



leader guide



WILDERNESS

SKILLS FOR

WOMEN

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Dear Book Club Leader,

Girl, I'm thrilled you've decided to lead a book club using *Wilderness Skills for Women*! 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 Leaders 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.

But first, I want to encourage you in the role you are taking on as a Book Club Leader. Friends, 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 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 get to see God 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 chapter 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](http://www.RedeemedGirl.org)
- [www.RedeemedGirl.blogspot.com](http://www.RedeemedGirl.blogspot.com)
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=617306187>
- Myspace: <http://www.myspace.com/redeemedgirlministries>
- [www.BHPublishingGroup.com](http://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 *Wilderness Skills for Women*. 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 *Wilderness Skills for Women* 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

### Introduction

1. Marian describes herself as an “ugly crier.” What kind of crier are you?

***Leader:** Read what Marian says about “wilderness seasons” on page 3 and discuss. “Throughout the Bible, a wilderness season is a time of testing, trying, and training an individual. It is often marked by a period of isolation, loneliness, temptation, sorrow, and waiting. Why? Circumstances that try us, train us. Situations that break us, shape us. Such is the wilderness. In the midst of the “dark night of the soul,” we are often miserable, but there, we are made. Transformed by the testing . . . if we pass the test, that is.”*

2. A wilderness season is a time when faith is tested. Are you currently in a wilderness, or have you been through one in the past?
3. Marian describes the elements of the “perfect storm” (rejection, unmet desire, heartbreak, loneliness, confusion) that resulted in her wilderness season. What circumstances led to your wilderness?

***Leader:** In the following excerpt, Marian explains the purpose of the book (P. 5).*

*“So, what’s a girl to do when she’s failing a test? Duh . . . study! Everything I needed to overcome the depression, fear, anxiety, and flat-out misery that I was feeling was at my disposal. I only had to make the decision to apply the truth of God’s Word to my circumstances and walk by faith. I don’t say this flippantly. No, it wasn’t a piece of cake to change my thinking and, therefore, reign in uncontrolled emotions. But I knew I had a decision to make. You see, walking by faith is a choice. I had to choose to believe who my God is, to believe what my God has said, and to believe what my God is able to do. 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.”*



# Chapter 1: Welcome to the Wilderness

1. Have you experienced grief as described in this chapter?

**Leader:** *Remind your group that this question does not just pertain to a breakup, but can relate to illness, death, financial crisis, personal failure, infertility, divorce, miscarriage, abandonment, etc.*

*Read the following out loud and discuss.*

*“I’ve never experienced a physical pain that compares to the emotional pain I felt. I remember thinking, Is there an elephant sitting on my chest? Am I having a heart attack?”*

*“Walking through this multilevel season of grief, filled with its doubts and fears, was for me a journey...a harsh wilderness trek through some rough woods and rugged terrain. Often, I felt completely lost in this wilderness. The underbrush of emotions and the steep cliffs of fear surrounded me at every turn. Confused, wounded, scared – and yes, at times, so very lonely.”*

2. Which of the five stages of the grief process are you currently in? Denial, anger bargaining, depression, or acceptance (p. 13)

**Leader:** *Your group members might not currently be in one of these stages, but you can ask if they remember going through one or all of them at some point.*

**Leader:** *Read the following quote out loud.*

*“Along the way, there were times I was severely tempted to throw away my camping gear and build a permanent*

*settlement. Denial is a cozy place to live... maybe I'll stay here, I mused. Or better yet, anger sure feels good. Perhaps, I'll forward my mail. Then there's depression. At least a girl can catch up on her sleep in Depressionville. But I didn't stay for long at any of these campsites... although each sure seemed alluring at times. I pressed on through the wilderness, sensing something or Someone was beckoning me forward... deeper through the thick darkness... toward a glimmer, a spark, a distant Light." (P. 13-14)*

3. Marian describes the tormenting questions that assaulted her faith. Can you relate to her experience?

**Leader:** *Below are the questions Marian was tormented by for reference.*

- *If God is so good, then why do you hurt so bad?*
- *How can you trust a God who would purposefully inflict such pain in your life?*
- *How could He – that God you love so much – have allowed this to happen?*
- *I thought Jesus loved you and had a wonderful plan for your life. Does this wonderful plan include public humiliation, rejection, heartbreak, and possibly lifelong singleness?*
- *It seems your God has blessings for everyone but you. You are such a fool. That trust of yours is pathetic. You would be happier if you would just bail on following that Jesus.*

## WEEK TWO

### Chapter 2: The Wilderness of Rejection

1. Everyone experiences some form of rejection. If your life were a reality tv show, which one would best fit you?

*Survivor* – “The tribe has spoken.”

