

# **Sorority Girls Can Change the World**

**Katie Mullis Bulmer**

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ISBN:-13:978-1542650526

# DEDICATION

I believe we all have passions. Mine is to share how richly God loves his Daughters.

To my precious daughters. Those who call me mama and those we have “adopted” over the years, this is for you.

My prayer is that something in these words will prick your heart and cause you to hear something, maybe for the first time, about the incredible world changer that you already are.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katie spends most of her days exploring Chattanooga with her husband and two daughters, having college students over for dinner, or working from home in yoga pants. Speaking of yoga, she does that too. But mostly Katie loves traveling the country helping sorority girls realize they TRULY can change the world.

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#sororitygirlscanchangetheworld



# CHAPTER 1

## HUNCH PUNCH AND HANGOVERS

I was once convinced I had found my best life at a fraternity party, with the hottest date, the finest outfit, and a deliciously strong cup of hunch punch in my hand.

But when the makeup came off, the drunken buzz turned into a terrible headache, and the guy that promised forever never called again, I started to realize this life wasn't so great after all.

A typical sorority girl is my first language. Popularity, boys, and Bacardi was the language I learned in high school, and it was tattooed upon my heart when I joined a sorority in college.

"Be skinny, wear the right makeup, get a tan, and do whatever it takes to be beautiful."

"Sleep with your boyfriend if you don't want him to leave you."

"Wear designer fashion."

"Oh, and did I mention, be beautiful?"

The parties promised to be “fun,” and the guys promised that we would last “forever,” but fun and forever never lasted nearly as long as I had hoped. What I was really longing for was to be made whole.

God turned my life upside down during my senior year of college.

I had a pretty radical conversion experience I felt transformed, I felt on fire, I felt confused. I wanted so badly to share my “upside-down story” with my sorority sisters, but I told myself no one cared, my story was irrelevant, and they wouldn't trust the girl who was dancing on the bar a month ago anyway.

Then I got married, had babies, and just got busy.

As our family grew, and I grew up, I still felt this nag that I couldn't shake. A “Holy Hunger” if you will, to share what God had done in my life with my sorority.

But sorority girls are all beautiful and intimidating, and I was no longer a twenty-year-old. If this was what God wanted, He would've had to part the heavens. I needed to hear the plan from the voice of God before I ever stepped foot on Greek Row again past graduation.

Plus, I got distracted.

I worked in youth ministry, children's ministry, and by this point, I found myself in the deep end of homeless ministry. I was so busy doing "the work of Jesus" I forgot to ask what Jesus even wanted me to do.

This all came to a head one particular Friday morning.

Elaine, one of my formerly homeless friends, was facing eviction. In the six months I knew her, we build a friendship so deep she becomes like a sister. She was never a project to me, always a friend. I helped her get on her feet, and she helped open my eyes to how challenging it is to get out of the poverty cycle.

Elaine quit high-school at 17 because she was pregnant, she married the man who later gave her another child then left her for drugs and other women. When she decided to seek a better life for her and her children, she didn't have many options. When I met Elaine she had no car, no home, no job, and no one to watch the kids even if she had a job. All her friends and family were in the same situation or worse.

When we met, my tenacious enneagram 3 came out in full force, and I was determined to help her become a success story.



I called everyone I knew in our small town and devised a plan to help Elaine. We educated her on how to handle money. A friend of mine gave her a job. Another friend loaned her a car. Yet another friend who managed an apartment complex agreed to let Elaine and her two kids stay for free for two months until she could come up with rent money. I babysat her kids while she worked, and she even got baptized in our church.

It was all a perfect plan until I realized I wanted a better life for Elaine much more than she did. She slowly stopped showing up for work. Her kids were always late for school and rent in the apartment where she had now lived for six months was now dangerously past due.

That particular Friday morning, Elaine was facing eviction and ending up in the same place she was when we first met. She had exhausted all her extensions, excuses, and all the help from the community I could find. I woke up early, calling all hands on deck. How could we help her get out of this? What could I do? What jobs could I help her find?

I called and texted Elaine at least a dozen times. Why wasn't she picking up? I told myself that she must have found an odd job and was working her butt off to come up with rent money to avoid going back to the streets.

Finally, at 11 am I couldn't stand it any longer. I drove to her apartment marched up to her door and knocked relentlessly. A few minutes later. Elaine came to open the door. Her eyes were squinting from the sun, her hair standing up on one end, and the pillow marks on her cheek. She was ASLEEP.

My blood began to boil. I took a deep breath, thinking how myself and everyone I knew in this town was frantically making phone calls and finding ways we could help her avoid homelessness, yet the girl we were trying to help didn't even care.

I wasn't sure whether to yell, cry, or just run away but instead, she spoke first, "Katie thank you for everything you have done for the kids and I but I've never stayed in one spot for more than a couple months anyway, I got a friend who offered her couch for us until we find out what is next."

I tried to argue and plead that she could get her way out of this, but I learned a painful lesson that day. You can lead a horse to water, but you really and truly can't make them drink, even if you are a neurotic overachieving enneagram three.

I drove back home and found myself in a puddle of tears in our walk-in closet having a total “come apart.” Have you ever had one of those really good, on the floor, throwing a sweater into the carpet type of meltdowns?

Me either...I’m asking for a friend.

I cried out, “GOOOOOD Are you asleep up there? Can’t you see how hard I’m working to be a good Christian? How could you let everything fall apart? Where are you?”

Then it happened.

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The heavens didn’t part, but they didn’t have to. Never before or never since have I been more certain that I heard the voice of God.  
“Go share your story with your sorority.”

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Yep, I heard the voice of God. Not in a creepy audible person next to me kind of way, but it was undeniable.

He said, “When did I ever ask you to serve the homeless? The mansions of Greek row are just as hungry and thirsty. Go tell them about eternal water that changed your life.”

So that happened.

Days after my meltdown in the closet, my head was still replaying the still small voice that said, “Go share your story with Sorority Women” and combating it with all the questions like, How do I start? Who will listen? Do I knock on the door to a sorority mansion and say, “Hey, I was crying in the closet, and God told me to go talk to you guys? You got a minute?” I’m sure that would go over well.

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It turns out when you say yes to the God of the universe, the rest of the details fall into place.

-Katie Bulmer

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When I wasn’t saving the homeless, raising children, or working in advertising, I was doing yoga. I got my license as an instructor and started teaching yoga part-time at our local gym. If I were to write my life story, I would never have imagined yoga would be the door God would use to start a ministry, but God writes better stories than I do.

At church the very next Sunday after my meltdown, a college student I knew approached me and said, “Don’t you teach yoga? I’m the sisterhood chair of Alpha Delta Pi and need a fun event. Could you come to teach a yoga class for us at the sorority house?”

At first, I thought I was being punk’d. Did this girl read my journal? How did she know God asked me to go back to greek row? How did she know I needed an open door to start the conversation? How did she know her timing was

incredible? Did she say Alpha Delta Pi? This is the same sorority I was in!

I was staring at her like a deer in the headlights as all the thoughts bounced around in my brain. Then I began to smile. I knew God was at the start of something, and I was all for it.

She starred at me expectantly and confused, “Ummmm, so would you be able to come on Tuesday....for Yoga?”

I came back to planet earth, smiled at this sweet angel in front of me, and said, “Can I ever.”

A few days later, our yoga class at the sorority house was a success. Some girls did headstands, others did warrior poses, and everyone nailed their shavasana pose (my yoga friends got that reference). After the class was done, the girl who stood on her head the longest came to chat with me. She was a gymnast, therefore a natural at yoga. We talked about headstands and balance, and she mentioned she is the president of the sorority.

**STOP IT. WHAT!?**

As soon as I realized I was in the presence of madam president, I knew this was my opportunity to mention that God told me to talk to the sorority women...but I probably shouldn't lead with that.

Instead, I said something along the lines of, “Hey ummmm, so I was your typical heartbroken and hungover sorority girl. Since graduation, I’ve learned a lot of stuff which I wish I would have known when I was your age, I’d love to talk to you guys about that sometime. Maybe like a small group, or just your executive board, or not at all actually, if you think it’s dumb, really it’s fine.

A few moments of awkward silence as I wiped my sweaty palms on my yoga pants.

Your highness of the sorority nodded and said, “Yeah, that sounds interesting, why don’t you come talk to our chapter next week. You have about 15 min at the end of our chapter meeting. We would love to have you. There are about 225 women in our chapter, Sound good?”

I look around again for Ashton Kutcher, and the cameras from the team of Punk’d. How did she know about this call to talk to sorority women? How did she know I had zero ideas on how to get there? How was this happening?

Wait, crap, did she say, 225 girls!???

Days later, I found myself in the very same chapter room, where I first became a sorority girl. The same feelings of insecurity, self-doubt, and finding my place in the world washed over me.

I looked to my left and saw the beautiful blond who secretly questions if people see beyond her looks. To my right, I saw the studious girl who secretly wonders if she fits in. My heart began to race as compassion filled my veins for this room full of incredible women trying to figure out life just like I was.

When the president gave me the cue, I stood in front of 225 of the most beautiful women ADPI had ever seen; I thought I was going to vomit, wet my pants, or both.

But instead, I poured my heart out. Here is what I said:

When I was your age, as many of you, I was utterly clueless of any potential I had to “change the world,” set trends, or even declare a major. My only concerns were about being pretty, popular, and boys... oh my goodness, boys.

During my high school and college days, I soaked in all the fun I could find. I got into bars in downtown Atlanta at the ripe age of 17. I may or may not have danced on the said bar. I made all the questionable Spring Break decisions. I dated guys who promised fun through money or love or because they told me I was pretty. I drank everything and smoked everything and kept straight A's the whole time so my mama would never know.

The parties promised to be “fun,” and the guys promised that we would last “forever,” but fun forever never lasted as long as I had hoped. What I was really longing for was to be made whole.

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I needed to be wanted. I needed to hear I was pretty. I wanted the glass slipper to fit me and only me.

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-Katie Bulmer

I found fun. I found parties. I found popularity. I found myself more empty than ever before.

I was searching for my happily ever after in a boyfriend. I kept thinking, “This is the guy who will bring me happiness.” And every time the relationship ended, I thought, “If only I was prettier, more fun, or said something different.”



Just like my sorority sisters, all the covers of Cosmopolitan magazine, and that loathsome Cinderella, I *NEEDED* a guy to complete me. I started to grow frustrated on the hamster wheel of using all my might to find worth and getting nowhere. But where could I turn?

