

JOHN BEVERE

Best-selling Author of *The Bait of Satan*



Extraordinary

The Life You're Meant to Live

Praise for
Extraordinary

“I am living proof that no matter where you have come from or what you have been through, God desires to do *extraordinary* things through you and for you. John has chosen a timely subject because if we are going to accomplish all that God has planned for this generation, we need to know that God desires so much more for us. Let John’s incredible knowledge of Scripture guide you through discovering the *extraordinary* life that God has for you!”

—JOYCE MEYER, Bible teacher and best-selling author

“In *Extraordinary*, John Bevere does a wonderful job of showing what God created us for and how that applies to all areas of our lives. As a professional athlete, I am constantly dealing with the balance of being extraordinary for God, as well as in my career. This book has shown me that there is no separation between our spiritual lives and our everyday lives. God has called us to live extraordinarily, every minute of every day. This book is a must read for those who are looking to live fully immersed in the greatness of Jesus!”

—KURT WARNER, NFL quarterback and two-time league MVP

“John Bevere is one of the most passionate people I know, and I believe he has truly grasped the meaning of John 10:10: ‘I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.’ In *Extraordinary* he digs into the Word to show what it looks like to please God and use the talents He has given us. John pushes believers to the edge to get them to launch out into the deep. He lives life to the fullest and, through these pages, will inspire you to experience the joy of serving Christ with passion.”

—JAMES ROBISON, LIFE Outreach International

“This is a one-of-a-kind hero message! In his unprecedented approach, John Bevere has delivered a book that will unlock the extraordinary within you. I pray your heart is open and ready to receive *Extraordinary*.”

—DARLENE ZSCHECH

“John Bevere’s penetrating and practical insight into ‘what makes life work’ shines again from these pages. In a day when twittering quick-fixes are sought for life-solutions and sound-bite remarks are dubbed as wisdom, there’s a need for this kind of honesty about the requirements for substance to build a life. John shows that extraordinary living is within every person’s reach, but not on ordinary terms.”

—DR. JACK W. HAYFORD, chancellor, The King’s Seminary and founding pastor,
The Church On The Way

“*Extraordinary* points us to that spot on the horizon—the place that could be ours to live. In his book, John gives us a glimpse of what God has for us in that place so that we will chase after it and allow God’s Spirit to take us there.”

—CHRIS TOMLIN, lead worshiper, Passion City Church, Atlanta, and sixstepsrecords’
recording artist

“John Bevere gives a unique peek into our natural human desires for an extraordinary life and provides a frank, candid, and probing discussion of why—when we crave to soar like the mighty eagle—we often accept walking among the chickens as our ultimate fate in life. John’s book shows us how to reach that extraordinary individual that resides in all of us.”

—BISHOP T. D. JAKES, senior pastor, the Potter’s House of Dallas, Inc.

“In *Extraordinary*, my friend John Bevere guides readers on a journey toward discovering a life of *more*—more understanding, more success, more excitement. And he shows us exactly what it takes to move beyond an ordinary existence and to take hold of an extraordinary life!”

—ED YOUNG, senior pastor, Fellowship Church and author of *Outrageous, Contagious Joy*

“My favorite thing about John Bevere’s books is they’re all loaded with Scripture, challenging you to grow deeper in your walk with Jesus, and *Extraordinary* is no different. John walks through the Bible and opens your eyes to God’s passion of getting you away from ‘the ordinary’ and into ‘the extraordinary.’ Prepare to be challenged and changed as you read.”

—AARON BADDELEY, PGA golfer, Scottsdale, AZ

“With both *grace* and *guts*, John Bevere challenges us to live a bigger life in God—the life we were always meant to live. In this powerful new book, John shows us how the grace of God can become the springboard to a ‘life less ordinary.’”

—MATT REDMAN, songwriter

“John Bevere shows from the Word that everyone who wants it can live a life with impact. This book hits hard with truth. No more boring, watered-down, weak spiritual life for the body of Christ. Let’s do it! We can all release God’s power and do the extraordinary!”

—SHAUN ALEXANDER, former NFL MVP

“In *Extraordinary*, John Bevere examines and inspires the heart to realize God has called us all to abundant life. Each of us knows we are meant for more. This book will help you leave mediocrity behind and enjoy the great adventures God has for you.”

