

Surrendering our Frustrations to Walk in Love

By Terri Prahl

I excitedly paced the empty expanse of freshly mopped hardwood floors in anticipation of the new furniture I had saved for and waited on for months. My husband and brother-in-law had driven our truck to a nearby town to save the delivery fees, and I was giddy with joy over how the sofa and loveseat would impact our daily lives, allowing more guests to sit comfortably in our home.

As they pulled into the driveway, exiting the cab, their avoidant eyes signaled something was amiss. The next sentence began with, “don’t get upset” – never a good sign! In their hands were two cushions that had escaped the plastic wrapping, carried by the wind until landing on the congested highway. This forced them to pull over to retrieve the black, tire-streaked cushions before tying them down and continuing home.

To say I was frustrated was an understatement! In those moments, I was anything but peaceful. I don’t remember the exact words uttered, but I know they weren’t reflections of Christ’s love for these men.

In mere seconds, this costly furniture had gone from new to used – its imperfection spiraling me into an unhealthy spirit of discontent. A discontent revealing what was important to me.

Furniture was no reason to hurt people I loved. My disappointment didn’t dissipate quickly, but I knew what God required of me. James 1:19-20 says, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

My meltdown was not a Spirit-led response. It revealed my inability to be slow to anger and extend grace for human error. This wasn’t an offense that justified moral outrage.

After a time-out, I found the guys successfully cleaning the cushions and knew the error of my ways.

While we laugh at the tire saga today, it reminds me of our great need for Jesus. Only through yielding to the Spirit can we produce the righteousness of God.

Let’s ask the Spirit to slow our reactions and walk in love today!