

# His Revolutionary Love

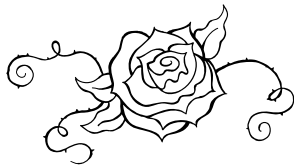
JESUS' RADICAL PURSUIT OF YOU

## Leader's Guide

“He takes us firmly by the hand  
and leads us into a radical life-change.”  
—Romans 2:4 (*The Message*)

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## *Dear Leader,*

Maybe you are a youth pastor or a small group leader, or you host a Bible study or are a mentor. Whatever your position, thank you *so very much!* If I could, I would leap off these pages—or your computer screen—and give you a huge hug! In my life, those who invested in me when I was a young woman impacted me more than they ever could have known. Jesus used them so much to direct me to the right places in my life and I know he will use you too. I want you to know that you are so important. I know the Lord will bless you for investing!

More than ever, today's teenage girl needs a woman in her life to offer a truly listening ear, give hugs when the dramas of life become overwhelming, and provide direction when the road ahead is confusing.

Being a friend to a girl is not nearly as hard as it seems. In fact, I hope as you go through *His Revolutionary Love*, whether it's with your own daughter or a small group of girls, you'll find that they talk more than you do. As they talk, listen. You will learn their lives and hear their hearts. It is then that you'll be able to impart the truth of just how crazy about them Jesus really is!

Each week, be sure to pray for the girls in your group. Realize that, for some girls, you may be the only person in their lives praying for them on a regular basis. Ask the Lord to impart to each girl an understanding of how wild he is about her in the way that only he can.

The best place to start *is* with prayer. I'd like to offer a prayer for you, and for what we're doing in the lives of young women:

*Dear Jesus, thank you so much for my new friend, who is choosing to invest in the lives of your precious girls. Please settle her heart, reassuring her that nothing will come up that the two of you cannot handle together. Give her patience, wisdom, and a good case of the giggles in the weeks to come. Most of all, fill her own heart with your revolutionary love so that she can in turn pour into the hearts around her. In your transforming name, amen.*

I hope that you will find this guide to be a support for you in the weeks ahead. Take these suggestions and use what works for your group and leave out what doesn't. Add whatever you feel inspired to add—it's your group!

The first half of the guide provides you with information on leading a small group. The second half provides questions and answers that tie directly to my book, *His Revolutionary Love*, to help you get the conversations rolling.

I also offer additional support to the girls as well. Radical Revolution is the name of my ministry to teen girls. RadRev, as we call it, provides weekly inspirational entries as well as vlogs (video blogs) on topics that are important in a girl's life. I hope that you and your girls will connect with me and others in RadRev on FaceBook at:

Living with Purpose: A Radical Revolution  
*and*  
Rad RevGirls

You might also like to consider jump-starting or wrapping up your study by hosting a Revolutionary Love conference. To find out more information on having the RadRev conference come to your community, stop by my site at [www.LynnCowell.com](http://www.LynnCowell.com).

His,

A stylized, cursive signature of the name "Lynn" in black ink. The letters are elegant and interconnected, with a large loop at the end of the "n".

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## Group Planning and Guidance

### STARTING YOUR SMALL GROUP

Whether you decide to join us and start a RadRev group (I hope you do!) or whether you are leading in another situation, here are some helpful tips to get you going.

**Pray.** Ask God to bring to your mind girls that you can invite and ask him to prepare their hearts ahead of time. Commit to praying for the group regularly.

**Explain your vision.** If your group is connected with a church, meet with the youth pastor, if possible, to explain the vision of your group and what you hope to achieve. If you're part of a church, it's important to have the support of the leadership. They can do much to help strengthen and support your group.

**Recruit.** Meet with girls in your church, neighborhood, or schools who may be interested in forming a group such as a RadRev Group. Encourage them to invite their friends.

**Plan an introductory meeting.** At this meeting, share your vision for the group. Have a copy of *His Revolutionary Love: Jesus' Radical Pursuit of You* to show the girls. Discuss the reasons for starting a group and who they might like to invite. Once you know who will be attending, you can purchase a copy of the book for each girl.

**Define.** Before you dive into your regular meetings, it will help to write a mission statement together with your members and talk about any goals for your group. Examples of goals could be:

- ☞ to encourage teen girls
- ☞ to share the gospel with girls at school or in sports clubs, etc.
- ☞ to reach out to those who may feel rejected and have a need to belong
- ☞ to bring older and younger ladies together for the purpose of mentoring

For example, the mission statement of RadRevolution is: “To encourage today’s young women as they *realize, respond to, and rejoice in* God’s radical purpose for their lives.”

