

Ladies, Are You a Yo-Yo?

All right, ladies! This one's for you.

Over the years, as I have ministered to women young and old, I've had the opportunity to teach them something I learned as a 20-year-old young lady. Each time I share my story and the principle, I notice that the ladies are often the ones convicted and the guys are all backing me up on this one! This was not a lesson I enjoyed learning, but once I got it, it changed my life forever and every single relationship I had.

I had a very difficult time as a child and even more so as a young teen. Once God got a hold of my life, He began to heal, restore and deal with the baggage and character flaws. I'd have to say part of this lesson is baggage and part of it is plain old "inheritance" from Adam and Eve. (Thanks a lot, Eve.)

It all started for me when my husband and I began to date. We met at church, and he had been closely connected to the godly family that I lived with for over 20 years. He had grown up believing in Jesus and trying to serve the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind and strength. He had a great job as an architect and was dependable.

He was fun to be around, made me laugh and was very kind-hearted. We would go out with friends and have a good time, and we always had fun together. Sometimes I would be super easy to be around. Other times, it was like I was walled off and no one could get close.

You know what I'm talking about, ladies. You feel good about who you are, confident, happy and beautiful, so you let people close to you. You welcome them with open arms and believe the best about them.

Other times you don't. You feel bad or something petty happens

to you, and you close off. In those times, nobody gets close. You clam up. You start to distrust, get critical and start looking for faults in others to justify that you are just not quite sure about them. Well, that was me!

One day my husband and I, who were dating at the time, were on our way back from shopping. For some reason, I don't remember why, I was really closed off that day and distant. As we rode along in his truck, he finally decided to confront me.

He said, "You know, Autumn, I'm really getting tired of you treating me like a yo-yo!"

At that, I scoffed and turned away from him to face the window. He was completely off-base in my mind, and I wanted him to hurry up and get me home. Once there, I jumped out of his truck and hurried inside without saying much of a goodbye. He drove off, and I'm sure he wondered if we had just ended something that had just begun.

Later that evening, I was in the kitchen helping clean up after dinner and the godly woman who is like a mother to me was asking how my date went. I began to tell her how it went, and then I started to tell her about what he said. I was really building to the climax of the story and fully expected her to be as offended as I was at what he said.

As the words "and he said I'm tired of you treating me like a yo-yo" came out of my mouth, I was so confident that she would back me up, but she didn't. Without a moment of hesitation, the word "yo-yo" still resonating in the air, she said, "Oh, Autumn! You treat everyone that way."

She said it with a smile on her face and so matter of fact, but it felt like she had just shoved a knife in my heart. Oh! Ouch! That really hurt to hear. I was being confronted by the Holy Spirit now! What am I going to do?

As I stood there in the kitchen, reeling from the words, I

made a quick decision in my heart: I want this guy I'm dating in my life. I had no grounds for keeping him at a distance or getting rid of him. From that moment forward, God began to walk me through how to treat people and how to stop treating everyone like a yo-yo.

I'd like to say it was an overnight change, but it wasn't. For my future husband, it was an overnight change, but for everyone else it was a process. I had to get the help of the Holy Spirit to stop doing something I had grown so accustomed to doing. Eek! That was not easy. Little by little, I began to be steadier with people, and when I got tempted to pull back or close off, I wouldn't let myself.

I have way more that I need to share, but for now here is where the bottom line is:

Jesus said in Matthew 7:17, "Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit."

This is what settled it for me. I couldn't find bad fruit. This guy I was dating was a "good tree." Therefore, I could afford to let him close and be in my life. Would he make mistakes and not do everything right or perfect? Oh yeah, but the produce of his life was good, and therefore I wanted him in my life.

Make up your minds, ladies! No matter who it is, make up your minds and stick with it. The produce of your relationships will be so much better, and you will be a stable person that people want to be around. People won't be "on guard" around you because they will know you are always going to be the same with them as well.

*Adapted from A Modern Voice blog. Blogger and speaker **Autumn Darden** inspires women to be all they can be for God. As a graduate of World Revival School of Ministry, worship leader*

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