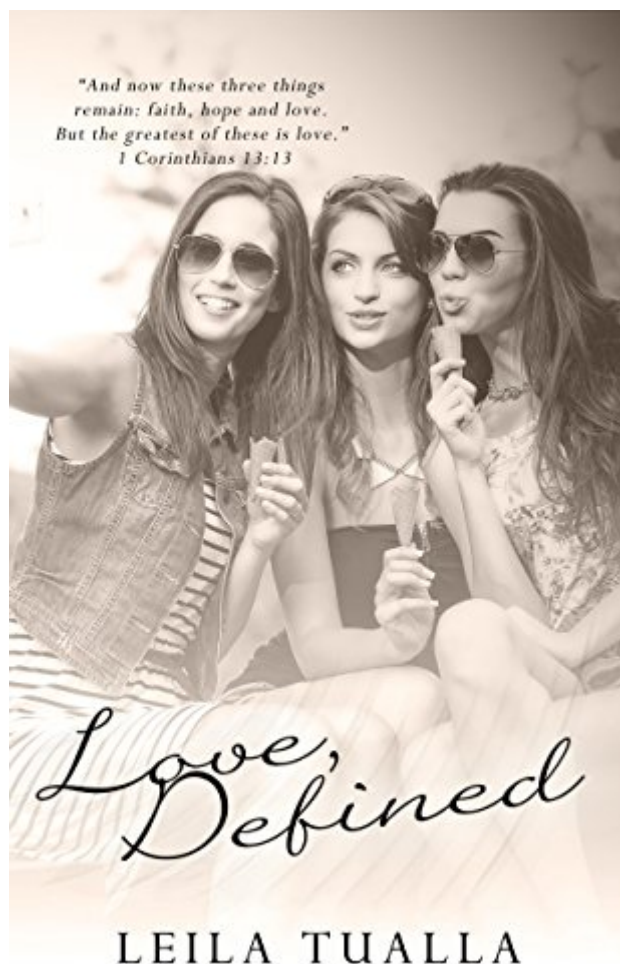


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Love Defined



Synopsis

In their final summer before graduating college, three childhood friends expect an uncomplicated transition to adulthood—but learn they all still have some growing up to do. Alex Makapulo is facing a crisis of faith. Raised a Catholic, Alex is considering becoming a member of her best friend Jack Page's church—against her family's wishes—but she can't quite take the final step of baptism. Jack loves Alex and doesn't understand her hesitation, and Alex wonders if Jack's love is a blessing or a distraction to test her religious conviction. Lori Hanson embarks on the trip of a lifetime. For her twenty-second birthday, Lori's grandfather presents her with a summer vacation in England. While preparing for her adventure, she meets British musician Colin Watson online and quickly falls for him. They plan to hook up when she lands in London, but her grandfather forbids it. Due to complicated family dynamics, Lori must regretfully comply with his wishes, though she vows never to forgive him. Andy Taylor is looking for love in all the wrong places. When Andy runs into an old crush, she decides she wants a more meaningful relationship with sexy Miles Webber. But when she confides in Alex, her friend warns her Miles only wants her for sex. Andy becomes angry and devises a reckless plan to distract Alex's attention from her relationship. Things don't go quite as she expected, though, and Andy is left facing a crushing moral dilemma. As the summer unfolds, three young women learn love and faith go hand in hand, not everything is black and white, and sometimes in a fast-paced world you have to slow down, breathe a little, and find your own definition of love.

