

LEADER
GUIDE



sex and the city
UNCOVERED



marian jordan

Dear Book Club Leader,

I'm thrilled you've decided to lead a book club using *Sex and the City Uncovered!* I know this experience will be life changing for you and for the other women in your group. I so wish I could sit down with your group for coffee and laugh and cry as you walk through this season of life together.

In this Leader's Guide you will find tips to help you start a successful book club, as well as week by week instructions, and steps to sharing your faith in Jesus Christ. It is my desire that this guide is an aid for you as you lead other women in the study of this book.

First, I want to encourage you in the role you are taking on as a Book Club Leader. Friend, it was in a small group setting that my life was truly transformed. I was the girl "looking for love in all the wrong places" until I found myself in a Bible study with a few other women who showed me what it was like to know, love, and follow Jesus. Small groups provide a place where women can be honest, transparent, and most importantly real. I pray that your book club will be a place where girls can discuss their hopes, heartbreaks, and find healing for their hurts.

And guess what? God will use you to make an eternal difference in someone's life!

One of my favorite Bible stories tells a miracle of transformation. In John 2 we learn that Jesus was invited to attend a wedding in Cana. In Jewish culture a wedding was a time of joyful celebration. At this wedding, the host family ran out of wine, which was considered a huge social faux pas in that day. Therefore, when Jesus' mother learned of the situation she reported the problem to her Son. She knew that Jesus could transform the situation. Jesus instructed the servants to fill six empty water pots to the brim with water. Then

miraculously Jesus transformed the water to wine. This was the first miracle that revealed his glory.

While this story is special because it is the first recorded miracle of Jesus, what I love most is what it teaches us about God's work. You see, Jesus entrusted this *miracle of transformation* into the hands of the servants. The servants were the ones who poured the water. The servants were the ones who witnessed the water transform into wine before their very eyes. The servants were the ones who stood by as the wedding guests enjoyed the benefits of Jesus' amazing power.

Friend, you are in the same position as a book club leader. God has chosen you as his instrument. Just imagine what you will witness God will do in the lives of women! Your role is simply to serve God by loving the girls in your group and sharing with them God's truth. Like the servants in John 2, Jesus is entrusting you with the miracle of transformation!

You are in my prayers as you begin this amazing journey.

For His Glory!

Marian Jordan

- www.RedeemedGirl.org
- www.RedeemedGirl.blogspot.com
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=617306187>
- Myspace: <http://www.myspace.com/redeemedgirlministries>
- www.BHPublishingGroup.com

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BOOK CLUB PLANNING TIPS

- **Invite women to join your book club:** Explain that you will read and discuss *Sex and the City Uncovered*. Be sure to invite women at least three weeks prior to your first meeting so that they have plenty of time to buy the book and read the first chapter.
- **Choose the date, time, and place for your book club:** (Hint: coffee shops, apartments, dorm lobbies, churches, and restaurants make great book club settings.) Let the women know there will be a set start and end time. (ex. Wednesday night, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at Starbucks)
- **Inform participants well in advance to purchase the book:** (Books are available online at Amazon, Barnes and Nobles, Lifeway Christian Book Stores, and many others.)
- **Get the word out:** (facebook/email/phone calls/evite etc.). Be sure all the details are clear and easy to follow. Where to meet, when to meet, what to bring, and what to read prior to the first meeting.
- **Pray:** Ask God to prepare you to facilitate the group. Ask for specific women to join the club who need to hear this message. Pray for wisdom and guidance as a leader. Pray for God to bless your book club and for him to transform lives! Pray over your time together and for each girl that comes through the door. Ask God to use you in an effective way to minister to the girls that come and that the group time and discussions would bring glory to His name.
- **Prepare:** Read the book and review the study guide provided. Prepare your own notes, comments, and questions to go along with those provided.
- **Provide:** As the leader your job is to make sure there is comfortable seating for the group and provide note cards (for prayer requests), extra pens, and refreshments if appropriate.

