

UNCOMMON MARRIAGE

MONTH

Guide for Group Facilitators

The *Uncommon Marriage Bible Study* has been designed to make it easy for participants to read and engage with the material without a great deal of preparation on your part as the leader. Even so, it is helpful to have someone who can coordinate the logistics, facilitate conversation, and make sure the group stays on track. Every team—no matter how strong—needs a coach! If you are the leader of your group, thank you for your willingness to serve in this capacity.

As you read through this leader's guide, keep in mind that these tips are merely suggestions to help the sessions run smoothly. You know your group best, so feel free to adapt this study to meet their unique needs and to suit your own leadership style.

Purpose of This Study

The members of your group may have different goals for being part of this study, and they may be in various places in their marriage. But there's one unifying goal you can focus on as a leader: to encourage each couple to grow in their relationship and develop healthy patterns so they can build and maintain an uncommon marriage.

Logistics to Consider

- **Duration:** This is a five-session study. Decide whether your group will meet weekly or every other week.
- **Materials:** Each participant/couple will need the book *Uncommon Marriage* and the *Uncommon Marriage Bible Study*. Determine if people will buy their own books or if they'll be purchased by one point person.
- **Meeting details:** Decide where and when you will meet and if child care will be provided.



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- You might also want to consider if food/snacks will be part of each session.
- **Contact information:** You may want to get the phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses for the members of your group in case you need to communicate with people throughout the week.
- **Discussion format:** There are many ways to facilitate discussion using the Bible study, depending on the needs and desires of your group. You may encourage participants to read the content for each session ahead of time and answer the questions in advance. Or you might want to have group members read the content and questions during the meeting—either out loud or on their own.

Tips for Leaders

- Pray for the group before each session, asking God to prepare people's hearts to be touched and to bless each relationship represented.
- As you facilitate conversation in your group, be aware that some people may tend to dominate the discussion while others may remain quiet. Try to pay attention to the dynamics so you can redirect the discussion as needed and invite everyone to participate.
- Create a safe environment for participants to share openly. You may want to remind group members that the things shared in your group are confidential. Be sure to set a tone of grace as people open up about their relationships and their struggles.
- If any group members share something about their marriage that seems to go beyond your scope as a leader (such as abuse, infidelity, or clinical depression), refer them to a pastor or a Christian counselor.

