

## Thoughts

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### [Respecting Women \(View in PDF\)](#)

*"Politeness costs nothing, and gains everything."* — Lady Mary Wortley Montagu

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### Sobering times

It's incredibly disheartening to both read and hear about disrespect and abuse to girls and women on any level: locally or internationally, whether [physical](#), emotional, [sexual](#)—or any combination thereof. From tactless and demeaning comments, to [abandonment](#), [pornography](#) and the [sexualization of little girls \(additional link\)](#), [revenge porn](#), [rape](#), [sexual trafficking](#), [sexual harassment](#), [sex selection](#), [genital mutilation](#), [breast ironing](#), and abortion whether voluntary or [forced](#) (to name but a [few issues](#)).

All over the world, millions of girls and women suffer a tremendous amount of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and pain. Many girls suffer terrible things growing up at the hands of their own family members or relatives, and some women feel trapped and put up with abusive husbands in the confines of their own home. The depth of pain, fear, and hopelessness they must feel is unimaginable. The vast majority of abuse stems from men and societies in which girls and women are almost treated like animals, and yet while it's a generalization to say that all men are perverse or degenerate, the fear and [suspicion](#) of that potential remains, and the evidences of it naturally take many forms. In this light, I struggle with even the association and stigma in being a man, and all the negatives that are part of it.

Following is an example of how, years later, street harassment can damage intimacy in a marriage (guest post excerpt entitled [Is Shame Causing Your Low Sex Drive?](#) reposted with permission from both host, Bonny of [OysterBed7](#), and post author Keelie of [Love Hope Adventure](#)):

*When I was growing up, there wasn't a name for this, or much awareness. Now...we call it [street harassment](#). This is when a random stranger hollers out at you or follows you when you are walking down the street. Those that live in urban areas experience this more.*

*Since I grew up in an inner city, I dealt with street harassment on a regular basis. Men of all ages would call out to me or come up to me and say inappropriate things. I taught myself to put up defenses anytime someone let me know they found me sexually attractive as a way of keeping myself safe.*

*Once I got married and my husband felt like he could tell me how sexy beautiful I was, it was a big turn off for me. If I ever caught him staring at me, it would make me feel uncomfortable and I would put walls up.*

*Unfortunately, the shame I carried from other people's sin caused me to make my husband feel like a creep. That put distance between us in our sex life, because he felt like I saw him as a pervert.*

So what can I do about it? While I cannot fix the world, I can ensure that I respond with [respect and sensitivity](#) to women by listening, encouraging, and complimenting them every chance I get. It is my hope that something in

these pages encourages others to do the same. Respect should always be mutual, but all too often it seems women are not esteemed or treated with the tact and kindness they deserve. I have found this to be true not only in the more obvious places such as secular high schools, but sometimes even in the Christian workplace, which is all the more disturbing.

## Tact and honor

*"Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment." — Benjamin Franklin*

Has it ever bothered you to see a woman being ridiculed or made fun of because of her gender? Perhaps when just "joking" a husband has made fun of his wife? Disparaging jokes or snide comments can quickly hurt and even destroy a loving relationship, and it sets a bad example that others may follow. The saying *"Often the truth is spoken in jest"* is very evident through body language and tone of voice. While men are sometimes the brunt of this, on too many occasions I have witnessed women being ridiculed for something that is a natural part of who they are as women. Or fathers talking about their daughter's period to coworkers.

Even in countries such as Egypt, it is [common practice](#) for men to make "cat calls" or "wolf whistles" at women. All too often men are quick to judge without first making (or at least wanting to make) an effort to understand how *they* think and feel. The different God-given attributes and characteristics in women should never be used as rationale for tactless attitudes and demeaning comments from men. If there is no evidence of respect for women in public, there is no reason to believe there is respect for them in private.

