

## Goldsby Zone Newsletter

January 2008

Issue 2



### MASTER GARDENER

By Linda Leavell

What does a master gardener do to keep his garden in mint condition? What does a silversmith or goldsmith do to produce a pure product? What does a potter do to form a creation?

Scripture refers to God pruning, refining, and molding us. The purpose for this: 1) to cut away what is unwanted for more fruitful growth; 2) to free from impurities or unwanted material; 3) to create a particular form or shape.

God uses our circumstances to prune, refine, and mold us. It may be the loss of a job, death of a loved one, or dealing with a prodigal child. It may be recovering from an addiction, accepting a ministry call that brings major change, or forgiving a person

who betrayed our trust then being willing to accept the consequences of that betrayal.

When we find ourselves in these circumstances we are humbled, we lose our sense of control. We have a choice – to embrace or reject our faith.

What does God want our response to be? Deuteronomy 8 says, *“All the commandments which I command you this day you shall be watchful to do...And you shall earnestly remember all the ways which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to know what was in your mind and heart whether you would keep His commandments or not.”*

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“...effective small-group ministry must accomplish three goals:

1. Provide nurturing relationships in the presence and to the glory of Jesus Christ.
2. Invite others to faith in Jesus Christ.
3. Reproduce a new set of leaders so new groups can be formed.”

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### AN INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY

By Steve Leavell

When Anthony and Jessica Rossier returned to the States, we asked them to visit the **Grace for the Heart** house church. Our purpose was twofold. First, we wanted the people in the house church to know who our missionaries are, where they are working, and what their ministry is. Second, we want them to hear how God is moving and working not just here but around the world.

Anthony and Jessica shared briefly about their background, the call they have to

Argentina, and the work they have been doing. Then they opened it up for questions. There were so many questions for them that it was like a machine gun firing at them. They brought their ministry, hearts, and the country of Argentina alive to the group. Everyone came away with a new awareness of another country, people, and vision.

Leona Stroup felt a real tug on her heart for this couple, and has been doing some research on Argentina. We've asked her to bring one

particular aspect of the country or the work of Anthony and Jessica to the house church each week. This keeps their ministry and the country of Argentina in front of the people. We use this then as opportunity to pray for them.

When they are in the U.S. again, we will have them back to give us an update. Anthony and Jessica are in our heart and our prayers. Now they know of our love and commitment to them.

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## “THROW-AWAY SONGS”

By Bob Haught

“... for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh...”  
Philippians 3:3

<sup>8</sup> Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’” Luke 4:8

### Throw –away songs?

When the worship leader spoke the words, I knew exactly what he meant. He was referring to that first song or two that are sung at the beginning of the worship service while people are still trying to get “settled in” and ready to worship.

Although I understood, and could almost agree, I had to back up and contemplate the statement. I tend to process slowly, but I do process. These are my thoughts:

The purpose of a worship leader is to lead people into worship. (Profound, huh?) However, we all do not enter in at the same pace. There are some who maintain a life-style of worship or are more adept at practicing the presence of God (as Brother Lawrence so ably taught in his book by that name). They are in the Holy of Holies at the drop of a hat and will drop their own hat.

Others need assistance with their focus. We live in a hustling and bustling world with countless cares and distractions. If we as sheep can get sidetracked, how much more so are the lambs open to distraction. **Re-**

### member, until lambs learn to follow The Shepherds voice, they follow the sheep.

As we gather for house church most of us are still carrying a little “residue” from the day. We (yes, me too sometimes) need a few minutes to gather our thoughts and prepare our hearts to go before Father.

The Welcome portion of our service should begin to help the saints “unload” that “residue” of the day’s events and begin to think about Jesus.

In our house church Kathy and I like to have a Scripture read just before worship. We generally ask someone ahead of time to pick out any Scripture they like to read and, perhaps, make a short comment about it.

Sometimes this even brings a little open discussion. We have found this to aid immensely. As people focus on Jesus they are able to enter into worship more quickly.

Keep in mind, although worship is not about us, but all about Him, we are to prepare our hearts to worship “in spirit and in truth.”

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Here are some things and ways to keep our faith while in the pruning, refining, and molding process.

**Relinquishment:** The dictionary’s definition is: “*laying down or releasing something at great personal cost.*” When a seed is planted, it relinquishes up everything within itself to produce something bigger, greater, and of more value. Relinquishment stops our manipulation of the situation and releases the Holy Spirit to do the supernatural.

**Submission:** Ken Gire writes: “*The closest communion with God comes, I believe, through the sacrament of tears. Just as grapes are crushed to make wine and grain to make bread, so the elements of this sacrament come from the crushing experiences of life. Submitting to God in our crushing life experiences is the most difficult decision we’ll ever make. It’s painful, frightening, and even risky. But as we bow before God, we find ourselves deeply loved.*”

**Hope:** I once heard hope defined as: “*memory of the future and confidence in God.*” Hope’s power is that we have the energy and desire to go on because we believe something better is coming.

