

Girls Night #219: The BEST Thing you can do for Yourself as a Single Woman — with Madison Prewett Troutt

0:00:05 - Stephanie

Hey friends, welcome to Girls Night. I'm Stephanie May Wilson and I'm so happy that you're here. Each week, I have a girlfriend over and we talk through one of the biggest questions we have about our lives as women. We're talking about friendships and faith and relationships and self-confidence, about our calling in life and how to live every bit of our lives to the full. Life is so much better and easier and absolutely more fun when we navigate it together as girlfriends, and I cannot wait to get started, friends, I am so excited to be back for season 18 of the Girls Night podcast. I'm even more excited because our first guest is my new friend, Madison Pruitt Trout.

Now, I'm guessing that a lot of you are familiar with Madi after her debut on the reality TV show, the Bachelor, but along with being a TV personality, Madi is also an author, a speaker, and she has an incredible social media presence.

Her life mission is to share the name of Jesus and to help women discover who they were made to be and where to find the truest form of love. Madi has a brand new book out and it's called the Love Everybody Wants, and in it she's talking about so many important things like how to stop settling for less than you deserve, how to see yourself the way that God sees you, how to find a partner who's going to compliment you, not complete you, and so much more, and that's what today's episode is all about. One of my very favorite things that she talks about are strategies to combat the lies we so often tell ourselves during waiting seasons. Lies like I'm just hard to love or I'm never going to be enough. You guys are going to love this episode and you're going to love Madi, and I cannot wait for you to hear this. Guys, I am so excited for who you get to meet today. I'm sitting here with my new friend, Madison Pruitt Trout, and Madi. I'm just so happy to get to what we're really having coffee right now.

0:01:57 - Madi

We're not in the same room, but we're having coffee. I know it feels like we're together.

0:02:00 - Stephanie

Yes, yes, thanks so much for coming to Girls Night.

0:02:03 - Madi

Yes, thank you so much for having me. This is so fun. I really do feel like we're having a Girls Night, although it's bright outside and daytime, but it feels like we're together, hanging out, exactly, exactly.

0:02:15 - Stephanie

Well, I'm so glad that everyone can be here like with us. One of my favorite things that people say about, I think, podcasts in general but I hear it a lot about my show is that it's like you're so

involved in the conversation that you start answering out loud and like joining in, like oh, yeah, yeah, me too, and you go oh, no one can hear me, right, exactly.

0:02:34 - Madi

You're like, oh now, if someone just saw me do that, I look crazy and it's fine.

0:02:38 - Stephanie

But that's how you know you're doing something right as a podcast, when people are talking back to you Like that's what we want. Absolutely so for women who haven't gotten to meet you yet, which I feel like is probably not very funny, tell us who you are, what you do, in a fun fact about yourself.

0:02:53 - Madi

Fun fact. Okay, so I am Madison Prewett Troutl just added that trout to my last name, got married nine months ago to Grant Trout, and so it's so weird I'm still not used. I'm so used to saying Madison Pruitt. I'm like, oh, Madison Prewett Troutt. So we've been married for nine months, live in Waco, Texas. He works as a young adult pastor here in Waco and I kind of do a little bit of everything I like to write. I have some books out, I speak and kind of travel all over for speaking and then do some social media, different collaborations and things like that. So a little bit of everything.

I went on ABC's The Bachelor, and that is how many people kind of know me and are familiar with my face and just my faith, and so that has been quite the experience and we're still healing from that one. But here we are. Here we are and I'm so excited to be now releasing my new book, the Love Everybody Wants, which I'm super passionate about and excited about. Fun fact about me actually is that I was on reality or I was on TV before. I was on the Bachelor for the Price Is Right. I went on the Price Is Right and I won \$8,000. And so that was my first TV debut and I'm pretty proud of it. That's amazing. I think a lot of people don't know that, so I like to always share that one \$8,000.

0:04:22 - Stephanie

That is amazing. Is Price Is Right? I'm going to make half of everybody mad. Is Price Is Right? The one where you go wearing like a costume? No, that's.

0:04:32 - Madi

I don't think so. You're like I didn't wear a costume. No, I don't think so. It's the one where, like, they call you up and it's like you guess the price of the item. Yeah, in my case, I was like I don't remember. I think it was like \$750 or something like that. I was like \$750 and the price was \$799 and I was the closest to it and they were like Madison, come on up. And then there's like different games that you have to do. So I did pretty good on the game. I didn't win all of it. I stopped at the \$8,000 and could have won \$16,000. But I was like I'm going to secure the bag and take the \$8,000 and not risk it Totally.

0:05:11 - Stephanie

That's always anytime I'm watching anything like that, like take the money.

0:05:14 - Madi

Yeah, I take the money.

0:05:16 - Stephanie

No, like take it, take it, don't push it. Okay, I love that. I love that. I'm going to have to look up what the one is right. People wear costumes. Is it like super market? Sweet Anyway.

0:05:26 - Madi

Yeah, you don't have to tell me about that one.

0:05:28 - Stephanie

I swear people wear costumes. Okay, I'm making things up. Okay, I want to hear, I really want to hear about your book. I guess let's start there. Tell me about the book. Tell me what it's about, what inspired it. And really I want to hear more of your dating story. Tell me about the book, like how did this come about? What inspired it? Give me the rundown.