*Write out your group’s mission statement.*

*List your goals for the group.*

**Schedule.** Create a schedule of where and when you’ll be meeting. When choosing a place for your group to meet, keep in mind that intimacy can be fostered best in a safe, cozy environment such as a home. If a church location is preferable, be sure to schedule the room and the dates of the planned meetings. If you are looking at meeting in a restaurant or a coffeehouse, check with the management to see if meeting there is OK. Ask the girls in your group for input on where they would feel most comfortable, and what times work best for them.

**Get the word out!** Announce the start of your group. Put an invitation in your church bulletin, send out an e-mail or a text blast, Tweet an announcement, create an event invitation on FaceBook, or go old-fashioned and create and distribute posters or flyers. Better yet, do all of the above and more!

## **YOUR FIRST MEETING**

Beginning a small group is an exciting time. The initial meeting is very important to set the tone for the group. Each meeting will follow a similar format. Here are some suggestions.

**Socialize.** Serve refreshments; this always puts people at ease. You can keep it really simple—I often serve fruit punch and popcorn. They just like to have something to eat while they talk!

**Introductions and icebreakers.** Ask everyone to introduce herself and tell one interesting thing about herself. Or pair the girls up and have each girl introduce the other. Using icebreaker activities and questions (Where were you born? What’s your favorite ice cream?) can help teenagers to get to know each other and relax. All sorts of icebreakers can be found on the Internet.

**Group rules.** Be sure all members understand—and accept—that “whatever is said here, stays here.” You want your group to be a safe place where members can talk openly, knowing that what they reveal won’t be going outside of the group without their permission. Cultivating this environment of intimacy is extremely important to developing a close group. (Depending on the ages and needs of your group members, you may need to amend these rules at a later date for cases of unhealthy or dangerous behaviors that would need to be shared with a parent or guardian. But this kind of rule change should only be done with the knowledge—and ideally agreement—of the person involved and with the support and participation of the group leader.)

**Announcements.** Share quick announcements with the group about things such as birthdays or any new social gatherings or events in your community that might interest the girls. (And you can remind them to check out the RadRev site during the week at [www.RadRevolution.org](http://www.RadRevolution.org).)

**Read.** For the first meeting, read the introduction (“The Love Story Begins”) of *His Revolutionary Love* together. This will give the girls an idea of what is in store for the weeks to come. In this section, I give the reader background information and set the tone for the book. As you read through “The Love Story Begins,” encourage the girls to highlight or underline sentences that stand out to them. We want this book to be a “working” book, like a journal that they can go back to and refer to again and again. Let them know it’s OK to write in their books! They can write out questions that they have and ask them the following week.

**Pray.** End with sharing prayer requests and praying for each other.

**Look ahead.** Have the girls open their books to chapter one and ask them to read that chapter and answer the questions before your next meeting. You might ask them to put the next week’s date next to the chapter to help them remember.



## GROUP MEETING SCHEDULE

Every small group will be as different as the teen girls who are involved. Tailoring your meetings to meet the specific needs of the teenagers in your group is important.

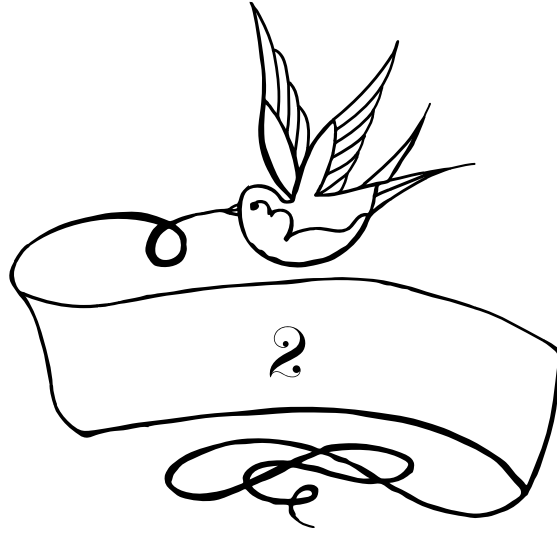
**Frequency.** In an effort to meet the needs of the unique groups, these groups can be flexible. In some of the groups I've mentored over the past nine years, I found meeting every week caused burn out. For others, meeting weekly is exactly what they needed. Meeting too infrequently, though, makes it hard to build a sense of community with your group. If someone were to miss a monthly meeting, she would go months without attending her small group. Every other week seems to be a good fit for many.

