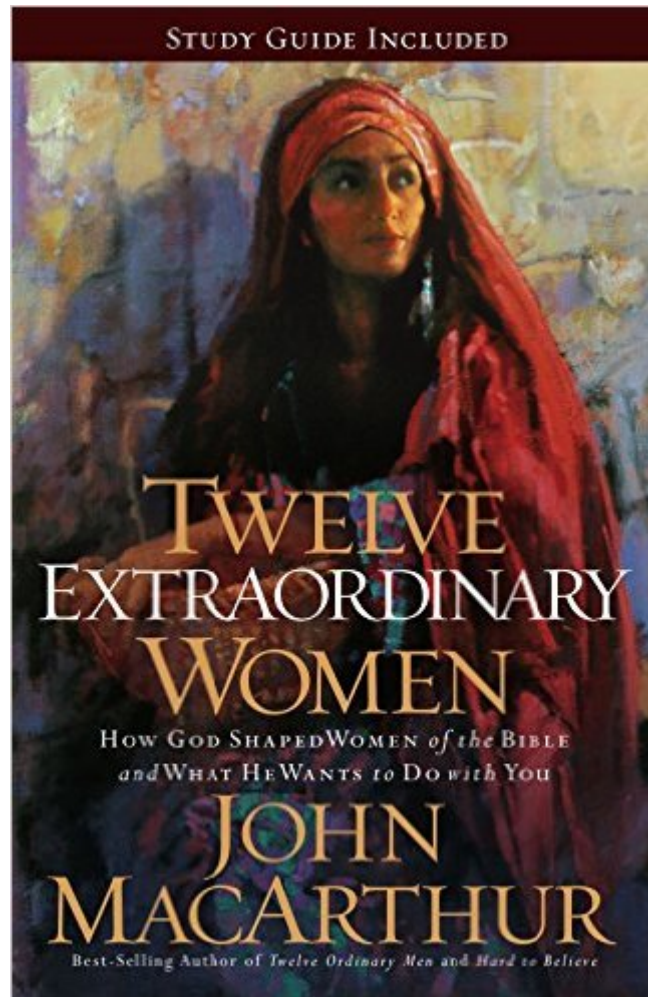


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# Twelve Extraordinary Women: How God Shaped Women Of The Bible, And What He Wants To Do With You



## Synopsis

They were ordinary, common, and in some cases shockingly low-caste, yet each was made extraordinary by her life-changing encounter with God. Readers will be challenged and motivated by *Twelve Extraordinary Women*, a poignant and personal look into the lives of some of the Bible's most faithful women. Their struggles and temptations are the same trials faced by all believers at all ages. Inside this book, best-selling author and Bible teacher John MacArthur shows that the God to whom they were so committed is the same God who continues to mold and use ordinary people today.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*Twelve Ordinary Men*, John MacArthur's book on the apostles, was a surprise hit. After the book stayed on the bestseller lists for over a year, Thomas Nelson suggested publishing a second volume, this one dealing with some of the best-known women of the Bible. MacArthur accepted the challenge and drew up a long list of possible subjects. "I admit that I chose the twelve women featured here by a completely unscientific process: I weighed their relative importance in biblical history alongside the amount of material I had already developed on each of them as I have taught through various passages of Scripture. Then I chose the twelve women who were most familiar to me." *Twelve Extraordinary Women* is not exactly a sequel to MacArthur's *Twelve Ordinary Men*, yet it bears many similarities. Like its predecessor (and unlike the majority of MacArthur's books), *Twelve Extraordinary Women* is not primarily expository. Instead, it is a series of brief character studies. Like *Twelve Ordinary Men*, it is ideally suited for personal or group study, and is intensely

