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What is true beauty?

Whether it's age-defying makeup or the latest diet fad, our culture continually tells women that beauty consists of flawless skin and a supermodel figure.

In *True Beauty*, Carolyn Mahaney and her daughter Nicole Whitacre direct us to the truth of God's Word, where we encounter an entirely different--and refreshingly liberating--standard of beauty.

Offering a path to freedom from the false idols that society, the Devil, and our sinful hearts so often create, this encouraging book will help you exchange the temporary glamour of pop culture for the unfading beauty of godliness.

Includes a discussion guide.

True Beauty Details

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Author : Carolyn Mahaney , Nicole Mahaney Whitacre

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From Reader Review True Beauty for online ebook

Teresa says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book!! We studied it in our Sunday night class at church. It really opened my eyes to how much I actually look at mine and others outward appearances and if I say I have a flaw I'm actually saying God designed me with a flaw. It's a daily struggle. I really thought that the two authors did an amazing Job at keeping a balance between everything. Not going too far with some things, like how to dress and how much make-up you should wear. Very well done. Highly recommend :)

Danette says

Fantastic! When we behold the Beautiful One we begin to reflect His beauty - true beauty. The book also deals with teaching our children.

A book by or about a pastor's wife.

Marguerite Harrell says

I am reading this book! Looking forward to learn a lot from this! Great book so far, and having hard time to put down this book. Every women need to read this book. (12-02-2014) I got 10 more pages to finish reading True Beauty by Carolyn Mahaney and Nicole Whitacre. Great book and this will receive 5 Stars! Every women in all ages need to read this book. You might laugh in some pages. Great book and it will point you to the real True Beauty with His Word.

Annette says

I was prepared not to like this book but found that I really really liked it. I love how this mother/daughter team brings scripture to bear on a topic that could easily be frivolous and trite. Just an example from my own stage of life: "Though many women become hard and bitter as they grow old, a woman who trusts God, who pursues a gentle and quiet spirit through the many trials and temptations in her life, grows more radiant and lovely, even as she wastes away. Her beauty is an imperishable beauty, after all. This is the powerful, living paradox of true beauty." Amen.

It's easy to fall on either side of the "beauty" spectrum... spending so much money and time on outward beauty or just letting go to the point of not caring. This book brings the much needed balance to the concept of beauty, wanting to show feminine beauty to the world, and the loveliness of inner beauty that also makes one more outwardly beautiful. I think this would make a great study for a mother/daughter study or a Titus 2 focused book study.

Looking foward to going through it again soon.

(I received an ebook copy of this book for review. I was not required to leave a positive review. All thoughts are my own."

Valerie Kyriosity says

I finished a book in print! I don't remember when I started it, but it's one of several in progress that I'm hoping to polish off soon.

This was good, just not quite what I was looking for. The audience was more women who are wrangling with caring too much about cultural standards of outward beauty, and I think the book would be helpful for them. I tend toward the opposite end of the spectrum -- not caring enough about physical appearance and wanting a little motivation in that direction. Of course the encouragement to pursue inward beauty through contentment and good works is a helpful message for any woman, and the more I grow in those areas, the more beauty will work its way outward.

Bee says

I really enjoyed reading this book. The authors speak in a clear, concise, and friendly way that entices the reader to continue reading. But it doesn't stop there. This book isn't just a great read, but rather, is also a tool for Christian growth. True Beauty is convicting and such a blessing. The study questions help provide further reflection and self-understanding.

Jamie says

My rating is unfairly low, first because I listened to the audiobook and didn't care for the narrator; second, because I was expecting something a little more philosophical; third, because the book is addressed to women who either have a husband and kids, or who are longing to have them. There are two examples of single women, and both found their "dream man" after handing their desire for beauty over to God (although, granted, the author describes one of these as being widowed some fifteen or twenty years later). So although I didn't enjoy the book, it really wasn't the author's fault.

I did really appreciate her main premise: it's not about you (who was it who said humility isn't thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less? Basically that is the author's point, and a VERY good one!). I also really appreciated how she acknowledged that modesty is more of a condition of the heart, and how it LOOKS is something of a fluid concept, that the outward manifestation is influenced by culture, and what's we think of as "modest" in 2019 is very different from what it was in 1919.