I grew up in Marietta, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta and the buckle of the bible belt. In Atlanta, you say you're a Christian because your grandmother went to church, *and* you went to Vacation Bible School when you were seven years old. If this isn't proof enough to my extreme devotion to Christianity, I even had a bible verse on my bulletin board in my bedroom for good measure. I don't remember what it said, but I know you're impressed.

Looking back, I guess I was sure of my salvation based on my church attendance, my relatives, and my zip code. It makes perfect sense.

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I had just enough Jesus to be informed but not enough Jesus to be transformed.

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Don't get me wrong, I always used the Christian card when it was convenient, or I wanted someone to think I was respectable, but when it comes to being a *real Christian*. I was saving that until I became a Grandma.

I just wanted to have fun, and all the Christian girls I knew were allergic to fun. I started to think Christians and fun went together like gym shorts and stilettos; they just don't. I figured if Christians ever threw a party, the only danger would be death by boredom.

For the love of being popular, there was just no way I would let Jesus get in the way of having any fun. It just seemed too costly.

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I knew what I had to give up, and I wasn't really sure the sacrifice would be worth it. I mean, I am sure Jesus would totally understand if he ever went to a frat party. -Katie Bulmer

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My senior year in college after yet another devastating heartbreak, I came to an all-time low. I felt like I tried everything in my power to find fun, happiness, and happily-freaking-ever-after.

For twenty-two years, I was told a guy is what I needed to complete me, but that clearly wasn't working. I had to find a better plan.

My friend, Robin, invited me to a Greek girl's bible study. I thought it was dumb and I didn't want to go. I figured all those nerdy Christian girls would be totally un-relatable, plus they could probably sense my sin and wouldn't want me to join their little Holy club anyway. But desperate people do desperate things, so I decided to give it a try.

I found myself sitting on the beige carpet as 15 of us squeezed into a tiny living room apartment across campus. The smell of brownies filled the air as I fidgeted with the hole in my jeans. I was secretly trying to remember that one bible verse I had on my bulletin board back at home, so I would have something to offer this conversation.

I had no idea I was about to hear a story that would change my life forever.

I still remember, clear as day, the leader sharing with us the story of the woman at the well (John 4). A woman who was married five times, and having spend the night parties with a guy she wasn't married to. A woman who showed up mid-day, doing the ancient walk of shame in her boyfriend's toga. (Katie paraphrase).

A woman who was desperately wanting to feel love, worth, and for someone to tell her she was beautiful.

She placed all of these needs in the arms of a guy, and she kept walking away empty-handed. She told herself, if only I was prettier, smarter, funnier, or somehow not enough and too much at the same time...maybe he would stay.

But the guys never stayed, and her heart was in shambles.

My heart beat faster as the small group leader drew a picture of a cup, symbolizing the woman's desperate attempts to fill her life with men. The cup seemed great and "full" for a moment, but what she didn't realize was her cup was scattered with holes at the bottom. The fullness was only temporary because soon, the cup would leak and become empty again.

A guy named Jesus met her right here. In her emptiness, in her walk of shame, in her desperation of looking for love in all the wrong frat boys, (or gladiators or whatever).

Jesus looked at the woman no one else would talk to, with respect and said,

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“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. The water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

Jesus John 4:14

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My heart stood still. I was cold and sweaty at the same time. My eyes darted around the room to see if anyone else heard what I just heard.

Jesus didn't ask her to get her life together. He didn't look at her with shame. He broke all cultural barriers by talking to a harlot from the wrong side of town. A woman who most people wouldn't be caught dead drinking from the same cup, yet he offered her a glass of eternal water.

Since this moment, I've found this encounter at the well to be the longest recorded conversation with Jesus in all of scripture.

Did you catch that?

Jesus talked to Kings, religious rulers, politicians, and even his mama, but...

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The longest recorded conversation with Jesus  
in scripture is with a heartbroken girl.

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Just like me, and maybe you too.

The King of the universe sat beside the well and spoke to her just as He spoke to me in that tiny apartment and said, "I offer you ETERNAL water so you will never thirst again."

I swallowed hard, realizing how dry my mouth had become, just like my life. A desert of empty promises and mirages of happiness that never came true.

Now this Jesus guy, who I hardly knew, said He was offering water where I would NEVER thirst again? You mean there was a way to end the cycle of looking for love in all the wrong fraternity boys? Was it possible to feel *permanently* fulfilled? Was it possible to get off the roller coaster of feeling full, then feeling completely defeated? Was there a forever that was truly forever?

I had more questions than answers but those words, “Eternal water” somehow sounded like everything I had been searching for.

Later that night, I looked up at the ceiling to pray to a God I wasn't even sure if I believed in and said:

“God, I have chased fulfillment in every form of the word and came up empty every time. My way is clearly not working, and I want to try your way.”

I took a deep breath and finished,

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Hey God, if eternal water exists,  
I want a keg of it.

-Katie Bulmer

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I didn't even know what any of this meant, but the days and weeks that followed, I was transforming from the outside in.

I stopped searching for approval from others and started realizing the God of the universe already said I was worthy. I stopped needing love from a boyfriend, I started to love myself.

The guy who was sloppy drunk at the bar trying to pick me up seemed 100 times less attractive. The God of the Universe who gave His life for a selfish party-goer like me seemed 100 times more attractive. The Great Physician was healing my heart. The more I fell in love with my Heavenly Father, the less I needed anything else. I wasn't longing for something; I had it!

My roommate slipped a note under my door that said, "I see the changes in you, and I'm proud of you."

My life was changing because I finally found eternal water to quench my thirst!

In retrospect, I now see I was looking for a guy to fill my God-shaped hole. How unfair of me to put that type of expectation on another sinful human being. It turns out a guy is not my savior, and I am not his.

I had to be made whole in Christ first, then, and only then, could I have a healthy romantic relationship.

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I used to think following Jesus meant losing everything important to me. It turns out, I found everything important to me.

-Katie Bulmer

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A couple of months after becoming a new creation, I met this really cute youth pastor, and for some reason, he seemed to like me too. I had huge issues trying to understand why a youth pastor would want anything to do with me. I tried, in my mind, to push him away because even though I knew I had been made new, how could a human look at me that way? How could this perfect guy want anything to do with someone like me?

This is where I want better for you sweet friends. I want you to meet your perfect guy one day and not have to deal with telling him about your past baggage, scars from old boyfriends, and questionable party tactics. I want two complete and perfectly whole people to seek Jesus until they find each other.



I fell in love with my heavenly Father, and he blessed me with the most amazing husband I could ever ask for. He models Christ to me daily and gives me a picture of just how much Jesus loves me.

Friends, I speak your language. I've been to fraternity parties hugging the toilet after too much Tequila. I've had lots of heartbreak, and I've also found my happily ever after.

I want to save you from tons of scars, heartbreak, and hangovers. I want to help you channel your incredible power of influence, and I have some wisdom to share that the world is simply not telling you.

There are so many things I see from this side of the fence I missed when I was your age. After years of college ministry, hundreds of coffee dates, and lots of marketing research, it became apparent that all women have the same basic fears, insecurities, and questions.

Sorority women have more in common than we do differently. I believe the time is now for sorority women to rise and be the change, I believe to the very core of my being you can be.

Sorority girls can...

CHANGE  
THE  
WORLD

I believe this to my bones.

If you are wondering if I said ALL of that at the sorority house, probably not. In fact, my knees were shaking so bad I couldn't tell you what I said. But I did have a girl come up to me afterward and tell me I should be a motivational speaker.

I told her I don't even know what that is.

Today I have the pleasure of traveling the nation to motivate, encourage and help sorority women learn they truly can make a difference. From my own experience and the hundreds of girls I meet wearing your exact same (totally adorable) shoes, I believe today's college women are ready to stand for more on greek row. The rest of these pages will show you how.

Let's start changing the world, my friend.

## World Changing Action Steps

1. Have you ever heard the voice of God?
2. Do you know how to listen? Hint: One of my favorite quotes is, “Don’t listen to the loud voices, listen to the true voices,” How can you listen to more true voices?
3. If God was sitting beside you right now and could only tell you one sentence, what would it be?
4. Talk a few minutes about calling. What is unique to your experience, skills, or passions God may be calling you into today or preparing you for in your future?
5. Tell a story that is more than likely unique to you and only you. It could be funny, crazy, or embarrassing.

Example: I am probably the only person reading this who was born days before a hurricane. My parents brought me home from the hospital to an apartment with water up to their knees with no electricity or phone service. I like to say, “I came into this world with a bang.”

## CHAPTER 2

### IT STARTS WITH TRENDS

Ah, the age-old question, “What is cool?” Anyone alive for more than ten years knows the answer to this question changes quite frequently. In my lifetime, I was once totally convinced gaucho pants, acid-washed jeans, and *New Kids On the Block* were cooler than a polar bear’s toenail.

At some point, my acid-washed jeans were in a garage sale, and my *New Kids On The Block* cassette tapes (they are a thing) were in the trash.

I’ve studied marketing for as long as I can remember. I was a marketing major with an emphasis in sales. I’ve worked in print, radio, and TV advertising.

Currently, I work with apparel and print marketing, primarily selling bulk orders of 100+ T-shirts to universities and organizations. In this industry, I see the first wind of what is trending and the millions of dollars that hang in the balance.

I get paid to track when something is cool or lame and the money that changes hands in the meantime. All this trend studying and experience brings me to one unmistakable conclusion:

Sorority girls can  
CHANGE  
THE  
WORLD

This became most evident, starting with a little T-shirt company called Comfort Colors.

## 100 Million Dollar Power of Influence-

In early 2010 I started working in the apparel industry. At the time, the trend was “baby doll tees.” Girls liked the smallest shirt they could wear, and no one I ever worked with had heard of a little brand of oversized tees called Comfort Colors.

Comfort Colors, a family-owned t-shirt company founded in 1975, was primarily found in beach shops along the coast. For thirty years, the company earned a decent income, found its niche in the beach shops and intended to carry on “business as usual” for the foreseeable future. Yet, sorority girls...

No one knows where or why, but around 2013, sorority girls decided they liked Comfort Colors tees. Sororities started ordering the tees in bulk, taking cute pics with their tees for Instagram (as one does). It wasn't long before this little T-shirt brand busted into the scene as a nationwide sales explosion!

