

H E A R T  
S I S T E R S

Becoming the Friend You Want to Have

**NATALIE CHAMBERS SNAPP**

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HEART SISTERS  
BECOMING THE FRIEND YOU WANT TO HAVE

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# A LETTER TO READERS

Hello, Sister.

I can already tell we'll be friends. By picking up this book, you tell me so much about who you are and what you believe.

You care about your relationships with other women. You wonder how to have deeper, more authentic female friendships. And you are more interested in encouraging and supporting other women than you are comparing and competing with other women.

Maybe you've also been wounded by a female friend in the past and your heart is filled with trepidation over the thought of opening it up to new friends. Maybe you're struggling to forgive a friend who has hurt you. Or maybe you wonder if you need to have a difficult conversation with a friend, and if so, what should you say?

Relationships aren't easy, friend. I really wish they were, but they're not. Anytime we invest our hearts, there's a chance they will get hurt. However, hurts from our relationships with women can especially sting. Unfortunately, I know this from experience. Fortunately, I've lived through it and was able to eventually seek and foster healthier female friendships as a result.

I know you can, too.

Sometimes, when we look back in our own lives, we start to see things more clearly. Now that I'm forty-one years old and a follower of Jesus, many of my tangled experiences are much more clear. I'm guessing I'm not alone in this, either. You could probably say the same about your own life, right?

The father role in my life has been a rotating door. I was born through artificial insemination because my father was sterile. In other words, I don't know the identity of my biological father.

I grew up in a small Midwestern town, the daughter of a wonderful mother and, sadly, a severely alcoholic father. My dad surfaced now and then when he was on the wagon; however, he disappeared when he was off the wagon. When I was six years old, my father's alcoholism ended my parents' marriage. My mother did everything she could to provide a normal, healthy childhood for me, and eventually she remarried. A new man stepped into the father's role.

In addition, I was bullied horribly in middle school and high school and experienced "mean girl" behavior in college. Admittedly, sometimes I was a *victim* of mean girls and sometimes I was the mean girl. I wish this weren't true, but I have to be real with you—I was.

A few years after college graduation, I married my college sweetheart. We settled into newlywed life and things were good—or so I thought. Six months after our wedding, our marriage started to crumble. We sought help and began to heal, but then a year later, old problems resurfaced and showed no signs of stopping.

To say I was devastated is putting it mildly. It didn't help that during the time when I moved out of the home we shared, my

father's health began to fail. He died two months after I filed for divorce.

A more detailed account of my story can be found on my blog, but these two events, in combination with my other life experiences, brought me to my knees—literally.

I decided to train for a half marathon, which is hilarious because I had never run even a mile prior to this decision. Right before one of those runs, I grabbed the Michael W. Smith CD my aunt had given me and popped it in my Discman. (Can you believe we used to run with CD players on our arms?) I will never forget that run, that vehicle God placed on my heart because He knew it was the only way I would be alone with my thoughts. As I listened to so many beautiful songs about Jesus, I began to wonder.

I started to meet with a very patient and loving woman from an organization called Priority Associates. She answered my hard questions and presented the gospel to me for the first time. Turns out, what I thought was the end of my rope was actually just the beautiful beginning.

Two years later, I met a man who had also traveled a broken road. We fell in love, got married, had three children within four years, and moved to a new community. We've had our share of struggles, but through it all, our love for Jesus sustains us and motivates us to keep showing up each day.

During those sometimes lonely days of my childhood, I always wanted to have a real-life sister. We would play with dolls, love pink, wear sparkles in our hair, and tell late-night secrets. I know, Gender Stereotype Central.

But God didn't plan that for me.

He did, however, plan for me to have sisters of the heart.

A LETTER TO READERS

Heart Sisters who didn't grow up with me but will stand up with me no matter what. Heart Sisters who know my most horrible qualities and love me anyway. Heart Sisters who aren't related to me by blood but instead by the sisterly bond entwined between our hearts.

Heart Sisters are just as strong as—and in some cases even stronger than—blood sisters. May we find them and hold on to them always. I know you will, friend.

Love,  
Natalie Snapp

# INTRODUCTION

**Y**ou should probably know that I'm not a psychologist, and I haven't been to seminary. I don't have any capital letters following my last name to denote an advanced degree; in fact, I've only completed four years of college finished far longer ago than I care to admit.

However, perhaps Mark Twain said it best when he stated, "A man who carries a cat by the tail learns something he can learn no other way."

I've carried the cat by the tail. Several times. I'm a slow learner, sisters.