practical. The women MacArthur chose as subjects for this book are: Eve, Sarah, Rahab, Ruth, Hannah, Mary, Anna, The Samaritan Woman, Martha and Mary, Mary Magdalene and Lydia. "My prayer for you is that as you read this book you will share their faith, imitate their faithfulness, and learn to love the Savior whose work in their lives made them truly extraordinary. Your life can be extraordinary, too, by His wonderful grace." The format of the book will be familiar to those who have read *Twelve Ordinary Men*. MacArthur spends a chapter discussing each of the women (though Martha and Mary share a single chapter) and shows that what made each of these women extraordinary was nothing they brought to God, but the work of the Savior in their lives. Each of them had a deep reverence towards God and trusted His promises, whether they looked forward to a time when the Savior would come, or whether they looked back at his death and resurrection. Some of them stood between the New and Old Testament eras, even witnessing with their own eyes the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus Christ. By way of introduction, MacArthur writes about the high position given to women within Scripture. Women are never relegated to a secondary status and, unlike so many other religions, are never degraded and considered less important than men. From the beginning of the New Testament era to the close of the canon of Scripture we see God granting extraordinary privilege to women. There are countless women in the Bible who stand as examples of faithfulness, integrity, hospitality and every other admirable virtue. "The faithfulness of these women is their true, lasting legacy. I hope as you meet them in Scripture and get to know more about their lives and characters, they will challenge you, motivate you, encourage you, and inspire you with love for the God whom they trusted and served. May your heart be set ablaze with the very same faith, may your life be characterized by a similar faithfulness, and may your soul be overwhelmed with love for the extraordinary God they worshiped." Each of the subsequent eleven chapters is a study of a particular woman, with MacArthur shining light on the Scriptural accounts of each subject. Each chapter is practical, showing how the virtues exemplified in the lives of the women can be applied to the life of the reader. The reader is shown how he, too, can be extraordinary through the power of God. *Twelve Extraordinary Women* is a worthy successor to *Twelve Ordinary Men*. This book is both informative and inspiring. It will lead the reader to understand what each of these twelve women surely knew, that God was the truly extraordinary one, as He conformed such ordinary women to the likeness of their Savior. I highly recommend this book for both personal and group study.

This is a fascinating account of the lives of some of the more prominent women in Scripture. Unfolding the verses that tell their stories, MacArthur does a phenomenal job illuminating what is

most interesting and inspiring about these women. The twelve he chose include: Eve, Sarah, Rahab, Ruth, Hannah, Mary (the mother of Jesus), Anna, the Samaritan woman, Martha and Mary (sisters of Lazarus), Mary Magdalene, and Lydia. I used to think that back in Bible times women were degraded and reduced to a lower status than men. But MacArthur explains well that Scripture never puts women on a secondary level, discounts their importance or gifts, but speaks of them in honor and commends the faithfulness of them who follow the Lord. Each chapter of this book is dedicated to one of the twelve women. MacArthur briefly but deeply reveals what was extraordinary about their lives. What set these women apart was not anything they did or accomplished, but resoundingly God's saving work in their lives. These women are all characterized by a deep love for God, their faithfulness to follow Him, and the hope they had either for the Savior to come, or in the saving work He accomplished for them on the cross. Not knowing many details about them, I was fascinated by the chapters about Eve and Anna. I had a lot of preconceived conclusions about women like Ruth, Hannah and Rahab and this book really helped me see how God shaped their lives for His purpose. I was also interested to learn that so many of the women can be found in the genealogy of Jesus! My favorite of the twelve was chapter eight, "The Samaritan Woman: Finding the Water of Life". I am very familiar with this story, but never thought there was anything particularly remarkable about it. An outcast woman who meets Jesus at the well, He tells her facts about her life that convict her, and she tells others to come meet Him. In this chapter MacArthur unfolds details and background that I never knew before. The Jews considered the Samaritans to be unclean and had nothing to do with them. It was outrageous that Jesus would travel through their land let alone drink water from a strange woman. His encounter with this woman was intentional and had a marvelous impact. For some reason, Jesus chose to reveal to her His identity as the Messiah. I find the conversation between Jesus and this woman to be very extraordinary. He approached her with tender truthfulness and she was never the same. He confronts her sin of adultery and in doing so her deep need for a Savior. She could not hide anything from Him, but her heart and life were exposed to Him. She is intrigued when Jesus tells her of the living water that He has to offer: "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The Holy Spirit was obviously working in her heart because by the end of this amazing conversation she had run back to her town to tell the people what Jesus had said. MacArthur says, "Her response was typical of new believers, one of the evidences of authentic faith. The person who has just had the burden of sin and guilt lifted always wants to share the good news with others." This is a refreshing and inspiring story of the exuberance of faith, impact of freedom from sin and amazing revival that can be spurred on by

proclamation of the Truth. This is just a glimpse of one of twelve incredible women who were changed by the Holy Spirit from the inside out and dynamically used by God. These women were nothing special in and of themselves. Ultimately their lives bear testimony to the glorious work of salvation and of God "the truly extraordinary one..." In his introduction MacArthur prayerfully urges that as you read this book you will "share their faith, imitate their faithfulness, and learn to love the Savior..." By His grace we can be used extraordinarily too!

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