*The Bachelor* – “No rose for you.”

*The Apprentice* – “You’re fired!”

*America’s Next Top Model* – “You just aren’t pretty enough or thin enough...”

**Leader:** : *Read the following out loud.*

*“When you stop to think about it, all of the so-called reality TV shows thrive on this same formula... The basis of every single of these shows is REJECTION!... When was the last time you felt the bitter sting of rejection? If a camera crew secretly filmed your life, what scene would be your ‘rose ceremony?’”*

**Leader:** *Read “The Rose Ceremony” and discuss (P. 23-24).*

2. In this chapter we learned how the deep wound of rejection can lead to future bad choices. Can you trace any of your regrettable decisions to a root of rejection?
3. Having read the story of Joseph, do you find any metaphoric parallels to your life? (I say metaphoric because I doubt that there are camels in your story – however, if there are, you go first!)

**Leader:** Ask your group to skim back over Joseph's story in the sections titled "Joseph", "The Pit", "Coincidence or Providence?" on pages 24-29 to answer this question.

4. To discover the theme of this chapter fill in the blank:  
What seems like \_\_\_\_\_ is God's  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Leader:** Read "Danger Zone" and discuss (P. 29-32).

5. How is the sovereignty of God revealed through the life of Joseph? How does this truth help you to trust God in your wilderness season?

**Leader:** Read "Perspective and Sovereignty" and discuss (P. 39-42).

**Leader:** Read Isaiah 41:9b-10.





## WEEK THREE

### Chapter 3: The Wilderness of Temptation

1. In the beginning of chapter 3, who did Marian say that she “fell head over heels in love with”? What elements of her testimony of transformation do you relate to?

*Leader:* Read “Head Over Heels” and discuss.

*Leader:* Read Ezekiel 36:26-27

*“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”*

2. Marian said it “was her passionate love for Jesus that was put to the test.” How is your love for God being tested?
3. Marian explained that true worship of God is when He is at the center of our hearts and lives. In this chapter, she uncovers how Satan seeks to destroy our worship through temptation. This temptation is described as a “war for our worship.” How does the realization that there is a war raging for your worship help you to overcome the temptation in the wilderness?

*Leader:* Read “The War” and discuss (p. 60-62)

*Leader:* Remind your group of Dr. James Dobson’s quote on page 65 from his best-selling book *When God Doesn’t Make Sense*.

*“Most believers are permitted to go through emotional and spiritual valleys that are designed to test their faith in the crucible of fire. Why? Because faith ranks at the top of God’s system of priorities. Without it, He said, it is impossible to please Him (Heb. 11:6). And what is faith? It is the substance of things ‘hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’ (Heb. 11:1 KJV). The determination to believe when the proof is not provided and when the questions are not answered is central to our relationship with the Lord.”*

4. Why does Satan desire to destroy our love for God?
  
5. Upon realizing she was in a war for her worship, Marian said, “There was no better way for me to express my love to God than by staying faithful to Him in my pain.” Here she describes making the mental choice to worship and praise God in her wilderness despite the pain and confusion she felt. How can you worship God in the midst of your struggle?

**Leader:** Read “Worship” and discuss (p. 66-67)

**Leader:** Read Job 13:15a

## Chapter 4: Sarah... A Survivor's Story

1. Sarah's story brings up the question that many ask in the wilderness: "why?" How can you relate to Sarah's struggle?

***Leader:** Have your group skim back over Sarah's story on pages 74-80.*

2. This chapter teaches a powerful truth about our perspective on pain. Sarah said, "I knew my pain had a purpose or God would not allow it. We live in a broken world that is filled with sin and suffering. God is not sadistic. Satan wanted me to believe He took pleasure in my pain. The truth is Jesus aches for me. I know God was saying to me, until healing comes, 'His grace would be sufficient for me and His strength would be made perfect in my weakness.'" Discuss her realization. How does remembering that God is not sadistic and that He hurts for you bring comfort to your heart?

***Leader:** Read Hebrews 4:14-16.*

*"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."*

3. Sarah is a woman who has chosen to use her suffering as a means to glorify God. How can you turn your situation into an opportunity for praise?