### SAMPLE 90-MINUTE MEETING SCHEDULE

First 15 minutes: Refreshments and introduction.  
10 minutes: Announcements and icebreakers. Example: In a group that meets after school, have each girl share about the best thing/worst thing that happened in her day.  
40 minutes: The meat of the group discussion on the book.  
20 minutes: Time for prayer requests and group prayer. Leave a few minutes at the end so that everyone isn't stressed and/or rushing off!

### SAMPLE 60-MINUTE MEETING SCHEDULE

First 10 minutes: Welcome and announcements.  
40 minutes: Group discussion on the book.  
10 minutes: Prayer. You may want to write down the prayer requests and let each member take them home. You can also try splitting up into pairs to pray together so that each girl has more time to devote to praying for others.



# Leadership Training

## LEADERSHIP INTRODUCTION

Just as a thermostat sets the temperature for a home, the leader sets the tone for the group. Your role is vital. Rest assured, most leaders feel somewhat inadequate for the job. You're not alone if that is how you feel. The apostle Paul also felt inadequate for the job set before him. However, he learned a great truth: "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). He also said, "I can do all this through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13). If we begin to think that we're qualified for serving God on our own power, abilities, and strengths, we are setting ourselves up for failure.

A small group leader such as a RadRev group leader is someone who desires to be all God has created her to be. She's not one who knows all the answers, but she knows the One who does and is willing to lead others to him.

An effective small group leader is one who:

- ☞ works well with other people
- ☞ serves as salt and light in the world (Matthew 5:13-16)
- ☞ puts the needs of others before those of herself (Philippians 2:3, 20)
- ☞ listens well
- ☞ depends on prayer
- ☞ is organized
- ☞ knows when to delegate
- ☞ is not afraid to reveal her weaknesses and personal struggles to others
- ☞ believes in servant leadership (John 13)

✞ takes great comfort knowing God equips the worker for the work (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)



*Leadership: to act in order to stimulate and encourage others  
to realize their fullest potential.*

—Ted Engstrom

## HELPFUL TIPS FOR LEADERS

As the leader, follow the Holy Spirit and what he leads you to do. He has called and equipped you for this season. Trust him in all things pertaining to your group. Pray for your group and each member by name on a regular basis.

Encourage others to participate. People remember best what they discover and verbalize for themselves. Some people are naturally shy, while others may be afraid of making a mistake. If your discussion is free and friendly and you show real interest in what other group members think and feel, the quieter ones will be more likely to speak up. Remember, the more people involved in a discussion, the richer it will be.

With teen girls, you have to be sure that no amount of unkind teasing takes place. The group needs to be a safe place for girls to share with each other without fear of hurtful criticism.

Guard yourselves from answering too many questions or talking too much. Silence is OK. It gives others a chance to share their ideas. If you're one who participates easily, take a few seconds to see if someone else has something to share.

Make personal, honest applications and commit yourself to letting God's Word change you.

Remember it's not our goal to use the small group time to fix problems but rather to support and encourage each member in the group. It's not your responsibility as the leader to give a lot of advice. At times you may need to redirect the group conversation—and then have a private conversation later with the member who is looking for deeper help.

Confidentiality is the key to any small group. We want everyone to feel safe, so please remember to keep what you hear in the group private. If you find a teen is engaged in unsafe behavior, first encourage her to tell her parents on her own. Give her some time to do this. If she doesn't, it will likely be your responsibility to share this information with her parent. These are difficult matters; seek advice.

Girls who are attending may not have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. Reach out to those teens. God may have brought her to your group for that very reason.

Make the schedule clear and available to each member. It's helpful to start on time. Teens are very busy these days and showing respect for their time is important.

### THE POWER OF A QUESTION

There are many types of questions. One is a closed question that can be answered in one word, such as "Yes," "No," and "OK." Then there are open-ended questions, which are better for prompting discussion.

- ☞ Closed question: "Did you like the sermon on Sunday?"
- ☞ Open-ended question: "What did you think about the sermon on Sunday? What did you like or not like?"

A good discussion group leader will ask questions that guide the members into deeper discussion and discovery. She also uses questions to clarify a response, such as, "Are you saying that you believe Jesus died for all people?"

### OTHER TIPS FOR GOOD DISCUSSION

- ☞ Initially, direct questions to the entire group. (Do not pick out one person and put them on the spot. Let anyone who wishes answer the questions.)
- ☞ Allow people time to answer each question. Often we don't get answers because we don't wait long enough.
- ☞ When you do get a response, acknowledge it and explore it further, if appropriate.
- ☞ Watch for nonverbal signs that people want to participate: leaning forward, a hand going halfway up, someone giving the answer to the person next to them. Prompt people gently, for example: "Courtney, you look like you've got something interesting to say" or "Zoe, your brow just got a wrinkle in it—is that because you are confused or because you disagree with something?"
- ☞ Though you do want to avoid putting people on the spot, be careful to include everyone and to avoid letting any one person monopolize the discussion. Sometimes linking a quiet person with another member might help that person to voice their opinions: "Those are some good thoughts, Carrie. Rachel and Maria, what about you? What do you think about what Carrie just said?"
- ☞ Avoid leading people to the answers in your own head—try to let the discussion develop naturally.

