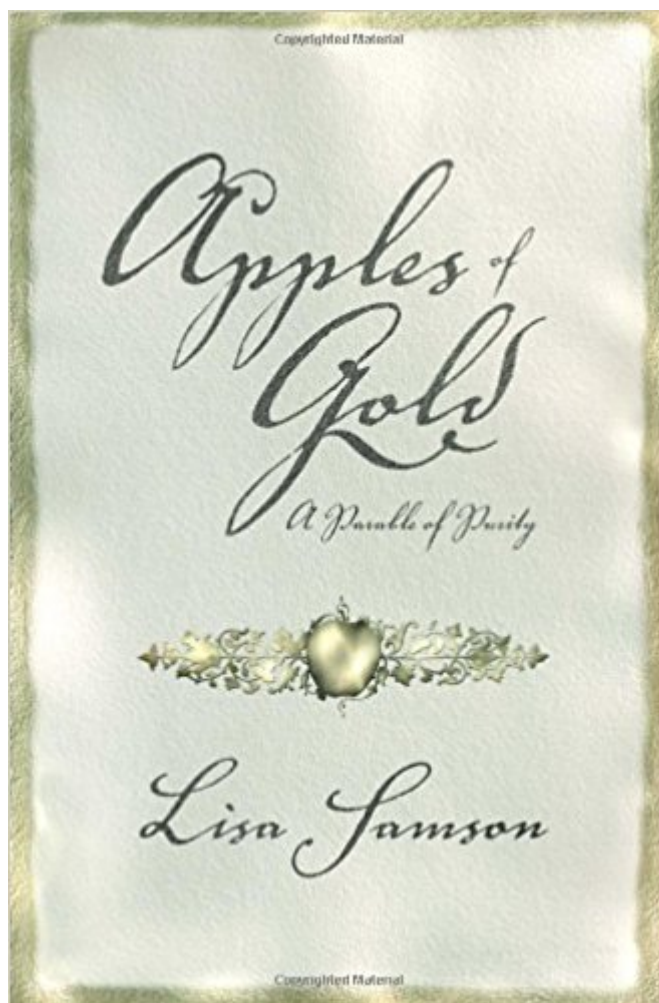


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Apples Of Gold: A Parable Of Purity



Synopsis

“Once upon a time, many years ago, when true love walked hand in hand with kisses and promises, and decisions were made to last forever, two girls received a summons to appear before the governor. So begins the story of two sisters in a long-ago land who are presented with a precious gift. The governor wants the young women to protect and care for this gift until the return of his son, the prince of the land. Upon the prince’s return, one sister will be chosen to serve the prince according to how the gift was cared for and both sisters will be surprised by what the prince wants to offer the one who best cherishes the gift. The young women have dreams of being happy and loved. But how they see the gift and themselves will determine how that gift is treasured and what will remain of their dreams. Apples of Gold is a powerful parable about the beauty of sexual purity and the prize that awaits those who are committed to the keeping of such a gift.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Praise for Apples of Gold “Lisa brilliantly weaves the important message of purity into this powerful little parable • a must-read for every young woman you care

about! Shannon Ethridge, M.A, Best-selling author of Every Young

Woman’s Battle “Lisa Samson’s Apples of Gold is the perfect

apple of a story • a beautiful tale on the outside with delicious

substance underneath! In an age when too many girls are confused about what real love involves,

mothers and daughters should not miss this important parable. *“A beautiful tale, simply told, Apples of Gold shines with truth. Give this book as a gift to the young girls in your family. You’ll be glad you did.”* —Angela Hunt, author of *Uncharted Waters*

“My fifteen-year-old daughter stayed up late to finish Apples of Gold. She loved the story’s fairy-tale format, and the message came through beautifully, yet subtly.” —Robin Lee Hatcher, author of *A Carol for Christmas*

“Apples of Gold is an allegory with a hook that will catch the imaginations of young teen and pre-teen girls. As the father of a lovely daughter and grandfather of eight beautiful granddaughters, I want every one of them to read Apples of Gold and cherish its truths.” —Deborah Raney, author of *A Vow to Cherish and Remember to Forget*

“We speak of sex to our girls at a younger and younger age. Lisa Samson has taken the heart of a crucial concept, wrapped it in a lovely story, and delivered a message that cannot be stressed enough, soon enough.” —Eric Wiggan, author of *The Gift of Grandparenting*

“Lisa Samson’s Apples of Gold is a lovely and touching parable about purity and self-respect, a gentle reminder to our sons and daughters that they have been given a precious treasure to cherish.” —Donita K. Paul, author of *DragonSpell* and *DragonKnight*