A wife [shares](#) about this:

*"Another problem is how men treat women in the world. Every article on rape, every sexy pic shared and commented on social media, every dirty joke, sexual innuendo text, playboy magazine in the newsstand, wolf whistle, etc. tears at even the strongest and most confident woman.*

*While we ladies pray for God to protect our husbands from this sexually-charged world, men pray for your wives and **carefully** watch your own conduct.*

*She sees you check-out the college skirt walking by, and some days she may laugh it off as just your being a guy, and other days it can rip her heart out no matter how she tries to convince herself otherwise.*

*Our vulnerability is a delicate and precious thing, perhaps more so than our raw sexuality, and it is a huge part in feeling that knowing and oneness we so desire to have with our husbands."*

So, simply put—think before you speak and act, and ask yourself how she might feel before you say or do something. Guard her privacy—don't share anything about her that might embarrass or hurt her. Like the old adage states, "if you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all," but *look first* for things you can genuinely compliment her on, being careful they're said and received in context. The more thoughtful and sincere your words, the easier this will be.

## Manners

When it comes to manners, open the door for her, or hold it open a few seconds longer if she is right behind you. Let her go first or pass in front of you. If her glass is empty, ask her if she would like a refill. Set or clear the table, and always pay for her meal. Ask her what she likes and dislikes. Chivalry is evidenced by thoughtfulness in action, such as those who pick

up and drop off their wives or girl friends near building entrances/exits when it's raining, cold, or just a long ways to walk. It's not about men insinuating that women are weak or can't do things for themselves; rather, it's about showing that we care, and expressing genuine kindness in tangible ways.

## Men and modesty

*"It's a man's job to respect a woman, but a woman's job to give him something to respect."* — Unknown

In addressing men in regards to sexual harassment, J Parker of Hot, Holy, and Humorous wisely [states](#):

*"Distinguish yourself from that jerk in her past by demonstrating tenderness and respect. Be a secure place for her to express her sexuality without feeling viewed as an object or used for her body parts. Yes, I know it's unfair that you're having to deal with stuff some other guy did to her a long time ago, but we all come into marriage with baggage and we have opportunities to break down each other's barriers and provide someone in this world our spouse can really trust. Don't you want that to be you? She does—she wouldn't have married you if she didn't want the person she trusted most to be you."*

Are men immodest toward women in the way they dress (or don't dress)? To determine that, specifics of *how and why they can be* are needed from the eyes of women themselves:

*"...I'm sick of hearing men talk about how women need to "not cause their brothers to stumble" when they don't think twice about walking around without shirts."*

— Sarah, reply to [Debunking the Only Men Are Visual Myth](#) on [goodwomenproject.com](#).

Another woman notes:

*"Thank you. One thing I've been struggling with lately is what modesty means for guys. On youth camp, or days away, we would be oh-so-shocked if girls took their shirts off to play some game, but the young guys do it. All the time. And no one wonders if they make the girls, who are 13, 14, 15 stumble. Simply because our bodies are—and work—differently, people assume that girls don't "stumble" or at least not on the physical things. Lie.*

*How hard is it to stay focused when a guy next to you plays volleyball, topless, all muscles out and on and on?*

*Every time I mention this, people scoff at me, because it's like men cannot be subjected to things because of women. They are free, boys will be boys, etc. But it hurts to see a very unbalanced rule that works differently depending on your gender. Guys used to tell me "But I'd only take my shirt off because I'm sweating." To which I just say that with a bra and a shirt on, girls are as warm if not more than they, yet, for the sake of modesty, respect, etc. keep the shirt on.*

*Why not encourage guys to be helpful as well? (I'm not a man-hater at all, I just really struggle over the unfairness of this topic). Thank you!"*

— Clotilde, reply to [Your Body Is Not the Problem](#) on [ruthiedean.com](#).