—TOMMY BARNETT, pastor, Phoenix First Assembly and Dream Centers: Phoenix, Los Angeles, New York

“Teens and adults today spend too much time aimlessly looking for value or something worth working for. In this book John Bevere challenges us all with the simple answer to questions about meaning in life. Only those ready to make changes need apply!”

—RON LUCE, president and founder, Teen Mania Ministries

“John Bevere speaks and writes with an unmatched passion to see people become everything God intends for them to be. *Extraordinary* is another powerful step in that process, calling us all to greatness that allows us to max out our Christ-life potential and live a life that pleases the One who gave it to us in the first place.”

—LOUIE GIGLIO, Passion Conferences/Passion City Church

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WATERBROOK
PRESS

EXTRAORDINARY

PUBLISHED BY WATERBROOK PRESS
12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921

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ISBN 978-0-307-45772-1

ISBN 978-0-307-45774-5 (electronic)

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Published in the United States by WaterBrook Multnomah, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House Inc., New York.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Bevere, John.

Extraordinary : the life you're meant to live / John Bevere.—1st ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-307-45772-1—ISBN 978-0-307-45774-5 (electronic) 1. Christian life. I. Title.

BV4501.3.B4825 2009

248.4—dc22

2009017143

Printed in the United States of America

2009—First Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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*I dedicate this book to my son...
Austin Michael Bevere*



*God has blessed you.
You're reliable, faithful, and sincere.
You're strong, witty, and ingenious.
You've been a delight to raise.
It's a joy to watch your extraordinary life unfold.
I'll love you forever, son...*

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Acknowledgments

My deepest appreciation to...

MLisa. To my gorgeous wife, best friend, lover, amazing mother, most faithful supporter, and co-laborer in the ministry. You are truly God's gift to me and His beloved church. I love, value, and treasure you.

My four sons. Addison, Austin, Alexander, and Arden. Each of you brings such great delight to my life. You are each a special treasure. Thank you for not only your encouragement but also your participation. Your reward is great!

The staff and board members of Messenger International. Thank you for your unwavering support and faithfulness. It's a pleasure to work with each of you and an honor to serve God together. Lisa and I love every one of you.

Our many ministerial friends all over the world. Space doesn't permit me to write all of your names. Thanks for the invitations and the honor of speaking and ministering at your churches and conferences. I love you pastors and ministers who serve God faithfully.

Tom Winters and Steve Cobb. Thanks for your encouragement and belief in the message God has burned in my heart.

Bruce Nygren. Thank you for your editing skills on this project. But most of all, thanks for your support.

All the staff at WaterBrook Multnomah. Thanks for supporting this message and for your professional and kind help. You are a great group to work with.

Most important, my sincere gratitude to my Lord. How can words adequately acknowledge all You have done for me and for Your people? I love You deeply and more than words can express.

Extraordinary

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9, NLT).

These words paint a picture of an unimaginable and extraordinary existence, one far beyond what any mere mortal has known or experienced. You may have heard these words before and related them only to heaven’s glory. But in actuality, they were penned for the here and now! For the writer, the apostle Paul, continues, “But we know these things because God has revealed them to us by his Spirit” (verse 10, NLT).

Paul, who lived during the church’s inception, was divinely moved to bring into the open what had been previously hidden to our eyes, ears, and imagination. He also wrote the following to describe the mandate of his life:

My task is to bring out in the open and make plain what God, who created all this in the first place, has been doing in secret and behind the scenes all along. Through followers of Jesus like yourselves gathered in churches, this *extraordinary* plan of God is becoming known and talked about even among the angels! (Ephesians 3:9–10, MSG)

There’s One Person above all others who desires an extraordinary life for you. He is a Father who delights, like any good father, in the achievements and happiness of His children. His name is God! And nothing will please Him more than seeing you reach your highest potential.

God’s extraordinary plan is revealed when we live extraordinarily. Together let’s give the angels something to talk about!

EXTRAORDINARY

Extraordinary. Just hearing this amazing word arouses the desire to surpass the norm, to break away from the status quo. Its definition is “beyond what is usual, exceptional, exceeding the common measure.” One-word synonyms include *remarkable, amazing, marvelous, and unimaginable*. To better understand the full meaning of this inspiring word, consider its antonyms: *common, normal, and usual*.

