

DISCOVERING HOW TO IMPACT YOUR WORLD

UN **DARE TO BE** COMMON

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

TONY DUNGY



Loveland, Colorado
group.com

Group resources actually work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's



Relational

Learner-to-learner interaction enhances learning and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What learners experience through discussion and action sticks with them up to 9 times longer than what they simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of Christian education is to equip learners to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Learner-based

Learners understand and retain more when the learning process takes into consideration how they learn best.

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FOREWORD

An *uncommon* life doesn't happen by accident. It's the result of the choices, actions, and commitments we make—to God, to ourselves, and to others.

It's not all about big commitments, however. God uses the dozens of little commitments we make every day to prepare us for the big ones. When we choose to live them out in God's strength rather than our own, we grow. What we do in practice, we'll do in the real game.

So let's kick off our practice time together. You'll help each other train together as we examine what's critical to living an uncommon life. And as you do that, you'll discover how to impact your world in ways you haven't yet imagined.

In Session 1, we'll work on strengthening your core. Why aren't more men prepared to live an uncommon life? How can you live out that life even when it's not popular or easy? We'll look at the roles we already play in life, how our successes and our failures reveal where we're at right now, and how to move forward from here.

The first place an uncommon life plays out is in the home, and that's what Session 2 is all about. Our actions speak louder than our words. We'll examine how our actions affect the rest of our family, for good and bad, and how to invite God into changing our actions when we need to.

In Session 3, we'll work on lifting up our friends and others we know. It's easy to let other commitments get in the way of our friendships. It's uncommon to put our friends first. How can others around us get built up as we follow Jesus' example? How can we be a friend to others? And how can we find the friends *we* need? We'll look at all of that together in this session.

Every man asks himself, "What am I going to do with my life? How can I make a difference?" Here's something every man needs to understand: We make an uncommon difference when we say yes to God and allow him to guide our steps. So we'll discover what God's built us for—and how to keep our focus—in "Session 4: Your Full Potential."

Again, it's God's desire to give meaning and purpose to each of our lives. But we always need to remember that it's *God's* meaning and *God's*

purpose. In “Session 5: A Mission That Matters” you’ll discover what it will take for us to make room for God’s plans.

In Session 6, we’ll take a closer look at the “platforms” God’s already given each of us—the places and situations where God’s put us—and how we can best use them. Every day we’re fed messages, expectations, and images that push us to live a life other than the one God has planned for us. We’ll examine those messages and what we can do to counteract them.

We’ll close this study by remembering what our foundation for an uncommon life is: our relationship with Jesus. What are we really putting our faith in? If it’s anything but Jesus, it’s a false hope. When we make Jesus the guiding force of our lives, we can’t help but live an uncommon life.

God has given each of you dreams and goals that only you can fulfill. There are always risks in stepping out and doing the things God’s put on your heart right now. But it is always worth it. It’s my prayer that this study will give you the encouragement and some fresh new ways to begin following those dreams.

So begin walking those dreams, together. Dare to be *uncommon*.

—TONY DUNGY

INTRODUCTION

Tony Dungy made a decision to live his life with *Quiet Strength*, the way God intended. And millions of football fans and non-football fans alike have seen the results of that by Tony's *Uncommon* actions and character both on and off the field.

In January 2009, God gave Tony's life another dramatic turn. At age 53, Coach Dungy chose to walk away from a 31-year NFL career—one which took him from player, to the first black coach to win a Super Bowl ring—so that he could take the next step forward in pursuing the uncommon life God's prepared for him.

With this study, Tony invites *you* to *Dare to Be Uncommon*—to discover your life's mission and live it out to the fullest. And that big mission starts with little steps.

Thus, the issues you'll explore in this study are issues men wrestle with throughout their lives. How do I maintain my character, in *all* parts of my life? Who can help me move forward, and how can I help them back? How can my life have significance, even after I'm gone? Let Coach Dungy be *your* coach as you walk together through these and more questions over the next seven weeks.

This study is meant to be done in a group setting, whether it's a men's breakfast on Saturday morning, a small group meeting in a home, a restaurant, or church, or even as a lunch group at work. Everyone who participates will gain a deeper understanding of how they can impact their world—your world.

You'll want everyone to get a copy of this study, so they can work through it both during and between meeting times. Make sure you also get the DVD that accompanies this study, so all of you can hear Coach Dungy's pep talk for each week and get ready to go out and make these principles real in your lives. We recommend that each participant get a copy of Tony Dungy's book *Uncommon* as well.

Briefly, here's how the sessions break down.

Think About It

You'll spend time thinking about the session's topic. A simple experience will ease you into the topic and help you start thinking about it. Then you'll talk about the connections between the experience you just had and your own life experience.

Talk About It

In this section you'll take things a little deeper. The discussion here will tie your life connections to the Bible passages in the next section. This is an important time to get to know what's on other guys' minds and hearts and to help each other walk through the things you discover together.

Study It

This section is where you'll dig into the Bible and see the principles you discover exemplified in God's Word. Through further discussion and sharing, you'll connect your earlier discussions and experiences to the discoveries you make in different passages.