Megan Taylor says

I have seen this book out for awhile, such as in the bookstores, events, and even on Crossway's website. I kept passing it up because I didn't feel like I struggled with not thinking I was beautiful enough. In my teen years, I definitely struggled with this issue but God has taught me a lot about this issue. So with all that said,

I saw the title and never even picked up the book to look at the back to see what was contained within the pages.

I was thankful that I did decide to pick up this book finally! Although it's not a huge struggle for me, I do struggle with other things that this book helped me gain a different perspective over. It's a book that I want to keep to use with my daughter's when they get a little older. I've already been able to use some of the points made in this book with my soon-to-be 7-year old. I feel more prepared to give her a godly answer now that I've read this very gospel-centered book.

Some of it did address the things that I thought it would. However, the biggest message all throughout the book was how true beauty is found in God alone. True beauty is found in holiness. God sees beauty completely different than how our culture defines beauty.

Carolyn and Nicole do a wonderful job making "true beauty is found in God" not sound like some cliche. Instead, they remind their readers that we have peace and can be ourselves when we truly know and believe that true beauty is found in God.

If anyone is looking for a summer study to do with a group of girls, then grab this book! You will definitely be able to get a lot of discussion out of those girls. Not only that, but you will be able to teach them God's view of beauty. In all honesty, it's a book that probably almost every girl or woman should read.

I received this book free from Crossway.

Allison says

Another book I recommend every lady read. Mahaney writes with such clarity, simplicity, and gospel centered truth on issues that are often murky. I've never heard someone talk about clothes and modesty like this before. Most people refuse to talk about and give a blanket statement about a Bible verse that mentions this issue, or they give such strict rules, but Mahaney has such a graceful balance.

Shannon says

Usually, quite honestly, I don't prefer Carolyn Mahaney's writing style. Sometimes it feels like she's being TOO kind and gentle with me--to the point of it feeling a bit patronizing. And due to an unhealthy tendency to compare, leading me to fits of panic at never being a good enough mom, my husband told me he'd rather me not read her blog.

But I gave this book a try, because early in 2018, I realized that I had lived my entire life believing I was an object to attract a man. Just one man, but still. It wasn't anyone in my life who caused this warped view: it was that I am an INTJ-pattern-finder and systems-builder, and I noticed enough of a pattern in my culture to sense, subconsciously, that this was my role. Hidden until this year, it always caused problems between me and my husband: nothing that was too troublesome to our marriage, but always a bother.

So I am happy to report that this book literally CHANGED MY LIFE.

Only two chapters in, I felt my whole perspective shift. I felt freedom from myself in a way I never had before, freedom to enjoy my husband in a way I never had before (because now he didn't have to prove to me constantly that I was good at fulfilling society's role for me--a game he was too healthy spiritually to be willing to play). I felt, ironically, more beautiful, even with my aging mom-bod, than I ever have before in my LIFE: beautiful the RIGHT way, not the self-conscious, self-obsessed way.

It was solid advice, but it wasn't anything I hadn't heard before. But it was all in one place, communicated in the same kind tone (which I did not find patronizing this time--maybe because I was approaching the book out of a felt need and thus more humbly?) Maybe it was just that, once I was aware of the problem, I became more receptive to teaching. Either way, it was *transforming*.

There's also a great discussion of the hotly-contested phrase "gentle and quiet spirit" that has greatly helped me as my functioning definition.

Stefanie Kamerman says

I loved this book. Really, I did.

Carolyn and her daughter, Nicole, start their book out by explaining the gospel according to beauty our society preaches to us and flat out tells us how that gospel is one big lie.

Yet again, God blows me away with how He uses authors--especially these two women--to preach His gospel and to show how the gospel applies every aspect of our lives. Beauty included. Carolyn and Nicole explain how women--of any age--will be transformed by the truth in the gospel of Jesus Christ once they learn what true beauty is. Because it isn't the latest hair styles, clothes, make up techniques, face lotions, or botox. It is the true Beauty of God. His Eternal Beauty. His design for us. His craft of man-kind.

This book addresses topics like our hearts, body image, clothing, eating disorders, and the beauty of our works as Christians. They surround these topics with God's truth and wisdom. The gospel in which they preach sets us free from the limitations of our culture's idea of beauty and directs us to the limitless beauty that rests in our Savior and God's unfailing wisdom about beauty.