- ***Tips for First Meeting:***

1. Allow time for everyone to arrive, chat with each other, and get a snack. (It is best to not allow this time to linger too long or you will have difficulty getting everyone re-focused). Be sure to begin promptly!
2. Sit where all can see you and officially welcome everyone to the group and let them know how happy you are that they are there. Introduce yourself and any co-leaders
3. Pass out note cards for everyone to fill out their name/ email/phone number/birthday, etc. This way you can contact everyone in your group.
4. Share your vision for the book club (i.e. fellowship/ exploration of God's truth/prayer and encouragement).
5. Encourage the girls to be open to share with each other and that it is a safe place to do so. Remind them that this time is meant for discussion. (Emphasize that everything shared should be kept confidential.) Model openness by sharing with them why you picked *Sex and the City Uncovered* for the book club.

BOOK CLUB GROUP TIME GUIDE

I. FELLOWSHIP/CONNECTION TIME (10-15 minutes)

The purpose of this time is to break the ice and create community.

II. DISCUSSION/EXPLORATION OF TRUTH (45 minutes)

The purpose of this time is to dig into the book and cultivate discussion.

1. Open this time with prayer. Ask God to guide the conversations and teach each girl what only His spirit can.
2. Dive into questions from the back of book. Have assigned scriptures and passages ready to read out loud.
**See week by week discussion guide*
3. Make sure everyone is involved in discussion and on topic. Avoid going off on tangents. After one girl answers a question, it is good to ask “What do the rest of you think?” (Don’t be afraid of silence.)
4. Affirm answers given whenever possible. Encourage times of deeper discussion and always direct women to God’s truth.
5. After going through the discussion guide conclude with prayer time.

III. PRAYER/ CLOSE (15-20 minutes)

The purpose of this time is to conclude the study with prayer and instructions for the next meeting.

(Be sensitive to the fact that some girls in the group are not comfortable praying out loud. Ask for volunteers rather than assigning the task.)

1. Pass out note cards to each person in the group and encourage them to write a personal prayer request on the card to exchange with another member of the group. This way you can be praying for each other during the week.
2. Assign the next chapter to read.
3. End on time with a closing prayer. (Women are more likely to stay consistent if they know the established time is reliable.)

WEEK BY WEEK DISCUSSION GUIDE

WEEK ONE

Chapter 1: The Sex and the City Life

1. What elements of Marian's story do you connect with?
2. All of us go through life with some insecurities. Identify some of your own insecurities and methods you use to mask them.

***Leader:** Please note that some women in your group may be shy or they may not know everyone, so be sure you "open up" and identify some of your own insecurities. Don't monopolize the conversation or feel you must do all the talking, but do keep in mind that you set the tone for the group time.*

3. Define the "modern single girl" as seen in various modes of the entertainment industry.

***Leader:** Ask for girls to throw out examples (specific TV characters, magazines, etc) and where these examples come from. Which ones are the most powerful and why?*

4. How does the world tell us we should try and fill "our empty martini glass"?

***Leader:** Do those things truly replenish and fill? If so, how long until the thirst returns?*

Read the following scripture: Proverbs 14:12

- *How does this verse describe the issue raised in this chapter?*
- *What “way” seems right to the world?*

5. Introspectively, can you identify a decision that led to a chain of events that directed the course of your life for a time? Would you modify that decision based on what you know now?

Leader: This question deals with Marian’s decisions in college. Ask if anyone can pinpoint a time in their life that altered the direction of their life?

Leader: Read the following quote out loud and ask the women to discuss.

“There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God Himself” (Blaise Pascal).

**Suggested Scriptures: Genesis 1:1, Genesis 1:26-17;
Colossians 1:16-17, John 1:3-4**

WEEK TWO

Chapter 2: Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places

1. Which *Sex in the City* character, as described in this chapter, do you identify with the most? Why?
2. “Women just really want to be rescued.” Agree/Disagree

Leader: Discuss the episode cited in this chapter’s introduction (found on pages 13-14). Why do some women fear admitting they “want to be rescued?”

3. Describe how you/we “look for love in all the wrong places.”

Leader: Explain that love can also be defined as “acceptance, approval, completion, or attention”

4. Have you ever felt “captive to emptiness”? How does emptiness create a prison in our lives?

Leader: Read “The Prison” found on pages 22-25 and discuss.

5. What lies are we as females told by the world from the time we are small through maturity? Who tells us these lies?
6. Compare and contrast Adam and Eve’s life in the garden before and after the apple. What did they gain? What did they lose? Was eating the apple worth it?

Leader: Read out loud the following “before” and “after” verses with your group.

