

Lab #2: Relationships Being the Set-Apart Girl

- Think about your heart. **What fills your heart?** What are the things/people/ideas that are so important to you?
- Usually many of these things important to us have to do with relationships...our friends, our parents, boyfriends

- Let's imagine that this vase is your heart...
- Many times we go looking for our needs to be fully met in our relationships—friends, boyfriends—our needs for love, acceptance, validation, security
- They will meet some of our needs and they do have a place in our hearts. But when we put all of these different things in our hearts—boyfriends, job, school, friends, people's opinions, material objects, etc....What happens? Are we completely filled?
- No, there are still holes, spaces not filled.
- God—the living water, fills us COMPLETELY...all of the spaces & cracks. When we are filled by Him, we're not looking for love, acceptance, validation, security from these other relationships. This is what it's all about. **Only God can fill me completely.**
- And God tells us who we are. We are beautiful, loved, accepted, forgiven, secure.

- The problem is that we want to stuff all of the "things" & relationships in first and.....then we'll add God. Right?? It is important for Him to be a part of our relationships, right? Absolutely.
- BUT... more specifically he wants to be the CENTER & FOUNDATION of them.
- It's about making God the center of it all. Not fitting God in...(into the cracks & spaces left over after I fill section of my heart) but building your life around Him...building your relationships around Him. **It's not about fitting God into my life, it's about building my life around Him.**

- So let's look at it this vase in a different way...
- Fill the glass of water first....make God the foundation. You are completely filled...your needs for love & acceptance are met. What happens when you add the relationships in....??
- God covers all of those relationships. He is the foundation of them & supports them.
- Later, we're going to be looking at what this looks like in relationships.

- But why...why does God even need to be a part of it? Isn't he just for church? Isn't he just a God who sits up in heaven telling me what I can & cannot do? Why would he want to be a part of these areas of my life??
- 1. Because He loves you. He wants to be there. Because He knows what's best for us.
- 2. Because ONLY God can fill and fulfill every need that we have.
- 3. God is a God of relationships & wants to be God over your relationships.

- You are chosen.
- Another word for chosen is set-apart.
- God has called us to be set-apart. & different than the world in many ideas of our lives, including relationships.

What are you filling your heart with? Relationships that Influence your Heart

- Think of your BEST friends—the people who you are the closest with, share everything with, text constantly
- Think of your GROUP of friends—people who you hang out with
- Ask yourself—How do these friends influence me?

- The fact is: **Your friends influence you.**
- They will influence the clothes you wear, the movies you watch, the things you do on the weekend.
- They will influence how you feel about yourself, how you think about parents/other friends, your choices.
- These influences can of course be positive...but they can also be negative.
- What is your story of how your friends have influenced you?

- Many times we think: I can be the bigger person. I'll be the good guy. The "designated driver". I'll be the one to influence them.
- Chair analogy—It's easier to for someone to pull you down off of the chair than for you to pull them up with you.
- Although you can still have an influence on their life, you need to look at how much influence they are having on you....whether you realize it or not.
- Your choice of friends can determine your future—look past the "here & now"
- Small choices add up for the good or bad. We can find ourselves asking "How did I get here?"
- The choice is yours. **Choose wisely.**
- We've all heard the saying "follow your heart." I am challenging you to something different: **"don't follow your heart, lead your heart"**

- Now, I know when I listened to people talk about friends, I got scared—do I have to give them up? What is God saying? You may need to re-evaluate some of your friendships. Limit your time with them. Limit their influence. Completely stop hanging out.
- It all comes back to God being at the center & foundation. Go to Him first. Pray about your friends. Learn to listen to Him—that feeling inside of your heart that you just know. Reading His Word.

- In my own personal story, there was a time in my life where I really started living my life for God...more than just being a Christian...this radical change in God caused a radical change in friends.
- **Godly friendships will encourage me, keep me accountable, & point me back to Christ.**
- Just because that friend goes to church or youth group doesn't make them good for you.
- These Godly friendships are the ones that keep God in the center—praying for each other, reminding each other about God's truths, standing up for each other, encouraging each other, learning about God together
- Pray for Godly friends—go places that you could find them
- Make the choice to be a Godly friend. To stand up for God's standards.
- **Be intentional in your friendships.** It's about the choices you make.

What are you filling your heart with?

➤ Boys/Dating

- Realize that God is writing your love story. It won't look exactly like anyone else's.
- Know that wherever you are...in whatever situation you're in...whether you've never had a boyfriend to having a lot and maybe making some mistakes...God is waiting for you to hand the **pen** over to Him. It's never too late for that.

- In my own personal story, I thought I needed a boyfriend. But through some life-changing events, God showed me that I didn't need a boyfriend. That what I needed was a solid relationship with Him.

- I dated God for a year, and He began to teach me what it mean to truly build my life around him.

I didn't know there was another option. All I had ever heard—through media, movies, friendships, books...was that you needed a boyfriend. You got old enough & you started dating & you lived happily ever after...end of story. Why?? Why do we feel like we "need" a boyfriend??

