



Some of the girls from Kristin Abbott's Bible study group freeze for a picture while being in the middle of getting a treat Tuesday evening from the kitchen. From left to right, Renae Thornburg, Kristin Abbott, Andrea Zamora, Elena Devora, Tabitha Barnett and Shelby Stevens.

L&T photo/Giseelle Arredondo

By GISEELLE ARREDONDO

• Leader & Times

Kristin Abbott hosted her weekly girls Bible study Tuesday evening at her home, in which more lies were discussed in depth.

The lies studied range from anything conditioned by society, to cute little quotes on Pinterest that sound really good at a glance, and to the contents in the book the group reads, "Lies Young Women Believe."

The main area of focus for the young women this week was beauty and the idea that beautiful girls are worth more.

“Our culture definitely says it’s true,” Natalie Robinson said.

“Conversations about our bodies come up a lot, especially when you are close to your friends – especially with your family, your mom,” Abbott said. “It’s something that we dwell on, even when we don’t necessarily like bashing ourselves, It’s something that we talk about. It’s something that we are very conscious of.

“Either you have to look good or you have to perform to be accepted,” Abbott said. “So if you don’t feel pretty enough, you feel like you have to over perform to be accepted, or if you don’t have talent, you feel like you have to over compensate in the area of beauty. Or sometimes, when one has both, you idolize that person and say, like ‘oh my gosh, you’re so talented and you’re so pretty’ and that’s where we hold the standard.”

Culture teaches women that their identity is found primarily through how they present their physical bodies to the world or in what talents they have to offer, but God’s Word teaches that identity is found in being His daughters, according to Abbott.

“Not on what we do, not on what we look like, and just in being who He says that we are,” she said. “And that sounds great, but is that how we live? No, I don’t think it’s something that I live day to day. That I can just live in acceptance. That I am enough because I don’t have to perform to this level to be loved.”

Natalie Robinson said she always wanted to be comfortable in her own skin and accept who she was before she wore any make-up.

Andrea Zamora said that she struggled more with her inner self rather and just being cautious of the things that she would say in the past and how she would present herself, but she’d slip-up

and apologize. One of her friends finally told her to not pretend and not apologize.

“Like a filter,” Abbott said.

“If I was the person on the outside, the one that is in the inside, I’d combust,” Shelby Stevens said.

“What I always say is you’re your worst critic,” Zamora said.

So what is beauty?

According to truecampaign.org, beauty is a difficult word to define, because even in different languages it has different meanings. In Japanese, beauty is something along the lines of humility. Whereas in Hebrew, beauty is to glow or bloom. And even though the Bible uses the word beauty in different ways, the highest expression of beauty is seen in God. Therefore, beauty is something that creates a sense of worship. It can be safely concluded that to experience true beauty is to live a life that embraces and expresses the beauty and goodness of God.

Tabitha Barnett said that the way she sees it is that one must look at God like an artist. One can’t see Him, therefore, one must look at his masterpieces and creations and go from there.

Society will say that girls need more self esteem or more self confidence, but by dwelling on these issues one is already being selfish. The group agreed that instead of focusing so much on the self, it would be healthier to focus on someone else. Focus on helping others.

Even though the group covers serious issues, the mood in the room is always light.

“I like big Bibles, and I cannot lie,” Kimberly Robinson said. The room roared with laughter.

One of the reasons for the study is “To know truth and then to be able to put it into action,” Abbott said. “I think that having a group meet in a home in a smaller setting, sometimes helps people feel more comfortable to open up, and I love the idea of being able to talk about life with people and not just be a church thing – more of just common life issues together; being able to discuss them and grow together.”