0:05:52 - Madi

Yeah, so I started writing the love everybody wants in a season of singleness.

I actually started writing it a while ago, a long time before I even met Grant, knew about Grant and truly was writing it from a place of like encouraging myself.

I was not finding contentment in that season of singleness and just really wrestling with thoughts and doubts, like is there something wrong with me? Am I in my heart to love? Why is it seem like it's happening for everyone else and not me? Am I not enough? You know, really just struggling with those doubts and those thoughts. And then I had just this like revelation one day, as I was just like reading the word and spending time on my quiet time one morning. Nothing crazy had happened. I was just reading the word and I remember I just felt like God was was laying on my heart. Like Madi, you've been desiring and looking for the right thing just in all the wrong places. Like you've been taking that desire for a supernatural, lasting love to humanity and to people, and only I can give you that. And it was just that moment where I was like, wow, so simple. But that just changed everything. Like that literally just changed everything for me, lord, because I've been trying to find just security and happiness and wholeness in a relationship status and in finding a boyfriend or in finding a spouse, and that just totally rewired my thinking and just getting back to that place where I realized, okay, lord, you are the only one that can satisfy, you are the only one that can complete me and I'm going to, I'm going to keep you as that foundation and then all other relationships, all other things can build off of that foundation. And so once that foundation with the Lord became my highest priority and strong and healthy, all the other relationships in my life naturally became healthier and stronger because it was just coming up from that foundation. And so that's kind of how it started really, just from a very vulnerable, heartfelt cry in my own season of singleness. And then what was interesting is, about halfway through writing the manuscript was when I met Grant and we

started dating. And I think it's just so cool because I I think it was just God's grace and kindness to truly let me write a book on relationships and go through every stage in a relationship, from singleness to dating to engaged to married and all the in-betweens of evaluating and lonely nights and tears and waiting seasons and heartbreak and rejection and all the things in between, and just really getting to feel that firsthand and right from that experience.

And so I'm writing a chapter on singleness. While I'm struggling in singleness and that's something that you know, I think when I was in singleness I wanted to hear from someone that I felt like could really understand and get me, and not a 45 year old man who had been married for 25 years. And some of those books like truly transformed my life. Like there are a couple of books from some you know, some pastors who like really encouraged me, but I wanted, like a young girl, to be like hey, I get it, I get you, I'm here with you, and so that was really, you know, something that I just am so thankful that the Lord allowed me to kind of walk through all of those, all of those steps.

But the love everybody wants is definitely not a book on how to get a boyfriend and how to find your happily ever after, but it's rather rather to show you how to look to God, how to see yourself and find that deep love that our culture and media tries to spin and tell us that we can find it in all these other things. But really getting to the real truth of like it can only be found in Christ. And so finding the love everybody wants isn't nearly as complicated as we've made it. It's actually pretty simple. And it says in Matthew 22, 35 through 39, the two greatest commandments that Jesus gives us is to love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. And then the second is, like it, to love your neighbor as yourself.

And so I really walk through those three relationships and how our relationship with Jesus is the most important.

It's the foundation, and then from that place, you're able to build a strong relationship with yourself and learn how to value yourself, be confident in who you are in Christ, know your identity, know your worth and value in Christ and then, from that place, have healthy relationships and strong relationships with other people.

And so we tackle all the things. We talk, you know, on faith and finding that relationship with the Lord and redefining true love, getting back to that place of taking your longings to the Lord and then from there, also talking about you know identity and self-worth and confidence, knowing your value, setting high standards, knowing what you deserve, and then also tackling, you know, a lot of the heartbreaks, rejections, singleness, waiting seasons, and then even to what do you look for in a relationship and in a spouse? And so, yeah, that was really my heart. Posture is I wanted people to know, hey, you were made from love, by love and for love, but at the same time, like it takes some work to get those loves in order, because a lot of times we can get our loves out of order and try to take what we were meant for to other people or to other things, when ultimately it can only be found in God.

0:11:05 - Stephanie

I love that so much. The women who are listening are like yes, like we've been talking about this first, so this is so weird. Cut from the same cloth. I love this so much. Yes, and they meant all of that. Tell me a little bit more about your dating story.

0:11:23 - Madi

Yeah, so Grant and I actually got set up on a blind date, which it's funny. So when I was talking about that season of singleness where I was struggling with contentment, when I had that moment with the Lord and I really felt just that conviction of man I'm so sorry, lord, I have been placing other idols on the throne of my heart, like I have been caring more about finding a spouse and finding a person to do life with than pursuing you. And it was that moment of change for me to really put Jesus back on the throne of my heart and make him the King of my heart, that all of that began to change. And then from that place I really started loving my season of singleness, like I was thriving. And so I found just like Godly community and was just finding so much contentment in the season that God had me in. And that's when I was also finishing kind of like this book. And then I met Grant and I remember I was like Lord, this is not the timing that I would have expected. Like now I'm thriving in my season of singleness. I don't even know if I want to be in a relationship. I feel like that's always how it works.