Working in the T-shirt industry, I received updates every week, notifying us of stock shortages as Comfort Colors reps began scrambling to keep up with demand. By this point, I was getting request after request for this previously unknown brand of tees. Every time I entered an order for a customer who wanted Comfort Colors tees, I had to click a disclaimer stating “I understood there are stock shortages.” Many colors they simply couldn’t keep on the shelves long enough to note any inventory.

Sales of Comfort Colors were rising, and everyone in our industry was scratching our heads, saying, “What the heck is going on with this once small T-shirt company?”

I was convinced they had a celebrity endorsement or a widely successful new ad campaign. Maybe Beyoncé starting wearing the tees? It had to be something big because almost overnight (I hope you are sitting down for this) Comfort Colors brand tees skyrocketed from a \$10 million company to...

One Hundred Million Dollars!<sup>1</sup>

Just to give you a little perspective, One hundred million dollars will buy 800 medium-priced homes or a year's salary for over 2,000 school teachers!

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<sup>1</sup> <http://directdesigninc.com/comfort-colors/>

Here is the crazy part: the sudden peak in demand was not due to any extra marketing or promotion from the company. They hired no celebrity to endorse them and launched no new products. I later found out their CEO passed away during the middle of this sales explosion.

Comfort Colors had no idea this was coming, but when sorority girls decide they like something, there is no stopping that 100-million-dollar train.

## It's not just T-shirts

I have seen the same thing happen with black-rimmed glasses, yoga pants, Birkenstocks, the messy bun, and whatever the fascination is with pineapples. What was once considered nerdy, sloppy, or irrelevant turns into a multi-million-dollar business when sorority girls decide something is cool.

After this book first made its way into the world, I was interviewed by a New York City trade publication called, "Youth Trends." Youth Trends' purpose is to look to youth culture to truly define what is cool for big-name companies like Coke, Nike, and Samsung, to name a few.

Think about it this way, the 60-year-old overweight guy in his high rise office doesn't know what is cool (no offense Orville). But he is smart enough to realize millions of dollars hang in the balance when it comes to being on the first wave of the next big trend. Corporate Executives hire companies like Youth Trends to answer the hundred million dollar question, "What is cool?"

As the rep from Youth Trends and I chatted during the interview, I was stunned to hear this big city trade publication talk about where they look to define cool. I thought she would say NYC, LA, perhaps, the Kardashians or MTV.

The researcher I spoke with noted how she, too, noticed sorority women have incredible trend-setting power; In fact, she noted sorority women, specifically in the southeastern United States as some of their biggest leads to the next wave of "what is cool?"

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**Marketing Research analyst look to  
YOU to define what is cool!**

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This is a privilege and a responsibility.

At 33 million strong with an estimated worth of 150 billion dollars, your demographic spends an estimated \$9,000 every minute. Marketers care a great deal about what attracts sorority girls and what "it" thing they will fall in love with next.



In the documentary titled *Merchants of Cool*,<sup>2</sup> marketers, experts, and economists explore the relationship between the media and our youth. The remarkable thing is that you each look to each other for identity.

You probably never thought about the media and apparel industry looking to you for what is cool just as much or more than you look to them, but it is true.

Malcolm Gladwell, author and social science researcher is arguably the expert in this arena. In his book, *The Tipping Point*, Gladwell explains this trend-setting power as “The Law of the Few.”

"The Law of the Few" supports the idea that "The success of any kind of social epidemic is heavily dependent on the involvement of people with a particular and rare set of social gifts."<sup>3</sup>

In other words, when trends shift, the few people with “a rare set of social gifts” are the ones riding the first wave of “cool,” while the rest of the world follows.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/view/> "

<sup>3</sup> <https://malcolmgladwelltippingpoint.wikispaces.com/The+Law+of+the+Few>

Never has “The Law of the Few” been more applicable than with sorority girls. What they wear, where they eat, and what they get tattooed (seriously) gets noticed and shifts the mainstream culture.

Sororities are filled with popular girls, who organically socialize with other popular people. They have large social networks and can make a once unknown brand of T-shirts sell for one hundred million dollars.

Sorority women also have, on average, fifty percent more followers on social media than their non-Greek peers. With any given post, sorority women can influence their social platform of thousands of people.

Even the least friendly of the bunch is placed in an environment to effortlessly meet tons of popular people and socialize with the most influential students on campus. Even if you aren't cool, your friends are...therefore you are. This is the perfect recipe to turn even high-waisted jeans back into style (Lord help us).

Don't take my word for it. *The Fraternity Advisor*<sup>4</sup> has some incredible research on the world changers that are part of the Greek system:

- 76% of all Congressmen and Senators belong to a fraternity.
- Over 85% of the student leaders on 730 campuses are Greek.
- The Greek system is the largest network of volunteers in the US,
- All of the Apollo 11 astronauts are Greek.
- 85% of the Fortune 500 executives are greek.
- Over \$7 million is raised each year by Greeks nationally for charities
- 71% percent of those listed in "Who's Who in America" belong to a sorority or fraternity.

This is a remarkable power of influence. Look at these incredible statistics! If that isn't proof you can change the world, I don't know what it is! I could end the book right here, but I'm going to talk about sex in the next chapter, so you probably want to stay tuned.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://thefraternityadvisor.com/greek-life-statistics/>

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Did you know nearly every great movement in our history was started by a small group of young people? -Katie Bulmer

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Why not you? Why not today? Why not with some of the most outstanding, trendsetting humans on the planet?

One of the biggest push backs I hear from this idea is fear. Fear of others, fear of failure and a belief in a bunch of lies. The biggest lie is perception from the media.

## Lies you are taught from the media

I mentioned I was a marketing major and have spent my whole grown-up life studying and understanding how marketing works, (and manipulates us) into buying. Take for example an excerpt from a blog post I did on an L'Oreal commercial.

*Guys! You won't believe this! According to a commercial I just saw, if I use L'Oreal cosmetics, I will look just like Jennifer Lopez! Everywhere I go, the light will highlight all of my best features, and my friends will throw their heads back in rolling laughter at all of my jokes.*

*Isn't this exciting!? I mean, I'm sure Jennifer Lopez buys her cosmetics from Wal-Mart. That part makes perfect sense. (Eye Roll)*

*J-Lo's beauty probably has nothing to do with her personal trainer, aesthetician (who likely lives with her), facial peels, Botox, facial massages, professional makeup artist, and all the hired help who handle her real life. No, I'm sure none of that helps her look beautiful.*

*The \$7 tube of lip gloss is the secret. For the love of lip gloss, thank you, L'Oreal, for this commercial, so I know how to be beautiful just like J-Lo!*

Dear commercial makers, we were not born yesterday. We know better than to think lip gloss will make us look like a celebrity and your fake words like “collagen modules” and “pheramides” will not give our lips the appearance they have been injected with sunshine and fairy glitter either!

## Who is the Media?

Believe it or not, in the U.S., there are just six corporations that control 90 percent of what we read, watch, or listen to. Due to mergers, buyouts, etc., the fifty-plus companies that ruled the airways back in 1983 have consolidated into just six.

When it comes to movies, TV shows, radio, commercials, or pretty much any other media we consume, did you know only 232 media executives control the information diet of 277 million Americans? That's one media exec to 850,000 subscribers.<sup>5</sup>

The 232 media execs in their fancy Hollywood office, far removed from your actual life, are simply looking to get rich and don't have your best interest at heart. No offense to the media makers, I was one after all. Nevertheless, I have yet to sit in a boardroom where there was a discussion on how to convey healthy relationships, model positive friendships, or have a girl put on *more* clothing.

Marketers also know the more risqué their product, the more free press. If a movie is pushing the envelope with too much sex, for example, the media will be all over it. *Fifty shades of Grey* saved millions of dollars in advertising because the news gave them publicity for free!

The news can call it terrible and say, "Oh, can you believe it?" But the movie makers are laughing all the way to the bank while they save on advertising dollars and pocket the proceeds as people show up in droves to see what all the fuss is about.

We are smarter than this.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.businessinsider.com/these-6-corporations-control-90-of-the-media-in-america-2012-6>

## It's Not Even Real

My husband and I recently went on a trip to Las Vegas. He had a work conference, and I was able to come along to enjoy the city. It took us about five minutes from getting off the airplane to realize Sin City lives up to its name.

Billboards, signs, and lights, advertising sex everywhere! Nearly nude women on every corner who “want to meet you” so the billboard reads. The streets are littered with playing cards featuring nude women. Every casino smelled like cigarettes, booze, and regret.

Yet, even with all of the questionable behaviors, what struck me about Vegas was the huge beautifully ornate and strikingly elaborate hotels full of amenities fit for royalty. Shows full of talent matched by none other. The streets glittered with lights and glamour, breathtaking beauty twinkled under the night sky and exquisite detail into every inch of the architecture.

One morning, while waiting for the elevator, I stood astonished at the elaborate oil paintings, Persian rugs, and lavish decor from floor to ceiling. My eyes followed the seam of the intricate wood finish on the side of the elevator. That's when I noticed the veneer that was peeling off at the corner. What looked like 1,000-year-old wood pulled fresh from some exotic forest was actually a cheap covering.

It wasn't even real. What looked to be alluring and beautiful was just an inexpensive mask.

Staring at that wall, I felt that was the perfect example of the media. We don't really stop to think about it, but we personalize and try to relate to the shows and movies that we know are fiction. It's simply human nature. It's normal and even healthy to relate to what we see. The big screen has been captivating us for years, motivating, inspiring, and letting us fall in love with love all over again.

But it's not even real.

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The media doesn't care if a movie encourages you to have unhealthy relationships, irresponsible sex or go into financial dept. They just want you to buy their stuff.

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We have allowed media to teach us what is right and acceptable, yet the people making these movies and commercials are simply trying to make money. Your future, your wellbeing, and your heart are *not* even considered in making the script.

The conclusion? "Kids feel frustrated and lonely today because they are encouraged to feel that way," Mark Miller states in *Merchants of Cool*. " Miller continues...

"Advertising has always sold anxiety, and it certainly sells anxiety to the young. It's always telling them they are not thin enough, they're not pretty enough, they don't have the right friends, or they have no friends...they're losers unless they buy their product. But I don't think anybody, deep down, really feels cool enough, ever."

So here's my question...