- ☞ Ask for feedback and clarification on questions. If you get blank looks, you may need to rephrase a question to make sure those in your group understand what is being asked.
- ☞ If you ask a question and everyone freezes, try breaking up the group into pairs and having them ask each other the question. Then come back together to discuss your responses.
- ☞ The better you become at asking questions, the better you will become at thinking through anything, anywhere, anytime, for the rest of your life!

## TROUBLESHOOTING

*Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough?*

—1 Corinthians 5:6



What makes us wonderfully made and unique can also, at times, be a hindrance to the growth and openness of the group we're in. Below are some examples of different types of personalities—and common traits and challenges that come with them—that groups face. Possible solutions for coping with challenges follow each personality.

<i>Personality</i>	<i>Challenge</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Silent Suzie	Does not speak up in the group; she sits passively on the outer edge.	Direct a question to Suzie that you know she can answer. Being able to answer and answer well once may give her the confidence to speak up again.
Troubled Tonya	Uses the group as a counseling session, and shares at length at each meeting about the deeper and more troubled issues in her life.	Be sensitive. Don't abruptly cut her off. Find an opportunity to break in (a pause for breath, or the end of a comment) to say something like, "Those are hard things, but I think if we continue through this study, we may all find some helpful ideas." Afterward, offer to meet with Tonya to discuss her problem. <i>Don't</i> feel as if you have to answer or solve all her problems. For instance, you may need to refer her to a professional counselor if the issues are deep enough. (Focus on the Family has great resources for those who may need more focused counseling.)
Blocker Brenda	Blocks the flow of discussion with argumentative statements and tangents.	Refocus on the passage or question at hand. Ask someone in the group to restate the question.
Talker Taylor	Shares long illustrations and answers, interrupts others, and monopolizes the conversation.	Have Taylor sit beside you. Use physical cues such as laying a hand in front of her or nudging her to help interrupt her flow. Speak with her afterward and say something like, "Taylor, it's great that you have so much to offer to the discussion, but I think we need to help others in the group to take

		an opportunity to talk. Can you help me do that?" Then offer some suggestions such as waiting for others to answer first, letting her invite others to expand on what she is saying, or being careful to wait for people to fully end their comments and maybe counting to five before she jumps in.
Argumentative Alexandra	Challenges the discussion leader. <i>But</i> is her favorite word. She becomes combative and defensive if others in the group don't agree with her.	Remind Alexandra that the Bible is the final authority. Don't enter into an argument. The Holy Spirit is capable of defending himself. While the leader must not allow anyone to teach anything other than the truth, don't become angry or get flustered. This will alienate the group. Instead, encourage the group to stay in the discussion, when appropriate: "So Alexandra has made some pretty strong statements, guys—what do you think?" At other times, if you can see the discussion is going nowhere, it may be best to move on: "OK, I can see we have a lot of strong feelings about this topic—sounds like it would be a great subject for another whole meeting time. But for right now, let's get back to . . ." Make a note to yourself to prepare to offer the subject up for discussion at the next available meeting time.
Pleasing Paula	Always gives the "right" answer even though it may not be how she truly feels.	Always speak honestly with the group, revealing your own weaknesses and struggles. This will help others learn to be vulnerable as well. Express appreciation when she suggests an opposing view.
Complaining Carley	<i>Something</i> is always wrong, according to this girl. Often complains about the people in the group and the way the group is run.	This always helps: assign her a job to do. Giving people responsibilities takes away their inclination—and time—to complain. Also, remind her that everyone is doing the best they can and that if she has a complaint, she should come see you privately first (rather than spreading negativity through the group).
Superficial Sara	Shares on a very superficial level, not willing to go deep or reveal too much about her true feelings.	Again, be vulnerable yourself. Be open and specific in your own sharing, and ask for appropriate specifics when members offer stories from their own lives.
Late Lindsay	Always arrives fifteen minutes late. Always has an excuse.	Set a specific time and begin promptly—even if there is only one other person present. If tardiness continues to be a problem, ask the group if the meeting time is too early and needs to be changed. Also, you could try always starting with a really fun activity or treat—something people will be sorry to miss.