And so I met him and was just kind of in a season where I wasn't really looking for anything at all and got set up on a blind date. And so we got set up on a blind date, mutual friend, and literally just the very first date we went on I just knew there was something so different about him and so special, and just the way that he talked about the Lord and what the Lord had done for his life, and I could see his passion for Jesus, I could see his love for people, the way he interacted with the waiter, the way he just talked about his friends and family and interacted with people we'd passed by, and I just was really really amazed and just even his confidence in who he was in Christ, and so those things just really captivated me really early on. I remember I called my mom right after and I was like I just met my husband. I like no. From day one I was like this man, I'm gonna marry him, which is funny because it's so not how I had dated previously.

I feel like previously my dating was kind of filled with more justification, excuses, overlooking red flags, you know would have a lack of peace, and I'd be like, oh, it's fine, it'll get better. He has potential and I just would kind of, you know, not pay attention to the things that I should be paying attention to. And I learned a lot through all of that. But with Grant, it was the first time that I had such peace from the very beginning, and I just felt God's presence in it and I just knew God was for it. I just knew it was of God and everything I had prayed for, everything I had waited for, everything that I knew I needed in a man and in a relationship I saw at the very beginning, like this man has.

And I think that the most important part of all of that was neither of us were looking for each other and both of us were so wholeheartedly seeking after Jesus and so even coming together. It was like, oh, you're not in any way here to like complete me. You know, I'm not in any way here to make you more whole. We are brought into each other's lives to add value and to compliment one another and to push each other closer to Jesus. But at the end of the day, like, I

know who I am in Christ and Jesus alone completes me and satisfies me, and we were both able to come from that place, which was just so healthy, and our relationship was able to just start on such a strong foundation, with clear vision, and we knew exactly who we were and where we were going. And because of that, like it was such a, it was not an easy dating experience. I don't think any relationship that's worth it is easy. But it was man, it was God, was still in it from the beginning.

0:14:58 - Stephanie

I love that so much. I love that so much. You know, I know that you have learned so much in your life about this, like about single-nice and about this waiting season. What can feel like a really, really long time of waiting. What are some of the things that you kind of some of the hangups that you see other people getting caught on, or like some of the things that you're like if you could tell everyone, including yourself, who's in this season, something like, yeah, what would it be?

0:15:32 - Madi

Man. I truly think that for at least from my perspective and for me, like the biggest thing I struggled with was just the wrong perspective. Like I think I saw single-nice as a season of less than and I saw marriage as more of like this ultimate goal, and single-nice was more of just this thing that I wanted to pass through, but marriage was like the destination. And I think I just had this wrong perspective. And when I read through 1 Corinthians, chapter seven, like Paul puts it so clearly the gift of single-nice, Like we hear that phrase gift of single-nice, and I don't know about for the listeners, but I know for me when I heard that phrase I like cringed, I was like stop, Single-nice is not a gift. I don't want single-nice, I want marriage. And people would come with a gift or see.

0:16:17 - Stephanie

Yeah, no, literally.

0:16:18 - Madi

I'm trying to give it back, I'm trying to exchange it Like thank you, lord, but no, thank you, and that's I mean. That's how I felt, you know, when I was in my season of single-nice, for a lot of it and just like struggling with, I don't want to be here. But I think it took that perspective shift of you know, realizing single-nice actually is truly a gift, and Paul talks about it in that chapter in 1 Corinthians, talking about how single-nice gives us undivided devotion to the Lord, like it is the. It's the time in your life where there are no distractions, You're not looking to please anybody but Jesus, and you have this opportunity to really grow in your faith and in who you are, in Christ. And so for me, there's things I talk about in my book, three of the biggest things that single-nice taught me when I was in that season, and the first one was holiness and just getting to a place where I could be truly complete in Christ and just looking to to find all of my fulfillment, my joy, my peace, my security, all of those things in Christ alone. It gives you that time and that opportunity to just get your heart right with God and be who he's called you to be. And so that would be like the first thing that I think that I learned in the season of single-nice and just what a gift that was.

And the second is it gives you an opportunity to heal. Single-nice gives you an opportunity to really confront, you know, things of your past or lies you've believed or areas that you need to heal in your heart. It just gives you that space and if we don't take that time to get free from the things of our past, we're already going to be building a wall between us and potentially if that's what God has for us a future spouse. And so taking the time and singleness to really heal and confront those things Like I remember one of the biggest prayers I prayed was just like, lord, let me confront every feeling, even if I don't want to, like I don't want to run from anything. So let me head on face every, every lie I'm believing, every feeling, every, every, you know. Just attack every, everything. Like let me just like hit it head on and just deal with it, because I don't want to carry it into. If you have called me to be married one day, I don't want to carry that into marriage Like, I want to deal with it right now. And so healing.

And then the third thing I would say is just healthy habits. I believe that our person is what we habitually do, and so single-nice gives us the opportunity to start developing those healthy habits in our life, those patterns, those practices that not only you're able to develop in single-nice but you're also able to carry that through your entire life. Like I look back to my season of single-nice and there were so many things that I learned and so many things that I developed that I still, to this day, continue in marriage and get to practice in marriage. But yeah, I would just go back to like what keeps a lot of people stuck is just that wrong perspective of seeing single-nice as almost like being on the sidelines while marriage is like you're in the game, you know, and at least that's how I felt. I grew up playing sports and I saw, okay, lord, it feels like when I'm, you know, single and all my friends are married, like they get to be in this game called marriage and I'm just on the sidelines like waiting for my turn.