If you sorority girls, maintain such an incredible power of influence that you can grow an average t-shirt company to a 100-million-dollar business and even make a pineapple all the rage, why in the name of cute shoes would you let *MTV*, *The Bachelor*, *Cosmopolitan*, or 232 money-hungry strangers with an agenda have any say whatsoever over your one extraordinary and precious life?

You are the coolest trendsetters the world has ever known!  
You decide what is acceptable, you decide what you pour  
into that beautiful mind of yours, and you decide where to  
spend your dollars.

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You are smarter than the commercials, The  
Kardashians, and the hype. You are the hype!  
Be the change you want to see. -Katie Bulmer

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## Your Dollars Matter

I bet you didn't know you could change the world with a  
bracelet?

Worldwide, many women face impoverished conditions, so  
they look to prostitution as a means of survival. Women  
who have no education, no skills, no support, no transporta-  
tion, and no hope are told their bodies are the only thing  
they have to offer.

In comes Trades of Hope.

Trades of Hope is a company founded by a mother-daugh-  
ter team with a mission to provide beautiful jewelry and to  
support the hands who make it. Trades of Hope is not a  
charity; they are a difference-maker.

Research shows impoverished countries do not flourish when they are simply given money; the change happens when you provide jobs.

Trades of Hope partners with artisans in dozens of countries worldwide, and we can be a part.

What if the Membership Education Vice President's bought Trades of Hope jewelry for all their new members? What if the most influential consumer demographics in the world (i.e., sorority girls) decided they liked this jewelry?

With every purchase made, we can support dignity, freedom, and a fair wage for a new friend half a world away. Can we say that for the jewelry from Target?

I believe if this concept caught on, sorority women could flip the economic model of many third world countries. Maybe one-day Trades of Hope will experience the same good fortune of Comfort Colors, and we will all be talking about how villages in Uganda used to be poverty-stricken, now the children are educated, the water is clean, and their bellies are full, thanks to some jewelry and the trend-setters who are sorority girls.

If it could happen for a T-shirt, why not some earrings?

*Some say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.*

-John Lennon.

I get that this may be a totally new concept to you, so don't get overwhelmed. I am simply trying to make the point that sorority women have incredible power to start trends. I am merely asking you to consider starting trends with a greater impact than making a T-shirt cool.

If you don't know where to start, there's an app for that! The "Ethical Barcode" lets you scan almost any barcode and rates the product according to health, environment, and social impact. In addition, Projectjust.com<sup>6</sup> is a website where you can search the brands you love and understand the ethics behind it.

The best way to change the world is to start small. Maybe there is a local cause or boutique near your campus doing great things in your community or around the world.

Your sorority can host a spirit night supporting the local shop, promote the tastiest thing on their menu, and wear their T-shirts. When sorority girls support world-changing organizations, the organization sells more. When world-changing organizations sell more, they can better support their honest practices and set a higher bar for the competition...eventually changing the world.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://projectjust.com/>

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In Marketing 101 we learn, “You vote with your dollars.” Buy the change you want to see.

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Voting with your dollars means every purchase we make tells the company we want to see more of what they are making. For example, if we support a faith-based movie, we tell Hollywood we like it, and they should make more. If we support fifty shades of questionable decisions, we are telling companies to keep blurring the lines of pornography and entertainment, abuse and love.

What are we telling companies we want to see more? What are our dollars supporting? With every dollar spent we *vote* for the type of world we want to see.

This is such a powerful concept, especially for sorority women. Need I remind you major organizations look to YOU for trends. What do you support? What do you want to see more?

I truly believe if the most incredible women on the planet (i.e. sorority girls) understand your buying power, you ladies can shift mainstream culture for the better. You could show up in droves to the next faith-based movie. You could set sales records for ethical companies making a difference.

Your trendsetting potential to support ethical companies, movies with a positive message, and uplifting music could entirely...

CHANGE

THE

WORLD.

Next time you make a purchase take a moment to see if there is a similar product offered by an ethical company.

Some of my favorites:

Trades of hope [www.Tradesofhope.com](http://www.Tradesofhope.com)

Penny Story [www.thepennystory.com/](http://www.thepennystory.com/)

Noonday Collective [www.noondaycollection.com/](http://www.noondaycollection.com/)

# World Changing Action Steps

1. Is any of the above information a shocker to you? Did you know about your power of influence?
2. Do you have a company that may be lesser known that would be incredible to support? Maybe a local family friend who is making a difference? How could your sorority support them?
3. What is a world-changing company you could share about on your social media?
4. What is one “world-changing” purchase you can make this week?
5. Would you feel comfortable bringing everything you listened to, downloaded, and watched with you to church on Sunday?

Ouch right?

World-changing women need to consider their integrity with their purchases to be the change we want to see.

(When I first heard this message I threw away my “Sex and the City” DVD’s) What is something you need to consider not supporting with your world-changing time and dollars?

## CHAPTER 3

### SEX AND GREEK ROW

The 100 million dollar power of influence I mentioned in the last chapter is remarkable, even world-changing. Yet, my passion gets turned up when we talk about using your power of influence to change the dating world.

If the most beautiful, trendsetting, movement making, women are not raising the bar when it comes to dating, who will?

It's time to change our culture of dating, and I believe sorority girls are the ones to lead the way.

When I get the opportunity to speak to a large group of sorority women, I love to do this little exercise from the stage. I bring a handheld dry erase board and ask the girls to shout out the characteristics they want in their dream husband.

I am clear I want them to think long term here. Yes, tall, dark, and handsome is clearly important, but I also want them to think about what values they will cherish when they are covered in baby spit-up, dealing with losing family members, or navigating money stress. What characteristics describe the *life partner* you want beside you?



Here is a list of the most common adjectives I hear:

Smart

Funny

Trustworthy

Leader

Wants to raise kids in church

Healthy/Fit

Faithful

Loyal

Polite

Nice to his Mama

Friendly

Ambitious

Not a surprising list. We all really want the same basic things in prince charming. The kicker lies when I ask the hard question: Why in the world would the most beautiful women on campus accept anything less than what we see on this list?

I have met women in every sorority, all across the nation and I have yet to hear a girl say they want their dream guy to pretend to love them, say all the right things, use their body, and then never call them again.

Yet time and time again, I sit at the coffee shop with a beautiful 19-year-old girl as the tears fall into her latte over some *stinking boy* who did just that.

Through the sniffles, I hear her say,

“I thought he loved me, but...”

Or

“He said this time would be different, but he cheated again.”

or the especially hard to hear,

“He acted like I was special that night, but after he got what he wanted (pause as she holds back sobs), he acts like he doesn’t even know me when I see him on campus.”

This is the part during our coffee date when I want to scream. “Have you even seen yourself in the mirror? Do you have any idea you are not only beautiful, but you are also a trendsetter, smart, strong, well rounded, inspiring, and did I mention beautiful!?”

The vein in my forehead begins to throb as my mind continues, “Moreover, I have seen this guy you are crying over...what in the actual heck? What are his life goals? To brush his hair and pull up his pants?

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“Did he even pursue your heart, or did you just hand it to him?”

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-Katie Bulmer

After my internal rant, I'm tempted to throw my coffee in the air, race over to campus, pull this punk kid out of bed from his college apartment, and hold him up by his throat against the wall as I give him a piece of my mind.

However, it turns out this behavior is illegal. I digress.

I don't lecture my sorority girl coffee companion, and I don't beat up the hooligan who broke her heart (although I'm still tempted). My anger quickly cools into compassion as I look across our lattes, and quickly remember, *I was that girl too.*

Just like my countless younger friends at the coffee shop, I too was looking for love in all the wrong fraternity boys.

As you read in the first chapter, I was also broken and hoping another flawed human could somehow rescue me. It never worked out that way for me, and it turns out this formula is still producing the same disappointing results.

Women hand over pieces of their bodies in hopes of getting love in return. This method only leaves them feeling more empty than before.

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It turns out there is only one savior, and your boyfriend is not him (and you are not his).

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As our conversation at the coffee shop winds to a close, it occurs to me; she doesn't have a dating plan. Just like myself and the girls I mentor she would tell you she wants everything on the list I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, yet she settles for less because she doesn't have a plan!

An architect perfects a blueprint before the construction team ever breaks ground. A business owner lays out a plan for the next fiscal year. Yet, beautiful women are walking into one of the most important decisions of their lives, a dating relationship with no plan!

It's time to make a plan.

I created a free resource for you. I call it a Dating Plan. It's a free interactive quiz giving you options to define what matters to YOU. The results are sent directly to your email address.

Once your responses are sent to you, you then have written evidence of what matters to you most and areas you are unwilling to compromise. Tattoo the results to your forehead if you must but please my friends. STOP SETTLING.

Link to the Free Dating Plan:  
[tinyurl.com/mydatingplan](http://tinyurl.com/mydatingplan)

Maybe the problem is that no one told you as no one told me:

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You decide what is acceptable  
in the guys you date.

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Just as in trends, movies, and t-shirts, you decide what is acceptable, not the media and not the guy. You get the opportunity to DEFINE what matters. Draw a line around the physical boundaries you don't want to cross and STOP compromising.

*Treat your kisses as if you have a limited supply.*  
*-Allie K Stanley*

My family and I went to the Grand Canyon recently. I posted an Instagram picture of me doing a yoga pose on the side of a cliff. Ok, in truth, the camera angle made it *look* like I was on the edge, but I am not a complete idiot. I was well within the safety zone while doing the said yoga pose.

The point to my post was this: if you don't want to fall off the edge, you don't dangle your toes and lean in (or in my case do a yoga pose) near the edge, hoping you won't fall.

If you don't want to sleep with him, don't have spend the night parties at his house. Don't have heavy make-out sessions in the dark with articles of clothing missing, and Bacardi swimming through your veins.

If you flirt with a guy, he will respond. If you say it's okay to go back to his apartment after too many Jell-O shots, he thinks it's okay to kiss. If you say it's fine to lay on his bed, he is not an idiot.

Does this sound like the book, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*?

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Temptation is infinitely easier to  
avoid than to overcome.

---

If you don't want to fall off the cliff, don't dangle your toes off the edge and hope to be a superhero.

Instead of flirting with disaster, create a safety zone, and then take three more steps back, just to be safe.

Think on this for a minute. Does the guy you are dating now or have recently dated know what you define as acceptable and not? Have you taken the time to determine what is important to you when it comes to sexual integrity and what lines you don't want to cross?

