



The Lost Art of True Beauty: The Set-Apart Girl's Guide to Feminine Grace

Leslie Ludy

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Sensuality equals beauty—that's what today's young women are learning from our sex-obsessed society. Millions of 20somethings are caught up in trying to look like fashion models, movie stars, or the hottest new pop singer and end up plagued by insecurity, eating disorders, and sexual promiscuity.

Bestselling author and speaker Leslie Ludy (*Set-Apart Femininity* and *Authentic Beauty*) shares a different vision for feminine loveliness as God intended it to be—the breathtaking radiance of a young woman who has been transformed by Christ from the inside out. With candid personal stories, practical advice, and inspiration, Leslie leads young women on a life-changing journey to become women of feminine grace, beauty, and enduring style.

Leslie inspires girls toward inner changes but also talks about practical social grace and manners, how to dress beautifully, and even how to create a warm and lovely environment in the home. Clearly, true beauty is more than skin deep.

The Lost Art of True Beauty: The Set-Apart Girl's Guide to Feminine Grace Details

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Hannah says

This was an amazing book! :) I definitely want to read more of Leslie Ludy's books. I think every girl should read this.

Erika says

This book has made a wonderful impact on me. It really describes the woman I want to be. Even though it is designed for girls or young adults, it is still applicable for women of all ages! There are beautiful lessons about womanhood, all derived from Scripture. This book is very Jesus-centered, which is hit or miss with some people. The only reason I did not give it 5 stars was that at some points in the book the author seemed to put herself on a pedestal, even if she (the author) didn't mean to. I could certainly see how those points of the narrative would be a turn off for some readers.

Amanda says

Leslie Ludy is like the big sister who has walked the path before you and wants to warn you of all the dangers and roadblocks ahead, while encouraging and cheering you on with each step you take. She tackles a lot of the problems and pitfalls young women face in our generation and she does it with grace and class and a genuine desire for us to be all the Lord has called and created us to be. Her love and fire for Christ is evident in her writing and is a real inspiration to the reader. With great quotes and testimonies sprinkled throughout you will get a glimpse of those who found a beauty that doesn't fade but shines brightly even after they are gone.

This book is about beauty but not the kind to be gained by mortal means that is promised to fade with time. It is about a lasting, eternal beauty that glows from the inside out when you take your eyes off yourself and fix them on Christ. In a generation of superficial, look-at-me, sex appeal or the lazy, I-can't-be-bothered, go-to-school-in-my-pajamas look, it is no wonder true beauty is a lost art. But Leslie encourages you to allow God to be the beauty the world sees when they look at you, while dressing your temple is a way that glorifies and reflects that Beauty.

While I will say that some of what she touches on is almost repeated from her others books, they are subjects that bear repeating and doing so only drives them home further. I recommend any and all of Leslie Ludy's book to young women who have a heart for God. You will be challenged by their contents, yes, but you will also be very, very blessed!

Olivia says

I first read this book in 2010, I believe. In the introduction, Leslie Ludy writes, "I pray that this message will encourage you to become fully and completely His [Jesus Christ's]." It did. This book brought me to a turning point in my life, a point where my purpose became truly to live for Jesus Christ and make everything I do all about Him, and there are several reasons why this book did that for me.

The first reason is that Mrs. Ludy makes it clear that radiant womanhood and a vibrant life are only possible if my life is completely surrendered to and built around Jesus Christ. Though I had encountered the idea of living life for Jesus alone as I was growing up, it was never presented to me like this before. Not just reading my Bible and going to church and praying, but literally making every single aspect of my life all about Him. Reading what I read for Jesus Christ. Listening to the music I listen to for Jesus Christ. Enjoying friends for Jesus Christ. Brushing my teeth for Jesus Christ. No longer was "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31) a nebulous thought; it was a reality.

And this reality affects my life in very practical ways, as Mrs. Ludy also made clear in this book. It became an inescapable truth that if Jesus Christ has changed me on the inside, then the natural result will be a change on the outside. This can be a challenging and convicting thing at first - and caused me to put this book down and almost never finish it the first time through. Yet I love how Mrs. Ludy was not afraid to point out things that some might not appreciate that those who read this book might be set free to live fully for Jesus Christ.

Examples used by Mrs. Ludy made these practical principals easy to grasp. True examples of girls and women who have chosen to surrender to Christ not only helped me to wrap my mind around what that might look like but also inspired and encouraged me, knowing that such a life isn't just a nice idea. The story-oriented writing style also made this an easy and relatable book to read.

I recommend this book for teens and women who desire to live for Jesus Christ alone, especially those wondering what it looks like to serve Him in practical, every-day life. If you read this book, may it encourage you also to become fully and completely HIS!