But man, I don't see single-nice as a waiting season that is inactive in any way. I see single-nice as a season that is full of purpose, full of opportunity, full of growth, and you're not on the sidelines in any way, and even if it feels like a waiting season for you, whatever it is you're waiting on maybe it's, you know, finding your spouse, maybe it's a job, maybe it's whatever it may be for you, but it's not inactive and I think that's something the Lord really spoke to me in. That season was like what you're, what I'm doing in you, is way more important than anything I can do for you, anything I can give you, and what you're waiting on and what you're waiting for. And so just not neglecting where we're currently at, because it isn't where we want to be. And so waiting well is being able to be faithful with where you are, while also still clinging to, you know, the hope and promises that God gives us for our future.

And there was a verse in Psalm 84 that I really clung to a lot in waiting seasons, and it talks about how, for those who's walked with the Lord is blameless. Like no good thing does he withhold from us who are faithfully walking with Him. And so he is not a God of let me restrict, let me withhold, let me tease you, let me hurt you. He is a good, good Father, and so you have what you need when you need it and he just His timing is best and His ways are best, and so for me, it just I had to be like okay, god, instead of saying like God, why, and like why isn't this happening? I just tried to flip that perspective in my mind to just say like what can I learn here? What are you trying to do in me here? What are you trying to teach me?

0:20:55 - Stephanie

Yeah, I love that so much those are. I love hearing you say these things because, like it feels like you're reading my journal out loud. It really does, and you know my husband and I have been married for we just hit nine years, which is wow.

Amazing, it's not crazy. So, yeah, we just hit nine years and I heard someone asked him the other day I like heard him talking in the phone and someone asked him, like you know what his advice is for preparing for marriage? And he said the exact thing that we both did and the exact thing that you just said of like, use this time, use this time to become the person that you want to be, period, and the healthier you are, the healthier you both are, the healthier your marriage will be. And just the things that I learned and did and the ways that god grew me while I was single Like I'm still seeing the fruit of them nine years in a marriage. Absolutely, it's just, it's better still from that, and so I'm just, I'm so glad that I just I'm so glad to hear you say that, I'm so glad, yeah, I'm just really glad that you're at this book.

0:22:03 - Madi

That's so good and it's so true and it's like I think too, for Um, like for me, I had to get to a place where I was like if god never gives me a spouse, like if I never get married, he is enough, and like truly believing that. Because I think one thing that we can do is put so much of our hope in potentially getting married one day and I think if our hope is in that we're going to be so disappointed and not because Our spouse isn't amazing and great and a gift and a blessing and all the things but like marriage is hard and people are imperfect and they're going to fail you, and so like for me, man, I realized that in singleness, but I've even seen it like, I've even seen it in in marriage Like I'm like, okay, yeah, like I fail you and you fail me and You're not perfect and you can't complete me and you can't meet every desire and satisfaction of my heart. And that's one of the biggest things that I, that I talk about in this book is like, hey, this is not the roadmap to go find your spouse, because our hope is not in a spouse, our hope is in a savior, like we are not looking to. You know how can I meet my person so that I can live the life God has through me? It's like no, you've already met the one that can give you everything you need. You are already complete in him. And then, from that place, like, run your race and just like, give the rest to the lord and, if it's according to his will, like, you will find that person and you will be with that person in the time that you're supposed to be.

But that was the hardest thing for me to accept. But I think, when we can get to that place where we can fully accept that and knowing that Every season god is preparing us for something. And so for me, yeah, I look back, like you said, in that season of singleness and I'm like man, the lord was preparing me to be the wife that I am today, um, but I can say that about so many different things. You know, there's so many seasons where I'm like, wow, that season was so hard. But like, praise god for that closed door, praise God for that rejection, praise god for those moments, because it's so Prepared me for who I am today and where I am today and what I'm doing today, um and so, even if it's not even regarding like marriage, just in all things, man, just yeah, every season, god can teach us something and there's something to be learned.

0:24:14 - Stephanie

Oh my gosh, seriously, I feel like I'm like You're cut from the same cloth. I love it so much. Um, tell me you know one of the hardest things I know for me, and you can't. You touched on this at the beginning, but I want to go back to it. Um, one of the hardest things I know for me when I was single and dating and when you know I was like Dating people who ended up being almost they're not quite, or like I am, so into them. They're sort of into me, like you know. I mean all the things that happen. Um was the Doubt that crept into my mind about Myself, like it really was everything that you said at the beginning, like am I hard to love, is there something wrong with me?

Am I not good enough? Like, what is it about? Why is this working out for other people and it's not working out for me? What does that mean about me? What are some of the like Tools that you've used or that have helped you the most to combat some of those thoughts?