My quick tips for developing healthy boundaries when it comes to sex:

**1) DEFINE what matters.** What lines do you NOT want to cross? Make a dating plan. (Hint this is much easier to define when you are single. Girls in a dating relationship, remember what mattered to you *before* you started dating him, have you compromised anything you used to believe?)

**2) Avoid Temptation.** Determine what situations cause you to get dangerously close to the line.

Examples that might make you “fall off the edge.”

- Hanging out with a guy alone after midnight
- Surrounding yourself with friends who laugh off casual sex
- Tequila (but seriously)

**3) Have a conversation.** Dating a guy who seems great? Maybe you have gone on a few dates or maybe even been dating for months, but neither of you have discussed what is important to you in a physical relationship.

I get it; this part seems awkward, but nothing is more awkward than being naked (yes, that is what I said.)

Why do we often think it’s okay to be naked with someone but not to have a conversation?

Below is an example of a conversation starter one of the girls I mentored used:

*I really like you, and I want this to continue, but I want to make sure we are on the same page on where this is going physically. It's important to me that we....FILL IN THE BLANK.*

---

Selfish relationships think:

“How can I get all I can from them?”

Honoring relationships, think, “How can I give

as much as I can to them?” -Katie Bulmer

---

Here is the thing, both of you are going to have to explain all of your previous sexual relationships to your future spouse one day. Is the relationship you are in today giving you more to explain, excuse, and regret? Alternatively, is this a relationship where you are building each other up, preparing BOTH of you for your future marriages?



## You Must Be Willing to Walk Away

*The Huffington Post*<sup>7</sup> wrote an exceptional article explaining our current dating culture in simple economic terms:

“It’s a question of supply and demand. “Easy” women are easy to get. The supply exceeds the demand. Now, it’s the sexually modest woman that stands apart in the dating world as the rare and desirable thing.

Rare and desirable, I like these adjectives. Just like precious stones, the more rare, the more valuable. What woman wouldn’t want to be described as rare and desirable? Yet, many misled sorority women still believe the way to get a man’s attention is with a low cut shirt.

The article explains women wearing low cut shirts are a dime a dozen, what stands apart now is the woman who carries herself with modesty. She is rare and desirable.

I will point out, a low cut shirt WILL get a man’s attention but is it the attention you want? A fisherman will tell you they use a certain type of bait to attract a certain type of fish. If you are using a low cut shirt to attract a guy, what kind of guy are you fishing for?

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/debra-macleod/2015-dating\\_b\\_6385346.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/debra-macleod/2015-dating_b_6385346.html)

Typically when I am sharing topics like this at sorority houses most girls are intrigued. They want to have a dating plan and to be seen as rare and desirable, but their immediate push back comes to, “What will guys think?”

I’m so glad you asked. I have done my homework on this subject, talked to dozens of guys for their advice and I found an article that sums it up perfectly.

The *Good Man Project*<sup>8</sup> (a hugely popular online magazine for guys) puts it like this:

*Ladies, if you really want men to step up and become the real men you talk about, you must demand it. I’m not saying ask for it, and I’m not saying hope for it, I’m saying demand it. What does that mean? It means you don’t settle for anything less. It means if you aren’t satisfied, you walk away. Men will rise and meet your challenge, I promise, it’s what we do best. We love challenges. We love it when women make us step up and work.*

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<sup>8</sup><https://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/the-good-life-ladies-demand-what-you-want/>"

*If you do this right, you will have men lining up at your door. It seems counter-intuitive, but you have to understand how much men enjoy a challenge. There is nothing sexier than a woman who has the confidence to call us out and challenge us to rise. The part that you don't like is the hardest thing about all this. You must be willing you walk away if you aren't getting what you want. I will say this five more times because it's that important.*

*You must be willing to walk away*

*You must be willing to walk away*

*You must be willing to walk away.*

*You must be willing to walk away.*

*You must be willing to walk away.*

DROPS THE MIC.

In case you missed it, these words are from the lips of a guy. I have done interviews and podcasts with tons of male interviewers, and they all agree on this subject. If women demand better, men will rise to the occasion.

This truth has never been more applicable than with sorority women. Ladies, look in the mirror. Not only are you the most striking women on your campus, but you are almost always an all-around “good catch.” Like the statistics from the last chapter proved, sorority women are typically involved on campus, earn good grades, are responsible, come from nice families, and have good manners as a bonus.

Why are the most amazing women settling for anything less than the characteristics they put on their “ideal list?”

## What If I Never Get Married?

Maybe you’re thinking, that list is a good idea in theory, but good grief Katie, what if I never get married? What if this narrows my dating pool?

Girlfriend, let’s be real for a second. I get it. I was the girl who pretended I was strong and independent, but if I were to be honest, I would do whatever it took to make my boyfriend happy, anything to avoid another broken heart. I thought if I didn’t settle then I was going to end up being alone. I was utterly terrified to be a middle-aged woman with jelly donuts and seventeen cats as my only companions.

Now that I’m married with kiddos (no cats) and have a little life under my belt, I see this question much differently. I look across our lattes as we sit together at the coffee shop listening to the *twenty-two-year-old* worried she won’t find a husband. I look at her now and honestly want to say, “You are an infant! I can still smell the Similac on your breath! What the heck are you worried about?”

Good news from my side of the fence:

Do you know how many of my sorority sisters, friends from college, or other acquaintances did *not* get married?

Two. As in one more than one. As in only two.

I'm no mathematician, but I'm pretty sure you have a better chance of getting struck by lightning while getting bit by a shark, while winning the lottery than not finding an eligible bachelor.

The problem lies in finding the *right* bachelor.

While I only have two friends who never married, I know tons of people who are fighting custody battles over their kids because they are divorced or married and miserable.

Permission to speak freely here? While there are few guarantees in the marriage and dating world, I do have one guarantee for you: Sleep with as many men as you want, give your heart, and body away with little or no expectations and I guarantee you will have a million and one marriage problem if marriage works out at all.

Yikes, I know, I said it.

Or

You can be different than the world by protecting your heart and body. You can work on becoming the best version of yourself with as little baggage to carry into the marriage as possible. You can be Rare and Desirable.

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Worry less about getting married, and more about becoming a whole, complete best version of YOU! Don't you want your future husband to be doing the same?

-Katie Bulmer

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Having unshakable standards will narrow your dating pool. The guys that think dating you is optional, sex is a game to be played, or the guy who just wants to date you for selfish reasons, will no longer be considered as feasible options for you. Your dating pool is now smaller; you're welcome.

Every girl I have mentored, no matter our age, race, personality, or family history want to be seen as, "The only woman in the world."

You may not have thought about it this way but here is how I know this to be true. You don't want to be compared to all his exes, You don't want to be compared to plastic images on a website. You certainly don't want to invest months or even years into a relationship only for him to end up "having eyes" for other women.

Am I right so far?

Although we haven't met in real life I bet I know another thing about you as well. You do not, under any circumstances, want to hear from your boyfriend, "Hey babe, I am a sex expert."

GROOOOSSSSS Congratulations???? Are there trophies for that?

---

Here is the thing, he can be an "expert" on 100 girls on your campus (gross), but none of that matters unless he is an expert on YOU.

-Katie Bulmer

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This is the part where you snap your fingers and shout, "Hallelujah!" To put it another way, "You're the only one of you, Baby, that's the fun of you."

## BE THAT GIRL

Back to my dry-erase-board-prince-charming-exercise, I mentioned at the start of this chapter. It's easy to come up with a list of qualities we want in our dream guy, but what if we turn the tables? Does this list of ideal characteristics describe you?

Andy Stanley, in his series, *Love, Sex and Dating*<sup>9</sup> (go watch it on YouTube right now), asks this now famous question to thousands of singles. “Are you the person you are looking for, is looking for?”

In high school and most of college, I was not. I had my list of what Prince Charming would look like, but I figured in the meantime, I could dance on tables, get really drunk, and give my heart and body away to any guy who said the right things.

I realize now how hypocritical I was in wanting my dream guy to protect his body, mind, love Jesus, and being debt-free and devilishly handsome would be a nice bonus.

All the while, I assumed I could do as I pleased and expect my dream guy to pursue me.

How did this ever make sense to me? And how does this still make sense in the mind of singles everyday? This whole idea hit home for me in a grocery store check out-line.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://northpoint.org/messages/the-new-rules-for-love-sex-and-dating>



When my husband and I were just friends, we were working together on a church project and needed to run to the grocery store. We were standing together at the checkout line when he grabbed a *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. As usual, paraded across the magazine was a beautiful half-nude woman and at least a dozen articles featuring something about sex.

You can imagine my nervousness at first as he grabbed the magazine. But he did something strange, something I had never seen done before. As quickly as he grabbed the magazine, he turned it backward and set it back on the stand. After the magazine was backward on the stand he looked back at me and proceeded with our conversation as if this was a totally normal thing to do.

Dumbfounded and confused, I said, “Why did you do that...the thing with the magazine?”

Casually, with a shrug, he replied, “Oh, to protect my eyes. I just don’t want fake images in my mind to compare my wife to one day.”

*Swoon.*

He had me at “protect my eyes.”

As I found out more about this totally weird (in a really good way) guy, I also realized he had programs on his computer to protect him from internet porn. He even asked himself questions like, “Would I be comfortable bringing everything I watched, listened to, or read to church with me on Sunday?” Maybe he was in some twelve-step recovery program, I thought? Nope, it turns out he just learned a valuable lesson early in life. I said it before but it needs repeating:

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Temptation is infinitely easier to  
avoid than to overcome.

---

Who was this guy, and where had he been all my life?

Eager to tell my friends about this new guy, I specifically remember having a conversation with one of my sorority sisters, Amanda. Amanda is beautiful. Likely one of my most beautiful friends. She is popular, smart, and had no problem attracting boyfriends. But, like most of my sorority girlfriends, she liked to party, hook up with guys, and place Jesus in a convenient little box, careful not to let Him get in the way of her having fun.

When I shared the grocery store magazine story with her, she seemed spellbound but also totally in love with the idea that there were guys out there like this. She decided she was worthy of a guy who mirrored those qualities, and with determination, she told me, “I’m going to marry a guy like that.”

I don’t know why I was so surprised to hear her say that. In fact, most of my friends who heard about this guy “protecting his eyes for his future spouse” all had their hearts flutter like a teenage girl at a One Direction concert.

I didn’t know how to respond to Amanda when she told of her genuine desire to have all these qualities in her Mr. Right while spending zero time *becoming* Mrs. Right. The type of guy that is protecting his eyes and body while wholeheartedly pursuing Christ is looking for a girl on the same path.