Talking through issues with a group member can be very difficult. Remember, everyone has the desire to be loved and encouraged. Before confronting a group member, the leader should pray and ask God to give her an attitude of love. End the conversation with praise for what the member is doing well, leaving her on a positive note.

So what do you say when someone gives a “wrong” or seemingly off-base or misdirected answer?

- ☞ Ask: “Why do you think that?”
- ☞ Ask: “That’s one way of looking at it, but what other information are we given?”
- ☞ Ask if anyone else has another idea or thought. After you receive a different or more appropriate answer, bring the conversation back in line with the topic.

Keep in mind that your group’s knowledge of the Bible may not be as in-depth as yours. In some cases, what they think is from the Bible may not be biblical at all. That’s one of your jobs as a group leader—to encourage the girls to go to the Bible as *the* source of spiritual truth.

## REACHING OUT TO THOSE WHO DON’T KNOW JESUS

As we study the life of Christ and look at how he brought people the message of God’s truth, we’ll see that Jesus related to the culture of his day and made his message relevant to the people he was talking to. By following Christ’s example we’ll be better equipped to meet the needs of others in our own culture and to reach out to them.

Realize that some girls in your group may not be Christians. Or, they may think they are Christians (because of their family background or other reasons), but in reality they have never accepted Christ as their personal Savior. As you get to know your group members, it may be a good idea to talk to each one individually to get an idea of where they are in their spiritual growth.

Sharing your faith should be a natural thing. Be yourself. God can use you with your style and history. Begin by developing friendships with the girls, and commit to praying for God to open their hearts. Ultimately, it is his work and his Spirit that changes hearts. However, he trusts you to speak about your faith and to show the way at the right time.

### USEFUL VERSES FOR EVANGELISM

*God desires a life-giving, personal relationship with you.*

“Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty” (John 6:35).

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10).

*Sin keeps us from a personal relationship with God and the life he wants for us.*

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

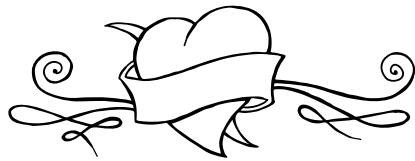
*You must personally receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.*

“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:16).

“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8, 9).







## Fun Things to Do with Your Group

### IDEAS FOR KEEPING IT FUN

Getting together with girlfriends should be fun! Below are a few suggestions to help you achieve a fun and memorable experience for your group members.

- ☞ Make sure to have an icebreaker for the first meeting (see ideas below).
- ☞ Provide food!
- ☞ Have contemporary Christian music playing as your girls arrive.
- ☞ Tie in holidays, seasonal events, and birthdays with your get-togethers.
- ☞ For example: Plan a time to get your girls together to bake holiday cookies.
- ☞ Research activities or create a small craft/gift for your group members to take home, one that will tie into the lesson/study. These things give group members a more memorable experience for the lesson/study.
- ☞ Give the girls a small memento for doing their homework. I have each girl who answered the chapter questions write her name on a piece of paper. I then put the paper in a bowl and draw out a name. The winner gets a small gift. This really helps to motivate them!
- ☞ If possible, you might consider holding the meetings at a different group member's house. This takes the pressure off of you as the leader and also gives other girls a chance to share their homes with the group.
- ☞ Find times to get together outside of the group!
- ☞ Example: Girls enjoy sleepovers. Large blocks of unhurried time are great for building friendships.
- ☞ Find a volunteer project to do together.

## ICEBREAKERS

An icebreaker helps you get to know one another and helps others feel comfortable sharing in a group. Your group may want to spend a few minutes during each session asking one “get to know you” question. Here are some suggestions. (Note: it’s important to be sensitive to the needs of your group when choosing any activity.)

- ☞ Give the group members index cards as they walk in and ask them to write down something funny that has happened to them. Have them fold the cards and place them in a basket. Then pass the basket around and have everyone take out a card that’s not hers. Let each girl read her card in turn and allow the group to guess who belongs to that card. Once someone guesses correctly, have the person who wrote on the card tell their story.
- ☞ Simply go around the circle. Tell the group: “Tell us your name, where you were born, and what’s your favorite \_\_\_\_\_ (color, food, Bible verse, movie, etc.).”
- ☞ Ask a trivia question. The person who answers correctly gets to ask a new trivia question.
- ☞ Have each person tell two true things and one untrue thing about themselves. Then let the others guess which one is not true.
- ☞ Have one teen share her story of how she came to know Jesus. Caution: never call on someone to do that on the spur of the moment. Ask the person ahead of time.
- ☞ The leader collects one fact about each member and types up a list of facts. These are facts the person has shared freely and doesn’t mind the others knowing. Pass the sheet out and try to guess which fact goes with which person.
- ☞ Place a bowl of candy-coated chocolates or other colorful candies on a table and ask each person to take four or five. Then have them talk about the following:
  - Brown—tell about the house you grew up in.
  - Yellow—describe your favorite summer vacation.
  - Blue—talk about your first airplane ride (or favorite airplane ride experience).
  - Green—tell about the best thing that happened this week.
  - Red—share a memory of your favorite Christmas.
  - Orange—wild card! Pick any topic from the above list.