0:25:09 - Madi

Yeah, man, I love that you mentioned that again and and brought it back to those questions that so many of us feel and face. And even like gosh, it doesn't go away, even when you get married. I'm like there's still moments where I'm like, am I enough? Like, am I, am I good enough? Like feeling you know the need to prove and all the things. And so, man, I would also just speak to like if you don't deal with those insecurities like they don't, they don't just go away, you know, and so we're always going to have to choose to, uh, to fight lies with the truth, no matter what season of life that we're in. But, specifically speaking to you know singleness and dating and, and in that you know state of life, there were so many lies and doubts that came up and that's why, even in my book, I start off each chapter, which I thought this was really cool, because I wanted to make it. I wanted this book to feel so, and we've kind of mentioned this and I love that you've said this a couple times but I wanted it to feel like you're reading my journal, like you're in my head and you're in my heart of. This is what I, this is what I felt, and this is what I faced, and so each of the chapters open up with like three questions Um, that I've that, I've like asked myself or I've wrestled, whether I've, you know, asked God, which is like you were saying am I hard to love? Am I not pretty enough? Am I not good enough? Why is it working out for everyone else? Is there something wrong with me? Like all of those questions. And so I open up each chapter with those and really, you know, begin to tackle kind of the, the answers and the solutions to those.

But again, uh, it goes back to like what I was saying, that I had to realize that my hope is not in a person and so my worth and my value isn't attached to someone else. My worth and my value is attached to a god who says I'm more than enough and to a god who had, who loves me so much that not only he died for me, but like he put his spirit inside of me and his spirit is more than enough. And continuing to live and love and Just think and and go about my day from that place Gives me that sense of confidence and courage, when maybe those feelings make me feel like I'm not good enough and I don't fit in and I don't belong and I don't measure up, um, and it's just going back to that place of like okay, these are what my feelings are telling me, and maybe even this is like what culture is telling me and what media is telling me, but what does god's words say? And so, going back to that place of of that being like the ultimate say so, god,

what do you say about me? Um, I think, just like, practically for me, first, like, it starts with prayer, um, just reminding myself daily a simple prayer of like Jesus, I need you. Like, even if that's all I get out of the prayer During the day, it's like Jesus, I need you, I need you so much. Um, I don't know how to love other people, I don't know how to love you. I don't know how to even love myself right now. So will you show me and help me? Um, and so just even like making it less about myself, even, and just like starting to thank god for who he is and what he's done. And when I do that, it almost like flips the script of like my problems that seemed so big, now I'll become a lot smaller, and god seemed so much bigger, and so prayer just really puts things into perspective, and so prayer Definitely a tool that was super helpful for me when I was having those doubts and insecurities and questions.

The second is definitely the word of god, the bible, that's just filled with so much truth and that helps us combat every lie. Uh, you know, I think one thing I had to realize was like you can't just remove, um, a lie. We have to replace it with something greater and something better. And so if we remove it, we're just making room for another lie to creep in. So we have to replace it With the truth.

And so, literally confronting those lies head on and being like, okay, I'm looking this lie in the face and I'm like this is what you say and I feel what you're saying, like I really do and I'm kind of coming into agreement with it. But I'm going to choose to look at you in the face and I'm going to say, no, but this is what God's word says and this is what the truth is, and God's word says that it's the truth that sets us free. And so, reminding ourselves of the truth, replacing those lies with the truth and making our thoughts and our thought life obedient to Christ, and what he says about us Is way more important than what culture says about us, way more important than even what we say and feel about ourselves. And so, ultimately, like coming back to that place, because our feelings are real, like you know, and and and, and it's okay to feel them, but feel what you feel, but know what you know and let that knowing and let that truth you know be what ultimately guides you and what ultimately leads you in your life. And so I would say prayer, the word of god, and then, third, I just said community. Community was so helpful for me In my season of singleness and endowed and frustrations, finding people that were like-minded, following Jesus, um, with their whole hearts, and also people who, having some people that were in my same season of life, um, I think it was.

It was hard for me at a time when I was only hanging out with Married people, when I was single, because then I was constantly comparing myself, and so it was really important for me to even, you know, put myself, get myself out of my comfort zone and like go to a you know, a singles night at my church or, you know, join a new small group or community group or something at my church, and just start surrounding myself with people who were in, you know, the same season of life as me, so that I wouldn't feel so alone and that we could just even hold each other accountable in the same you know lies and insecurities and doubts.

And so having that community just to remind you of who you are, who Christ is, point you back to the truth and to have someone you can confess to Um, you know the scripture talks all about like, how do you find healing as you, you bring you know the dark things into the light? And so

finding people that you can confess to, of like, hey, I've been believing this lie and I just needed to tell you, I needed to confess it. Um, and just having that person look at you and be like that's okay, but here's the truth. And now let me pray over you. Um, that was so huge for me, um, and so, yeah, I'd say a prayer, a word of god and in just community were really the greatest ways that I was able to like, combat those lies and really be who who got it called me to be. I love them, I love them and still, to this day, I'm still doing that.

0:31:09 - Stephanie

I'm still how they do. That it's a practice. And and. But I feel like when you're in the something that I've I've noticed for myself about like lies, truth, insecurities, once you sort of get into a rut, like it's hard to get out of it. So once you're thinking you know these negative things about yourself or you're like really afraid of this one thing, it's like it's all you can see, it's all you can think about, it's all you can feel, it's like it is a real, it is a real work to change lanes. But when you can change lanes, and once you like, it does take practice. It takes practice to be kind to yourself, to repeat truth to yourself, to like not be your own worst critic but to be a good friend to yourself. That takes practice Absolutely. But once you do it like it's easier. The longer you stay in that lane, the easier it is to to stay there Really.

