

CRU at UNC

JOSH AND ERIN SMITH

UNC-CHAPEL HILL

APRIL 2017



2017 WBR

Two weekends ago was our annual Women's Beach Retreat (WBR). We were thrilled to have 160 girls join us! Seniors do many of the talks and I got to coach one of them, Caroline, this year as she prepared. Her experience (in her own words)...

"I was really excited to be asked to talk about fear of the Lord at WBR because fear of the Lord is something that I knew my heart needed to understand more deeply. Through this opportunity to learn about this topic, I was brought back to the simple yet profound truth that God who is high above us has chosen to make Himself known to us – and the only appropriate response to this reality is to eagerly draw near to Him. I was incredibly humbled and encouraged to experience the Lord's hand in helping me speak clearly and confidently that weekend."

One of the most impactful parts about this weekend is the environment of vulnerability that is cultivated. Seniors did a great job sharing very honestly about the broken parts of their lives (perfectionism, body image, sexual sin, emotional and physical abuse were shared among others). It was very powerful to hear how the Lord was working the very difficult parts of these girls' stories to bring about restoration and show his power. A senior in my Bible study, Stuartt, shared her story. Here is part of it:

"When I was 9 years old, I was diagnosed with cancer. The doctors were unsure of how I was alive because the tumor had taken over my abdomen, and I had tumors all over my lungs. I went through a lot during that time, and I have a lot of ramifications because of the cancer to this day. I naively thought nothing bad would ever happen again after that. But when I was a Senior in high school, my mom (who is an alcoholic) became emotionally and verbally abusive. I was very depressed my entire senior year of high school because of it. I thought about hurting myself multiple times, but I heard the Holy Spirit tell me (every time I thought about it) that I was too special and too precious. Since coming to college I've realized He has groomed me and given me trials and tribulations that made me want to be a nurse (my major now!) and that though it all he has had a greater purpose. When I look back on my life now, there is not a single moment where I cannot see the Lord and His hand in my life, even in those dark times."

Pray for the Smiths!

- Pray for girls to bring sin and struggles into the light as a result of WBR.
- Pray for significant conversations as we follow up with girls from WBR, as well.
- Pray for Josh as he continues to prepare for Charleston summer mission. Pray there would be an environment of students and staff being cared for and pointed to Jesus more deeply during our time there.
- Pray for UNC seniors who will be finishing up college in the next few weeks. Pray they would transition well and walk closely with Christ after college. (Seeing our seniors leave is always one of the hardest parts of staff life!)

Thank you for your partnership with us. We are so grateful for each of you!