While I may not have an official pedigree when it comes to the psychology of women, I am one. Before then, I was a girl, so the female heart is one I've been around for as long as I can remember. My guess is if you are reading this, you know the female heart well, too.

Five years ago, God called me to serve on a leadership team of a ministry consisting of roughly seventy-five women. Two years later, He called me to take the reins and lead it.

During this time, there were definitely moments in which I carried the cat by the tail. However, toward the end of my time

as the leader of this group, I had learned how to gently pick up the cat and lean her against my chest. I'm certainly not Jesus, and I still make mistakes in my relationships; however, I've learned a thing or two since those days when I went for the tail.

Fortunately, I was able to walk through several conflicts within one year; though admittedly, it was one of the most difficult years of my life. While I wouldn't choose to go back and do it all over again, I am beyond thankful for the pruning He did in me during this time, and I now see there was no other way to get there.

Nothing worth having is ever easy, and my experience with female relationships and friendships is no different.

There I sat with tears streaming down my face on a cold, winter morning in January. I was in yet another conflict with someone I thought was a friend. I pleaded with God to make it all stop, to make the hurt I kept experiencing from other women just go away. I told God I would never, ever interact with women again and I would steer clear of female friends because I just wasn't very good at this friendship thing. I told myself my husband was enough, and I wouldn't need female friendships because I planned to lose myself in raising my children. I would go it alone because it was simply just too painful to have girlfriends.

But deep down, I knew I needed girlfriends. My husband can't, and shouldn't be expected to, fill the holes only girlfriends can fill.

Many tears were shed as I struggled to repair my broken heart—and the heartbreak I inflicted on others.

I am one imperfect woman, sisters, but oh, how I've learned through His mercy and grace.

## INTRODUCTION

Perhaps you are or have been like me on that cold, January morning. Perhaps you've been wounded by a woman or two and you have had enough. Perhaps you just don't think it's worth it so you've fooled yourself into believing your spouse and children are enough.

I don't write this book from a position of "I've got all the answers" or to share a story with you only to have you say, "Well, good for you! But what about me?" I write this book because I'm right there with you—not spouting off about how much I know but instead walking right next to you, experiencing the same relational difficulties that make those of us who choose to follow Jesus question if we really do or not.

In case you're wondering . . . I did interact with women again. I didn't hole myself up at home and vow to have every emotional need met by my husband and my children (you're welcome, honey). Deep down, I knew God didn't really want me to live without other women in my life, so in due time, I cautiously stuck my toes into the waters of friendship again.

It was the fourth best decision I ever made—just behind following Jesus, marrying Jason, and birthing my three babies. Today, my Heart Sisters help me remember to live by truth, take my kids when I need to go to a doctor's appointment, and encourage me to keep going when I want to stop.

And to think . . . I didn't believe I would ever have close friendships.

My prayer is that the pages of this book will encourage you to work hard for the other women around you. To love them. To cry and laugh and genuinely encourage one another instead of being threatened by the "fleshy" feelings of insecurity, jealousy, or comparison.

Although those emotions are very human and a struggle for most of us at some point in our lives, they are most certainly not from God and He doesn't want you to be held in bondage by any of it. Someone has to be the one to wave the white flag. Let that peace-seeker be you.

On that note, there's a common misconception about peacemakers that is just plain not true. They are thought to be doormats; people who allow their own needs to take the back burner and lie dormant so they can remain conflict-free. However, in reality, peacemakers are those who sense when something is wrong and strive to honor God through healthy conflict resolution. Peacemakers are peace seekers, not peace stealers!

Walking through conflict in a way that honors God is crucial to Heart Sister relationships because so often we are tempted to run from the relationship instead of working through the hard stuff. But did you know that working through the hard stuff can actually make your friendship even stronger? Chapter 4 introduces The P.E.G. System, which will teach you when and how to **P**ray, **E**xamine, and **G**o talk to a friend when a conflict comes up.

I hope you will find that loving the women around you will give you a taste of true freedom—freedom to accept without condition, freedom to truly love your neighbor as yourself, and freedom to live at peace with those around you.

While this book is focused on how women relate to other women, I think you'll find much of what we discuss is applicable to all relationships—male and female, friendship and familial, and even parent and child.

It's no accident you've picked up this book. There is something in here He wants you to read to either reassure you or

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prune you or both. The Refiner's Fire is hot, but the results are worth enduring the heat.

Know that I am praying for you as you journey through this, sister. May you experience His peace, holy conviction, and truth as you read these pages.