No act: Patrick Macnee opening the door for Diana Rigg. According to Diana, Patrick was as much a true gentleman off-stage as he was on-screen in [The Avengers](#) ('61-'67)

Is it just a [man's bare chest](#) that's the problem (even when most guy's everything-but-'ripped' hairy and/or saggy chests and bellies are hardly likely to incite lust among even the most visual of women)? Though it's frequently

mentioned most by women, no. Why? Women's arousal/temptation to lust is more involved and convoluted than that of men; meaning (by their own admission) even the glimpse of a man's arm or the scent of a particular lotion can stir lust among some of them. Medical science explains:

*"The researchers confirmed what most of them suspected all along: that women's arousal [and sexuality as a whole], much more so than men's, rests in the psychological as well as the physiological." — Roach, Mary (2009-04-06). Bonk: The Curious Coupling of Science and Sex (p. 200). W. W. Norton & Company. Kindle Edition.*

With this in mind, should men then wear long-sleeved shirts not only at swimming pools and the beach, but year-round? Looking at this both practically and objectively, it becomes as difficult to predict and deter lust in women through implementation of modesty in men as it is to define what modesty for women should look like. As Jessica Harris notes in her [Modesty 101](#) article:

*"Honestly, some of us wear clothes and our thought is, "He'll notice my \_\_\_\_\_ in this" and then we spend the rest of our day thinking about how good our \_\_\_\_\_ looks in the outfit we are wearing.  
We watch his eyes waiting for that moment he locks in and notices our \_\_\_\_\_. Then, what do we do? When he can't stop looking at our \_\_\_\_\_, we get annoyed. Right?"*

Yes, it's rude to stare at a woman's breasts (or any part of her that catches our eye); but we also need to stop pretending that we're somehow not supposed to notice them (or are incapable of it). Only God knows why He made them so prominent, placing them front-and-center on a woman's body so (regardless of size) they can't be ignored.

My point? It's honestly quite easy for women and men to argue that "the grass is greener on the other side of the fence" for each other. Yet for both of us, where our heart is when we put on or remove clothing—and whether or not we choose to honor and respect each other (visuals included)—is what God is looking at. Especially as it is very difficult trying to suppress or somehow redirect the God-wired longing to appreciate and enjoy not only the beauty of the female form, but the yearning for ongoing sexual intimacy and union.

## Listen

It's a little-known fact that men interrupt women more often in conversation, and not the other way round as some might think. For many people (myself included), listening is a difficult skill to acquire, but it's possible when the right motivation is there—after all, we always appreciate talking with someone who listens to what *we're* saying. I have a ways to go, as it's all too easy to interject my comments and questions, or second-guess what a lady wants to say.

## Understand

As men, we need to ask ourselves the following questions: Do we genuinely want to understand women? Are we willing to take the time to do just that?

If so, and if you're not sure what she may be thinking, or what her motives might be, ask—being sure that your tone of voice and response to her are not out of anger or frustration, but sincerity and genuinely wanting to understand. I'm convinced that there is a reason for everything—whether influenced by personality or driven by hormones (which in some form, *we are all* susceptible to). Knowing the reason for an attitude, action, or feeling is a big step in understanding, and I believe can resolve many conflicts. We don't always need to *see* things the same way, as long as we understand *why* we see them the way we do.

Some argue that women are weak because they express their emotions—which I **do not** agree with. Not only is this opinion rude, but womens' expression of emotion is both natural and beneficial. Medically, repression of

emotion and feelings over time can cause both psychological stress and [physical illness](#). In addition, men who think they are "strong" by not showing emotion are in fact demonstrating pride and engrained fear of being shamed by others for not living up to perceived expectations of them. Granted, it's much easier said than done, but in the long run, bottling up emotions which are real, and deep, does nothing but cause pain.