0:32:07 - Madi

Yeah, yeah, totally. I so agree with that. It takes intentionality. Sometimes it even takes like is weird, as this word is like intensity, like sometimes you don't feel like it but you just have to like make yourself do it.

You know, and, like you said, sometimes it's easier to just like sit in the lies and believe the lies, especially when the lies feel like the truth.

And so you're just when you're just in that dark place it's easy to just continue to spiral and you know it can feel like it can feel like death to confess sometimes. You know it can be really hard to be like, hey, this is a lie, I'm believing in an insecurity that I have. Man, that was like one of the hardest things for me. Like confession does not come natural to me when you know, even like now to this day, having to be like, yeah, um, you know, talking to my community group of girls, being like, hey, I thought some some pretty ugly things yesterday and I said some pretty ugly things to my husband, and you know, whatever, that's not easy to do. So I totally agree, like it takes effort, but then, once you start doing it, you see just like the light and the freedom and the lightness and the joy that you're able to carry and walk in when you're clinging to, to the truth, and you're able to have other people remind you of that truth when, when you've forgotten.

0:33:19 - Stephanie

Yeah, this is, um, this may not make any sense. This is something that's like happening in my head real time. But as you've been talking, I've been thinking about, like people's opinions, how everyone has. You said you know, am I not this enough? Am I not pretty enough? Am I not this enough? Like, and I pictured someone standing on stage and and a whole bunch of people in the audience, and I was thinking about how everyone in the audience is going to have a different opinion about the people on the stage. And just a minute ago you said, like that's the

truth, and the phrase that popped into my head was like who's truth? Every single person in that room is going to have a different take on what they're looking at, on, on, like you know what they're all like watching, and that we it's up to us to decide who's truth we're going to believe.

And I feel like I so often search the crowd for the person whose truth about me is as bad as it possibly can be, and I'm like that is the one that I'm going to believe, and I just that's so crazy because a lot of times, like, if someone has, you know, a negative opinion of you or you know is thinking bad things about you, it is like never about you. That person has so many things going on and so they can't even see clearly enough to be able to actually be a good mirror for you. Yeah, you're just jumping into kind of whatever the mess is that is going on in their heads too, and it's like that their voice may not be, have any credibility, may not be the majority, may not be, may not even know you, but we choose to believe that person, we believe their truth about us, and I just it's so hard not to, but like we've got to stop, you've got to stop.

0:35:05 - Madi

Amen. And oh my gosh, this is something that I actually talk about in my book. That changed the game for me. It was.

I was like man, Madi, why are you allowing other people, who don't know who they are, determine who you are? Why are you letting people who, like, don't even have their value and worth in Christ, determine your value and worth? And for me, like, realizing that changed everything, because I was like, why am I allowing other people who are imperfect, don't know who they are, determine my value and worth, when Christ is like, hey, I'm the one who created you, I'm the one who saved you and I'm the only one who's going to sustain you? So like, why are you looking to other people to try and do those things? And that like is such a powerful. I'm so glad you brought that up because that's such a powerful reminder for people and hopefully people listening are encouraged by that of like, stop, stop letting your worth and value be in the hands of other imperfect people. Like, give that to the one who created you, who knows every hair on your hand, every hair on your head, and who cares about you so deeply and loves you so much. And, man, I just I'm so passionate about that because I'm like we have allowed for too long other people to determine our value, our worth and how we feel about ourselves and how we view ourselves.

And looking through the lens of like, even making decisions and like from people, other people's perspectives about us, you know, like, oh, if I I'm not going to speak out or I'm not going to do this, or I'm going to do this or I and just changing ourselves, conforming, compromising, competing, comparing, literally all the things and we're going to find ourselves at a place becoming something we didn't plan on becoming, and we're going to look back down the road being like, how did I get here? And it's because we're constantly living for the approval of people. And Galatians 110 reminds us like hey, if you are living for the approval of people, you don't fear God and you're not a servant of Christ. And so we have to remind ourselves like, hey, we, we are not here to please people. We are here for one one reason only, and that is to please God, to know God and to make him known to others. And just living from from that

perspective just totally changes, I think, our viewpoint and how we view ourselves in love ourselves.

0:37:22 - Stephanie

I love that you said that, because the way that we see ourselves, you know, a lot of times people don't talk about that, they don't talk about it's almost like you shouldn't think about yourself at all. Like you, you shouldn't think about yourself at all. So don't, don't, like try to I Don't know increase yourself, confidence, like just you. This isn't about you, yeah, but like we have thoughts about ourselves, we do have a relationship with ourselves. We are, we spend a lot of time with ourselves and when that that relationship is off, the way that we see ourselves, like it spills out into every other part of our lives, absolutely.

There's this, the person that I I dated somebody before I dated my husband and I was really, really struggling with identity stuff. I just could not get on my own team. Like I just I just was absolutely my own worst critic and I like I couldn't figure out a way around it and and it was so wild because I had this really great person who was looking at me and telling me how great I am and how much they care about me, and like I had, I had that external Validation that I had been looking for for so long and it didn't help. Like it truly was like I Don't know, like putting water in a bucket with a hole in it. I just it's nothing stuck and it was so frustrating for me, it was so frustrating for him and it really like it's really hard to to love somebody who doesn't love themselves Really.