## CHAPTER ONE

# BUT DO WE REALLY *NEED* GIRLFRIENDS?

*The glory of friendship is not the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile nor the joy of companionship; it is the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when he discovers that someone else believes in him and is willing to trust him.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

I've always wanted to have a sister. For as long as I can remember, I longingly watched the girls who had built-in playmates to share giggles with in the middle of the night and inside jokes about Uncle Harry at family reunions. As an only child, I would have taken a brother as well, but a sister? Oh, the desire of my heart was strong. In fact, I still find myself feeling like an outsider looking in to blood-sister relationships during those moments when I forget I do indeed have sisters—though not by blood.

Through His grace, God granted me those sisters years later. No, we don't have a shared childhood and we don't have inside jokes during family reunions. However, we do have heart

connections that only sisters can have, and the love I possess for these women rivals the love I have for my husband and children. You mess with one of my sisters and the pit bull of my usually even-keeled self starts to smack its jowls.

After becoming a follower of Christ when I was twenty-seven years old, I quickly put the pieces together that it is He who creates us as women to be relational beings. Listen, I love my husband something fierce, but let's face it—there are some things the men in our lives are just not going to understand. And who are we kidding? They don't want to understand everything.

During our newlywed years, I told my husband more than he ever wanted to hear. I gave him the whole book when what he really wanted was the summary on the back cover. I lost him early and found myself offended when he only listened to 70 percent of the story because I wanted 100 percent of his attention. Similarly, my husband understands why our two young sons, who are fifteen months apart, have the desire to catapult themselves off the top bunk of their beds because he once was a young boy who wanted to do the same thing. He is; therefore, he knows. Meanwhile, my daughter and I look on, befuddled yet accepting that we'll never quite understand, while at times the boys look at us in the same way.

Now, let's change the scenario to one of my closest friends and me in a booth at our favorite Mexican joint munching on chips and salsa and talking over the same situation I shared with my husband. Invariably, my friend wants to hear more of the story. She might ask guiding questions or offer solutions or points to ponder from a female perspective because women typically get other women. This doesn't mean our husbands don't "get" us—there's just a different level of understanding

between two women who both know what it's like to have lost yourself amid the diapers and feedings or the carpooling or the pressure to balance it all. Don't get me wrong—our husbands can also be incredibly insightful and sensitive to our thoughts and feelings. I'm in no way bashing the male species.

However, the truth of the matter is we need other women in our tribe. We need to lean on one another and hold each other up when it feels like we can't walk. We need someone to lovingly tell us we should apologize to our spouses when we're in the wrong. We need someone to speak up if the dark brown lipstick makes us look like a corpse. Simply put, God knew we would need all kinds of relationships to fulfill the desire He placed in each of our hearts to live in community.

When we expect our husbands, or any man for that matter, to fulfill all of our relational needs, we are placing an enormous amount of pressure upon his shoulders. If we keep expecting him to fulfill the role of girlfriend, husband, and in some cases, God, we are setting that man up for failure. It's just not realistic nor is it fair to expect him to be able to meet every one of those needs. (And if you have the courage to read the former sentence out loud to your husband, tell him I said "you're welcome.")

So let's consult the Bible and dig around a bit, shall we? Evidence of women-as-relaters is found throughout the Bible beginning with the creation of Eve. God created Adam but soon realized there was "no suitable helper" (Genesis 2:20). After placing Adam in a deep sleep, God created Eve from one of Adam's ribs and he awoke to find the bone of his bone and the flesh of his flesh. No small feat, and of course, he suddenly had the suitable helper he needed. If only it were always so simple, eh?

Eve was created to commune with Adam. The mother of us all was made from his very being to interact and relate to Adam, the first man on the planet. It's a good thing she seemed to like him—she didn't have much else of a choice! Besides this, she became his "help meet" (Genesis 2:20 KJV) and apparently did so pretty effectively since eventually Cain and Abel were born. There might have been a little dysfunction since Cain eventually killed Abel, but then we can rest assured knowing that even the first family on earth had a little baggage.

There's no way around it, sisters. We are who we are who we are. We can't expect the cat to start barking. We are relationship seekers and we were created to be so.

Ruth refused to leave Naomi. Mary immediately sought Elizabeth after learning she was carrying the Christ child. Esther used her relational understanding to stop the destruction of the Hebrews. The list continues but, suffice it to say, there are several examples of women as relaters throughout the Bible.