Praise and Glory to Jesus Christ for Carolyn and Nicole for writing this book. It was eye opening and life changing in many aspects.

Analia says

Great book to revive a girl's self-esteem. Sometimes we need to readjust our ways of thinking, and this book does help. In a world where looks are everything, a christian girl can feel lost of how to feel, and how to act. In this book, we find many answers to those questions.

Mandy J. Hoffman says

The Overview

In a world where everyone has an opinion about what physical beauty is, the mother/daughter team of Carolyn Mahaney and Nicole Whitacre come together to share the Bible's truth. It is hard to find a book with a balanced perspective on this topic due to each of us having such different backgrounds and experiences. However, *True Beauty* is not about what we should or should not do, it is about how the Word of God should change the way we view beauty and therefore change how we live. This book is a warm conversation with two women about how we look, dress, and our definition of beauty through the lens of Scripture. It is filled with grace, not condemnation from the usual verses that are used to fill us with guilt.

The Readability

These 7 chapters are easy and enjoyable to read. Sometimes books on the topic of beauty can be hard to read because of the varied viewpoints of the author and the reader. However, this isn't full of the authors opinions but rather full of Biblical answers to our beauty issues. Carolyn and Nicole are gracious and loving in this book. While I felt convicted in certain areas, I did not feel like I was being judged, but rather loved and welcomed by those who also struggle in this sin cursed world. This lovely read is also full of stories that show us how the Biblical truth is applied without being legalistic.

The Highlights

Beside what I have already mentioned, I appreciated the simplicity of this book. The topic of beauty is usually quite complicated and broad - covering exercise, diet, weight, make-up, clothing, surgeries, and more. Instead, in *True Beauty*, we are presented with the gospel and how it can change us and our view of beauty. They address our heart motives not our functioning standards and allow the Holy Spirit to apply the truth, not their personal convictions. If you walk away convicted it is because of God's work in your hearts, not because of Carolyn or Nicole's personal opinions.

The Downside

From my view point there is no downside to this book. It greatly blessed and encouraged me.

The Recommendation

It is a book that I will encourage all women to read and one that I will refer to over and over as I teach my daughters about true beauty. *True Beauty* would be a good read for teens to older women who have already journeyed through much of life.

Kara says

Where do you get your definition of beauty? Is it wrong to want to be beautiful? How does our understanding of beauty affect our lives and actions?

Mother and daughter Carolyn Mahaney and Nicole Whitacre have teamed up to address these questions in their latest title, *True Beauty*. And wow, this book is truly a gem! I absolutely loved it, and it's next on my list to read and discuss with my teen daughter when we finish our current title.

So, does this book focus on physical beauty or inner beauty?

Rather than contrasting inner beauty with physical beauty, as so many Christian books on this issue seem prone to do, Carolyn and Nicole come from a different angle. They assert that any discussion of beauty must be grounded in the gospel. If, as the Westminster Catechism states, we exist to “glorify God and enjoy Him forever”, then beauty comes about as a result of fulfilling that purpose.

So, both inner AND outer beauty are a product of reflecting God’s glory.

Click here to read my entire review: <http://homewithpurpose.net/2014/04/tr...>

Neil Richardson says

I am a man. This book is designed for women. But I’m not sure we’re all that different when it comes to the culture-fuelled insecurities we all feel about our personal attractiveness. Or lack of!

I read this book in a day and I thank God for it. He has used it to help recentre me on himself as the source and focus of all beauty, which is seen in his eternity, creation, power, wisdom and holiness - and most of all in the unconditional love of his Son dying in our place on the Cross!

One section that really challenged me was in the chapter entitled ‘True Beauty and Our Hearts’. In this, the mother-and-daughter authors warn us of the danger of being ‘Glory thieves’ and ask whether we would be more gutted if someone praised us and didn’t praise God, or vice versa. That emotional response says everything about where our appreciation of true beauty lies - within our fragile, failing selves, or within our mighty, everlasting Lord, who promises to take us into his beauty in the new creation.

Recommended to all humans, both ladies and non-ladies, who are in pursuit of true beauty.
