

3-D Review

Song/Video: "I Kissed a Girl"



by Katy Perry

Background/summary: This is the first single release off 23-year-old rising star Katy Perry's debut album, *One of the Boys*. Born Katheryn Hudson, she grew up in a Christian home where both of her parents were conservative pastors. She released a Christian album under her real name in 2001. Claiming she was not a good Christian girl during her adolescence, she is pursuing her music career with a new name, new sound, and a new message/worldview. The single was pre-released on April 29, 2008, and quickly rose on the charts. The full album debuted on June 17, 2008. Perry has been dubbed "the next big thing" by *Blender* magazine, and the "one to watch" by *Teen People*.

Discover: What is the message/worldview?

- The video for this catchy and musically formulaic pop song opens with a quick image of Perry lying seductively in bed. Images continue to flash across the screen quickly for the video's duration, showing Perry and numerous other scantily lingerie-clad girls caressing themselves and flirting seductively with the camera while in close proximity to each other.
- While the song's visual content serves almost as a soft-porn teaser that is sure to be a draw for sexually-curious young male viewers, the song's title and lyrical content tell Perry's story of kissing another girl. This is really a video for young girls.
- In the song, Perry says she didn't plan or intend the kiss. Rather, with a "drink in hand" she lost her discretion and satisfied her curiosity over another girl that had caught her attention.
- After the kiss, she says, "I kissed a girl and I liked it/The taste of her cherry chapstick/I kissed a girl just to try it."
- As she processes her response to the kiss, she describes how it felt both "so wrong" and "so right." Still, this "don't mean I'm in love tonight."
- The random and boundary-less nature of sexual experimentation in today's culture is captured in the fact that Perry says she doesn't even know the girl's name, and that the girl is her "experimental game."
- Perry goes on to justify the kiss by describing "us girls" in purely physical terms as "so magical, soft skin, red lips, so kissable, hard to resist so touchable, too good to deny it, ain't no big deal, it's innocent."
- As the video draws to a close Perry says, "I hope my boyfriend don't mind it." The camera draws back and Perry is seen sleeping in bed next to her boyfriend. As she opens her eyes she realizes she's been dreaming, but the smile on her face as she rests her head back on her pillow indicates that she enjoyed the dream.

Discern: How does it stand in light of the biblical message/worldview?

- The video clearly depicts a current cultural reality related to our fallenness as human beings, particularly how the fall affects our God-given sexuality. The Scriptures tell us that God made all things and pronounced them all "good." In Genesis 3:6 all things are polluted by sin. "I Kissed a Girl" offers lyrical and visual evidence of this brokenness and how it is being uniquely embraced, expressed, and celebrated in today's youth culture through distortions of sexuality.
- God's clear plan for celebrating and experiencing our sexuality in all its glorious fullness invites us into exercising that gift in the context of a committed, life-long, heterosexual marriage. Fornication, adultery, and homosexuality are wrong.
- We all make decisions based on some authority. In this case, Perry opts out of making behavioral choices based on God's plan as revealed in His Word, instead choosing a personal, feeling-based ethic. She does what she does based solely on feeling and attraction, thereby justifying any of the choices she makes. The Scriptures call us to make our choices and live our lives according to the revealed will of God and to His glory, not our own satisfaction.
- Women are depicted as objects. The Scriptures teach that God looks on the heart, not on outward appearance. In addition, we are to find our identity in who we are in Christ. Not on what we look like on the outside.

Decide: What do I do with it?

- Because it mirrors our culture, "I Kissed a Girl" offers those called to love and lead kids an eye-opening glimpse into several rapidly developing mainstream cultural realities. Homosexuality is no longer stigmatized, but is now accepted and celebrated as normal. Feelings are the guide for life. Girls are taught to assume the role of objectified boy toys. Our teenage boys increasingly enjoy watching girl-on-girl sexual activity. Our teenage girls – even those void of lesbian leanings or feelings – are engaging in what we might call "experimental homosexuality." While it's not pretty, these are realities that we must recognize and understand if we hope to address them.
- Because it serves to direct young viewers and listeners, "I Kissed a Girl" is more than a song kids will listen to. It actually serves as a map to life, guiding impressionable kids into accepting and practicing the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are depicted and promoted in the song. This includes a postmodern ethical relativism, and homosexuality.
- The song and video should be played for parents and youth workers. Use it to spark discussion on evolving values, attitudes, and behaviors, along with how to bring the light of God's Word to bear on those realities in our day to day living with and ministering to kids.
- Since Katy Perry and her music are finding their places in the collective consciousness of today's youth culture, she and her music are realities that we can't ignore. Kids are seeing and hearing the music of Katy Perry. We suggest that after securing parental permission, youth workers view the video and deconstruct its message with their middle school and high school students. The exercise will not only offer opportunities to bring the light of God's Word to bear on the song's faulty messages, but will serve to teach kids how to think Biblically and Christianly about their media choices.
- Katy Perry's own personal story and transformation can be used to spark a discussion on the true nature of being a Christ-follower, how to integrate faith into all of life, and how to guard ourselves from falling prey to dominant cultural values that oppose the way and will of God.

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