“Lisa Samson, in her masterful style, pens a beautiful allegory in Apples of Gold. This lovely book touches on a sensitive topic with the beauty and respect it deserves.” —DeAnna Julie Dodson, author of *In Honor Bound, By Love Redeemed* and *To Grace Surrendered*

“Apples of Gold is a precious gem of a story. Sweet and touching with a powerful message every young girl should hear.” —Roxanne Henke, author of *After Anne* and *With Love, Libby*

“Lisa Samson has created a delightful story that can be read for sheer enjoyment by a wide age range of readers. But Apples of Gold offers parents a much needed format to go beyond the story, through the Parable, and straight to the heart of what every young woman needs to discuss with her parents: sex. If we don’t talk to our kids about sex, there’s a whole world out there waiting to do it for us and they won’t offer God’s perspective.” —Dandi Daley Mackall, award-winning and best-selling children’s author

“Apples of Gold is powerful and persuasive tale that encourages a young girl to value her virginity as a gift entrusted to her by God. Highly recommended!” —Kathy Herman, author of the *Seaport Suspense Novels*, the *Baxter Series*, and *Poor Mrs. Rigsby*

“Lisa Samson, in her masterful style, pens a beautiful allegory in Apples of Gold. This lovely book touches on a sensitive topic with the beauty and respect it deserves.” —Gail Gaymer Martin, award-winning novelist for Steeple Hill and Barbour Publishing

“Apples of Gold captures the heart as well as the mind! As the mother of four young daughters, I am especially grateful to Lisa Samson for crafting a story that conveys

profound truth while also drawing on images from the fairy tales that my daughters love. By doing so, Lisa has given us an effective and powerful tool to share the importance of purity in a world that pushes anything but. I'm sharing this story with my daughters now, before they're teens, so that when the time comes, they concept of purity will be one they easily understand.

Marlo Schalesky, author of *Empty Womb*, *Aching Heart* and *Only the Wind Remembers*

"A relevant story for today's world, Lisa Samson's *Apples of Gold* offers encouragement and hope to those readers who would take up the challenge and learn from someone who's been there. This story is a must read for the preteen and teenage girls in your realm of influence.

Diann Hunt, Author of *RV There Yet?*

"Lisa Samson's delightful parable presents morality and consequences in a fresh light - one that makes the reader say, 'Of Course!'

Carolyn Aarsen, author of *The Only Best Place*

Lisa Samson is the Christy award-winning author of sixteen novels, including the critically acclaimed *Women's Intuition* and *Tiger Lillie*. Lisa, her husband, and their three children recently moved from suburban Baltimore to urban Lexington, Kentucky where they enjoy walking to the coffee shop, the library, and the park. Lisa speaks at writers' conferences and has recently started a critique service to help other writers who wish to grow.

The principle behind the story is fantastic and I appreciate the author addressing such a difficult subject as purity but that said it does get a little difficult when it seems like Ugly girl gets favored by Mommy and Daddy and the AUTHOR while its pick on the pretty princess and she is screwed at the end of the book....the idea is great but I do not know why Ugly has too equal good inside and Pretty has to equal hideous inside....not necessarily the whole lesson I want for my daughter.

This was a beautiful, encouraging parable. I'm much older than the intended audience, single and in my 30s, but I still enjoyed it. The story still made me think and challenged me. I read it quickly, in just a couple hours and all in one sitting. It was a blessing.

Great book! My kids ages 8-13 love it!

Lisa Samson is a lyrical writer with a marvelous, God-given gift to examine the human heart. Though her "realistic" fiction is stronger than this short fairy tale, I personally found the story to be

filled with wisdom and beautiful imagery. Some reviewers seem to miss the point of the story entirely. Yes, the blonde, beautiful sister is ultimately portrayed with character flaws, but Ms. Samson's intention does not seem to be a criticism of a person's looks. The object of the story is the issue of whether each girl cherishes the gift that is given to her. The premise of this lyrical tale concerns two sisters, Liza and Kate, who live on a prosperous island governed by a benevolent ruler. The governor's son is seeking a servant to manage his household affairs, and he desires that his father present both girls with precious gifts. Liza and Kate are each given beautifully golden, lusciously fragrant apples to guard for a week's time. After the completion of the week, the governor's son will arrive and ask to see the apples. The sister whose apple is undamaged will obtain the prized position of servant. Which sister will cherish her gift, and which one will not? Whom will the governor choose? This parable extolls the importance of guarding the purity of which we have been presented. The apples are a perfect analogy. I especially liked that both sisters were portrayed so differently: one cautious and struggling with feelings of inadequacy, and one frivolous and impulsive. I liked that both sisters were far from perfect. This fact added a touch of realism to the story. My only complaint is that the author's note to girls seemed a little too preachy. Ms. Samson seems to gloss over the very real and unfortunate fact that temptation lurks everywhere. She seems to imply that maintaining purity is very simple: she did it, after all. It's possible I'm reading more into the author's comments than are meant, but being unmarried and thus knowing that this struggle is very real indeed, I did feel great empathy for Kate's character at times. All in all, this book reaffirms the truth that beauty is fleeting but love is abiding. It would be interesting if Ms. Samson would one day write an allegory depicting Christ's love for us all. I think readers who complain about Ms. Samson's treatment of Kate's character in *Apples of Gold* might appreciate a story examining another biblical truth: that God loves us unconditionally, and that He proved it by taking our filth and heinous deeds upon Himself, (2 Corinthians 5:21). Please give this lyrical parable about the importance of purity a chance. God bless you all.