Live It

This brings the study full circle. Just as you started the session by reflecting on your life, you'll have a chance to reflect again, this time connecting to your life what you've taken from the study. The activities will guide you in making these connections.

Commit to It

Before you conclude your session, it's important to commit to an action point that will help you continue to grow. We'll give you four options to choose from.

STRENGTHENING YOUR CORE

DEVELOPING UNCOMMON CHARACTER
INSIDE AND OUT

WHAT EACH PERSON WILL NEED:

- Bible
- Pen
- Camera or camera phone

Think About It



Without any conscious direction from you, your body knows how to take care of itself. If you were facing hypothermia, your body would let fingers, toes, and other extremities go before it let your vital organs die. If you were starving or dehydrated, your body would do whatever it took to keep those core organs working—to keep you alive as long as possible. Your body knows that damage or loss of your core leads to irreparable or even deadly consequences.

Your spiritual health and life aren't that different. Damage or compromise of your spiritual core can also lead to irreparable or deadly consequences. To live an uncommon life, you must protect and build your core. And in order to do that, you need to understand what your core is—who you *really* are.

Pass your books around the room, and have each person write his name, phone number, and e-mail address in the space provided on pages 71-72 of this book.

When you see this icon, →  have someone in your group read the section aloud as everyone else follows along.

Let's begin this study by thinking through what our core really is, so we're ready to move forward from here. For each of the sentences below, choose the one word you think best describes you. You might think of several words you can put in each space, but try to narrow it down to one word that really captures who you are. Some possible answers follow each sentence.

I most value _____
(friendship, honesty, faith, integrity, wisdom, laughter, hard work, family, relationship, money, God's Word, fun, freedom, success)

I strive hardest for _____
(growth, knowing God, peace, advancement, love, understanding, self-improvement, obedience, reaching my potential, glorifying God)

I will never _____
(abandon my..., turn away from..., quit, cheat, lie, forget..., leave..., steal, fail to..., stop...)

If your group is still getting to know each other, have everyone share their completed core statements with the rest of the group. This will help group members understand where others are coming from very quickly.

Find a partner, and share your answers. Discuss why you chose the words you did for each sentence.

**UNCOMMON
TRIVIA**

Morgan Wootten was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2000. What significant fact about Coach Wootten's career sets him apart from other basketball Hall of Fame coaches?

Talk About It

“Integrity is that internal compass and rudder that directs you to where you know you should go when everything around you is pulling you in a different direction.”

COACH DUNGY



At the professional sports level, players are so specialized that few of them ever change positions. There are exceptions—sometimes a tight end moves to the interior line, or a receiver joins the defense. Sometimes a lineman has even played the role of running back. But the longer an athlete stays in and practices a position, the more likely he or she is to stay there. The routine of the position helps develop the skills the athlete needs to play well at that position.

Likewise, every man has a number of roles or positions he fills. Some of us are students. Most of us work. Some are fathers, and all are sons. The longer we stay in a role, the more it shapes—and even defines—who we are.

Every role we fill provides tremendous opportunities to grow and develop. But every role also provides challenges to our core. Your role in your job or school can distract you from putting Jesus first or being available to your family. Your role as a father or son can tempt you to take loved ones for granted. We sometimes can substitute serving in ministry for serving Jesus.

Think about the major roles you’ve had in life and how they’ve helped shape who you’ve become. Maybe your sales job has taught you how to close a deal. Maybe your studies have nudged you toward either becoming high-strung or becoming a slacker. Perhaps fatherhood has deepened your wisdom or sense of responsibility.

For each of the roles below, think how that role has helped make you who you are today and how it might provide a challenge to your core. An example is included to get you started.

AREA	ROLE	HOW IT HAS SHAPED MY CORE VALUES	HOW IT CAN CHALLENGE MY CORE
Family	<i>Fatherhood</i>	<i>Challenges my selfishness</i>	<i>Desire to provide causes me to focus too much on money and advancement.</i>
Career/ School			
Family 1 (Son, Father, Brother, etc.)			
Family 2			
Volunteer Work/ Ministry			
Other			

Discuss:

► *What's the greatest challenge to your core that you're currently facing?*

► *How will you be true to who you are in the midst of that challenge?*

Live It

“Ultimately, character and its growth don’t come from rules but from small actions of responsibility that occur day after day.”

COACH DUNGY



The teachers of the law presented themselves as complete, knowledgeable, and close to God. In fact, they were proud, religious, misguided, and far from God. The woman caught in adultery, on the other hand, could do nothing but lean on Jesus’ mercy. To find character and core issues in your life, start by looking at how the way you present yourself fits with what’s really going on inside.

Have everyone who has a camera on his phone (or another digital camera with him) raise it in the air. Form groups of three or four, making certain every group has at least one camera.

Take a picture of each person in your group. Have each person look at his own photo for 20 seconds. While you look at your photo, think about this one question only:

► ***How do you present yourself to those around you?***

Now write your thoughts to this question here:

Now think about what’s going on inside you. Make special note of the things that don’t quite fit with the image you try to present to others. For example, you may want your boss to think you’re a loyal