It’s like Amanda was headed east, and her dream man was headed south, and she somehow thought they would meet up in the same place and live happily ever after on matching unicorns.

I don’t know why I didn’t see it earlier. I was the same way just a few months before we had this very conversation.

I met Bryan just months after I heard the woman at the well story. In fact, Bryan was the first guy I dated after I became a Christian and the last guy I ever dated. As I type, we have been married 15 perfectly imperfect years and I see now how God had to transform me FIRST to be the girl Bryan wanted to marry.

The pursuit of a romance to make all your dreams come true is not only impossible but also totally unfair to put that burden on another sinful human being.

Jesus is the only one who can truly fulfill you.

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I think the real question is not,  
“Will I get married?” but  
“Is my God big enough to take care of this?”  
Katie Bulmer

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He is a good father. He sees you begging and pleading for what you think will fulfill your heart but, he loves you too much to let you believe the lie that another human can fill the void only He can fill.

He wants to pour into your broken places to make you whole and complete. He wants you to become the person you are looking for, is looking for.

God isn't preparing you just for marriage, He is preparing you for a mission to do incredible things, this is just part of the story.

Enjoy your single time. Make the most of it. Don't worry. God's got this.

## God invented sex

When I was 20, if I came across some mumbo jumbo about waiting to have sex for marriage I would have rolled my eyes and said the author was so old fashioned. With my younger self in mind, I researched the meaning of sex in and outside the Bible. Here is what I found:

The very first time sex is referenced in our history the Greek word used is e'chad. This word translates to: binding together at the deepest level. Katie translation, sex is like concrete.

“Binding together at the deepest level” is a good thing in marriage because concrete is bound for life. No matter the wind or rain that comes our way, concrete will never separate.

Take the very first wedding story for example: In the very beginning, God said on Adam and Eve's wedding day, “The two are united as one (Genesis 2:24).”

The two share e'chad.

Remember when we talked about how women want to be seen as the only woman in the world? Just as Adam saw Eve. This was the original design.

I believe this is still the design today. After a couple is married, the two become one. However, we don't treat sex like concrete. We treat it like scotch tape. When a relationship doesn't work out we can just "scotch tape" ourselves to someone else. In reality, we are digging up concrete.

Driving by construction sites on the highway, you can see concrete doesn't like to be moved. Breaking up concrete requires heavy equipment, tons of work, and there is a huge mess left behind. Did I just describe anyone's last breakup?

Perhaps sex is more like concrete than scotch tape. But e'chad is just one viewpoint. Here is an excerpt of my most popular blog post: What scientist and therapist say about sex:

## What science says about sex:

“There are three main neurohormones that are released during sex. Dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin. These chemicals work together to give us pleasure and bond us together. Oxytocin, in particular, tells the brain, "Once connected, stay connected. Sex bonds us at a relational, physical, and chemical level. It is a powerful force.

- "Sex and the Brain." <sup>10</sup>

"The human brain appears to be specifically designed to encourage monogamous, trust, and commitment-based marriages—even to the point of possessing intricately coordinated brain chemical production."

- [Science and the bible agree on sex.](#) <sup>11</sup>

When a woman is touched lovingly, her brain secretes oxytocin, which activates feelings of closeness and trust. When this is experienced outside the commitment of marriage, women can become deceived into thinking a bad relationship is good because of the effects of touch-dependent oxytocin.

If a sexual relationship ends, the broken bond and feelings of betrayal of trust can lead to severe emotional trauma.

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<sup>10</sup><https://markturrell.wordpress.com/2012/03/18/sex-and-the-brain-how-neuro-science-may-soon-change-all-our-relationships-6/>

<sup>11</sup><http://www.icr.org/article/science-bible-agree-casual-sex-bad/>

For men, an effect of vasopressin—which floods a man’s brain during intercourse—leads to a bonded feeling with his partner. Research shows if he has intercourse with multiple partners, the bonded feeling is dissipated, eventually imperiling a man’s ability to form long-term attachments.

-McIlhaney and Bush M.D

Gosh, that's weird, it's almost as if God knew the science and emotional bond behind his very creation!

No, no, no, I’m quite sure the writers of Cosmopolitan magazine know more about sex than God. Maybe a Ph.D. in the area of relationships would know best. Let's see what Therapist have to say.



## What Therapist say about sex:

“In the counseling office, individuals rarely, if ever weep scalding tears about any other sense of loss like they do for a sexual relationship when it ends. There are soul ties that bind two partners together in unseen ways, and there is a sense that part of you has been stolen. There is a hole in your soul where the connection was ripped from you.” - Dr. Waylon Ward <sup>12</sup> Professional Counselor, author, and speaker

"Twenty years as a counselor has told me nothing has the ability to degrade, cheapen, wound, and rob a sense of who you are as does sex outside of its original design."

-Anonymous therapist

Hmmmm

The scientists and counselors make an interesting point...what did the Bible say again?

*"I am allowed to do anything. Yes, but not everything is good for you."* 1 Corinthians 6:12

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.drwaylonward.com/>

Katie Paraphrase: Sure, you are *allowed* to eat donuts and pizza all day, every day but I don't think you will like the consequences.

*"Don't you see? Sex joins two people together. The two will become one. Therefore, RUN from sexual sin! **No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does.***

*(1 Corinthians 6:18)*

Consider your heavenly father knows how to care for you better than the movies and magazines. Take a moment to fathom that God gave you the gift of your sexuality and wants you to enjoy it, but not with just anyone. Just as we said, you are "allowed" to eat donuts all day, there are natural consequences to that behavior. This is not a matter of opinion or even religion; this is a matter of how we are *designed*.

God, who made every cell in your body, God who created hormones, and crafted the very idea of procreation knew He wanted sex to mean more to man than the rest of His creation. This human, this being created with the very thumbprint of God, was going to be given the gift of true intimacy, true vulnerability, true expression of love, in this wedding gift called sex.

Sex was designed to give us a glimpse of how much God loves us, how much he sees us naked, vulnerable, and fully ourselves, and vows never to leave us, fight for us, and stand beside us no matter what.

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There are not even enough words to combat the struggles we face coming from a sexual past, but the judgment is not one of those words.      -Katie Bulmer

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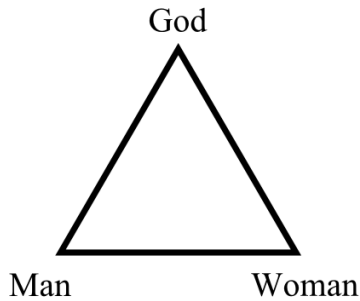
Our culture told you sex is no big deal. But maybe you are dealing with the aftermath of “torn up concrete.”

I wish I could have coffee with you personally and tell you, “I’m so sorry. I know this hurts. Take time to grieve. It’s a loss, it’s a death and it is painful, but next time can be different.”

I wish someone would have told my 20 year-old-self the lie of damaged goods is just that, A LIE. There is no one too far gone to experience the type of marriage designed for Adam and Eve.

There are forks in the road every single day. I don’t care what happened last semester, last year, or last night. Today is the day you get to choose what you want to define your future.

## Change Your Focus



This is how the whole male-female relationship is supposed to work.

The woman keeps her eye on the prize of closeness with her creator and worries 100x less about what guys think of her. She is fully confident her future is in the strong and capable hands of a Creator who has every detail of her life already under control.

The men get to do what they do best: run, persevere and sweat their way through temptation and lesser definitions of “fun,” also with their eyes on the prize.

Both are becoming whole, both are getting rid of baggage, and both are learning more and more about how to love because they are getting closer to the author of love himself, Jesus.

At the top of the triangle, an amazing girl and guy who have been fighting the good fight, meet. Oh my goodness, Nicholas Sparks has nothing on the type of romance that can begin here.

Please, friends, if you hear nothing else, listen carefully to this; fifteen years after college I have a total of zero friends who wish they would have had more sex when they were single. This is because no one told us our past would show up in our future. Please choose the fork in the road toward protecting your heart. Your future self will thank me.

## Change the Dating World

This material may come to you as a shocker, but I've done the research, and it's true. Despite what you see on TV, the statistics tell us MORE people are waiting to have sex until marriage, fewer teenagers are getting pregnant, and MORE couples are staying married.<sup>13</sup>

Your generation wants more than ever, a healthy future for your families.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://consumer.healthday.com/kids-health-information-23/adolescents-and-teen-health-news-719/u-s-teens-waiting-longer-to-have-sex-cdc-701550.html>

"<https://consumer.healthday.com/kids-health-information-23/adolescents-and-teen-health-news-719/u-s-teens-waiting-longer-to-have-sex-cdc-701550.html>"

We talked about how sorority women have a 100 million dollar power of influence, but did you also know there are an estimated 9 million sorority women around the globe?

Imagine with me your world-changing power applied to the dating world. What if the trendsetting, movement making women reading this book elevated their standards in dating? What if you realized your worth? It could change future marriages. It could change future mommies and daddies, it could change the way our next generation view marriage.

Stop chasing boys and start chasing Jesus. It could

CHANGE

THE

WORLD

it will most definitely change your world.

# World Changing Action Steps

1. As my husband learned much earlier than me, temptation is easier to avoid than to overcome. What is a way you can put yourself in less tempting situations?

2. Make a dating plan  
[tinyurl.com/mydatingplan](http://tinyurl.com/mydatingplan)

3. When the results are sent to you, do these characteristics define you as well?

4. When you prune a tree, it hurts the tree, it leaves a mark, but ultimately it helps the tree to grow stronger and become healthier. Sometimes we have to prune things from our lives for our overall well-being. Are you in the middle of an unhealthy relationship? If you were to “be willing to walk away,” how could your sisters support you?

5. Discuss how and what to say to your current or future boyfriend when it comes to establishing healthy physical boundaries.

## CHAPTER 4

### PHILANTHROPY

I hope you had a tall glass of ice water after all that sex talk. We are not done yet with the counter-cultural, mind-blowing ways sorority girls can change the world.

I need you to take a seat, breathe in deep. I have another idea that will totally blow your hair back.

What if philanthropy was more important than socials? Better yet, what if philanthropy was the social?

Breath into a brown paper bag...I promise it will be fun.

First, let's state what sororities are doing well. Every sorority has a philanthropy. The organizations they choose benefit in big ways from the generous events and fundraisers done by sororities. Collectively, each sorority donates millions of dollars to amazing charities worldwide every year.