Amanda says

Overall solid book

LeighAnne says

I pre-read this book for possible use in a teen Bible study. The author clearly has a heart for teen girls. She shares personal examples of personal failure and growth while using some Scripture to back up her points. Her vocabulary does get hung up on a few "favorite" words, which is distracting. For example, she uses the word, or form of the word, "slob" at least half a dozen times. My biggest criticism of the book is that although she is teaching girls to be socially sensitive, selfless, and hospitable, she spends an inordinate time discussing what she and her husband do that is so right and what she has observed in others that is extremely offensive to her. I would think she could get her point across without condemning people she knows. I would actually be afraid to have dinner with her-she could be observing me for some material for a future book! She quotes Amy Carmichael often in the book. It seems to me that she could learn a little from the graceful speech of Ms. Carmichael.

That being said, I intend on having my daughter read this book. There is much that is positive about it and

the author addresses some of the more modern issues that girls are encountering these days.

Lydia Howe says

One Sunday afternoon I had a headache, so I wandered into my sister's room to ask for a head massage. Afterward I noticed this book on her bed, so I picked it up and began reading. It wasn't until last night (March 21st) that I realized I had never reviewed the book, so here I am.

The book was very easy to read, and kept me interested until the end (I read it all in one sitting). It was delightful how the author wove Biblical truths and life experiences together to form a book that was relatable, practical, and drew the reader in. Her writing style is also one that I find to be engaging, which is a huge plus.

I don't have a ton of details to add since I read this book two months ago, but I do look forward to reading more books by the same author.

Olivia Claassen says

"The Lost Art of True Beauty" by Leslie Ludy is a truly helpful guide to becoming a more pure, christ-seeking young woman. It is helpful to all ages, although the main focus is a message being sent to teens. Ludy is not, however, sending us girls the message to cover up in shapeless, unfashionable clothes and completely ignore boys. She is helping us to be Christ-serving while looking fabulous but modest, and being the type of girl who is attractive to guys who seek true Christ-like beauty in a girl. Ludy shows some good examples of who to be and who not to be, and how to be a true christina and get through the teen years happily, with friends, and a heart and mind and body filled to the brim, and overflowing with a passion for Christ. This book is most helpful, and a quick read that i will take to heart forever more.

Melody says

"...we are constantly assaulted by a world that insists that we aren't alluring enough-- we need to change our bodies, our clothes and our personality in order to be more appealing. And the same culture that trains young women to become sexy, sultry, and seductive also trains men to lust after women who possess those traits."

A breath of fresh air in our day-- a lady who tells young women what they need to hear. This is a book written equally for new and not-so-new christian girls/young women. Mrs. Ludy lovingly yet firmly gives the truth about real beauty-- it's not something physical, something you can see and feel. Real, true beauty shines from within, and springs from a love and devotion to our Lord. If we are not devoted to surrendering our very lives to God to serve His purposes, if we are not willing to cultivate a relationship with the Creator of beauty itself, we will never have beauty-- at least, beauty by God's standards, the kind that really turns heads. By the way, I was encouraged by how conservative her views are (i.e. on TV, movies, etc.) considering how many modern Christian teachers seem to be so lax on these issues.

Mrs. Ludy writes in a straightforward manner, which can be a little dry at times; but as she mentions in the forward, she strives to write as if she were chatting with the reader across the table. All in all, I was quite

encouraged and challenged by this book, and I'm grateful to the friend who gave it to me as a birthday gift!

Keturah Lamb says

A friend loaned this book to me months ago... but I just recently found time to read it. And wow. I feel the timing must have been from God. I have not felt so inspired, encouraged, and motivated by a book in a LONG time. And it spoke to me on so many levels. Going through a tough time in life, and trying to rest on God's grace and planning. And fighting anything unfeminine... yet at a loss as to how to do so. Leslie Ludy seemed to understand exactly what I needed to hear and wrote those words. And now...just for the strength from God to live a life for Him and to be a true woman of God that exudes real beauty, internally.

I'd recommend this book to every girl and woman!

Christina Knotts says

This book was wonderful reading for today's average girl. I appreciated the concept of being set-apart and was eager to get online and read her wonderfully put together webzine (www.setapartgirl.com).

Although Mrs. Ludy's style of writing lacked a confidence I have so admired in authors like Debi Pearl, I still came away refreshed and uplifted to live solely for Jesus Christ.