Genesis 2:25: The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Genesis 3:6-8: When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

Leader: Read and discuss “The Design” page 28-30

Suggested Scriptures: John 10:10; Colossians 2:8

WEEK THREE

Chapter 3: Looking for Love in Mr. Right

1. We are all in a constant state of looking for the perfect guy, the perfect shoe, the perfect black dress, and the perfect hairstyle – all seem elusive. Talk about your current “searches” or “thirsts.”
2. What thirst did the woman at the well have that she hadn’t recognized?

Leader: Read “Thirsty Girl Meets Jesus” on pages 57-63 and discuss.

Ask the women to identify how the woman at the well attempted to quench her thirst. Hint: The answer is men.

Leader: Remind the group that relationships are good by reading the following quote:

“As a single girl, there are two truths that I must hold in balance in order to be content. First, God created me for relationship, so my desire for a husband is not wrong; it is good. Second, even though I was designed to be in relationship, my ultimate contentment, satisfaction, and happiness will never be achieved simply through a human relationship. I was designed for something far bigger, far greater, something far more satisfying.”(p. 56-57)

3. Jesus offers the woman at the well/us a different kind of water: “But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again – ever!” (John 4:13). Discuss the implications of Jesus’s meeting our thirsts.

4. Define *God-spot*, according to the text.

Leader: *Ask if anyone would like to read the definition from page 52.*

“The God-spot is easy to recognize: the empty ache in our souls that never seems to be satisfied.”

5. How are acceptance and security related to unconditional love?

Leader: *Remind the group of the foundational truths discovered in chapter two.*

Flip back and read “The Loss” on pages 34-36. Remind the group that the unconditional love that every woman craves can only be found in a relationship with God.

Suggested Scriptures: Psalm 42: 1-2; Psalm 63: 1-3

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WEEK FOUR

Chapter 4: Looking for Love in Approval

1. Where do you/we look for approval?
2. Describe some labels that you have had to live with since junior high. Where did those labels come from? Are you still living with them, or have you rejected the labels of the past?

Leader: Read the following quote from pages 78-79 and discuss:

“Think about it. What things do we do so that others will approve of us? What lengths do we go to in order to feel like we belong? How much money do we spend? How much time do we invest? How much of our daily effort is fueled by the desire to find acceptance? It’s called “Keeping up with the Joneses” for a reason.”

3. Do you believe that the appearance factor and the performance factor are strong motivators in the daily decisions we make? How? Why?
4. What defines you?

Leader: Read and discuss “What Defines You” from pages 89-90.

5. Rejection and acceptance both have an impact on the way we view ourselves. Discuss an example of each from the recent past. How did you handle the rejection? The acceptance?

6. Jesus gave the sinful woman at the party a new label: “forgiven”

Leader: Read Luke 7:44-50.

“When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, ‘If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.’ Jesus answered him, ‘Simon, I have something to tell you.’ ‘Tell me, teacher,’ he said. ‘Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?’ Simon replied, ‘I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled.’ ‘You have judged correctly,’ Jesus said. Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.’ Then Jesus said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ The other guests began to say among themselves, ‘Who is this who even forgives sins?’ Jesus said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”

After she had been rejected by all the townspeople. You/we are not rejected by Christ in our present state; we are accepted, forgiven, and loved. What kind of effect do you think Jesus's acceptance had on the sinful woman's life?

Leader: *Read Section "Who is This Man?" on pages 93-94.*

Ask the women to think of their old labels as "lies" and to believe the words of Jesus who says that they are "loved, chosen, and accepted."

Read the following quote from page 97 as a thought to ponder: "When we give someone the power to define us, we put that person in the place of God."

**Suggested Scriptures: Psalm 139 (especially verses 13-17),
Genesis 1:31**

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WEEK FIVE

Chapter 5: Looking for Love in a Hook-up

1. Identify what (or whom) you are still looking for.
2. Is there such a thing as “sex without strings”? Agree/disagree. What strings come with being sexually active?

***Leader:** Read Carrie’s quote about “safe sex” that is found at the top of page 109 and discuss.*

***Leader:** Read “Ashley’s Story” found on pages 117-120 and discuss.*

3. Do you know someone who reminds you of the woman the temple leaders wanted to stone? How is she treated by the world? In what radical way did Jesus respond to her?