## ICEBREAKER QUESTIONS

Ask basic questions that will help people get to know each other. Remember to only use questions that pertain to your group. Here are some examples.

### CHILDHOOD QUESTIONS

Where were you born?  
How many brothers and sisters do you have?  
How old were you when you learned to ride a bike?  
What is your mother's/father's occupation?  
What's your favorite subject in school?  
What's your favorite childhood memory?



### FAMILY

The trait I most admire in my mother, father, sister, and/or brother is \_\_\_\_\_.  
Our favorite family pastime is \_\_\_\_\_.  
My most obvious physical trait is my \_\_\_\_\_. I inherited it from my \_\_\_\_\_.

### SPIRITUAL

My first memory of hearing about God is \_\_\_\_\_.  
The person who introduced me to Jesus Christ is \_\_\_\_\_. Note: This is somewhat like the testimony suggestion. Only ask people who you know have a relationship with Christ. To ask a girl who doesn't know Christ could be to place her in an awkward situation, or lead her to make up a story (not a good thing for such an important subject!).  
The first church I ever attended was \_\_\_\_\_.  
The Bible verse that most speaks to me is \_\_\_\_\_.  
My favorite Bible story is \_\_\_\_\_.  
My first Bible was \_\_\_\_\_.

*Note:* On these final three, be extremely patient. A girl may struggle with thinking of a favorite verse or Bible story. Let them know it's fine if they can't think of one.

### PERSONAL

Before I arrived here today, I had to \_\_\_\_\_.  
My favorite toy when I was a child was a \_\_\_\_\_.  
Two years ago, I spent most of my time doing \_\_\_\_\_.  
Each teen tells what the first letter in her name might stand for. Example: My name is Carley. C stands for crazy!  
If I could do or be anything at all, I would \_\_\_\_\_.  
As a child my favorite daydream was \_\_\_\_\_.  
My favorite thing to do these days is \_\_\_\_\_.  
When did you pierce your ears? How did it go? Or, why haven't you pierced your ears? Tell us your story!

## SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events help create a sense of unity and community in any group. I suggest having at least two special events during the year that deviate from your normal schedule. Below are some suggestions:

- ☞ Invite a special speaker to come instead of having your normal discussion group.
- ☞ Have a themed dinner (salads, Mexican, Italian).
- ☞ Have a picnic in the park.
- ☞ Go to a teen retreat for the weekend; or host or attend a His Revolutionary Love conference. You can see my speaking schedule at [www.LynnCowell.com](http://www.LynnCowell.com) under Speaking Schedule.
- ☞ Do a community project together.
- ☞ Do a service project at Christmas.
- ☞ Volunteer at a nonprofit agency or ministry.

Hopefully, you're more comfortable now with getting your group rolling! I know it may seem like a lot of information, but remember that the most important thing is to provide a safe place for the girls to learn about Jesus.



## *His Revolutionary Love*

### Discussion Questions

As I wrote previously, in some books, the introduction might not be that important, but it really is in *His Revolutionary Love*. In the introduction—“The Love Story Begins”—I give the reader background information on me and really set the tone for the book. *For this reason, I encourage you to read “The Love Story Begins” out loud in your first meeting.*

As you read through it, encourage the girls to highlight or underline sentences that stick out to them. We want this book to be a “working” book, like a journal that they can go back to and refer to again and again. Let them know it’s OK to write in their books! To use the margins. They can write out questions that they have and then ask them in group the following week.

#### CHAPTER 1: HE WANTS ME

Each week, encourage the girls to memorize the group verse.

*Let the king be enthralled by your beauty;  
honor him, for he is your lord.*

—Psalm 45:11

1. Have you ever felt unwanted? What was the situation?
2. Why do you think that we want to be wanted so badly?
3. How did it strike you when you found out that the love notes Lynn was referring to were from Jesus?
4. Lynn said God is jealous. Did you know the root word for *jealous* comes from the Latin and Greek word for *zeal*? Merriam-Webster's tells us that *zeal* means "eagerness and ardent interest in pursuit of something."