My favorite part of the book was the very practical tips/ideas Mrs. Ludy offered. An absence of practicality is one of the things I loathe in modern-day Christian books. Yet, Mrs. Ludy had an abundance. I was thrilled to learn so much about eating habits, exercise, emailing, internet usage, and so much more.

I think the bottom line is that girls and women of all ages today need to remember for Whom and What they live.

Jumana says

Amazing book. Great read and would recommend for women of ALL ages; it gave me a glimpse of what true beauty is really like in Christ and I've never stopped fighting for it since!

Penelope Payne says

A friend of mine gave this book to me for my birthday, and I enjoyed it so much! I think that this is a book that every woman, young or old, should read. It was very informative, telling how to exude a Christ-like femininity, not the femininity of the world. I wish I could give it more than five stars.

Leslie covers issues that many girls and women can relate to, such as peer pressure, fashion, eating disorders, body image, forgiveness, and even creating a Christ-like atmosphere in your home, room, or wherever you live. And that is just the tip of the iceberg.

Along with the quotes on the quote page, these quotes had an impact on me:

“The temptations of the world must not be looked at, listened to, or entertained even for the slightest moment.”

“She feels emotion at greater levels, but she is not a slave to her feelings.”

“If we live in a sloppy, disorganized environment with clothes strewn all over the floor and dishes piled in the sink, we are likely to feel chaotic, scattered, and sloppy as we go about our daily tasks.”

“The more you mull over it [an offense], and go over the scene in your mind, the more it has an opportunity to take root within your soul and plant deep seeds of bitterness.”

“However, though we are not to accept harassment from the enemy, we can still thank God for the opportunity to learn how to fight, pray, and be strengthened in our faith - just as it says in James 1.”

Marissa says

Wow. I read this book when I was fourteen and thumbed through it today five years later thanks to some new thoughts I have about being a woman in the Church. I'm not a fan of Ludy and I wouldn't check out books written by her normally, partially because I'm of the "slob" crowd she makes reference to quite frequently in this book, but curiosity opened me up today. The Lost Art of True Beauty bills itself as practical advice on Biblical femininity in modern America for teenage girls, drawing the author's personal experience and scriptural reference.

I have to conclude that while this book isn't the worst thing an impressionable fourteen year old girl could be reading, it definitely, definitely isn't the best. I'll start with the things Ludy got right. Girls should absolutely be feeling loved and adored by Christ, who loves us perfectly, and know to recognize abuse and mistreatment from others and sometimes themselves. Ludy is right to address eating disorders but flirts with some really dangerous territory in doing so. Throughout this book, she more or less operates on the presumption that all attention a young girl pays to her appearance is intended to make herself attractive to the opposite sex. She couches this with a disclaimer that girls shouldn't be ashamed of their bodies, while paradoxically ostracizing young women into three groups: girls who put all their self worth into keeping up with the latest fashion trends, slobes who dress like sloppy guys to buck said trends, and Christian girls who wear tents to preserve themselves for marriage. The whole tone of the book, from the very title designating itself as for the "set-apart" girl, is very condescending and more than a little troubling throughout. I'm sorry, but the sections where she talked about respecting her husband by never making "bodily noises" around him just about made me die laughing. Really, this whole book in its seeking to give practical, real-world advice is just another measuring stick by which young girls can determine their worth.

At the end of the day, I just don't get it. If these teen girls are loved spectacularly, beautifully, and perfectly by the creator the of the universe, does it really matter what they're wearing? The most offensive and blatant implication here is that a girl's body belongs to her husband before she's even married. That by itself is revolting enough, but this whole book sells the idea that if a girl embodies the extremely guided and specific sacred feminine attributes, she'll be irresistible to men. It's funny to me that Protestant missionary Amy Carmichael is quoted with such frequency throughout the book because her vocation and ultimate legacy in and outside Christendom have N-O-T-H-I-N-G to do with marriage. This book gets it right in just saying that

a girl is adored and beautiful because she is a child of God. She does not need a husband to fulfill her vocation on earth and redeem what God has already made perfect, and Carmichael's life is an example of that. The Lost Art of True Beauty says otherwise.

Mothers, your daughters deserve better.

Mary says

I like a lot of what the Ludy's preach, and for the most part our lifestyles match up in beliefs, desires and views on femininity. The only reason I can't rate this higher is honestly, I feel like Leslie does talk a bit too much about herself, and what she thinks without Biblical support. Also I feel like she is too judgemental. A good portion of her book, and all the magazines i've read, bashes anyone who doesn't fit the standards in her head, implying they aren't Christian, and praises only those who fit her view of christianity. I felt uncomfortable reading about her talking so viciously about these women. If Leslie would lose the criticism and judgment I would be a whole hearted fan!
