

## News Story Summary

Mary Louise Whitlow, 53, is a proud gardener. Her garden was one of five featured in the Dallas, Texas Master Gardener Garden Tour on October 1. Whitlow lives with her husband and mother in the home where she has lived much of her life. Her father taught her gardening skills when she was young. She doesn't shy away from hard work and heavy lifting. The bulging muscles in her arms testify to that. She doesn't mind getting dirty, sweaty, and sore. She has replaced much of her front yard with flowering perennials, reseeding annuals, cacti, and succulents. Because she likes to benefit wildlife, she plants things like poppies, daisies, and blue mistflowers. Observers can see many busy bees and butterflies there. Whitlow's hard work and experience have paid off in multiple ways. In addition to being selected to be a part of this year's tour, she enjoys the beauty and satisfaction and is confident of future success in her endeavor.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase "Dallas County Master Gardener Tour".)

## Focus Attention

Open the session by sharing the news story. Invite volunteers in the group to share their gardening tips. Highlight any tips that relate to preparing and cultivating the soil. Point out that today's lesson from 2 Peter teaches us that we are to be cultivators as well. Challenge the group to look for the things Peter directed his readers to cultivate as they study today's passage.

## Challenge

Remind the group of the news story. Point out that Mrs. Whitlow was taught about gardening by her father. Compare Peter to a father passing on his knowledge to the next generation. Encourage Christian group members to persist in their efforts to cultivate their faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly affection, and love. Close in prayer thanking God for providing salvation, and asking for the strength to continue the work of cultivating spiritual growth.