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Customer Reviews

Right from the get go, I knew this was going to be an intriguing YA book. The cover of Love Defined by Leila Tualla, confirms this marvelous contemporary story of three college girls on the brink of discovering their new adult lives in the working world. Author Tualla sets the stage where we are hooked into some kind of distressing event that is causing a lot of emotional tension between the girls. Backing up three months to the start, we are introduced to college girls that have been friends for eternity, but even though their personalities are being constantly defined by age and life, friends stick together no matter what. Three different girls, three different storylines, but uniquely blended together with some of the chapters opening with one of the girl's quotes, directing our attention to the storyline at hand and moving it forward. I have to admit I loved Alex's story, as she developed strength and maturity in her devotion to God. Her struggles were real, but her faith continued to grow and deepen as her friend's problems spiraled out of hand. I loved the style of the author's writing, as Love Defined is as true to life as you can get. This is not a sugar coated book, but definitely a Christian story that is probably happening all over the world to young adults and older teens, over and over again. Although, as in real life, we don't know what will happen in the long run with these girls, Tualla does give us a satisfying ending, knowing that God is faithful and His love endures. As the author reminds us: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." 1 Cor. 13:13 There must be a sequel to this book!

As we grow into adults and set our future paths, the people we are friends with can often change and sometimes the ones that you love most in the world are the ones that you can end up pushing away first as all of a sudden, they don't fit into the types of people you should be hanging with or you discover that you want different things in life and have different hobbies which lead to friends etc. Love Defined by Leila Tualla is that sort of book and it really reminded me of the Britney Spears movie "Crossroads" where three childhood friends get together on the night after Graduation to dig up an old time capsule which leads them spending time together on a road trip to LA. In Love

Defined, we have Alex who is just discovering what it is to be a Christian and she is in love with her friend Jack who is studying to be a Pastor but the romantic cynic in her is scaring her away from making the first step in not only love but also her move in Christianity as her parents are devout Catholics and she was brought up in the Catholic church. Lori has met a guy online - Colin and is headed overseas for the first time but what happens when she goes with her grandfather who starts to treat her like she is not only a child but also a slut, when Lori has never had a proper relationship before. Can Lori stand up for herself and take her life in her hands for a while rather than stepping down and complying with what her family wants and needs are? Third but not least, is Andrea Taylor aka Andy who is the Politician's daughter so she should be all classy and uptight but she is anything but as behind doors with her friends, she lets her hair loose and is a party animal. What will happen though when one night of fun turns into a drunken party where she accidentally sleeps with Alex's boss's son and she falls pregnant? The story then leads up with the three of them taking a ride to an abortion clinic where Andy must make the decision of a lifetime and one that will either break or bond the three girls together forever. Love Defined, was one of those College friendship tales where it's not till something major happens in our life that we can come to appreciate the friendships we have established in life and about the people who care for us most when times get hard.

What is love? Is it unconditional? Can it bring out the best and worst in us? Three young women on the cusp of adulthood wrestle with and learn about this word in its many dimensions. Alex Makapulo searches for the unconditional kind through Christ and her dearest companion, Jack. She knows that her love for the Lord is deep and sincere. But, she holds back. Alex is unsure if she deserves to be reciprocated. Then there is Jack. Inexperience and lack of faith in herself leave her uncertain of how she feels for him. Is he her best friend or her soulmate? Her two roommates Andy Taylor and Lori Hanson struggle with their own issues of sentiment. Andy looks for the wrong kind in the wrong people. Her reckless behavior eventually leaves her with another choice. Can she love an individual she has never met enough to put his needs before hers. Will she love him enough to save his life? Lori's dilemma involves devotion to her grandfather. Alex has known her entire life, but hurts her in a soul piercing way. When he seeks her forgiveness, is she able to overcome the pain and anger enough to open her heart to him once again? As I made my way through the pages, I found myself becoming more and more emotionally invested in the characters. I rooted for Alex. Yet, like her roommates, I wished that she would relax and enjoy life a bit more. I hoped that Jack would be that

special person for her. But, I understood her doubt. After all, if he wasn't "the one" and she made the wrong move, she could lose him forever. I wasn't sure if I wanted to shake Andy or hug her until she felt loved enough to respect herself and her body. Lori made me think of my younger self, holding grudges that were best washed away with forgiveness. It's reasonable to say that Leila Tualla did an amazing job. How else could she have captured my heart and my attention so fully? I only hope that she writes a sequel. She has me wanting to follow the lives of her characters and find out what kind of women they become.

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