

Chapter 12: The Staircase



When I was a young single mother, there was a time when I was going through a trial with my 15 year old daughter. She was a very heavy sleeper. You could have a freight train go through her bedroom and she would not wake up. I was her transportation to school and after dropping her off, I would head on in to work.

Every day was a battle to get her to wake up in the morning and get ready for school. She just would not get moving in the morning. And every day, I would arrive at work 15 or 20 minutes late, with my stomach in knots from all the stress.

I must admit, I did not handle the situation very well. I would try to get her moving in the morning, but nothing seemed to work. It sometimes would degenerate into me yelling at her. I deeply regret the scars on her tender soul that I made with the yelling.

Anyway, as believers in Yeshua our Messiah, we are called to walk in agape love, unconditional love. Easy to say. Hard to do. How to do that when there was such a character flaw in me, with little patience?

I had been asking Him, how do I learn to love the way Yeshua loved? I felt like I was given paint brushes, paint, and a canvas, and was being told to paint a Rembrandt. I can't even draw a stick figure!

One weekend at a soaking time of worship, I remember lying on my face on the floor before the Lord. He took me into a vision that I will never forget.

I was at the bottom of a staircase. At the top step stood Jesus, in a white robe. His eyes were full of mercy and compassion. He looked at me and beckoned for me to ascend the stairs. He gave me instructions.

Each step on the stair has a name. It was the fruit of the spirit.....but backwards.

He told me that I was not allowed to go up to the next step until I had first mastered the step I was currently standing on. Once I had mastered that it, then I could proceed to the next step.

The bottom step that I was standing on was self control. He was showing me that I needed to focus on having self control in my character, words and actions. I needed to put a "bit and bridle" on my mouth and restrain those hurtful words from coming out. Once I had mastered self control then I would be allowed to go up to the next step.

The next step after self control was gentleness. Again, I was to remain on that step and work on that character in my life. Once it was mastered, then I would be allowed to move up to the next step, faithfulness, and so on until the last three steps....peace, joy and then love, where Yeshua was standing.

What a visual lesson that was! What an insight! To understand that walking in agape love is like a recipe, with ingredients, and that the very first ingredient to master is self control.

It was at that time that I "turned a corner" in my life. I used to be a "yeller." It was a deeply ingrained habit. I had grown up in a household of strife where yelling was commonplace. It did not happen overnight, but as I repented and worked with Yeshua on building self control in my life, the yelling stopped.

Kingdom Principle:

What the Father showed me about agape unconditional love is this. It's a little bit like a recipe to make a cake. There are different ingredients to make the cake. To make a cake from scratch, you need butter, eggs, flour, baking soda, cocoa powder, a dash of salt. Similarly, agape love begins with self control. Then there is the ingredient of gentleness, then faithfulness, then goodness, and then kindness, then the loooooongsuffering (or patience), then peace, and oh to be able to walk in peace at all times! Then joy, and then the top step is love, and that is where Yeshua is standing, smiling and waiting for us to ascend and come up into His unconditional love. It is a life long journey and quite a process. Character development takes time. You don't plant an apple seed in your backyard and expect to get apples the next day. Fruit takes time to grow. Similarly, godly character takes time to grow.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23

Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.
Proverbs 25:28

Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 1 Peter 3:3-4