And no matter how much someone else loves you, they cannot convince you that you're worthy of love. It just doesn't work. Yeah, and then you know, if we're thinking, you know I'm not enough, I'm not good enough, I'm to this and I'm to that. There are so many opportunities we're not gonna take things, we're not gonna say impact that we're not gonna make. Yeah, because we're holding ourselves back, and we were holding ourselves back to try to make other people happy who aren't thinking about us at all.

I have no idea exactly, totally have no bearing on the situation at all, but to please them. We're we're missing out on on so many things in our life and it's not even pleasing them.

0:39:27 - Madi

So yeah, no, that's so good. It's like such a weird dichotomy of like, like it talks about in scripture you know of, of don't like, don't boast in yourself, boast only in the cross of Jesus Christ, and you know like dying to yourself and and and all of those things right, but also having this like bold, unashamed, you know, like spirit in you, and I do think it's like this weird. It's like an upside-down Kingdom. It's not how you would envision finding confidence. Like I think when we think confidence the world's way, it's like oh, boost yourself, make it yeah, like for sure, and make it all about you. Like massages, have guys affirm you, get as many guys after you as you want, like growing you know Social media followers wear tight clothes, get compliments, I don't know. However, we envision confidence. There's definitely the world's way, and I think what's interesting is like for me, because I would say probably most of the people that have met me Would be like about it. You're one of the most confident people I've ever met and I'm like man.

That's crazy. A lot of times I don't feel confident at all, but I would say like truly, I've been able to find this shameless, like audacious, bold, just faith, and it's it's truly been born from this place of dying to myself but finding new life in Christ and from that new life in Christ becoming a new creation in Christ. I have every reason to be confident, you know, like I have every reason in Christ to be confident and to and to know who I am and to stay true to who I am. And so I think it is like this, this interesting approach that you had alluded to it, because it is, it's like both and it's like a sense of, you know, dying to yourself but also like Staying true to yourself and knowing who you are and being confident in that. But it really isn't you, it's God's spirit inside of you. And so for me it's like man. I I don't boast in Madi, because Madi, apart from Christ, is terrifying. She's rude, she's impatient, she's not kind, she's selfish, you know, and the list goes on, but it's like man.

When I have submitted myself and yielded to the spirit of the Lord and I have said Lord, it's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me, and I live with that sense, that perspective, my life, my, my, my manner, my confidence, my, everything totally changes. I'm able to like walk into rooms and my perspective is not what do they think about me? Are they gonna accept me? Are they gonna love me? Am I good enough? Like now, my perspective is like who can I encourage? How can I serve? What can I do, lord, how do you want to use me? Because it's like I'm not. I'm not internally focused, but at the same time I'm so confident in who I am, that in Christ, that I'm able to like, encourage and love on other people, and so it's an interesting both and you know situation.

0:42:16 - Stephanie

And like the thing that's so crazy about that, too, is that those are the things that that like if your ultimate goal was to have people love you to, you know, be included, to be accepted, like being really kind, serving other people, encouraging other people like that's the way to do it. In the same way that One of the things that really stood out to me because I've seen this pattern in my life and in my relationships when you are talking about your husband, you're like his confidence, it's. It's not the obvious things that draw us to someone, or maybe they do it really Initially, but like that's not what keeps people around.

0:42:59 - Madi

It doesn't keep us there.

0:43:00 - Stephanie

Yeah, yeah, yeah, um, um, confidence in a person, someone really knowing who they are, and and like that is the thing that's actually captivating, and the things that you stick around for are the, are the Kindness, are the love, are the, you know, selflessness are the Encouragement, are all the things that are that you're talking about, and so it's just funny that, like, again, there's this sort of both and, where it's, you're not going into a situation trying to like, make everybody like you, yeah, and the things that you're doing are much more likely to make people like you. Yeah, exactly, it's just a weird thing.

0:43:36 - Madi

No, it's totally, absolutely. Because it's like once you I mean, if we have the spirit of God inside of us Like once people encounter that, like it's captivating, you know, like it's, it's something it's it like doesn't make sense. Like when you read first Corinthians 13 and you're like this is what love is like. Oh, love is patient and kind and others focused, and all these like it doesn't fail. And you're reading all these things You're like, whoa, that's insane, because it's so, not what culture, you know, preaches and the things that we see around us all the time, but it's like that is so captivating to people and so, the more that you are that like.

One of my favorite practices Is to just look at first Corinthians 13 and replace love with Um, first and foremost the name of Jesus, but then even beyond that is my own name and be like Madison. Madison is patient, madison is kind. And then I asked myself Is she those things? Is she being those things? And sometimes the answer is no, girl, and you need to work on it. Um, but you know, when I am like submitted to the spirit, I'm like, yeah, like that those are the things people are getting from me. Um, it's not all the things that I don't know, like you would think you kind of alluded to that, but, like the world would put high value on, it's actually like these. You know things that outlast the superficial and the things that are fading and that are temporary. It's like, oh, some of it's things that you can't even see, you know, just like love and hope and peace. Um, so I love that you mentioned that and that's definitely, you know, what definitely drew me in Um with grant and, and I speak to some of those things, like even in in my book of, just like you know, knowing I think sometimes it's really hard in dating or in relationships is like when you don't have a goal or when you don't know when you're headed. Um, that's where it can be easy to like, settle or to lose sight of, kind of like the vision.