**Leader:** *Read this final section of Chapter 4.*

*“Girls, get this. Sarah should not be walking. She probably should not be alive today. Yet Sarah is the leader of a worship group called the Jump Team. God is a miracle worker! Everyday He performs a miracle in Sarah by giving her the strength and the ability to do what He has called her to do—bring Him glory through her gifts and talents. I love to watch that girl dance. Her feet move from a source that is otherly. Each step is a beautiful act of worship that brings glory to her King. During a dark season of life, Sarah made the choice to praise God with her life and with her talents, and by doing so she turned a wilderness of temptation into an act of worship.”*

## WEEK FOUR

### Chapter 5: The Wilderness of Despair

1. In this chapter Marian describes “that box” that inflicts pain. What is your box?

*Leader:* Read “That Box” and discuss (P. 82-84).

2. Despair is defined as a state of being without \_\_\_\_\_ . (p. 83)
3. Have you ever been at the point where you were ready to give up hope?

*Leader:* Read “The End of the Rope” and discuss (P. 85-87).

4. Hagar encountered God in the wilderness when she was at a point of desperation. What did you learn about God and about the wilderness from her experience?

*Leader:* Read “A Divine Search and Rescue Mission” and discuss (P. 88-89).

*Leader:* Discuss the questions asked on page 89.

- Are you running, hoping someone will catch you?

- Do you, like Hagar, feel unimportant and overlooked?

- Do you feel defeated by life?

- Is "LOST" more than just a television show in your world?

5. Do you ever feel "invisible" or like no one understands your pain? So did Hagar until her encounter with "the God who sees." Does this fact about God's character comfort you? Does it give you a newfound hope?

**Leader:** Read "Spill Your Guts, Girl" and discuss (P. 89-92).

6. On page 91 Marian describes how the wilderness took her prayer life to a whole new level of intimacy with god. Are you real and raw with God about your pain?

*Fill in the blanks of this powerful verse of Scripture:*

"The righteous \_\_\_\_\_ out, and the Lord \_\_\_\_\_, and delivers them from all their \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord is \_\_\_\_\_. He saves those \_\_\_\_\_ in spirit" (Ps. 34:17-18)



## Chapter 6: Cristy... A Survivor's Story

1. Have you ever needed god just to breathe?

**Leader:** Read the section below where Cristy describes her feelings (P. 100-101).

*"I needed God to breathe. The days that followed are a blur really. I think I was in shock. Initially I was numb. I could barely function. I don't know how I physically stood to walk and attend the funeral other than the fact that the Lord carried me. In the weeks that followed, getting out of bed was a difficult task. I would fall to the ground from the pain—it was so physical I would get violently ill. I didn't know if I would live through the grief. I can honestly say I sensed God's presence in a powerful way. I knew I wasn't alone. I literally didn't know how I would get through minute by minute.*

*...I fell down in grief dry heaving...All I could do was cling to God. I had an amazing family, but no one, absolutely no one, could carry me but Jesus."*

2. What do you learn about god from psalm 27:13-14?

**Leader:** Read Psalm 27:13-14 out loud and discuss.

*"I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."*

3. How did this assurance give Cristy the strength to begin to climb up out of her despair?

**Leader:** Read from page 102 below and discuss.

*“Despair was ever present. At such a young age to lose your husband and have that type of happiness ripped away, I remember thinking I never wanted to be happy again. I said these words to my dad one afternoon, months after John’s accident, as we were driving in the car. My dad looked at me and said, “Then you don’t have the faith that you profess.” When Dad said those words to me, I knew he was right. I realized living in despair is living in hopelessness. Until that day I’d never stopped to consider that I could have hope and joy ever again.”*

4. How is our “hope” for the future rooted in our “faith” in God?

**Leader:** Continue to read from page 102 below and discuss.

*“After that conversation, I thought long and hard about what it was that I did believe. What was this thing that I called “my faith”? I believed there is a God. I believed He is good and sovereign and that His plan was good. I also believed that God gave His Son to die for me, so He understood my loss and pain. Just stopping to think about my faith, what I truly believed, gave me the hope to make it the next day, and then to the next.”*

## WEEK FIVE

### Chapter 7: The Wilderness of Unmet Desires

1. Are you living with an unmet desire? What are you waiting for?

*Leader:* Read “Polar Bear Attacks” and discuss (P. 108-110).

2. Women face three dangers in the wilderness of unmet desire: envy, manipulation, and worry. Which of these is your greatest struggle?

*Leader:* Review pages 111-116 and discuss.

3. Marian described the danger of the “pity party” and how Satan uses this tool to damage our faith. What did she learn that helped her overcome this temptation?

*Leader:* Read “Left-Handed Shame” and discuss (P. 118-124).