Have one of the girls read James 4:4, 5. What do you think it means that Jesus is jealous for you?

5. How does knowing this make you feel?

## CHAPTER 2: HE KNOWS ME

This week's verse to memorize:

*He will take great delight in you;  
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
but will rejoice over you with singing.  
—Zephaniah 3:17*

After your icebreakers and/or other activities, start this week off by reading Psalm 139 out loud together.

1. How do you feel about the fact that he knows everything about you and *still* loves you? (Ask some follow-up questions to this one. Have your girls go deep with their thoughts.)
2. What is one area of your life that you have a hard time conceiving that Jesus knows about and still loves you so much?
3. We're used to hearing other people say that we've offended them, but have you ever thought about offending God? What types of things do you think offend him? When have you violated any of those things?
4. Ask the girls which parts of this chapter that they chose to highlight. Have them read those to the group and talk about why they highlighted that section.

5. What questions did this chapter raise for you?

### CHAPTER 3: HE SPEAKS TO ME

This week's verse to memorize:

*My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me."*

*And my heart responds, "LORD, I am coming"*

—Psalm 27:8 (NLT)

1. Have you ever had what some might call a mountaintop experience? When and where? Talk about what happened.
2. When is the best time of the day for you to spend with Jesus? Where? Is it a quiet place?
3. In what ways have you begun to recognize God's love whispers? What has he been saying to you?
4. What sentences did you highlight in this chapter?
5. For the leader: Review pages 70-71 where Lynn took a deeper look at the meaning of John 1:1. Now you choose another verse from the Bible and do the same thing for the girls in your group. If there's time, perhaps one or two of your most mature students can do the same.

### CHAPTER 4: I NEED HIM

Verse to memorize this week:

*But God will never forget the needy;  
the hope of the afflicted will never perish."*

—Psalm 9:18

Start your group today by showing your girls the video of the water demonstration. You can find it as part 2 under "Videos" on my website: [www.LynnCowell.com](http://www.LynnCowell.com).

1. Why do you think we crave the attention of others—especially guys—so much?
2. What do you run to when you feel emotional, happy, or sad?
3. When you think about feeling "completed," what does that mean to you?

4. Where do you turn for a sense of completion?
5. How would you describe the difference between *joy* and *happiness*?
6. What do you try to “fill up on”—friends, boys, sports, schools, music, social networking, other things?
7. Like Lynn, have you ever been tempted to use people to make you feel good?
8. Have you ever asked Jesus to fill you up and be your everything? If not, do that today!

## CHAPTER 5: I GO AFTER HIM

This week’s memory verse:

*Come near to God and he will come near to you.*

—James 4:8

Read Matthew 25:1-13 together out of *The Message* version of the Bible. It is written out in *His Revolutionary Love*.

1. At this point in your relationship with Jesus, do you look more like a silly girl or a smart girl? Talk about why you feel that way.
2. Have you ever had to choose between Jesus and someone or something else? Talk about that time.
3. Like Lynn and her struggle with Greg, do you have anything in your life right now that you want more than Jesus?
4. When you’re spending time with Jesus and you don’t seem to be getting anything out of it, how do you respond?
5. What are the things you spend a lot of time on, the things that take up a lot of your thoughts, text messages, or daydreams? What things are you tempted to hang on to instead of letting go of to have a closer relationship with Jesus?
6. In the book, Lynn wrote, “If you want to experience a deep level of intimacy with Jesus, it will cost you—time, energy, discipline, and vulnerability, among other



things.” What is or will be the hardest thing—between time, energy, discipline, or vulnerability—for you to give up in order to become closer to Jesus? Explain why.

Ask the girls if they wrote their love letter to Jesus. If they didn't, pass out some paper and give them ten minutes to do this at the end of group.

## CHAPTER 6: I HONOR HIM

This week's memory verse:

*We make it our goal to please him.*

—2 Corinthians 5:9

1. How would you define *purity*?
2. Is having a super-sensitive conscience a blessing or a pain? Why?
3. Lynn wrote: “You have to work at it. You have to work at not only keeping things out, but putting the right things in.” Make a list of the wrong things to keep out and the right things to put in.
4. How do you show respect or honor those who are in authority in your life?
5. How does that translate to respecting and honoring Jesus?
6. Lynn wrote: “One choice to honor God, be it small or large, can lead to a life that honors God. A pure life.”
7. Pick one scenario and work through making one small choice at a time to honor God. Some examples: working for good grades vs. cheating; dating only a Christian or making the choice to not date as a teen vs. dating anyone who comes along; choosing friends who honor Jesus vs. friends who do not.
8. What are some of the choices you're faced with on a daily basis that give you the chance to choose whether to honor Jesus?

