

It's A difficult But Marvelous Thing

Lord, it is hard for ordinary mortals to balance the many strands that are necessary to weave our lives together. Too many of us try to emphasize one or two strands over the others and do not realize that, as strong and important as our favored strands may be, without the ones we neglect, ignore, or write off, the fabric of our lives will be full of holes and not strong enough to carry us through. The warp threads – the threads that run the whole length of our lives – are the strands upon which our lives are woven. They are made of our faith in God; his sustaining grace; and the witness of all those who went before us to create us and bring our faith into being. They are the ancestors, the traditions, and the experiences that have formed us. Without all these warp threads, there is no foundation upon which to weave. They may be subtle and we may not be aware of their impact, or we may try to deny their importance, but warp threads hold the weaving together. At the same time, we cannot rely only on the warp threads or no weaving will happen!

To weave we must also have weft threads – friends, family, the choices we make, the work we do, our relationship with the world, how we get along with other people, how we use our time, and how we live out our faith. Weft are the threads that are woven in and out, over and under the warp threads to make the fabric of our lives. We find them more colorful. We may feel we have more control over them. Our choices about weft threads create the pattern of the weaving, the color and design that is us. These threads can change. Some will end and new ones continue on in their place. We may start a pattern only to damage it by ignoring a thread or cutting ones we need. If a weft thread is dropped, the weaving is looser or weaker. If one is clung to too tightly it can brake leaving a hole, or it's tightness can pull the weaving out of shape. The weft threads can make the weaving look altogether different at the end than it did in the beginning – sometimes miraculously beautiful, sometimes puzzling, sometimes unfinished looking.

Lord, help us to remember that you provide the loom on which we weave, and that you will help us with the patterns if we ask. Your power in our lives can help us replace or reinforce a weak thread or tie in a new weft so that future weaving can be strong and vibrant. However, help us not to forget, you do not call us to sit back and wait for you to do the weaving, fix the knots we make in the thread, or mend the holes our poor choices or selfishness cause! Your love and the love of those you surround us with can keep us weaving till the end even when our strength fails. The bit of fabric our lives weave is joined with everyone else's bit to form a great quilt that encompasses all people with love, support and caring when we all do our best weaving. Guide our weaving hands and our use of threads!

This week in your prayer time:

•**Remember Brazil – The Amazon Rain Forest is burning!** The current U.S. president's trade war with China, has caused China to look for new sources for products they now purchase from the U.S. (like soy beans). The Brazilian president and farmers want to cash in. They are burning down the rain forest to make way for crops for China. The damage being done to Brazil and the planet is incalculable. The importance of the rain forest to the health of the planet is well known (though both the U.S. & Brazilian Presidents deny this). The number of plant and animal species being wiped out is unknowable since many are unknown to the outside world. The damage being done to indigenous people may never be fully known if their forest way of life is destroyed. The long-term effects of the fires on the world will not be known for decades. Once the rain forests burn, the massive loses cannot be restored.

•**Those effected by gun violence –** Children's Disaster Services sent Critical Response Care teams – 1 to Gilroy, CA (12 people were hurt & 3 killed at the Garlic Festival) & 1 to El Paso, TX (24 people were hurt & 22 killed in the shooting at Wal-Mart). The Gilroy team served 39 children over 6 days. The El Paso team served 35 children over 7 days. A team on stand-by to go Dayton, OH, (17 people were hurt & 10 killed) was not called (teams go when the Red Cross calls).



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