However, it's not just the Bible that demonstrates the importance of women as relaters. In a landmark study from UCLA roughly ten years ago, it was discovered that when women feel stressed, their brains release a hormone called oxytocin.<sup>1</sup> Oxytocin makes women want to surround themselves with other women, and this releases even more oxytocin, which has a relaxing effect and makes us think everything might be all right after all.

Left over from a time when humans had to be more aware of their surroundings in order to live, the fight-or-flight response describes our natural inclination to flee the scene if we feel threatened. However, the research that coined this phrase was conducted mostly on men. The same UCLA study referenced

above found that women and men actually respond to stress differently. (Which, I might add, I didn't need an official study to know. Throat clear.)

In her book *The Tending Instinct*, Shelley E. Taylor discovered that when women feel stressed, they "tend and befriend."<sup>2</sup> In other words, after a tough day, we like to spend the evening tending to our children and befriending our sisters around us. Let the oxytocin gates open and may the flooding begin, I say. The more oxytocin released, the calmer we feel. Hook me up to an intravenous drip, please.

Our bodies even respond *biologically* when we spend time with girlfriends, thus explaining why a night out with the girls now and then is essential to our sanity. Likely due to the oxytocin release, several studies have found social relationships are helping us to live longer, too. Those who have a strong friendship network find themselves with lowered cholesterol, heart rate, and blood pressure. Harvard University is even in on this as well—in their well-respected *Nurses' Health Study*, they discovered that a woman without a network of friends posed a risk to her health that was comparable to smoking or carrying around extra weight.<sup>3</sup> Sobering facts indeed. Girlfriends are a lifeline we cannot afford to live without.

The Bible not only includes several examples of women as strong and pivotal relational beings but also showcases a few women who chose not to live in such a sisterly manner as well. Leah and Rachel, who were blood sisters nonetheless, lived in a state of constant jealousy and rivalry with one another. Jacob was tricked into marrying Leah, a woman he found unattractive but who was so fertile she bore him six sons and one daughter. Yet Jacob didn't love her in the way he loved her sister, Rachel.

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*Looking sideways at what others have instead of looking up to God and thanking Him for what He's already given you never leads to anything good.*

It was Rachel he wanted all along because she was a knockout of a woman, but get this—she was infertile. In fact, Rachel was so bent on bearing sons for Jacob she offered up her maidservant, Bilhah, who bore him two sons. No wonder the twelve tribes of Israel came from Jacob's lineage—he was one prolific breeder.

Some scholars believe that Leah's "weak eyes" refer to the fact they were likely crossed or disfigured in some way. Though her beauty may not have won her the Miss Israel title, she possessed the good eggs that conceived several sons, which eventually led to six of the tribes of Israel. Rachel wanted nothing more than to bear Jacob sons, and Leah wanted nothing more than to obtain Jacob's love. They both desperately wanted what the other possessed. Looking sideways at what others have instead of looking up to God and thanking Him for what He's already given you never leads to anything good. The story of Jacob's wives was the perfect storm—and to think some people believe the Bible is an outdated history book. This trio's story is juicier than any episode of *Days of Our Lives* I've ever seen; not to mention their dilemma is one that continues among women today.

Another example of strife between women in the Bible is Sarai and Hagar. Like Rachel, Sarai (later renamed Sarah) was unable to conceive a child with her husband, Abram (later renamed Abraham). Also like Rachel, she offered up her maidservant, Hagar, to Abram, who lay with her and conceived a

son. Soon after, Hagar began to resent Sarai, and Sarai quickly blamed Abram for putting her in this position. (Can you just picture a befuddled Abram trying to figure this one out?) Evidently, he was ready to wash his hands of this situation as he gave Sarai permission to do as she liked with her maidservant. Sarai's solution was to simply be so horrible to Hagar that the only thing the poor maidservant could do to alleviate this tense situation was to flee her mistress.

And flee she did. Hagar ran, confused and alone and desperate to know what God's plan was for her. God spoke to Hagar while she was retrieving water at a well during her journey, and after instructing her to go back to Sarai with the promise He would give Hagar too many descendents to count, He said:

*You are now with child  
and you will have a son.  
You shall name him Ishmael,  
for the LORD has heard of your misery.*

*He will be a wild donkey of a man;  
his hand will be against everyone  
and everyone's hand against him,  
and he will live in hostility  
toward all his brothers.  
(Genesis 16:11-12)*

Ishmael later became the patriarch of Islam. The repercussions of a fallen female relationship know no boundaries, and its impact can go further than you ever imagined. I'm pretty sure Sarai had no idea of the generational impact her impatience with God's timing would produce.