Teach the girls to regularly ask this question: “What is the wise thing to do?” Try to bring this question to each small group. This way, your girls will get used to it and will begin to ask it of themselves.

## CHAPTER 7: WE PROTECT TOGETHER

This week's memory verse:

*Guard your heart above all else,  
for it determines the course of your life.*

—Proverbs 4:23 (NLT)

1. Go over the memory verse with the group. Now talk about it: how do you guard your heart?
2. Before reading this chapter in the book, had you heard the process (described there) of how a guy's brain works? Will knowing this change the way you'll approach dressing from now on? How and why?
3. How has getting a guy's attention affected the way that you choose to dress?
4. How do you deal with stress in your life? Is your physical body affected? If so, do you need some help in heading in the direction of healing?
5. When you read this verse in Proverbs for the first time, what went through your mind?

## CHAPTER 8: WE RELATE TOGETHER

This week's memory verse:

*No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*

—1 Corinthians 10:13

1. Does it seem old-fashioned to you to not initiate relationships with guys? When it comes to waiting for a guy to take the initiative, do you have a problem with that? Why or why not?
2. What do you think this quote means: "Man's rejection equals God's protection."
3. What kinds of things can you do, while you're waiting on a relationship, that will make you more ready to date?
4. In 2 Corinthians 6:16 Paul reminded his readers that, "We are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.'" Then he continued, in 7:1, to write:

“Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” Here’s something to think about: if we’ve already “contaminated our bodies” or spirits, how do we get them clean again? Talk about how God provides a way to do just that.

## CHAPTER 9: WE LOVE TOGETHER

This week’s memory verse:

*Don’t talk out of both sides of your mouth;  
avoid careless banter, white lies, and gossip.  
—Proverbs 4:23, 24 (The Message)*

Begin your group by reading the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42. Then read John 12:1-11.

1. Mary gave the most precious thing she had to Jesus. What would that thing be for you?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where others chose to pick on your friend and you’ve faced a decision to stand up for her or join with the others? How did you react?
3. Jesus demonstrated trustworthiness; this is a great trait in a friend. How do you find a trustworthy friend?

Leader: here are some additional questions to help define a trustworthy person.

- ☞ What does she talk about?
- ☞ How does she spend most of her free time?
- ☞ Does she often find fault and judge others, or does she protect her friends?
- ☞ Does she speak highly of other friends, or does she put others down so she can look better?
- ☞ Does she look for ways she can encourage other people?

4. Pass out these verses for your girls to look up in their Bibles and then take turns reading them out loud:

- ☞ “Mean people spread mean gossip; their words smart and burn” (Proverbs 16:27, *The Message*).
- ☞ “A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends” (Proverbs 16:28).
- ☞ “The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts” (Proverbs 18:8).

☞ “Gossips can’t keep secrets, so never confide in blabbermouths” (Proverbs 20:19, *The Message*).

5. Do you find it easy to get caught in the middle of conversations about others that are unkind? If so, how can you get out of this kind of talk? How can understanding Jesus’ radical love for you help you change the way you speak about others?

Read this quote from Chapter 9 in *His Revolutionary Love*:

And possibly the person gossip hurts the most is the person who speaks it. Just think about it. If you’re one of those people spreading rumors about others, why should anyone trust you with a secret? And what if you do get a piece of information about someone, and you pass it along, and it’s completely wrong? Then, you’ve not only hurt someone else, you also look like a fool for believing it in the first place. But that’s not the worst thing. The real problem is that every time you say yes to gossip, you allow your heart to become a little more calloused. You say no to caring for others. It makes it that much easier for you to not just say bad things about others, but to actually *do* harmful things to others.

6. What does Galatians 6:7 say will happen to those who sow seeds of gossip?

7. When you see something in your friend’s life that is not best for them, what do you do? How do you deliver the truth?

8. When have you been a cheerleader to a friend, helping her to see how a bad situation could turn out for good? Radical love looks beyond the obvious and in faith encourages a friend to believe Jesus will bring about the best in her life.

## SUMMARY THOUGHTS

To wrap up the book, share your sentiments with your girls.

Here’s the way I did it in the book:

I hope that after the time we’ve spent together in *His Revolutionary Love* that you, like Mary, feel compelled to respond to his love. My prayer for you is that you will sit at his feet like Mary, for the rest of your life—hanging on his every word and knowing that he is speaking to you, wanting you, pursuing you, hoping for you, and loving you. I hope that you have soaked in the truth of this amazing, life-changing love and that you will never be the same.

