

# Chosen Vessels

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”*

*2 Corinthians 4:7*



AABC Women's Ministry

Winter 2012

## Letting Go

By Brandi Lasnick

You may have heard the cliché, “If you love someone, you have to let them go.” This phrase always seemed to make sense, and I probably have even said it to try to help someone, but until a few months ago, I didn't really know how difficult it is to live it. Over the past year, our family has had to “let go” of several loved ones, each in very different circumstances. Through each situation, we have learned valuable lessons about love, peace, and trust.

When their children are born, parents know that eventually they will have to let go of them. I always thought that time would be when our children went to college or married. But for us, the time came much earlier than we thought. For about a year, our 11 year - old son Stephen had been having occasional headaches. In October 2010, after a CAT scan, the doctor told us he had a golf ball-size cyst in his brain. Within an hour, he was transferred to Buffalo Children's hospital. A neurosurgeon examined Stephen and the MRI results. He would have to do brain surgery, however, Stephen had a severe ear infection, so we had to stay at the hospital and wait a week before surgery could take place. A week after being admitted to the hospital, we kissed Stephen and chose to let go of him so the neurosurgeon could drill a quarter size hole in his skull and puncture the cyst so it would drain. Any surgery carries risk — and brain surgery even more so. Throughout the week and especially during the surgery, an overwhelming peace surrounded me. Each

time the doubts and fears would start to creep in – God's word would combat the feelings that threatened to strangle us. His power was stronger than the “What ifs?” We know that God loves Stephen even more than we do. No matter what the outcome, we could trust Him to be there to guide us through. We slowly started



to learn that both of our children never were really “ours” – they were and always will be God's children. God has given us the privilege and responsibility of raising them for a short time. We need to trust and rely on Him for the strength and wisdom to do the job correctly!

Five months later, my mom injured her back. Her spinal cord was wedged between her vertebrae causing severe pain in her legs. Surgery was scheduled in a few weeks, but in the meantime the family had to take

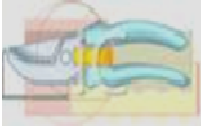
over her responsibilities. One of those responsibilities was caring for her mom. Our grandma had lived with my parents for several years because she had Alzheimer's. One night before the surgery, grandma fell out of bed.

Her head was cut and her shoulder and arm bruised to the point where she would barely move it. She was in the hospital for a couple days, but we knew that she could not go back home because we could not care for both my mom and my grandma. We made the heart-wrenching decision to move grandma into a nursing home. Although we all knew that it was the best option and was only five minutes away, we felt like we had abandoned our grandma. Each visit, we had to leave her again. This time, letting go meant battling with feelings of guilt and inadequacy. Once again, Scripture was my weapon against the barrage of accusations that tried to suffocate me. Through His word, God reminded me that she was His child and that He loved her even more than we did. She was not alone, be He was with her. His peace and trust in His sovereignty were yet again the answer to overcoming the emotions that weighed us down. Soon after, we once again found ourselves in the hospital, waiting for a loved one to have surgery. My mom's surgery would involve replacing three of her

*(continued on page 3)*

## *A Woman's Garden of Verses: Lessons from Pruning: the Pain Which Yields Much Fruit*

by Gina Stearns



***“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”***

**John 15:2**

It would be hard to speak of gardens without talking about the importance of pruning, especially with regard to roses. I know that when I am FINALLY able to cultivate those first few rosebuds, and they blossom in splendor, it is so hard to cut them back. First of all, I lose all that vibrant color and wonderful fragrance. For some bushes a few blossoms is all I get, so it is agonizing and almost seems cruel to cut away the only beauty that now exists, but I also know that pruning is a sacrifice and investment into the future for many more blossoms. If I really care about the longevity of the plant and its further ability to yield fruit or flower, I must prune.

So too, in the Master's garden, the Lord prunes those of whom He loves as well. It is painful for us, and perhaps in the moment, it may be for Him too. He may cut away our one Christian blossom from us through trial, the loss of a loved one, or some type of incisive procedure. In short, it hurts and we wonder if we have sinned against God. Some may even question His care and goodness. However, in the long run such eradication causes us to put more of our trust in the Lord, to seek his Word and His will. We learn to surrender the things that hinder our walk or pass the test of our faithfulness to him.