And, yes, I know there are women who have been horribly wounded by other women. I understand why some women desire to just be left alone or count only men among their friends. One of my readers, who we'll call Stephanie, confided in me she's only recently had girlfriends because she was betrayed and deeply hurt by a friend while in college. This particular friend shared personal information about Stephanie with others—information that had been shared in confidence and was tender to Stephanie's heart. Doesn't this just make you think of the phrase "with friends like these who needs enemies?"

Stephanie retreated from female relationships and became very selective of whom she would give a glimpse into her vulnerabilities. She became a "surface friend" to many but didn't have any friends who truly knew her heart. Stephanie found women to be catty and petty and preferred the company of men.

However, as we discussed earlier, men are equipped to only go so far into the heart of a woman because at the end of the day, they're not women. Being just one of the guys might work for a little while, but eventually, there are going to be situations where a female heart will desire friendship with other women. Our spouses can't be expected to be our sisters. Luckily, Stephanie was able to work through this past hurt, and today has been rewarded with true Heart Sisters who love her and can completely be trusted.

It doesn't help that our culture seems to glorify and profit from catty behavior either. The whole "Real Housewives of Wherever" series is fraught with behavior between women that actually encourages us to live in strife with one another. In fact, the cattier and more disrespectful the behavior among the

women on these types of programs, the higher the network ratings. It's true that a story of conflict naturally piques our interest as those disabled by the flesh, but what would happen if we just simply refused to watch shows like "The Real Housewives of Wherever"?

As followers of Jesus, it's our responsibility to monitor what we allow to enter our hearts. If we do indulge in a guilty pleasure, balancing it out with what is true, noble, pure, and just will keep our hearts centered on God. Television, books, magazines, and websites impact us more than we know. It's our job to guard our hearts *above all else*, and this includes monitoring what we allow into our souls. Caring is always better than catty.

If we waste our time being catty instead of caring, we are extinguishing the light the Holy Spirit illuminates within us. While teaching the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, Jesus talked to the crowd around Him about being the salt and the light. He often taught in parables, stories told with a simple lesson or moral. These intentional parables always had a specific focus, and Jesus knew the direction He was heading and the lessons He wanted His listeners to glean. I admit to being a bit befuddled when I first read about the salt and the light because come on . . . I can purchase salt in a cylinder at my local grocery store for about a dollar. How valuable is that?

Turns out, very. In ancient times, salt was thought to be extremely rare and quite valuable. It was often used as currency, was the culprit of a few conflicts, and according to Homer, was

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*If we waste our time being catty instead of caring, we are extinguishing the light the Holy Spirit illuminates within us.*

a “divine substance.”<sup>4</sup> Salt was set apart. Precious. Not to mention there are more uses for salt than just seasoning our food or melting the ice on our roads. In fact, the salt industry claims fourteen thousand different uses for these small pieces of the only consumable rock in existence.<sup>5</sup> Salt can be used to remove stains from clothing, brighten up the colors of vegetables, seal cracks, extinguish grease fires, and kill poison ivy, to name a few.

In other words, salt is not only precious and valuable. It’s useful. And we’re called to be the “salt and the light”—which means we are precious, valuable, and useful.

Salt also naturally brings out better flavor in what we eat and preserves food from spoiling; therefore, we are to bring out the better flavor in others and keep them from spoiling. In this way, we are useful to God. In the NET Bible, Jesus tells us, “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its flavor, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled on by people” (Matthew 5:13). Is it just me or does this make you a little concerned about losing your flavor? And yes, there are days in which I feel like I’ve lost my flavor. There are certainly moments when I feel as if God might want to throw me out. Luckily, God’s grace covers those less-than-favorable moments.

So we’re called to be the salt, which means we are to be set apart. We’re precious, valuable, and useful. But we’re also called to be the light. Like salt, there is a certain power in light we so often take for granted. Light allows us to function after the sun goes down. It makes scary moments feel not as frightening when it’s turned on. It produces a comforting glow. Figuratively, light illuminates the secrets we want to keep in the

darkness, so the enemy can't prowl around them anymore. Light is powerful, illuminating, reduces fear, and encourages truth.

It's a bit of a tall order, sisters. If we're called to be the salt and the light, then we're asked to be set apart, precious, valuable, useful, powerful, illuminating, fear-reducing, and truth-seeking. As Jesus shares, "You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill cannot be hidden. People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16 NET).