*Leader:* Point out what Marian learned on page 119.

*“As I tuned out the whispers of the Enemy and stopped thinking about myself for half a second, I listened to the women around me and I realized something: each woman had an unmet desire in her heart. I was not alone.”*

4. Have you ever seen your unmet desire be gloriously met...for someone else? Has envy ever robbed you of the joy of sharing

in someone else's celebration? Take a moment here to pause and pray for God's protection from envy and comparison. In this moment thank God for the blessings in your life.

5. Marian talks about "finding an alternate route" to bypass the wait. Have you ever tried to "reroute" and manipulate your circumstances? How did that alternate route work for you? What consequences did you face for not waiting upon God?

**Leader:** Read "*Delight and Desire*" and discuss (P. 126-130).

6. Psalm 37:3-7 teaches us that the solution to worry is to "rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him." This psalm also teaches us that the way to do this is to "commit" (hand over) unmet desires to Him. What desires do you need to "commit to God"?

## WEEK SIX

### Chapter 8: Wilderness Skills

1. How did the instructions on the “little yellow flyer” prepare Marian and her friend for their surprise encounter?

*Leader:* Ask your group to share a similar moment of experiencing fear in the wild.

Read the following excerpt and ask your group to review the various types of wilderness seasons and the need for “skills.”

*I've thought many times “what if.” What if I didn't know that running was the one thing you are not supposed to do? Our natural reaction in that moment would have been to flee. But that action would have made us bear kibble for sure. Knowing the right skills literally saved our lives. Here's a fact: You will face a wilderness season. Each person's faith will be tested. At some point in life you will go through a wilderness. Perhaps you are in one now.*

- So far I've described for you a few different types of wildernesses and how these specific ones can be overcome.
- If facing rejection . . . a girl needs perspective.
- If in despair . . . a girl needs hope.
- If living with unmet desires . . . a girl needs to rest.
- If in the wilderness of temptation . . . a girl must choose to worship.

*These are but a few examples. Pain and suffering will strike each one of us in different ways and at different times. Will*

*you come out of yours bitter or better? Will you be a woman who is stronger or weaker in her faith? Will you run to the Lord or run from Him? Will the trial make you or break you?*

*How we survive our wilderness seasons is a choice. But survival is also a matter of knowing the right skills and applying them. In the following chapters you will learn four skills that are the essentials to any wilderness season you will encounter.*

*Study these skills. Put them into memory and into practice, for you never know when you'll turn a corner and find yourself staring straight into the eyes of a black bear the size of a Civic (P. 142-143).*

2. God's Word, the Bible, is our "instruction manual" for surviving the wilderness seasons of life. What do the following Scriptures teach you?

Psalm 119:105

Psalm 1:1-3

Deuteronomy 8:1-3

Proverbs 3:5-6

Psalm 23:1-3

Psalm 27:1-3

**Leader:** *Select 2-3 of these passages to read out loud with your group. What instructions do you find in these verses?*



# Chapter 9: Wilderness

## Skill #1: Drink Plenty of Water

*Leader:* Read pages 144-146 out loud with your group.

1. Chapter 9 lists the warning signs of “spiritual dehydration” (p. 146). Which ones have you experienced or are you experiencing?

*Ask each woman to share something in her life that signals that she is “spiritually dehydrated.” (For example: cranky, easily offended or hurt, snappy, angry, fearful.)*

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

2. Marian says, “Desperation for [Jesus] causes a dependency on Him.” How has your wilderness season revealed your desperation for Him? Are you finding yourself closer to God because of your wilderness experience?
3. Read John 7:37–39 and Psalm 63:1–5. Are you drinking daily from the “living water”?

*Leader:* Read “Drink Deeply from the Living Water” found on pages 151-153 and review the daily quiet time instructions with the group.

4. Review the skills taught in this chapter for spending time with Jesus through prayer and Bible reading. Just as life without water is doomed for dehydration, a day without drinking from the

Living Water is headed for trouble as well. What is your plan of action to make your daily quiet time the priority of your day?

***Leader:** Ask each person to share their “plan of action.”*



# WEEK SEVEN

## Chapter 10: Wilderness Skill #2: Seek Shelter

*Leader: Ask the women in your group to share a camping experience or an experience when they needed to find shelter.*

*Leader: Read and Discuss “Shelter” found on page 156-159.*

1. How did God describe Himself to Moses in Exodus 13:18–23?
2. Prior to reading this description, was your image of God’s character similar or different?

