

LESSONS FROM NARNIA ON BEAUTY AND BRAVERY: A STUDY GUIDE FOR WOMEN

By Holly Wagner

The life that you and I have been entrusted with will include moments that demand bravery and will include moments that demand that we take a risk.

In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus told us, “Don’t think I have come to make life cozy.” Often we spend years looking for a “cozy” life, a safe and comfortable life, and yet the very reason we are alive on the planet at this time in history is to see the work of our Father done. And there is nothing safe or “cozy” about that! Retreating behind our “white picket fence” life is not why we are here.

Micah 5:1 says, “Now gather yourself in troops o daughter of troops, a state of siege has been placed against us...”

There is a war going on. A war for the sons and daughters of the King, and you and I have been commissioned as His soldiers. We have been given the mission of bringing justice where injustice has reigned.

The Chronicles of Narnia has painted and continues to paint this very story. In the newest installment in the *Narnia* series, *The Voyage of The Dawn Treader*, we are once again reminded, in such a creative and compelling way, that we each have a mission to fulfill and temptations to overcome, and it will take all of us working together to achieve it.

~#1~

As Edmund complains about his cousin Eustace, Lucy’s attention drifts to a pretty young nurse flirting with her handsome soldier. Without thinking, Lucy begins to mimic the nurse. There are three things we see: 1) Lucy sees love and beauty. 2) Lucy desires love and beauty. 3) Lucy mimics the image of love and beauty.

- In our image-crazed society, how much of what we do concerning love and beauty is subconsciously inherited?
- How do movies, magazines, television and music affect the way you think about love and beauty?
- How does what you see in the media compare with what God’s word says about women, love and beauty?

~#2~

I’m not exactly sure why we women feel the need to waste time trying to be someone else...but we have done so and perhaps still do. About seventeen years ago, I remember trying to figure out exactly what my role on the planet should be and how I should live it out (just a little light thinking!). Therefore, to

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help me on this journey I thought I should look at other women who were further along life's journey than me. This is a great thing to do...only I tried to be them. I wore the same kind of clothes they did, fixed my hair in the same styles and basically tried to be them.

You and I are supposed to learn from others, but we are not to try to become them! We each have our own unique role to play at this time in history and we will only play it by being comfortable in our own skin. Other people should inspire me...that's good. When I cross over into comparison...that's bad because it becomes destructive. I can never be anyone else; I can only ever be a better me!

Lucy and Edmund receive a disappointing letter from Susan. Edmund makes the statement, "We don't matter as much." Lucy gazes in the mirror and asks, "Do you think I look anything like Susan?" We've all been there, asking questions about ourselves in comparison to others. The underlying question is usually, "Am I beautiful?"

- The movie so far sets us up to see that Edmund and Lucy are both in an environment where they are not valued. How do you think our environment affects the way we see ourselves?
- As we are growing in our own skin, encouragement to be ourselves (and to be our best self!) is crucial to a healthy self-image. When our parents, closest family members and friends are absent, silent, critical or damaging with words, what happens to our internal selftalk? What happens in our relationships when we have a negative internal dialogue?
- Eustace makes fun of Edmund and Lucy, calling them orphans. Some of us may not have grown up as orphans, but we can still have an orphan's heart. Can you see how feeling abandoned would make someone feel unlovable, and even wondering if they are beautiful? Have you ever felt this way?
- If you are struggling with your own internal conversations, try standing in front of the mirror and reciting Psalm 139. Here are some other scriptures for you to memorize when negative thoughts come into your mind: Psalm 68:5-6; Psalm 27:10; Jeremiah 29:11; Jeremiah 1:5; Ephesians 2:10; Psalm 45; Song of Solomon 4:7.

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