***Leader:** Read John 8:2-11 and discuss how Jesus responded to this woman?*

4. Identify a time when you felt condemned by your friends due to your actions. Discuss the impact of the condemnation.
5. Has anyone ever just loved you right where you were, no matter what you had done wrong? Compare and contrast the condemnation of the world with the way Jesus loved the woman accused of adultery.

***Leader:** Read Romans 8:1 as a verse of encouragement.*

“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

6. How does God's promise of "beauty for ashes" apply to you/us?

Leader: *Explain that the expression "beauty for ashes" means that God takes our brokenness and makes us whole. God can transform our shameful past into something beautiful.*

Leader: Now read and discuss "Susannah - A Lady Who Waited" from pages 129-131.

7. Relate "What looks like rejection is God's protection" with hindsight to a painful rejection.

Leader: Ask the women to explain the physical and emotional consequences that result from going against God's design for sex?

8. How is God's design for sex for our own good?

Leader: *Finish by reading the following quote from pages 107-108.*

"God's design for sex is for our good. He created sex to bond a man and a woman together in the context of marriage. In the Bible, we are told that in marriage 'a man leaves his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh' (Gen 2:24 KJV). To become one flesh implies the union of man and woman in a sexual relationship. In the original language of this verse (Hebrew), the word for cleave is the same word as for glue. God designed sex to be a bonding mechanism, or the super glue between the husband and wife, in which they become one. Literally, when two people have sex, their souls unite and they bond to one another in a mysterious

way. This bonding works beautifully within the context of marriage, but outside of marriage, this bonding can cause emotional heartache, and deep lasting damage to the soul.”

Suggested Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6: 16-18 (printed on page 106), 1 John 1:9; Romans 8:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:17

WEEK SIX

Chapter 6: Looking for Love at Happy Hour

1. Explain what C.S. Lewis meant when he said, “What does not satisfy when we find it was not the thing we were desiring.”

Leader: Read “The Fix” found on pages 136-139 and discuss.

2. Describe and detail your “happy hour” elements. Or fill in the blank: “comfort _____ is my comfort zone.”

Leader: Ask the women to identify where they turn to in order to fill their emptiness.

Read John 7:37-38 as a verse of encouragement:

“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”

3. Are you currently “running on empty”? Reflect on a time when your red light was flashing. Who or what is/was siphoning your gas? Propose a possible solution to this dilemma.
4. “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.” What type of death is Proverbs 14:12 referring to? How does this apply to us?

Leader: Read “Running on Empty” found on pages 143-147 and discuss.

5. In John 10:10 Jesus said, “A thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance.” What has been stolen, killed, or destroyed in your life? Define an abundant life in your own words. Discuss the contrast.

6. Examining the parallel of the Vine and the branch with our lives relying on Jesus, how can we stay connected and dependant on the Vine of Jesus today?

***Leader:** Read John 15: 4-11*

***Leader:** Read “Intervention” found on pages 147-149 and discuss.*

Suggested Scriptures: John 15:4-11; John 10:10

7

WEEK SEVEN

Chapter 7: He Is Just That into You!

1. Describe something or someone you view as a treasure. What makes that thing or person valuable? Do you believe God views you as a treasure?

Leader: Read “Value” found on pages 170-174 and discuss.

2. What do you believe must shift in values and perceptions in this present-day culture for people to view themselves and others as a “treasure”?

Leader: Read the following quote from page 170.

“When I understood the meaning and the implications of God’s rescue mission, it rocked my world. The reason why this truth transformed me is that finally, I felt loved. And in this love, I finally found my worth, my value, and my true identity.”

3. If you were asked, “What are you worth?” how would you respond? On what are you basing your response?
4. “An item is worth what someone is willing to pay for it” (p. 172). Agree or disagree? Why?

Leader: Ask the women to think of something they paid a high price for because of the value of the object. Remind them that Jesus paid the highest possible price for them because of their value to Him.

5. According to 1 Peter 1:18-20, what grand gesture did God make *in order to rescue us* (p. 173)?

Leader: Read “Freed to Love” found on pages 174-175 and discuss.

6. Connect God’s gesture to what you/we are worth in His eyes.

Leader: End by reading “The Offer” found on pages 176-177 and discuss.