Sorority's charitable donations are incredible, but for most schools, the social budget is, on average, four times that of the philanthropy.



Socials are fun, and I'm a big believer in, "have fun always if not always" but what if I told you sorority women have the influence to reach far beyond greek row and influence more than just one philanthropy AND you could make it fun.

Imagine if 150 sorority women partnered with a fraternity (which is what you do for many socials anyway) and brought all of that man (and woman) power to Habitat for Humanity or any other local organization dedicated to changing the community? That is 300 young, able, and excited workers coming together to build a house, paint a building, play with kids, or clean up the city! What if all 300 guys and girls saved the \$5 they would normally spend on just one drink and donated it to said organization? That's \$1,500! That could go a long way for a non-profit.

Remember how at the beginning of this book, I told you I stood in front of my former sorority and spilled my guts out? Turns out they liked it, found it relatable, and I learned the whole "Share your story with sorority women" voice of God thing was no joke. Next thing I knew, I was serving as an advisor.

A girl who never went through recruitment, now serving as an advisor. Only God.

In my time as an advisor, I witnessed a miracle. Okay, fine, maybe that's a little dramatic, but it's pretty close. This particular semester all of the sororities on campus were on social probation. In case you don't know what that means; basically some rules were broken, and the powers that be in greek life said no one could not have socials for an entire semester.

Some girls cried, others threatened to quit, but mostly everyone was just a little bummed the thing they loved most about sorority life was taken from them for a full semester, but that's not the end of the story.

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Sometimes life gives you lemons, and you can  
plant the seeds and grow an orchard.

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Alpha Delta Pi at Georgia Southern University president, the community service chair, and a little help from yours truly decided, what if we took the time, energy, and budget of a social, and took it to the community to serve?

It started as a simple idea, and grew into over 600 volunteer hours and over 13 community projects all in one single day!

One Saturday, one semester, we divided up the chapter of 225 girls and invested in o the community. Throughout the city sorority women were spending time with our local nursing home residents, helping with a pet adoption, teaching children in the community about sustainability, painting a floor for a fostering agency, volunteering for upwards soccer, helping with a charity fundraiser, and building a gardening bed for the STEM classroom at a low-income school.

The dollars that would have normally gone to this “social” were invested into the community. They were able to write checks and buy supplies that made the community blubber in appreciation.

“Service Social,” as it was called, served the city in a big way. It gave community leaders a different view of sorority women. The event made the local paper, a local news story, and is still making a difference years later. It’s amazing the impact a group of girls could make in one day in just a few hours.

GSU Alpha Delta Pi community service chair, Anna Jeffords said it this way, “It’s so easy to get caught up as a college student with school, your social life, and other stressors- I didn’t expect service alongside my friends could bring my heart so much contentment!”

This is re-defining fun. This is fun on a whole new level. Just like Anna said, her heart was so content from serving.

Let me ask a hard question. If the worst were to happen and the office of fraternity and sorority life said, “Sorry, no more sororities on campus starting today.” Who in the city would miss your sorority most?

Would it be the bars who serve Tequila Tuesday (don’t act like I don’t know), or would it be the local non-profits who value and depend on your partnership?

Would it be Daryl, the 50-year-old guy who bartends at the best bar in town? Or Max at the low-income school who now understands where the food comes from thanks to your inner-city school garden project?

What lasts longer? What makes a greater impact? What will you remember when you are thirty (Hint...you definitely won’t remember Tequila Tuesday).

It has been three years since ADPI first had this service social. The garden at the low-income school still exists. Not only does it exist, over 700 kids learn how to garden each year.

The walls are still painted at the fostering agency, the funds are still impacting the non-profits, and the pets still have homes thanks to all the volunteers who helped with the pet adoption.

One Saturday, one Semester, a lasting impact. Can you say that about your last social?

Imagine the impact on the community if a sorority brought this world-changing power regularly. Even just once a year. Imagine the cleaner cities, better-equipped charities, and projects completed faster all-around your city thanks to sorority girls.

Not only would the community benefit, but you would too. Serving is a part of our DNA. Our hearts are content when we see the look on a senior citizen's face after a long visit or a child who has a chance to play in a clean inner-city park. We are happiest when our head hits the pillow after a long day of building homes for the homeless and painting over graffiti.

I have never seen sorority girls more beautiful than with dirty hands and tired feet.

Brandon Hatmaker, the pastor of Austin New Church, author, and world changer, has an interesting observation about groups serving the community in the book, *Interrupted*.

Hatmaker states, “Community Groups structured mainly for the benefit of their members have about three-year shelf life. They lose interest after this point because they get bored and discontent.”

A group that exists only to serve themselves unravel in about 3 years. Have you ever noticed the seniors in your sorority are significantly less involved than the freshman?

Seniors simply start to wonder how often they can go to the same functions and watch the same girls cry over boys and get sick in the bathroom. Hatmaker would argue this discontentment is due to a lack of serving.

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“We have an innate craving to live on mission with God in this dangerous and exciting world. Out there is where we come to life, and get over ourselves.”

-Brandon Hatmaker

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We are simply wired to serve.

Sure it's easier and more comfortable to serve only ourselves, but something within us wants more.

We crave a lasting impact. We want to make a difference in the world around us. We want to  
CHANGE  
THE  
WORLD.

If sororities looked to who was making a difference in their community and asked, “How can we help?” this would begin to change the stigma of greek life and re-invent what it means to be a sorority girl.

Remember you are a trendsetter, you are a connector, and one of the few who can decide something needs to be different.

If you are afraid, it’s okay. All great leaders are afraid. The thing that sets you apart is your willingness to keep moving with your fear. Where there is fear, there is an opportunity for leadership.

Would you rather be remembered as the girl who leads her sorority to help thousands of homeless children, rebuilt a retirement center, and cleaned up the inner city or the girl who was an expert at keg stands? You choose your legacy, choose wisely.

I'm happy to report Alpha Delta Pi at Georgia Southern University is no longer on social probation but still hosting a service social every year!

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“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

-Margaret Mead

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## World Changing Action Steps

1. Discuss this idea of a “service social” with your executive board. Could your chapter make this happen? If you can’t get the whole chapter on board, maybe your pledge class or group of friends can start the “trend.”
2. Ask local alumnae if they can recommend a school, retirement home, or organization that could use the help of your sorority.
3. Do you know any local organization doing great things in the community? Send them an email and say, “How can we help?” I made you a free guide to help start the conversation. Find it on my website at [KatieBulmer.life](http://KatieBulmer.life).
4. Ask the philanthropy chair how the chapter can better help serve your philanthropy and make this year your most generous year ever!
5. Join us every year for our annual Sorority Girls can Change the World Day! Every year we invite sorority women to get out in their community and campus to serve. To stay in touch with the date for this year follow us on social [@katiebulmerlife](https://www.instagram.com/katiebulmerlife) [@sororitygirlscanchangetheworld](https://www.instagram.com/sororitygirlscanchangetheworld)

## CHAPTER 5

### SISTERHOOD

Have you ever thought about why you joined your sorority? I'm sure you have compelling reasons for the sisters, the reputation, and the impressive pref day song, but I bet you never realized you were actually *created* for community.

Community is something we all want. No matter how you're wired, social butterfly, or socially awkward, something in your soul longs for meaningful relationships with others. We treasure friendships that allow us to truly "be ourselves." All of us long for a deep, authentic, and genuine community.

Dr. Brené Brown<sup>14</sup>, author, researcher, and extremely popular TED talk speaker has become well known for her research on vulnerability, courage, worthiness, and shame. After years of research, one of her surprising discoveries was "Connection is what gives purpose and meaning to our lives. This is what we are all about."

The truth is, we need each other. God gave us each other to walk alongside, encourage, and spur one another on. We all crave to belong, this is why Tom Hanks created a friendship with a volleyball on a deserted island in the ever-popular movie *Cast Away*. We need other people. It's our lifeblood.

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<sup>14</sup> <http://brenbrown.com/>

*“If you want to see your life in five years, take the average of the people with whom you spend the most time.” - Jim Rohn*

Who you hang out with is one of the biggest influencers on your decisions and predictors of your future. Your peers can influence your major, who you date, and even where you move after graduation.

In my own life, if it wasn't for my friend Stephanie, I never would have gone to Georgia Southern University. If not for my friend April, I never would have moved to NYC after college graduation. If not for my friend Katie, I never would have gone to the church where I met my husband.

Show me your friends, and I'll show you your future.

Think about the last major decision you had to make. Who influenced your decision? Are you thankful for their input or wish you didn't listen?

If you finally got accepted to nursing school or aced the class everyone said was impossible, who do you want to call first? Are they cheering for you, or are they preoccupied with their own life?

The point is, friends have an enormous impact on your life, even more than we realize. Who is influencing you?

“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.” (Hebrews 10:24, ESV).

## The Power of Sisters

My husband and I have two daughters. I think it's no accident God gave me a passion for young women AND two living, breathing, passionate little girls to raise. They constantly give me examples of the incredible power of sisterhood.

The best example I have of this type of friendship, i.e., sisterhood came from the top of Lookout Mountain.

On a Saturday in June, we spent the day exploring Chattanooga's iconic *Rock City*.

We had just moved to the area and this was the perfect way to get a view of the city and fall in love with all things Chattanooga.

We had a day full of gorgeous views, tons of memories, tired feet, and empty pockets. On our way out of the park, our seven-year-old, Ava, spots the rock wall that she just HAS to climb before we leave. It cost \$5, which isn't bad, but if we pay for one kid we, OF COURSE, have to pay for both. \$10 at the end of an already expensive day, so we say, "no."

Then Ava notices the sign, "If you climb to the top and ring the bell, your second climb is free."

Ava, who is naturally more athletic, knew she could make it to the top.

Before we had a chance to think about it, Ava bravely asked the attendant, "If I climb to the top, can my sister climb for free?"

The answer was yes, and we were all touched by her gesture, so \$5 came out, and the rope harness goes on our spunky seven-year-old monkey.

As expected, she climbs right to the top, rings the bell, and comes down to let big sis, Hannah, have a turn.

Hannah, who would rather be reading a book than doing anything that requires sweating hesitantly gets harnessed in and begins to climb the wall. After a few failed attempts, I figured we had our fun, and we could finally leave the park. BUT something interesting started to happen.