**Faith:** Hebrews 11 has been called the Heroes of Faith chapter. Towards the end it says, “*But some trusted God and were tortured, preferring to die rather than turn from God and be free. They placed their hope in the resurrection to a better life...All of these people we have mentioned received God’s approval because of their faith.*” Nancy Guthrie writes “*Trusting God when the miracle does not come, when the urgent prayer gets no answer, when there is only darkness – this is the kind of faith God values perhaps most of all.*” (Heb 11:32-ff)

**Community:** We need safe, caring people to stand beside us unshaken, who aren’t afraid to speak the truth, to grieve with us, who stick like glue and refuse to let us withdraw, because we can’t bear our load alone. In turn, we need to be safe, caring friends to others when they are going through their difficult circumstances.

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## FOUNDATIONS

Bob Goldsby

Many of you have walked with me through Matthew 28:18-20 and the command Jesus gives regarding discipleship. This is often referred to as “The Great Commission” and represents the primary instruction to mature believers who follow the Messiah.

As Disciples of Christ we are called to do several things (all simultaneously):

- Live as one set apart for His purposes (1 Cor 6:19-20)
- Live a life of obedience, making Christ the greatest priority in your life (Luke 14:26-27)
- Preach the Gospel (Mt 24:14; 26:13)
- Make Disciples (Mt 28:18-ff; Acts 14:21; et.al.)
- Work with faithful people as disciples so that they will make disciples of faithful people (2 Timothy 2:2).

All of these things require a community of believers so that we can walk in harmony and in personal accountability. God has chosen to use us for His glory and He does that in community. It is in the House Church that this is best done. Here we have a small group of people who can help one another by walking together.

The “Biblical Foundation Series” written by Larry Kreider is the primary tool of City Harvest Church to begin the discipleship process. These twelve booklets are designed to lay a solid foundation for a life of Christian discipleship. It does a great job of giving the basics to people but, in my opinion, its primary strength is that it provides each of us a tool to begin discipleship with others.

So, I have two questions for you:

1. **Are you currently in or have you completed this series?**  
If not please ask your House Church Pastors how you can do it with someone in your House Church.
2. If you have completed the series, **are you now leading someone else in it?**  
This is an excellent first step in learning to disciple someone. It gives you time to relate to one another and see if God is putting the two of you together for discipleship.

Some have felt that the series was “too basic.” If you view it, not only as a tool to enable you to lay the foundations of the faith but as a tool so that you can enter a relationship with others to begin to “make disciples” you can experience the joy of walking in “The Great Commission.”



“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”

Joshua 1:8

“...but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”

2 Peter 3:8

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; ...”

2 Cor 4:7

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Eph 6:11-12

### Biblical Foundation Series

by Larry Kreider

1. Knowing Jesus Christ as Lord
2. The New Way of Living
3. New Testament Baptisms
4. Building For Eternity
5. Living in the Grace of God
6. Freedom from the Curse
7. Learning to Fellowship w/God
8. What is the Church?
9. Authority & Accountability
10. God’s Perspective on Finances
11. Called to Minister
12. The Great Commission

# WALKING TOGETHER THROUGH LOSS

By John LaMadrid & George Golden

Have you ever walked through the loss of a loved one due to sickness or tragic accident? If not you probably have someone close to you who has. Tragically many walk through this time without significant support.

As members of Christ’s body we believe we are to walk with one another through such times. We want to be prepared to support those who are faced with the loss of a loved one.

Some common needs at a time of this kind of tragedy often include a need for companionship, prayer support for the family, house keeping, food preparation and child care. They may need assistance to find an appropriate funeral home or help to make wise legal decisions. Sometimes they need a driver available. Some will benefit greatly from a companion who stays with them through the worst days and nights.

We in the Goldsby zone want to prepare for times such as these. We’re looking for a few quality people:

- With great empathy for hurting people.
- Organizational talents.
- Who are accepting and caring.

If you see yourself with some or all of these, we need you!

Our desire is to intentionally prepare to walk with one another through tragedy and grief to healing, health and wholeness. We will develop strategies to strengthen, stabilize and serve family and friends as they recover from their pain and wounds.

If you wish to share your gifts, talents, experiences and expertise with those in need contact: George Golden at (360) 896-5754.

Shalom



God often creates unlikely companions!

News & Events	
Jan 13, '08	Zone Leader Potluck Creskide Estates 2:00—5:00pm
Jan 14, '08	Kreider Series #1 Loudermilk's 3009 Fairmont Ave (360) 773-0638 7:00—8:00pm
Jan 27, '08	Bethel Bible begins (All Units) Register at CHC
Jan 29, '08	Encouragers Luncheon CHC Chapel 1:00—3:00 pm. Call Gene Zinck (360) 882-3257

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**Speaking Up:** Are we willing to be transparent, vulnerable, and authentic in our struggles and difficult circumstances? When we do, it breaks down barriers, creates safe places to risk, and builds trust, faith, and hope. Intimacy in relationships brings life when we quit pretending and stop hiding behind denial embarrassment, guilt, or shame.

**Joy:** The Bible says to put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Why? When we choose to praise and worship God almighty we choose to take our eyes off of our pain, hurt, reputation, and devastation. When we look at our experiences through the lens of Jesus’ death and resurrection we then can experience a joy that transcends our heartache.

*“My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy,  
  
...Then you will be perfect and complete and will have everything you need.” James 1:2, 4*