And so having you know your standards or your non-negotiables or the things that you're looking for, um, whatever it may be, have it written down, have it on you know, on your heart, where you know, like this is what I deserve, this is what god calls me um to find in my relationships in life.

And so for me, like I wrote down those, those three things, and I was like I'm not dating somebody until I see these three things you know in his life. And then I had three more things you know before I would consider marrying him where I'm like these three things better be present If I'm going to say yes to somebody and she's to spend the rest of my life, and so having like those things, whatever it may be for you, your non-negotiables, um, you know, some people call it the list or whatever like having those things, um, and I don't mean superficial, like he likes he wears cowboy hats and he, you know, has this accent and has big muscles but like actually important things, um, you know, like how he loves people, how he serves people, how he loves the lord. Um, that was really important for me.

0:46:23 - Stephanie

I love that. I love that. Um Madi, thank you so much for sharing. I, before we go, would you mind praying for the women who are listening?

0:46:32 - Madi

Yes, I would love that. Prayers, prayers, my love language. I love it. I love it. Bring it on, let's do it.

Okay, father, I thank you so much for just who you are and for what you've done. I thank you that you are our Savior, that you are our sustainer and that you are our help in times of trouble. Lord, you are our light in the midst of darkness. I thank you for what you've done for us, lord, that you continue to offer us grace and love and mercy, even when we don't deserve it. And I just pray over every single person listening under the sound of my voice. Lord, I just lift them up to you.

I just pray right now that you would draw near to them, that you would meet them exactly where they're at, but that you would continue to take them higher and higher, lord, that you would continue to make them more and more like you. And I just pray for more of you and less of us, lord. Right now, we just we die to ourself and we just say, lord, we need you, we need more of you, we want more of you. And where we just submit to you, we know that your ways are higher, your ways are better, even when we don't understand, even in the midst of heartache, lord, even in the midst of waiting, lord, even in the midst of broken dreams and dashed hopes, lord, I just pray, lord, that you would be enough, lord, that your love would satisfy, that your love would complete, that we would take all of our longings to you and that in you we would find belonging, in you we would find security, in you we would find hope. And I just pray that you would just produce something so great on the inside of us, lord, and that you would use us in such mighty ways. I thank you for the gifts, the passions, lord, the talents, lord, that you've put inside of each and every single one of us listening right now.

I just pray that you would continue to show them what you have for them, that you not only save them just to take up breath here on this earth, but you save them to do good works in your name, lord, to go and to make a difference and to live a significant life, to make our moments count and make our moments matter. And I just pray, lord, that you would show us what that looks like, lord, and give us the strength, lord, to make you the foundation of our life, lord, to run to you and then from that place, lord, may we have a strong relationship with ourselves. Lord, show us how to love ourselves and see ourselves the way that you see us. Help us to value ourselves and to know our worth in you and to boast only in you. I pray, lord, that you would also just bless our relationships, any relationship, maybe that the listeners that are listening right now, maybe we're in some relationships that we shouldn't be in. I pray that you would give us the strength to be able to get out of the wrong relationships, to be able to walk away and to say no. Lord, give us the wisdom on what to say yes to and what to say no to a closed door and an open door, to be able to discern the difference. I pray, lord, for those, lord, who are in the evaluation stage, trying to figure it out. I pray, lord, that you would just give them the wisdom, lord, to move forward and to make the best next step.

Lord, I just pray for those in waiting and singleness season, Lord. I just pray you would sustain them, lord, and that you would be more than enough. Give them contentment in this season and show them that you have them where you have them for a reason and that there's something you want to do on the inside of them, lord. Thank you in advance, lord, for how you're going to

use all of us. Thank you, lord, that you are a God of abundantly more, that following you, lord, is the best decision we will ever make, and that you give us way more than we deserve and way more than we need. We thank you In the mighty name of Jesus. Amen, amen, thanks, Madi. Thank you, I had so much fun. It did feel like we were just having coffee and hanging out. Yeah, I love it.

0:50:05 - Stephanie

You guys, isn't Madi amazing? Seriously, she's our new best friend, right? I love her and I love her story and I'm so glad you all got to meet her. Now, don't forget that if you ever want to find the links for anything we talk about in our Girls Night episodes, you can always find those over in our show notes. Just head over to girlsnightpodcast.com and you'll find links for everything, including links for Madi, so you can pick up her book and follow along with all the great stuff she's doing.

Friends. That's it for today's episode, but we have so much good stuff ahead this season and, with that in mind, now is the perfect time to make sure you're subscribed. Subscribing to the show is the best way to make sure you never miss an episode. It won't send you an email or anything. It just makes sure your phone downloads the latest episode when a new one's released. And I did want to take a quick second to ask you all a favor If you enjoyed this episode or if you've been a Girls Night listener for a while now, would you take just two quick seconds to leave us a rating and a review on iTunes? Those reviews help out our podcast so much and it really would mean the world to me, so if you take two quick seconds to do that, I'd be so grateful. Friends, thank you so much for joining me for Girls Night, and I'll see you next week.

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