Two young sisters in a long-ago land of forever promises and special fruits are each given an apple, a beautiful scarlet apple, to keep safe and unblemished until the governor's son returns to inspect them after a week. And, in the process, choose whoever guarded her apple best as his bride. Clearly this is a parable of purity, one quite lyrically written. While I love parables and appreciated the lush language and message of this one, some deep flaws in stereotypes and forgiveness kept it from being the proverbial golden apple. Get this: the blonde pretty sister who gets compliments constantly is the one who messes up, while her plain sister is the one who guards

her apples (excuse me, apple) very carefully until the governor's son, the one right man, comes along to hold it, bite it, and just luv it. Obviously a stereotype of the shallow sort and therefore a big fault, as other reviewers have complained, but this was not by far the book's biggest fault: the treatment of the sisters' personalities was. In particular Liza, the "good" sister. In most books about purity, the author knows to be careful when presenting their heroine as a girl not just pure in body, but in thought; the books "The Princess and the Kiss" and "The Three Weavers" did excellent jobs at this. "Golden Apples", on the other hand, portrays the "pure" sister Liza as pure in body, but occasionally proud in thought. One description in the book says that "Liza took comfort in one thought: she was smarter than Kate and knew that prettying oneself and laughing like a brook didn't please anyone for very long". This off-putting sentence was compounded by the fact that preceding it was a paragraph stating that Liza's parents always came to HER for trustworthy errands, knowing that "her heart was strong and her aim was true". This description made me want to gag, after noting the fact that Liza seemed aware of her own virtue herself. And of course, happy-with-herself Liza is proven right in the end: Kate presents her apple with faults, namely the marks of another man, to the governor's son and is given a piteous and disappointed look from him. The poor girl finally gives up trying to defend her actions and flees the room in tears. Liza, and the author, don't sympathize with her for long. As Liza's going through a drawer in her room later on, it says "her grief for her sister began to fade. Kate's actions belonged to Kate alone". After all, Liza had TRIED to warn her and help Kate with her wisdom, but Kate hadn't listened. While I understand the common sense of allowing people to account for their own actions, Liza's fading sadness for her sister (mentioned twice) rather repelled me. If someone's life is saddened by sin and they are publically shamed for it, my sympathy for them as a fellow sinner and human being rises, not falls. Such people are well-aware of their mistakes and need comfort from a brother or sister in Christ, not condescending disapproval. The author at this point happily leaves Kate in the shadows, focusing instead on Liza's pure happiness. Liza revels in it too; her wedding day describes her as radiant, saying "not even Kate could outshine her. Liza's wedding day. Happiness filled her from marrow to skin". Even here, even on peaceful Liza's wedding day, there's still a triumphant note of competition against Kate. A wedding scene should never make you want to slap the bride silly, but I certainly did. Throughout the book we're encouraged to feel sympathy for Liza and disapprove of Kate's pride, but now that the situation's reversed, our feelings shouldn't be as well? Liza's a nice character and the book is mostly balanced with her genuine love for her sister, but these descriptions and mental remarks on her side were so unnecessary. It almost seemed to me that the author thought she needed to tell her readers what to feel: "Ok, Liza knows that a good heart is better than a

cheerful personality; this makes her SMARTER, get it? And since Kate created her own sadness, you shouldn't feel sorry for her; see, Liza doesn't. And you understand why, right?" Yes, I get it, and most teenagers with functioning cerebrums will too; there's no need to make Liza less likeable by filling her head with every principle you want the reader to swallow! That's not how you express such principles! Even smaller children would get that Kate doesn't deserve very heavy sympathy and that Liza's virtues are longer lasting without spelling it out, especially through Liza herself, which makes her by default extremely prideful. Overall, this is a lovely book, well-written and expressive. The two sisters love each other inspite of their faults and there was most likely hope for Kate, since men generally admired her, she learned the truth of real beauty, and desired others apart from the governor's son anyway. And, of course, since God's more forgiving than authors. Let's just hope that author Samson writes her next children's book with more subtlety.

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