Ponder this a moment: the opposite of extraordinary is *normal*! If we’re honest, I think we all want our lives to mean more or be more than what we’ve known and seen. Unless it’s suppressed, there is an innate desire in each of us to rise above commonness. We yearn for the extraordinary.

The most loved popular films that have captured the hearts and attention of the public involve extraordinary powers. There’s *Spider-Man, Superman, The Incredible Hulk*, the Star Wars saga, the Lord of the Rings trilogy, *The Chronicles of Narnia, The Matrix, Fantastic Four, The Incredibles, X-Men, Harry Potter, Pirates of the Caribbean*, and that’s not all of them. Add to this mix the movies with extraordinary heroes who do remarkable feats and live exceptional lives, characters such as Batman, Iron Man, Indiana Jones, Zorro, William Wallace, Robin Hood, Spartacus, Sergeant York, just to name a few. In fact, as of 2009, seventeen of the top twenty-five all-time blockbuster movies fall under these categories. That’s almost 70 percent, and the percentage varies only slightly if you extend the poll to the top fifty.

How intriguing that the bulk of the most popular movies of all time are not love stories, murder mysteries, espionage thrillers, war movies, true life accounts, sports flicks, westerns, police stories, or dramas of friendship, family, or life in general. No, the top box office draws are films that center on extraordinary characters doing remarkable feats, with a good number of them possessing beyond-human abilities or powers. Why? Because “extraordinary” is how we were created to live. It was God’s plan from the beginning.

CHRISTIANITY'S IMAGE

Unfortunately, God's plan and man's execution of the plan are often not the same. One of the main reasons I avoided Christianity for years was its portrayal. I, like so many others, saw men of God as Bible-thumping critics who were quick to judge the flaws of others. Or they were passive, backward, and ignorant. The idea that Christians were pioneers who lived and thought outside the box, behaving in extraordinary ways, never crossed my mind. And the idea of Christian women? Well, it was even worse. I perceived that they had no say in important matters, dressed unfashionably, and neglected their appearance. It was frowned upon for a godly woman to venture beyond her domestic duties and certainly unheard of for her to lead in any way. As a young man, I didn't want my wife forbidden to think and restricted from joining me in life's ventures. I didn't want a woman who was suppressed—I wanted one full of life!

I viewed Christianity as lifeless. Becoming a believer would mean losing my individuality and forgoing creativity, excellence, passion, and the ability to succeed in the marketplace, sports, politics, education, and other arenas of life. I didn't know it then, but my views were the opposite of how God created us to live, because He is the One who breathed into us the desire for the extraordinary. Listen to God Himself:

God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them
reflecting our nature
So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea,
the birds in the air, the cattle,
And, yes, Earth itself,
and every animal that moves on the face of Earth."
God created human beings;
he created them godlike,
Reflecting God's nature.

He created them male and female.

God blessed them:

“Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!” (Genesis 1:26–28, MSG)

We were made to reflect God’s nature. He spoke both to men and women, saying, “Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!” Adam, the first man, named every species of animal on the earth (I’m sure his wife would have been involved, but she hadn’t been created yet!). God brought the animals to Adam and gave him the responsibility of naming them. There are over one million species of animals on earth. Not only did Adam have the creativity to name them all, but he also had the capacity to remember each one. That was an extraordinary man doing a remarkable feat!

You may ask, “But since Adam fell, weren’t those abilities lost due to his disobedience?” No, Jesus flipped the mess Adam created for humankind. Paul wrote, “Here it is in a nutshell: Just as one person did it wrong and got us in all this trouble with sin and death, another person did it right and got us out of it. But more than just getting us out of trouble, he got us into *life!*” (Romans 5:18, MSG). The word *life* doesn’t merely describe the way we’ll live in heaven; it also means the “here and now.” Jesus not only recovered what Adam lost, but He also provided so much more—the potential of an extraordinary life!