As one woman shared, understanding can often be challenging, but your persistent patience may be just what's needed:

*"When you see something you love in a lady, don't let anyone rain on your parade. Just know that sometimes the woman you see is trapped behind many layers of conditioning, and the only way to bring her out is by loving who she is and who she really wants to be (not the person she **thinks** she has to be). Odds are, you'll probably be the first person in her life to really do that."*

## Admire and acknowledge

*"If God made anything more beautiful than a woman, He kept it for Himself."* — Unknown

Since I was a boy, I have admired girls and women a great deal. I believe God made women to have, and be, everything a man lacks and longs for—emotionally, mentally, physically, and sexually. They are to be deeply appreciated, envied, and lauded; not debased, objectified, or ridiculed. Solomon described the intricate beauty he saw in the woman he loved:

[Song of Solomon 7:1-9](#) (NASB) *"How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O prince's daughter! The curves of your hips are like jewels, the work of the hands of an artist. Your navel is like a round goblet which never lacks mixed wine; your belly is like a heap of wheat fenced about with lilies. Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle. Your neck is like a tower of ivory, your eyes like the pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath-rabbim; your nose is like the tower of Lebanon, which faces toward Damascus. Your head crowns you like Carmel, and the flowing locks of your head are like purple threads; the king is captivated by your tresses. How beautiful and how delightful you are, my love, with all your charms! Your stature is like a palm tree, and your breasts are like its clusters. I said, 'I will climb the palm tree, I will take hold of its fruit stalks.' Oh, may your breasts be like clusters of the vine, and the fragrance of your breath like apples, and your mouth like the best wine! It goes down smoothly for my beloved, flowing gently through the lips of those who fall asleep."*



*"Pretty!" [The A-Team's](#) Murdock convinces a lady (his real life [wife](#)) in [Bounty](#) (Season 3, Episode 22) that she is beautiful*

Physicality—for men and women—will always be noticed. We're only lying to ourselves if we say we *don't*—it's as instinctive as breathing. However, we are wrong to place value solely on the physical, since beauty is subjective and truly in the eye of the beholder. True beauty never emanates exclusively from the [physical](#); attitudes can be subjective and change quickly; e.g. how people view an overweight woman who then loses that weight. In addition, personal opinions vary substantially between people even over actors and actresses who, by cultural/marketing standards, are 'gorgeous' and have "arrived." Many women struggle with the notion that if their body does not match the unrealistic [Photoshopped](#) 'ideal' imagery touted by the media (who actively promotes and destroys at will to benefit their agenda), then they inherently lack appeal, and are not attractive. However, their core anatomy can still be appealing and attractive regardless of how feminine or perfect it may seem to them. It's greatest allure remains the fact that it's still a *different yet complementary design* from men, and it contains the elements and attributes that God intentionally created men to be visually drawn to.

I believe there are three distinct ways a woman is viewed, that—at times—can, and does, overlap:

1. As a person

2. As a work of art
3. As an object of desire, lust, or contempt

Physically, mentally, and emotionally, there are many things that happen to men when they encounter a woman they find attractive—the catch is *what we think and how we respond* to this. Admiration stems from a myriad of elements: mannerisms, voice, movement, and attitudes, as well as visual/physical attributes. From head to toe, there is a vast wonder and beauty about women, and I believe that man is a steward of something much better and greater than himself. Emotionally, women express their feelings and are often in touch with themselves and others. Mentally, they have many skills and abilities that parallel and often exceed men (e.g. able to read body language twice as well as men—women have between fourteen and sixteen areas of the brain to evaluate others' behavior versus a man's four to six areas.) Physically, they possess a very powerful sensuality and aesthetic beauty. Sexually, their differences are nothing short of breathtaking. God has truly blessed women in the way they are made—each part of them is unique and desirable in its own way. In her book *For Women Only* (p. 100), [Shaunti Feldhahn](#) notes one man's words that echo this:

*"She doesn't understand how even her occasional dismissals make me feel less desirable. I can't resist her. I wish that I, too, were irresistible. She says I am. But her ability to say no so easily makes it hard to believe."*

While we should be careful not to elevate women, we need to admire and acknowledge the incredibly beautiful way in which God has made them. It is often difficult to make eye contact with a lady that we find attractive, because it's painful to see beauty when we have no means of expressing to them how/what we feel about it (let alone a safe way of complimenting them). It then becomes a real struggle to not intentionally avoid them. But the pain goes both ways—as the saying goes: *"Don't hate [or avoid] me because I'm beautiful."* One woman shares about this:

*"...I, too, see it as a cop out. I believe Christian men have been led to believe the lie that they will always struggle with lusting after women. It's taught when they are teens, and supported through adulthood. This lie leads them to treat half the Christian population like they are invisible (bouncing the eyes) and keeps them from reaching out to women who aren't believers because they may be dressed skimpily."*

*Yes, men **can** and **do** have lust problems, but they don't have to be slaves to lust! Jesus came to set us free—how do we display that freedom with the current ways we teach men? Seems to me they become even more enslaved to the program of keeping themselves 'pure', while beautiful sisters in Christ are not looked at, not talked to, etc. because these teens/men are encouraged to 'bounce their eyes.'*

*Yes, it's a sore spot for me as a beautiful woman who is friends with beautiful women who have **all** felt weird by men who **won't look at us when we say hi!**"*

There is also frequently more to a story than meets the eye—women can suffer even from others' perception and reaction to their attractiveness. This truth, even illustrated in a 1950s TV show, hasn't changed. As an example, in [Whistle Bait](#) (Season 3, Episode 10) of [Father Knows Best](#), Betty Anderson is depressed and angry when a new girl in school, Diane Mills, receives unsolicited attention from the boys that she used to receive. However, [what she learns](#) is that that attention has resulted in Diane being ostracized and hated by the other girls—leaving her without any friends.



Betty (left) has a change of heart toward Diane (right) in [Whistle Bait](#) (Season 3, Episode 10) of [Father Knows Best](#)

## Compliment

*"Find a guy who calls you beautiful instead of hot; who stays awake to watch you sleep. Wait for the guy who kisses your forehead; who holds your hand in front of his friends. Wait for the one who is constantly reminding you of how lucky he is to have you." — Unknown*

Complimenting a lady on positive aspects of her character is one of the greatest things you can do. Why? Because it shows that (unlike our culture) you recognize *she's a person—not an object* with feelings, hopes, hurts, and longings.

Sadly, women—even little girls—are constantly bombarded by negative, exploitive messages and unrealistic expectations in the media and world in which we live that exacerbate insecurities about themselves. They need to be reassured and reminded that **they are beautiful—not "hot"—and that beauty does not mean being perfect.** They are **not** the same things. In response to an [article](#) about this, [Jennifer Vaughn](#) notes that:

*"My personal experience: not complimenting a girl results in anxiety, insecurity, and obsession with looks."*

Some additional examples from [operationbeautiful.com](#) and other sources reiterate this truth:

*"I've never been in a relationship, and to have a guy say that I'm beautiful is the best feeling for me."*

*"Although I am a very thin girl, I too get really insecure about my weight, and often compare myself to girls with fuller figures. I cringe at the term 'real women have curves' because I look at myself and see none, and often question the fact of whether I am indeed a 'real woman.' **I cry when I'm told I'm not a real woman.**"*

*"I just wanted to let you know how your site has helped me. I am 17 years old, live in Canada, and was diagnosed with [Bulimia](#) when I was 14. I began my first diet when I was 8. I have spent my entire life working to be "perfect" and thin. It has ruined my life. My teeth have almost no enamel on them left, my heart rate and blood pressure goes from too high to too low weekly. I get EKGs and blood tests at least once a month. I have spent my last two summers in hospitals and have missed part of my 10th, 11th, and 12th grade years due to being hospitalized. I can't stand up for very long without my vision going black and getting dizzy. My hair fell out a few years back. My fingernails turn blue and I'm always cold. I can't go out with my friends anymore—I get too tired. I have wasted so much time and truly put my health at risk and I still can't stop. The reason I'm writing you is because on Friday, I was at my weekly hospital checkup, and one of my therapists made me eat a 500-calorie meal, which I haven't done in ages, to "de-sensitize" me. I was on my way to the bathroom to throw it up after my appointment. **I had just locked the stall when I saw a sticky note on the back of the door. It said, "You're beautiful. You're good enough. www.operationbeautiful.com."** No one has ever said that to me. I didn't throw up that day. It was the first time I ate something solid and did not throw it up in years. I plan on plastering the Eating Disorder Treatment floor with Operation Beautiful sticky notes. :) Thank you, Vit"*