*Leader: Ask your group to recall their last “full-blown-meltdown.” What initiated the emotions? What was the response? Where did they run?*

3. The wilderness season can expose our deep-rooted beliefs about who God is. Has your heart believed lies about God’s character and therefore prevented you from trusting Him and running to Him for shelter?

*Leader: Read “Meltdown” found on pages 161-162 and discuss.*

4. How did saying and calling on the name of Jesus bring peace to Marian and her friend when their emotions were spiraling into a full-blown meltdown?

## Chapter 11: Wilderness

### Skill #3: Beware of Snakes

1. In this chapter we learned about the interaction between Jesus and Satan in the wilderness. How did Jesus stand against the lies and deceptions of the Enemy?
2. Marian gave an example from her life as how to detect a lie (hint: fake designer denim). What was the secret to recognizing a fraud?

***Leader:** This story is found on pages 168-169.*

3. What specific lies about yourself, your situation, or God has the Enemy whispered in your ear? List three.

***Leader:** Read and discuss the following excerpt with your group. Then apply the principles to the lies named from question three.*

*Jesus also gives us a warning about the snake, Satan, when He cautions, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10 NIV). Satan has an agenda and his mode of operation has not changed; he operates in lies. But girls, listen carefully—the snake is defeated! Jesus defanged the serpent at the cross. All he can do is lie to us. We must choose whether we will listen to his lies or to God’s truth.*

*Looking back over my recent wilderness season, I recognize that so many of my issues came down to where I allowed*

*my thoughts to dwell. The Enemy desired not only to steal my worship but also to kill my joy and destroy my faith. I've found the same to be true for every woman I've interviewed in writing this book. Countless women shared their wilderness tales with me, and the common denominator in all of them was the torment of lies and accusations each woman endured. So, what's a girl to do? We must do what Christ modeled for us in the wilderness. Resist Satan and stand firm in the truth of God's Word. Just as it says in James 4:7, "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (NIV).*

**Submit**—turn to God in prayer and claim His truth. I suggest you find specific Scripture passages that deal with the particular lies (temptations, questions, accusations) that torment you.

**Resist**—say no to the lies and tell Satan to “go away in the name of Jesus.” No lie. Just last night I put this skill into practice. I was driving to a dinner party when I felt those “poor me” thoughts forming. I listened to a few and realized if I didn't nip them in the bud, I would be quite the dud at dinner. So I began responding to the negative thoughts (lies) with God's Word. For each lie I heard, I spoke a Scripture out loud. Finally, as I was pulling up to the valet I said, “Satan, go away in the name of Jesus.” And guess what? It turns out that Jesus proves one excellent wilderness guide.

4. Find three truths from God's Word that dispel the three lies that you have listed above. Speak the verses out loud just as Jesus did. Remind yourself of God's truth every day.

**Leader:** *In the appendix you will find a list of “survival scriptures.” Encourage your group to find specific truths that counteract the lies they believe.*

# WEEK EIGHT

## Chapter 12: Don't Eat the Red Berries

*Leader: Read and discuss “beware of bitterness” found on pages 176-177.*

1. Why is the “red berry” of bitterness so dangerous?
2. Are there any wounds in your life that still need the healing touch of God? If so, take time today to pray through the pain and ask God to begin the process of healing your heart.

Leader: read and discuss “Unmet Expectations” found on pages 180-183

3. How can unmet expectations cause bitterness? What is the solution found in this chapter?
4. Unforgiveness is one of the key causes of bitterness in a woman's heart. Is there anyone you need to forgive? If so follow the suggested prayer on page 189.

*Leader: Encourage your group to write down any person they need to forgive. During your closing prayer lead the group in forgiving the ones on their list.*

## Chapter 13: Oh, Be Joyful!

1. Marian's mountain-climbing experience paralleled the fear she felt while in her spiritual wilderness. How has fear gripped your heart in your wilderness season?
2. Fear is conquered by faith. In what area is God calling you to trust Him?
3. The final skill is "Don't miss the Wild for your Wilderness." What do you think this means?
4. Read James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:6-9. What is the reason for joy in the wilderness?

# 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.

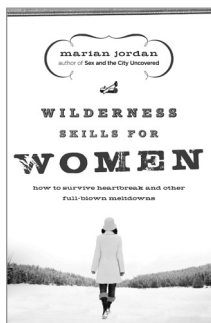
You can receive Christ right now by faith through prayer. (Prayer is talking with God.)

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



## 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."



For your next book club...  
**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*.



[www.RedeemedGirl.org](http://www.RedeemedGirl.org)