Lies Young Women Believe #9 "I Need a Boyfriend"

2/3 of all the girls they surveyed said they "feel better about their lives when they have a boyfriend"

Happiness or fulfillment in anyone or anything other than God is setting up yourself for disappointment or potentially disaster.

It doesn't have to be like this. You don't need a boyfriend. There is another option.

- Am I saying having a boyfriend is wrong? No. Am I saying dating is wrong?? No, absolutely not.
- But before you can be in a relationship with someone, you need to have your foundation. Before you get into a relationship, look at your motives.
- Are you looking for them to make you feel...wanted? Accepted? Pretty? Desired? Like a part of the crowd?—we need to get ALL of these needs met by GOD first. It won't work to look for them in a guy. I am married....and I STILL have to look to God for these things.
- This truth of "not needing a boyfriend"...of there "being another option"...is for you NOW. In whatever situation you're in. Whether you have never dated or whether you've had lots of boyfriends and even made some mistakes. This truth is for you.

Dating & Relationships

- I remember how freeing it was to learn that "there was another option" and that I didn't "need a boyfriend" like the world told me I did.
- Eventually God brought me to a point where I was in a dating relationship—after I waited for the person HE brought me & in HIS timing. Remember, I'm not saying that dating is bad.
- But whether you are in a dating relationship, thinking about being in one, or know that you will one day be in one...you want to make sure God is at the foundation.
- When it got to the point that I was dating...It was not dating "just to date" just to have fun...if you aren't serious...just be friends. There's so much less pressure & expectations...less broken hearts...and you give less of your heart away.
- Think about it...if I date 3-4 guys, I'm going to give a piece of my heart away to each of them. What happens when you meet your husband. Don't you want him to have your whole heart? I know you might not be thinking about that far away...but one of the main reasons of dating is to find your husband.
- Every person you date is a potential husband.
- You don't want to give away pieces of your heart. & You don't want to settle.
- God has someone perfect for you.
- It's never too late for you. If you've been in lots of dating relationships and made mistakes. You can make a decision to change now & start fresh. God is a God of second & third & fourth chances & He makes ALL things new.

- So what if I'm in a relationship with a guy...what should it look like?

- “keeping God at the center”
- What does this LOOK like?—looking to God for needs to be met. It’s not about us & what we can get out of the relationship. You should challenge each other to be more Christ-like. Praying together. Learning about God together.
- Triangle—the closer you both get to God individually, the closer we get to each other; the closer you try to get to each other...left God out of the triangle.

• Pursuing Purity

- It’s not about a list of “do’s” and “don’ts,”
- Making decisions—from the beginning, decide where your boundaries are together. Don’t wait until you are in the moment.
- Hang out with other people. Limit the time you are alone.
- Be careful. Don’t start thinking of him as “the one” until God has told you that. When you start thinking this prematurely, you start to give away little pieces of your heart. Don’t you want your full, complete heart to be given to your husband? Save it for him.
- If you mess up and go too far physically or emotionally, change directions. Make goals and commitments. Make the changes that are necessary. Don’t keep doing the same thing over and over again and putting yourself in the same situations expecting different results.
- Accountability—this is where you go to those Godly Christian friends to hold you accountable...this is where you go to your parents & keep them involved and a part of your life.
- This relationship is not about glorifying you—it’s about what God is doing in you both and through you both
- Pray about your relationship. Pray with each other. This keeps the focus where it should be...on God.
- Remember, you’re not in this relationship for what you can get out of it or for what he can get out of it. You’re in it for God’s purpose and to glorify Him. Are you serving God better together? Are you focused on HIS plan for your lives? If this doesn’t describe you, I would do some reevaluation and redirection.

• Every day & every second make a choice to honor God with your relationship

Challenge: **Be a Set-Apart Girl.**

- Seek God, ask God, evaluate every relationship you have with a guy. (& friends)
- God has chosen YOU & called YOU to be set-apart with a heart fully devoted to Him.

Fill in your Flower: I chose to be set-apart by _____.
 (examples on slideshow: putting God first, building my life around Him, making sure my friendships are Godly, dating God for a year, praying with my friends, waiting on God for the guy he has chosen, letting God write my love story, etc.)

Digging Deep

What am I filling my heart with?

What/Who do I allow to influence my heart?

Who truly has my heart?

What do I need to clean out of my heart?

Am I following my heart or leading my heart? What direction am I leading it in?

What will I do differently in my relationships with my friends?

What will I do differently in my relationships with guys/my boyfriend?
How will I be a set-apart girl?

Parents:

1—Remind your daughter that she has been set-apart by God, and that she will look different than the world in her relationships with friends and boys. Encourage her and teach her how to take the stand to follow God's plan rather than the world's plan.

2—Know who your daughter's friends &/or boyfriends are. Talk with her about their influences on her life & pray with her about these relationships. Always bring these relationships back to God & making sure He is in the center of them all.

3—Talk with your daughter about what she is going to do regarding dating and boys. Challenge her to wait for God's timing instead of having a boyfriend because she "needs" or "wants" one.

4—Pray for your daughter's future husband. Although you may have never met him yet, pray that he is saving himself fully for her. Pray that he is seeking after Christ as God is preparing him into the man of God he needs to be.