*"I'm a college student at Olivet Nazarene University. I placed [operationbeautiful.com] post-its all over the apartment building that I live in! It was so neat because a group of girls walked in and read them as I was on my way to my room, and **they were talking about how much they needed to hear that in today's world.**"*

*"The other day I was in math class talking to a friend of mine, Allison. **She has been so insecure about her weight and size.** We were having a conversation about things we hate about ourselves. Out of nowhere, Operation Beautiful popped up in my mind. I blurted out, "Wow, you look beautiful! Don't change a thing—you're totally gorgeous." Her eyes started to well up with tears, and she smiled the biggest smile I have seen in a long time. I know I made her day. Which made my day too!"*

*"Ever since I was little, I was always the "ugly duckling." I felt like I wasn't good enough, and I tried to make myself prettier by losing weight. Enter: [Anorexia](#). It's taken me almost three years to recover, and once I reached a healthy weight, I thought I could be happy again. I took up running and fell in love—I was strong and healthy. But, I started to have heart problems, and today my cross-country coach told me he won't let me run a race for another week. I broke down. My friends supported me, but I still could not stop crying. When I came home, I stumbled upon your blog and saw the pictures of the Operation Beautiful notes. I cried again, but this time it was tears of joy. **I don't remember the last time someone told me I was beautiful—even though I don't know any of you personally, you made me feel good about myself for the first time in a long time.**"*

*"I'm 17 years old, a high school student. I have been dieting since I was 9 years old, even though I know I'm what people consider skinny. I had an eating disorder when I was 12 years old, and was nearly hospitalized by worried parents. Although I'm now at a weight a doctor would consider healthy, I'm still always on the lookout for the product that will make my skin better, hair better, body better, stomach flatter, and so on, anything to fix what I see when I look in the mirror. I'm in constant battle with myself. I would love nothing more than to be a part of Operation Beautiful!"*

*"[Jessi](#) wrote, "On April 1st, I had something terrible happen to me. My body was violated and I was sexually abused. The next day at school, I was crying all morning, feeling disgusting and terribly awful about myself. When I went into the bathroom between classes to wipe away my tears, I saw post-it notes all over the mirror in the shape of a smiley face, each telling me how beautiful I was. Again, I started crying, but this time they were tears of joy. Operation Beautiful gave me the strength to smile despite what had happened. I know that I am beautiful, and that some wonderful stranger in my school was there for me. It was an amazing coincidence, and since then, I have begun putting up post-it notes on every mirror I see, hoping I can impact some stranger in the positive, life-saving way that I was impacted in. Thank you, Operation Beautiful for saving me from self-hatred, and making me see myself for the beautiful person I am."*

As these examples illustrate, negative messages can be countered by simple reminders of the truth: beauty takes many forms. A compliment is a [positive expression](#) of observation or reminder of the truth. When complimenting, keep these things in mind:

- **"Affirm her where you can.":** "Look for it [beauty] where it is; it's the quality of heart that is going to last a lifetime and is more beautiful." (~28:00) Stasi Eldredge, guest on Juli Slatterly's "Java with Juli" [#18: When You Don't Like Your Body \(Re-Air\)](#).
- **Be careful what you say:** And [how you say it](#).
- **Smile, maintain eye contact, and be sincere:** Don't say it if you don't mean it; she'll know if you're telling the truth (women are able to read body language twice as well as men—they have between fourteen and sixteen areas of the brain to evaluate others' behavior vs. a man's four to six areas—*The Definitive Book of Body Language*, p. 14, "What Brain Scans Show").
- **Stay in context:** Don't take her by surprise; let her know your intent by cuing what you're about to say—a simple "if you don't mind me saying so..." goes a long way.
- **Be discrete but specific:** Leave no lingering questions in her mind as to what you're complimenting her on and why (i.e. does she know you well enough to receive it in the spirit in which you meant it?)
- **Be intentional and consistent:** As noted in Bonny Burns' OysterBed7 [Week 32:Praise Her](#) post: "*Women dismiss probably half of [the] compliments they receive due to poor self-image. As she hears them consistently, though, she will start to believe them.*"
- **Avoid awkwardness—keep it short and sweet:** The longer it takes to compliment, the more awkward it becomes. Don't stop and expect a reply; avoid what may be an awkward moment for her—a more indirect compliment can also be easier to accept.
- **Body language:** Your tone of voice and posture count—if feasible, show genuine interest by mirroring her [body language](#).
- **Place value on her; not her clothing:** Instead of saying, "You look good in that," say "That looks good on you."

## Show gratitude

Be sure to always say "thank you" or "thanks" whenever a lady does something for you, and whenever possible, return the favor. Genuine gratitude is always appreciated, and goes a long way.

## Focus on the person; not the physical

*"You don't need to be 'perfect' to be beautiful."* —  
Unknown

Like all good actors do, Wendy Fulton's role as "Margo Wells" in [A Plush Ride](#) (Knight Rider: Season 1, Episode 12) vs. "Dr. Kelly Stevens" in [Bounty](#) (The A-Team: Season 3, Episode 22) illustrates how two very different people can live in the same skin; showing just how important personality is over physical attractiveness.



After Diana Rigg left, Patrick Macnee continued being a gentleman to Linda Thorson in *The Avengers* ('68-'69)

Physical beauty and attractiveness are subjective, and appeal differs for everyone—men and women alike. For men, staying focused on the person is not easy to do—women we find visually attractive will always catch our eye, and are often overpowering. Those not as physically attractive we admittedly tend to overlook or ignore; but giving equal attention to all women *is* possible, and should always be what we strive for. The true value of a lady is who she is inside—not how physically attractive we find her to be (the following verses leaving little room for debate):

[Proverbs 11:22](#) (NASB) *"As a ring of gold in a swine's snout so is a beautiful woman who lacks discretion."*

[Proverbs 31:30](#) (NASB) *"Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised."*

It goes without saying that these verses apply to men, too, as they address attitudes of the heart. The truth is that most women endowed with physical beauty do not appreciate being scrutinized or ogled, and those seen as less attractive may welcome being treated with equal time and attention. Regardless of perceived physical beauty, women should never be ignored or treated as a sex object. In this regard, a lady once shared with me that:

*"A smile and good, solid eye-contact tells a woman all that and more. Work on flirting with your eyes. Look into their soul; not their blouse. That is the ultimate compliment."*

As someone else put it:

*"Treat her as the person God intended; not the plaything this world thinks she is."*

The poem [The Beauty of a Woman](#) describes it another way:

The beauty of a woman  
is not in the clothes she wears,  
The figure that she carries,  
or the way she combs her hair

The beauty of a woman  
must be seen from within her eyes,  
Because that is the doorway to her heart,  
The place where love resides

The beauty of a woman

is not in a facial mole,  
But true beauty in a woman  
is reflected in her soul

It is the caring that she lovingly gives,  
The passion that she shows,  
And the beauty of a woman  
With passing years  
Only grows

(Authorship is variously attributed to the following: Maya Angelou, Ralph Fenger, Audrey Hepburn, and Sam Levenson).

### **No one's perfect**

Without question, attitude and personality are what ultimately "make or break" a person. While I highly esteem women, I want to be careful to recognize that like any of us, they are only human. Perhaps the greatest demonstration of respect is through enduring forgiveness and patience with them in the midst of mistakes, and the honesty and integrity to admit when we're wrong in return.

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