Let your light shine, sisters. Don't dim it because of fear or because you're worried about someone else's insecurity or are too worried about what others will think of you. Allowing your light to shine is a true example of loving your neighbor as yourself. Loving the women in your life through your sincere and loving light is what Jesus asks us to do. Shine bright.

Now that we've reviewed this background a bit, here's where guarding our hearts is relevant: the eyes are the lamp of the body. We draw light into ourselves through our eyes, and the light that shines out to the world comes from the same place. Therefore, what we allow our eyes, or our lamps, to see is going to affect the kind of light that illuminates those around us—and usually without us even realizing it's happened. What goes in certainly does come out, and unfortunately, I know this from experience.

Years ago, I spent a few months only reading *People* magazine and the latest bestsellers. I would not have dreamed of missing the weekly episode of *The Bachelor*, and I wasn't keeping up with my typical daily reading of the Bible. Soon, I found myself thinking catty thoughts about other women.

Camaraderie was replaced by competition as I began to look at the exterior instead of the heart. I even began to compare my very boring life to those in magazines, books, and television. So I can't help wondering what I am subconsciously illuminating to the world around me if I watch television shows that encourage cattiness among women. How does the media influence how I treat women in my sphere of influence?

Recently, I've been drawn to the book of Matthew, and since I'm using a relatively new translation called The Voice in conjunction with the New International Version, I am discovering connections between Scriptures I haven't seen in the past. In The Voice translation, Matthew 7:13-14 tells us

*there are two paths before you;  
you may take only one path. One  
doorway is narrow. And one door  
is wide. Go through the narrow  
door. For the wide door leads to  
a wide path, and the wide path  
is broad; the wide, broad path is  
easy, and the wide, broad, easy  
path has many, many people  
on it; but the wide, broad, easy,  
crowded path leads to death.  
The narrow door leads to a nar-  
row road that in turn leads to life.  
It is hard to find that road. Not  
many people manage it.*

Not many people manage it because it's far easier to walk the wide path the world so freely offers. However, if we choose

to take the narrow path and learn about Jesus, the narrow is suddenly more enticing. I'm not suggesting that trials and heartbreak are suddenly erased once we start to walk the narrow path, but as a hammer helps us pound nails into a board, the narrow path gives us the tools we need to stay on the narrow path. Shoot your arrow toward the narrow path and hide from the wide.

Matthew 22:37-40 tells us that the first and greatest commandment is to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds. The second is to simply love your neighbor as yourself. Every single teaching in the New Testament is based on these two—one called the "Great Commandment" and the other the "Great Commission." There's something about that word "commandment" that makes me think we should probably just do it. Likewise, when we commission someone, we hire that person. We've been hired by God to do the specific job of loving others as ourselves. Jesus didn't suggest we choose to follow these two principles, and He didn't ask if we wanted to do so. He commanded and commissioned it. He's not messing around with these two.

To shoot our arrow toward the narrow path, we need to choose to love God above all else and then choose to love those around us as ourselves. Choosing to love the women around us and desire good for them is an example of loving our neighbors as ourselves. We rejoice when they rejoice and we weep when they weep (Romans 12:15).

We are all broken. Every last one of us. Each of us has days in which we are ministering to others and days when we are being ministered to. He wants us to be in the game. He needs us to show up and be the hands and feet of His son. It's our job.

What could happen if we started a revolution of love, support, and sisterhood among women? How much freedom would we feel if we gave each other the benefit of the doubt and chose relationship instead of conflict? Would our hearts break less if we chose to work through those conflicts in humility instead of running away and adding more layers to the scars? Would we fight the inappropriate media that stereotypes us as catty and against one another and force it to stop? Would extra-marital affairs even exist if women agreed to stand together as sisters? The power we have as women is staggering.

We need someone to share in our laughter. Sometimes we need a good cry with a sister by our side. Other times, we need her to carry us because we simply don't think we can put one foot in front of the other on our own. We need Heart Sisters.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *Why do you feel like you need girlfriends? Journal or share in a group.*
2. *What makes a good friend?*
3. *Have you ever had a conversation with your significant other or any male figure in your life and realized that it might be best to be saved for female ears? Why do you think this happens?*
4. *Have you ever found yourself in a position of expecting your significant other to be your everything? Why might this be difficult for him or her? On the other hand, have you ever felt as if someone wanted you to be his or her everything? If so, how did it make you feel?*
5. *Which example of friendship from the Bible resonates with you the most? Why?*