It is true that we end up yielding not only more fruit for the Lord, but better quality. We are more sacrificial, more apt to have faith in His wisdom, and be in greater subject to our king. We are more willing to take risks, put aside selfish ambitions, and in the end ultimately become more like Christ. Our one passion or goal is to be totally in the center of His will. Thus we can bring greater glory to God.

Yes, we enjoy his blessings, but even more importantly, we enjoy and worship the “Giver of Blessings.” And isn't that one of the greatest purposes of fruit or flower anyway---to Worship the one who makes it all possible.

***Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.***

**Hebrews 12:11**



## *News at the Well*



### **A Night to Remember**

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011 many of you stepped into an Italian atmosphere and enjoyed an evening brimming with different tastes, friendships, laughter and encouragement.

The Chosen Vessels ladies prepared a delicious Italian meal complete with antipasto, lasagna, salad, tiramisu and pizzelles.

Laughter ensued as Gina entertained with facts about many well known Italians. Then we were challenged by Phyllis to be the servant that God wishes us to be...by putting Him and our relationship with Him first.

### **Check it out**

Chosen Vessels is now on Facebook- AABC Chosen Vessels

### **Coming up**

The Terra Cotta has once again been reserved for our Ladies Game Night on **January 27, 2012 from 7-10 pm**. Come join us in a night of warmth of fellowship, fun, and food. Watch for upcoming sign-up and announcements.

Penn York Camp will again be the site for our (hopefully) annual retreat. The time is **Friday March 9<sup>th</sup>, 5 pm to Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm**. We are busy planning and hope to see a record turnout. Watch the bulletin for details.

### **New Members**

Kelly Roberts has joined the Chosen Vessels Committee and Deb Hunt has returned as a member of the committee. We are thankful for them!

Would you pray for us as we make plans?

vertebrae with titanium rods and screws. The risks were great – she could be paralyzed. By now, the “What if...?” parade of thoughts were almost familiar. We had to let go, but without fail, God’s peace enveloped us, and we were able to trust Him for the outcome. Her recovery was slow and difficult the first few weeks, but each day gave us more opportunities to rely on God’s word to keep us from panicking or giving up hope. Just as before, each anxiety and uncertainty brought to mind a new verse of encouragement or strength.

Less than six weeks after my mom’s surgery, my grandma’s condition had deteriorated. Possibly because of a stroke, she was now unresponsive. Family was called in, and we had to let go of her --for the last time. My grandma was a believer – it was her faith that first revealed God’s love and character to me. We knew she was now in the presence of her Savior, but her absence here on earth left an empty place in our hearts. This time letting go meant coping with joy and grief simultaneously. She has given us many wonderful memories and left an incredible legacy. She took care of us for a long time; we took care of her for a short time. But God always was and always will be taking care of her. Knowing this gives us peace amidst our sorrow and strength to continue our lives without her.

Finally, two months afterwards, we “let go” of Stephen again. He took an 11 day trip to Jamaica with his Boy Scout troop. This was an exciting and

