants to restore me too the perfection in which he created me.

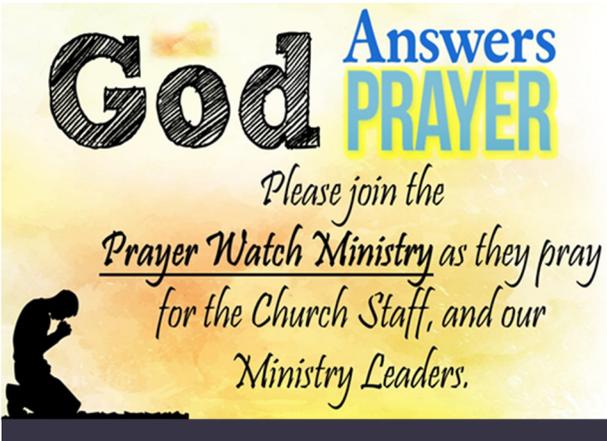
We must make a decision today about whom we will serve and choose to follow Joshua;

But for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.

May God bless you

Pastor Bob





*"If My people, who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV).*

## What if God's People Prayed?

By Fran Barbano

While studying scripture, we may discover many passages that make it clear that the meaning is two-fold. It was written for the times then yet has to do with the here and now for anyone reading or hearing the words at any time in history. Such a verse is 2 Chronicles 7:14.

There are many commas in this passage, which indicate pauses or moments of reflection on the part of the verse between commas. What do we discover if we take this verse apart comma by comma and reflect on each part separately?

One: "If My people" ... *My* people. God's people. Do we call ourselves Christians? Are we identifying ourselves with the Lord as he identifies us in relationship to himself in this verse? If not, why not?

Two: "who are called by *My* name will humble themselves," calls for identification with (called by My name), and action (humility) on our part if we claim to be Christians.

According to *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* 'humble' means 1) not proud or haughty; not arrogant or assertive; 2) reflecting, expressing, or offered in a spirit of deference or submission; 3) ranking low in a hierarchy or scale: insignificant, unpretentious.

Three: "and pray and seek My face," are calls to action from those hearing or reading these words. Do we pray? Regularly, or at all? Do we seek him, who is the author and finisher of our faith? Or do we believe that God is 'somewhere out there' and not really within reach? Jeremiah 29:13 is clear on seeking God and finding him: "And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your



heart" (emphasis NKJV).

Four: "and turn from their wicked ways," is another call to action. Turn. Turn around from the direction headed. Change. Give up our ways for his. These are vastly different ... our ways versus God's ways (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Five: "then will I hear from heaven, ...." The word 'then' is an absolute; "will I hear," is a promise. We could say it's absolutely a promise from God. When will God hear? "Then," when the first four parts of the sentence have been brought to fruition or completed. "If My people, who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven,"

When? After the first four parts are completed. Why do the first four sections of this verse need to be fulfilled? Because the entire verse, section by section, is contingent on the segment before it being completed or fulfilled.

Six: "and will forgive their sin and heal their land." The last part of the verse is a promise from God. Actually, two promises. Forgiveness, and healing of the land. After we fulfill the first five parts of the sentence, God has promised us that he will hear and "will forgive their sin and heal their land."

If God's people prayed and lived according to God's rules instead of their own, could this nation be turned around? Is it possible to even consider what might happen if enough people cared enough – and prayed enough – and lived according to God's ways, and not their own?

St. Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, to "pray without ceasing." Without ceasing means without stopping. In my opinion it means to always be in an attitude of prayer, and to be ready to pray in all circumstances and under all conditions. Since we need not be on our knees to pray, we can pray anytime, anyplace and for anyone – regardless of the time or the circumstances.

When considering to pray or not to pray, consider this: Ezekiel 22:30 states, "So I sought for a man among them who should build up the wall, and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one." (NAS)

"If My people...prayed ...". Think of the possibilities! God bless you.

**REMEMBER MAY 2<sup>ND</sup> IS THE NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER.**



## Signs of the times



### Apostasy

1) But the Spirit explicitly and unmistakably declares that in later times some will turn away from the faith, paying attention instead to deceitful and seductive spirits and doctrines of demons 2) by the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared as with a branding iron. I Tim: 4:1-2

In a recent letter from the American Family Association, I read the following statistics.

Those 19 and younger (generation Z) that identifies as atheist, is double that of the rest of adult population.

Millennials in America, (ages 20-34) 53% believe that the Bible is not literal,

but instead contained "helpful accounts of ancient myths."

a 9% increase in the last 4 years.

*Okay so what about those who belong to churches.*

Evangelicals: 53% believe everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature.

52% believe God accepts the worship of all religions.

78% Believe Jesus is a created being.

The "Rev." Nadia Bolz-Weber of the Evangelical Lutheran Church said the traditional teachings of Christianity are "utter bull...", and as for the churches we know it, we have to "burn it down and start all over"

Another survey finds: People with no religion - known as 'nones' among statisticians - account for 23.1 percent of the U.S. population, while Catholics make up 23 percent and Evangelicals account for 22.5 percent, according to the General Social Survey.

In other words, the "nones" are now officially the largest religious group in the United States.

Two-thirds of young people say they stopped regularly going to church for at least a year between the ages of 18 and 22, a new Lifeway Research survey shows.

These are the exact same patterns that we saw happen in Europe, and now most of those countries are considered to be "post-Christian societies".



And even the young people that are involved in church do not seem very keen on sharing their faith with others. According to one of the most shocking surveys that I have seen in a long time, 47 percent of Millennials that consider themselves to be "practicing Christians" believe that it is "wrong" to share the gospel with others.

Read more at

[http://www.prophecynewswatch.com/article.cfm?recent\\_news\\_id=3108#YIv4pc2Dx9cFq05T.99](http://www.prophecynewswatch.com/article.cfm?recent_news_id=3108#YIv4pc2Dx9cFq05T.99)

So where are they, the millennials and generation Z, turning, if at all? More frequently on tv, I've been hearing the practice of asking the universe for guidance.

Searching the internet, I found that this idea is a whole false teaching. The website goes on to 'teach' you.

"How to ask for a sign from the universe"

"Asking for a sign means that you're willing to collaborate with the Universe. It means that you're committed to releasing structure and control, instead be led by a power greater than you." (sounds good? But where does this power come from? A question not asked often enough) This seems to be a remix of eastern religions with meditation and mysticism and well includes most anything. May the force be with you or anything except the Creator of the Universe and all that is in it.

I recently heard of the Church of New Thought. It seems to imply that New thought is better than some out dated old doctrines that those closed-minded church people cling.

Instead they idolize **that which was created** rather than *the Creator*.

It seems some would rather put their trust and faith in an unknown god because they cannot fathom what God spoke into existence and that He has a plan from the beginning to the end and a plan for all those who seek Him.

Jesus talked to His disciples on the Mount of Olives in Matthew 24 about the signs that would happen before His return. Read the chapter, but I will pick up with v. 8 "But all these things are merely the beginning of the birth pangs. vs.9 "Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. vs.10 At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. vs.11 Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.v12 Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. v13. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

