

THE TROUBLING FOXES

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These troubling foxes must be dealt with in order for you to enter the next level in your journey of transformation.

- Once you entered the Kingdom, you began a journey to be transformed back into the image of God, your Creator.
- Scripture says that we are changing day by day from glory to glory into the very image of Christ.
- So, this transformation is a daily thing.
- The change occurs in your character.
- Before Christ it was all about self, but now it's all about God and becoming like Him.

Song of Songs 2:15 TPT

- YOU must catch the troubling foxes...
- Why? What's the big deal about the little foxes?
- They ruin the new character and nature that has been birthed within you when you entered covenant relationship with God.
- You are a brand-new creature because of the New Birth experience.
- These foxes will destroy the budding image if not dealt with.

What do the troubling foxes represent?

- These foxes are the little compromises that are hidden deep in our hearts.
- These are the area of our lives that we have not fully surrendered to Jesus and allowed the victory of Christ to shine into.
- These foxes keep the fruit of the Spirit from fully developing in us.
- The fruit of the Spirit IS the character of God.
- The fruit of the Spirit is the measuring stick which reveals how far along we are on the journey of transformation.

Galatians 5:22-23 TPT

Love must be expressed—it is seen in our actions

- Love is believing the best of folks.
- Love is giving what ever you have at hand to give to be a blessing.
- Love is praying for the sick.
- Love is speaking truth.

Peace subdues what?

- The enemy of peace.
- Peace subdues strife.
- Peace does not seek its own way.
- Peace does not get offended.
- Peace does not pay attention to a suffered wrong.

Patience

- Patience never quits
- Patience maintains a good attitude for however long is necessary.

Kindness

- Think sweetness when you think about kindness
- Kindness is thinking about the other person and doing something to help or bless them.

A life full of virtue

- Goodness manifests a life full of virtue
- This IS integrity.
- This is doing the right thing when no one is looking just because it is the right thing to do.
- Integrity is not taking shortcuts but doing everything in excellence and the right way.
- This applies to ALL areas of our lives...it begins within our homes and extends to our jobs and our dealings with others within our communities.

Faith

- Faith that always brings the victory
- This kind of faith comes from a deep level of intimacy with God.
- It is developed through prayer and fasting that has disciplined your flesh.

Gentleness

- Gentleness of heart speaks of compassion and always thinking of the other person before yourself

Strength of spirit

- Strength of spirit shows up in boldness and courage in the face of persecution and hardship.
- Strength of spirit will enable you to speak the truth in love to folks that need to hear a hard truth.

- Strength of spirit destroys doubt and unbelief because of the unwavering trust in the faithfulness of God.

These traits make up the character of God and this is who we are to become through the process of *daily* choosing obedience to His ways.

- Denying ourselves.
- Following Jesus' example in living this life.

Let's look at the life of Joseph which is a great example of a life lived in integrity and displaying the character of God.

- Joseph was born to Jacob and Rachel.
- You will notice when you read about this family that it was very dysfunctional.
- Jacob fell in love with Rachel at first sight.
- He made a deal with Laban, her father to work for her for seven years and then he could take her as his wife.
- Laban tricked him by giving him Leah, the older daughter instead.
- Leah and Rachel were identical twins, the only difference being in their personalities.
- Leah was mild tempered, and Rachel was fiery tempered—that's the meaning of the wording about their eyes—it's an Eastern culture thing.
- So, naturally Jacob was furious when he found out he had been tricked, but Laban agreed to give him Rachel after Leah's bridal week had been completed.
- In God's eyes, the covenant marriage was made with Leah, not Rachel.
- Leah was the wife—Rachel was the concubine or mistress.
- Do you see how this will make for a very dysfunctional family situation?
- As time went by, Leah had children and Rachel could not, so as was their custom, Rachel gave her maid to Jacob so she could have children by her and then Leah did the same with her maid.
- So now there is Leah, the wife and 3 concubines and children from the 3 women that Jacob did not love and no children from the woman that he did love.
- But finally, after many years, Rachel bears a son to Jacob.
- Notice the difference between Jacob's parenting of Joseph and the other children.
- Joseph was the child that he taught about his God and His ways.
- You can see in the character of the other sons that Jacob did not teach them about the one true God.

Let's read Genesis 37:2-4 AMP

- Joseph had a standard of conduct that his brothers did not.
- Joseph was not afraid to speak the truth to his father about his brothers conduct.
- Jacob was proud of his son Joseph for the character and integrity he saw in his life and he rewarded him with a special garment.
- Garments in that culture spoke volumes about the person wearing it.
- The brothers were not mad at the beautiful coat Joseph got, they were offended because of what it meant.
- A father's pride; a father's love—something they had never received from him.
- The responsibility of their poor character lays at the feet of Jacob.
- He did not do right by them and he suffered because of it—and they suffered as well.

Genesis 37:13-36 AMP

- The brothers were offended and filled with bitterness.
- Murder was in their hearts.
- Judah talked them out of murder and instead sold Joseph to slave traders.
- Joseph was on his way to Egypt as a slave.

Genesis 39-41

- How did Potiphar see that the Lord was with Joseph?
- It was through the character and integrity that he saw in Joseph.
- It should be 'CHRIST IN YOU' that folks see through your words and actions.
- Notice Joseph: in the midst of losing everything he had known and loved, his freedom, his family, betrayal by his own brothers—he still acted with the character of God.
- He did not become bitter.
- He worked at what was given him and did everything in excellence.
- He was working for God...not an earthly master.
- This is why the Lord blessed him!
- The Lord does not bless just because you are the son of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who have covenant.
- Covenant blessings come through obedience to the covenant terms.

When God looks at your life and sees a reflection of His image—He's going to bless you!

Verse 7-23 brings trouble.

- Notice the integrity.
- It was Joseph's love for God that kept him from having sex with Potiphar's wife.
- It is evident that he could have gotten away with it.
- It is obvious that she was a neglected wife, her husband was away a lot with his work.
- But it was wrong, and he chose to do the right thing and he did not regret his decision even when it brought persecution and an unjust sentence.
- How do we know this?
- His attitude did not change in prison; he still acted in integrity.
- We know this from the reaction of the prison warden towards Joseph.
- He saw the character of God in him.

Genesis 41:39-46 AMP

- The rewards of a life of integrity.
- God will exalt you in due time if you don't grow weary in well doing.

The troubling foxes:

- Disobedience
- Compromise
- Slothfulness – laziness