

# Gardens and Glass

By Margie Johnson



*“The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your love, O LORD, endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands” (Psalm 138:8).*

The minute I heard, “You can’t grow a beautiful garden without turning up the soil,” I had a quick flashback to a summer garden long ago. My husband and I ambitiously claimed a 20 by 50 plot along our back fence and with visions of seed catalogs dancing in our heads, we began the garden.

It started noisily with the shiny, lime-green tiller growling and chugging as it uprooted years of carefully-tended grass. Round one went well. We ended our day by rescuing worms that had successfully dodged tiller teeth. Then, we tossed out the largest patches of uprooted centipede.

The next afternoon, we tilled deeper to further loosen the soil so our vegetable roots might grow deep and strong. And that is where we found the

broken glass. There was quite a lot of broken glass. We pondered what ancient catastrophe had deposited so many broken bottles and jars in this area of our yard. We got down on our hands and knees and picked out the glass as we worked our way down the rows. We became so tired; the rectangle seemed to mushroom into the size of a Kansas cornfield that goes on as far as the eye can see. Crawling slowly, we decided to remove only the largest and most jagged pieces.

Time had smoothed the edges on some of the glass. We left these pieces behind, rationalizing it would not cut us later as we weeded and worked our garden. Standing over that fresh rectangle of earth with my back aching and sweat trickling dirt stripes down my face brought me great satisfaction. Before the first green sprout or single vegetable landed on a plate, there was joy in the working of the soil.

This is a time of deep tilling in my life. God is turning the soil where, over the years, I had buried shards of resentment, unforgiveness and unbelief. But now these shards, or chunks of “glass,” have turned up. Before, I was reluctant to let Him till deeper, therefore the pieces left buried for fifty years had become embedded. Like in my garden, some seemed smooth around the edges and not worth the effort to dislodge.

That summer long ago in my backyard garden, I learned that picking out glass can grow tiresome. Sometimes my fingers became nicked and sometimes I bled a little. I am a lazy gardener and God is not. He does not grow tired. He willingly, patiently and lovingly mends the broken parts and breathes life into the “soil” of my life. He never gets partially finished, nor does He downsize an area in me because His plans were too grandiose.

This year, I embrace the work of the Master Gardener and I will do my part as He does His. I am forever thankful I was not left fallow or untilled. I am thankful He promises to complete the work. I pray the freshly-turned soil of my heart will bring Him great joy.

*Margie Johnson lives in Cayce, SC with her husband, Mike and daughter, Jessie. She and her husband own and operate a manufacturing firm.*