Suggested Scriptures: John 3:16; Galatians 1:4; 1 John 3:1

PLAN OF SALVATION

I. God's Perspective

God loves you and created you to know Him personally. He has a wonderful plan for your life.

God's Love

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, NIV)

God's Plan

“Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” (John 17:3)

What prevents us from knowing God personally?

II. Our Condition

People are sinful and separated from God, so we cannot know Him personally or experience His love and plan.

People are Sinful

“...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

People were created to have fellowship with God; but, because of our stubborn self-will, we chose to go our own independent way and fellowship with God was broken. This self-will, characterized by an attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference, is evidence of what the Bible calls sin.

People are Separated

“For the wages of sin is death” [spiritual separation from God] (Romans 6:23)

III. God's Response

Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our sin. Through Him alone we can know God personally and experience God's love and plan.

He died in our place.

"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

He rose from the dead.

"...Christ died for our sins... He was buried, He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, He appeared to more than five hundred..." (1 Corinthians 15:3-6)

He is the only way to God.

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" (John 14:6)

IV. Our Response

We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know God personally and experience His love and plan.

We must receive Christ.

"Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12)

We receive Christ through faith.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8,9)

When we receive Christ, we experience a new birth.
(Read John 3:1-8)

We receive Christ by personal invitation.

[Christ speaking] “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me.”
(Revelation 3:20)

Receiving Christ involves turning to God from self (repentance) and trusting Christ to come into our lives to forgive us of our sins and to make us what He wants us to be. Just to agree intellectually that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an emotional experience. We receive Jesus Christ by faith, as an act of the will.

You can receive Christ right now by faith through prayer. (Prayer is talking with God.)

God knows your heart and is not as concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart. The following is a suggested prayer:

Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving me of my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be.

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart? If it does, pray this prayer right now, and Christ will come into your life, as He promised.

BOOK CLUB RESOURCES

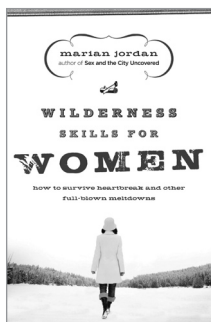


Sex and the City Uncovered

Is sex without strings ever possible? Is a closet full of designer clothes and shoes that cost a month's rent worth being in debt over your head? Is a social life that involves habitual happy hours really fulfilling? If you are one of the millions of women who is modeling her life according to those of Carrie, Miranda, Samantha and Charlotte on the HBO

Network series, "Sex and the City," the answer is a resounding and disturbing YES! In her book, *Sex and the City Uncovered*, author Marian Jordan tears away at the illusions of life and love portrayed by this hit TV series, and addresses the reason why women living the "Sex and the City" lifestyle still haven't found what they're looking for and never will.

Through firsthand experience, Marian realized that void could only be filled by the unfailing love she has found in Jesus Christ, and now she wants to fill women's hearts everywhere with the same joy. "When you take away the Manolo Blahniks, Cosmopolitans and never-ending string of love interests, the 'Sex and the City' lifestyle only leads to disappointment and disillusionment," said Jordan. "Look past the glamour and all you see is four women looking for love in all the wrong places, hiding their scarred hearts with designer clothes and desperately attempting to fill a void in their lives." Jordan explores a realistic version of the single woman's journey to find belonging, acceptance, security, completion and unconditional love in *Sex and the City Uncovered*.



For your next book club...

WILDERNESS SKILLS FOR WOMEN

Lace up your hiking boots and grab your backpack as Marian Jordan walks with you through the wilderness with her survival guide, *Wilderness Skills for Women*. This expedition through the wilderness isn't about roughing it in the great outdoors, rather, it is a journey

through the various wilderness seasons of life and the ultimate survival skills found in the Bible.

Through the stories of Moses, Joseph, Job, and others, Marian demonstrates how the greatest heroes of the bible endured seasons of wilderness in their lives, and the same is true for us today. While seasons of suffering can be very painful and demanding, it ultimately brings glory to God as you are made more into His likeness.

Marian shares, “Turning to the Bible, God taught me how other wilderness wanderers like me came forth triumphant from their seasons of testing in the wilderness. And He also taught me skills that I needed to learn from their experiences. These lessons are what you hold in your hands today. A real survival guide given to me in my most desperate time of need. It is my joy to pass these skills on to women who happen to find themselves lost in the wilderness.”



www.RedeemedGirl.org