The truth is, *God not only desires you to live extraordinarily but also has equipped you to do so.* Don’t ever forget these words. Etch them on the tablet of your heart. A remarkable, amazing, extraordinary life is not restricted to certain individuals or professions. It doesn’t matter who you are or how you serve in life. If you’re a schoolteacher, businessperson, government leader, stay-at-home mom, athlete, factory worker, hairstylist, student, pastor (the list is endless), it doesn’t matter, because you were created for extraordinary achievements in that role. The power to accomplish remarkable feats and live an exceptional life is not tied to an occupation but to a disposition of the heart. This is not only God’s will but also His great pleasure.

Hollywood, religious people, and our culture had painted for me a warped and limited image of God’s people. Why did I have this distortion? God, you, and

I have a common enemy named Satan, who is called “the ruler of this world,” “the prince of the power of the air,” and “the god of this world.” He controls the world’s systems and influences the minds of those who do not belong to God. He has billions of fallen angels and demons to carry out his grand strategy. The sad fact is that too often the church has limited Satan’s chief strategy to certain behaviors, like trying to get people to drink alcohol or watch dirty sex scenes in movies. He’s much more crafty than that and uses a wide variety of snares and diversions. We’ve missed his primary purpose. Because what he fears most is Christians discovering who God’s made them to be—extraordinary people with abilities to carry out remarkable and unusual feats. This should be the image society has of Christians.

In contrast to the present reputation of Christians, one of the great struggles the early church encountered was convincing people that believers were not superheroes or gods. Cornelius, an officer in the most powerful army in the world, bowed down to worship Peter and his companions. Stunned, Peter immediately replied, “Stand up; I myself am also a man” (Acts 10:26).

In a city named Lystra, the mob “went wild, calling out in their Lyconian dialect, “The gods have come down! These men are gods!” Paul sharply corrected them: “What do you think you’re doing! We’re not gods!” (Acts 14:11, 14, MSG). When Paul was on Malta collecting firewood, a poisonous snake bit him. He shook it off, and the inhabitants anticipated his death. “But when it was obvious he wasn’t going to, they jumped to the conclusion that he was a god!” (28:6, MSG).

Unbelievers said of the early church, “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too” (17:6). Christians were held in high esteem by their society. It’s recorded the entire city of Jerusalem’s attitude toward the church was that “everyone had high regard for them” (5:13, NLT). In our generation may we each live in such a way to recover that kind of respect for the church.

A JOURNEY

In the pages that follow, we will embark on a journey to fully understand the extraordinary way God wants us to live. I urge you not to skim through material or skip around because each chapter builds on the last.

I don't want you to experience what I did a number of times when I was growing up. Periodically I would come in late to a movie my entire family had been watching. One evening I walked into our TV room just as *West Side Story* was ending. The lead male character was dying and saying his last, climactic words. My mother, dad, sisters, and I had witnessed this scene together, but the impact it had on me was completely different. I couldn't understand why my mother and sisters were crying. Even my dad was somber and saddened. But because I had come in late, I thought, *What's the big deal?* The same scene that riveted my parents and sisters had no effect on me because I hadn't journeyed with them through the entire movie.

I don't want the same thing to happen for you with the message of this book. It's a progressive revelation that has the potential to ruin you forever for the ordinary. I speak from experience, because as I sought God, researched, wrote, and prayed over this book, I was changed forever!

As you make this journey with me, you'll not only know that you were created for the extraordinary, but you'll actually understand how to live it. Before we begin, let's pray together for God to reveal His desire and quicken yours.

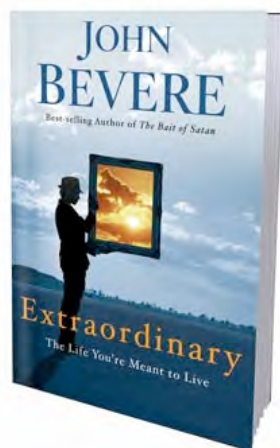
Dear God, I ask as I read this book that Your Holy Spirit will teach me. I pray that I will come to know what is the richness and enormity of the calling You've placed upon my life. I also want to know the power You've placed within me to accomplish this calling and to bring glory to Your name and joy to Your heart. You've placed me here for such a time as this. I pray this message would equip me to fulfill all the wonderful works You've planned for me to accomplish on this earth. It's in the name of Jesus Christ that I make this request. Amen.

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