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## Book Reviews

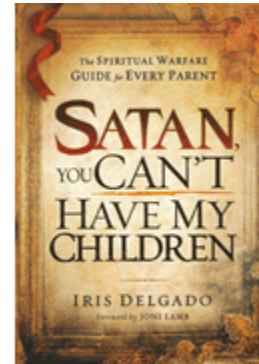
### SATAN, YOU CAN'T HAVE MY CHILDREN

*By Iris DelGado*

*Recommended by Deb Hunt*

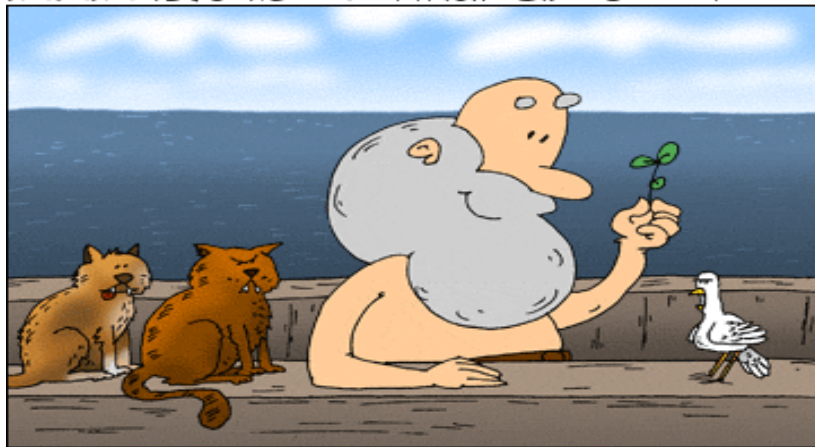
Satan and his demons want to break up our families and disrupt the lives of our children. Every home is his target; he has a long term plan for every Christian. We cannot remain passive in this spiritual battle.

The author teaches how to tap into the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to protect and fight for your children and grandchildren. The spiritual strongholds that Satan wages war with cannot be destroyed by flesh or by the carnal nature of man. They have to be pulled down through fervent intercessory prayers, praying Scripture, and other methods of spiritual warfare that Mrs. Delgado describes in this book. It is an excellent guide, filled with practical principles and Scripture-based prayers, to help in the fight against Satan and his evil demons. It will help in giving you confidence to stand firm against the enemy’s attacks. Her book is not only an eye-opener, but also very encouraging if you have a loved one you have been praying for—whether it is regarding salvation or living a life that is honoring to Christ.



## Crackpots Corner

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(See Genesis 6-8)

09-16-2011

**YOU THROW THE CATS OVERBOARD AND I'LL  
TELL YOU WHERE I FOUND THE BRANCH**

## The Way

"I'm the Way, the Truth...  
 No man comes before the Fa-  
 ther,, but by me." Jn 14:6  
 The promise to me  
 By my Lord Jesus,  
 Everywhere I go...  
 He is there-  
 Right beside,  
 Helps me through...  
 The tough times.  
 My Lord in that time  
 Carries me through.  
 He is my Savior  
 And Lord,  
 I will not forsake...  
 Or forget my Lord Jesus.  
 Follow Him with all my heart  
 and soul.  
 Amen



## Christmas Eve Snow

The winter snow  
 Covers the land...  
 Like a fluffy white blanket.  
 So white...so pure...  
 Looks so cottony soft  
 Untouched by humanity,  
 The Christmas snow—  
 Sparkles in the moonlight  
 This snow is special...  
 Kind of magical  
 The way it shimmers  
 And the way it covers the land.

Poems by  
 Katri J. Adams Ormsby  
 Writtn circa 1991

nerve wracking experience for us. We were thrilled that he had the opportunity to serve and learn in another country – but it was a long time to go without seeing him or even talking to him. God proved Himself faithful once again by upholding us with comforting verses when we were anxious or missing Stephen.

Did each experience make it get easier to “let go”? Not really. Our human-ness gets in the way, with our passions striving to control our thoughts and actions. Through these times, God has shown us just how powerful His Word is -- stronger than any emotional roller coaster of fears, doubts, grief, anxiety, or negativity that threatens to defeat us. “Letting go” of someone means reaching for God’s hand so we can let Him guide us through the difficult times. God is in control and He will never “let go”!

## Card of Thanks

*We women who serve on the Chosen Vessels Com-  
 mittee wish to extend our sincerest thanks to The  
 Elders of AABC under whose leadership we seek  
 to serve our Lord Jesus Christ. These Godly men  
 continue to sacrificially give of their lives for the  
 sake of His church and for the Gospel of Life.  
 Thank you all for the ways you direct, advise  
 and encourage us. For the Glory of God alone!*

*With Gratitude,  
 The Chosen Vessels Committee*

## Roasted Squash

*from the kitchen of Karen Blades*

1-2 pound acorn squash halved, seeded and sliced 3/4 in  
 thick  
 2 tbsp. olive oil  
 8 sprigs fresh thyme (I used dried)  
 Kosher salt and black pepper  
 1/4 c grated Parmesan cheese

Heat oven to 400, Toss squash with the oil, thyme, 1/2 tsp.  
 salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper.  
 Put on a rimmed baking sheet and sprinkle with the Parme-  
 san. Roast till golden brown and tender- 25- 30 min.