The attendant said, "There isn't a line, she can keep trying." This is when Ava seemed to have an idea.

From the ground below Ava exclaims, "Hannah, I climbed up just for you, I know you can do this! Put your right foot here, left hand there; don't look down. I'm here to help you."

Hannah's expression from the wall was filled with hesitation but a newfound determination from her rock-climbing-guide-little-sister below.

I held my breath as our shy and timid nine-year-old who has never made it past my shoulders on a rock wall soared halfway to the top.

Ava didn't stop guiding, "Hannah don't look down, I can see what you can't, put your left foot up and your right hand over, you got this, I believe in you. You are almost there."

Bryan, myself, and even the attendant were all hanging in suspense to see if Hannah could make it all the way up with the help of her guide below.

Hannah kept going higher, and her guide kept shouting, "Don't give up, put your right hand to the left, and your right foot up by your knee, you are almost there!"

A few more steps until Rock City heard the loudest and proudest bell ringing from the summit of Mount Everest...or at least that's what it felt like to me.

When the bell rang, our whole family erupted into cheering, and even the staff got a little touched at the whole scene.

Hannah propelled down, squealing. "I did it!!! Did you see me? I made it to the top!?"

Ava immediately wrapped her arms around big sis and said,  
"I knew you could do it."

And this mama cried like a middle schooler who just met  
Justin Bieber.

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What if we all had friendships that fought for  
each other, believed in each other, and never  
let each other give up when we know we are  
meant for more. -Katie Bulmer

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This is my passion behind this chapter.

In college life, this looks like being the friend who says,  
"No, I will not let you go home with that guy."

Or

"No, I will not let you have another Crown and Coke  
tonight."

"I know this major is hard, but you are made to be a  
doctor."

Friendships more like sisters.

Imagine friends who don't see your weakness, but instead  
won't let you settle for anything less than your best. When  
you're beaten down by the world, buried in self-doubt, in-  
security, and have just given up, your sisters won't take  
your defeat as an option. They know you're a fighter, and  
they won't let you rest until you are the best version of  
yourself! This is sisterhood at its best!

## I Have a Dream of Sisterhood

I have a dream of ideal friendships where you are loved not despite your flaws but loved even more because of them. I dream of a kind of friendship where you are inspired to be the best your friends already believe you can be.

I wish for you friends that don't simply agree if you're making poor choices, but lovingly tell you the truth you need to hear. I pray for a friend that lovingly hugs you when you realize that guy is not the best for you never lets you settle for status quo.

Just as iron sharpens iron, I pray your friends love you so much you can't help but grow into the world-changer they see in you.

I pray for friends who tell you when you have stuff in your teeth, laugh at your jokes, and encourage you to be brave.

More than I wish you have this type of friend, I pray you *are this friend*.

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Sisterhood really is the match to the explosion  
I see happening on Greek Row  
-Katie Bulmer

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This is true sisterhood and the dream of all your founding members. Friendships like this are rare, beautiful, and the kind that spurs each other on to world-changing potential. Friendships like these are not easily found unless they're made on purpose.

You need each other huddled together in the barracks of the war over your heart. After fighting the battles, you come back to your sisters to heal your wounds. Their words of encouragement help you to stay strong and keep fighting the good fight, cheering each other on to your God-given potential.

## I am not the first to have this dream.

Before there was Google, before there was “How to start a Sorority for Dummies,” there was a college freshman with a dream.

The year was 1851, and her name was Eugenia. A simple pastor's daughter who was away from home for the first time. She wasn't sure of her major, she had a crush on a guy, and she was trying to find her way in life...just like you.

Sure she could press ahead and figure it out all on her own, but Eugenia knew something early in life: *You are only as strong as the people who surround you.*

She searched for the five sharpest women she knew. Women of integrity, respect, hard work, and noble character. She dreamed their friendships would mean something more sacred.

Something more like a sisterhood.

She knew she was on to something big and took every step with great intention. In the Bible beside her bed with its worn leather and tattered pages, she found the blueprint for the first secret society for women.

*Psalm 15 (CEB):*

*Who is invited, Lord?*

*[Katie paraphrase: Lord, what is the character of our members?]*

*The person who lives free of blame  
does what is right,  
speaks the truth sincerely;  
does no damage with their talk,  
does no harm to a friend,  
doesn't insult a neighbor;  
someone who despises  
those who act wickedly,  
but who honors those  
who honor the Lord;  
someone who keeps their promise even when it hurts;  
someone who doesn't lend money with interest,  
who won't accept a bribe against an innocent person.  
Whoever does these things will never stumble.*

Women who honor and seek the Lord with their everything, and strive for outstanding character, this was the foundation of the very first sisterhood and the building blocks for future generations to come.

Over the years, sororities have been born with different creeds and beliefs but, I believe at the core, we all want the same basic thing: Friendships who call each other to be the best version of ourselves.

**Go read your sororities creed,  
Go ahead, I'll wait.**

I have read nearly every sorority creed and in each one, you can almost see the tears and feel the passion in the words for each brand new dream of fraternity to come alive in the generations to follow.

Your founding sisters developed mottos and creeds with beautiful ideas like:

*“To lend to those less fortunate a helping hand.” Phi Mu*

*“Strive each day to seek more earnestly the honorable and beautiful things” Kappa Delta*

*“Do Good and focus on hope” -Delta Gamma*

*“To work earnestly, to speak kindly, to act sincerely” - Chi Omega*

*“To honor my home, my country, and my religious faith” -Alpha Gamma Delta*

Just to name a few

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Our founding sisters had dreams so much bigger than theme parties and cute T-shirts.

-Katie Bulmer

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I think each of us still craves this world-changing sisterhood and this is one of the reasons you joined a sorority. I believe the dreams born by these incredibly innovative and inspiring women are still alive today. We are not too far gone. We can get back to the roots of why we exist as a sorority.

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Instead of thinking what can I get out of this  
sisterhood, ask what can I give?

-Katie Bulmer

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If you want this type of sisterhood, the first step is to BE-  
COME, this type of sister.

It could, absolutely...

CHANGE

THE

WORLD

## World Changing Action Steps

1. Look up your sorority's creed or motto. MEMORIZE IT. Pull out a few keywords that stand out to you, write them on your bathroom mirror or if you can do cute hand lettering write them out and make some copies to share with your sisters.

2. In the mountain example, do you currently identify with Hannah or Ava? Are you cheering on your sister, or do you need the cheering? At different times in life, we can characterize with both scenarios.

Everyone needs encouragement, but today, can you be the encourager?

3. Send a text to a sister that needs encouragement and a sister who inspires you. Would you like to set up a coffee date with one?

4. How can you surround yourself with uplifting friends? How can you be an uplifting friend yourself?

5. Take a moment to Wikipedia, your founding sister(s). What is something you admire about her? Decades from now, what do you want Wikipedia to say about you?

## CHAPTER 6

### EVERYONE IS DOING IT

My parents were Greek in the 1970s. My mom was a Zeta Tau Alpha, and my dad was a Kappa Alpha. I look back at the faded pictures of Old South and the composites of hippy haircuts and imagine what it was like when they were twenty. I asked them a lot about it. What was the culture like? What was expected of them? What were the parties like? After a lot of funny stories, we concluded that socially speaking, not much has changed.

Today, the haircuts are better, and social media is certainly different but let's remember the 1970's were not exactly wholesome. Most college students of the day subscribed to an attitude of "Free love and marijuana, my flower child." You understand if you have seen the pictures of Woodstock.

Here is the disconnect, while each of your sororities was founded with such admirable intentions to lift each other to a higher standard, heartbreak and hangovers have been the theme music on Greek row for almost fifty years. FIFTY YEARS!!!

Fifty years of being "typical sorority girls" is simply out of date.

I think we are ready for something new.



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If being normal was getting us somewhere, we would be there by now. It's time to reinvent what it means to be a sorority girl.

-Katie Bulmer

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## Chasing Rabbits

If you have ever been to a dog race, you have seen the electronic rabbit that is released as “bait” for the dogs to chase. From puppy-hood, the race dogs are trained to chase the rabbit around the track. They're all taught to run faster, start stronger, and train harder than the other dogs on the track chasing the alluring and seemingly irresistible rabbit that is never really within reach.

One day, on a track in Florida, there was a mechanical issue, and the rabbit slowed down enough for the dogs to catch it. The funny thing is, the dogs had no idea what to do when the rabbit was actually within reach. They just stood around barking, jumping, howling, and utterly confused when the allusive rabbit was within snout's reach.

I think this is the same thing that happens in our own lives. We spend our life chasing popularity, beauty, and boys. When these things are within reach, or finally held in our hands, we don't know what to do with ourselves. We think, “Is this what I was chasing?”

To add to the illusion, the “rabbits” we as humans chase, are all defined differently. None of us has the same definition of popular, beautiful, and happily ever after. If we ever catch the rabbit, we may not even recognize it because we are not even sure what we are chasing.

Tom Brady put this into words in his 2005 interview on 60 Minutes. Brady is arguably the best athlete of our time, handsome, famous, wealthy, with stadiums of fans screaming his name. He has "caught the rabbit" yet this is what he says:

BRADY: Why do I have three Super Bowl rings and still think there's something greater out there for me? [...], I think: it's gotta be more than this. I mean, this can't be what it's all cracked up to be. I mean, I've done it. And what else is there for me?

KROFT: What's the answer?

BRADY: I wish I knew. I wish I knew.

Tom Brady isn't the only one who “caught the rabbit” only to wonder what in the world he was even chasing?

All too many celebrities have arrived at the top only to be suicidal, addicted, and never able to stay in a healthy relationship.

What are we chasing?

In my own story, and fifteen plus years of college ministry, every young girl's story features the common theme of chasing; chasing popular, chasing pretty, chasing cool, and Lord knows chasing boys.

The plot twist happens when people catch their "rabbit" and realize it wasn't even worth it. More often, they get so exhausted running around the track, they are begging for a better way to end this ridiculous race. Sweet friend, there is a better way.

I love the way C.S. Lewis describes our chasing, "We are half-hearted creatures fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us. Like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because they cannot imagine what is meant by a holiday at sea. We are far too easily pleased."<sup>15</sup>

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We sell out for so little when God is offering so much.

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-C.S. Lewis

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<sup>15</sup><http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/702-it-would-seem-that-our-lord-finds-our-desires-not>

Why would the most amazing women on the planet settle for being a “typical sorority girl” when infinite joy and the chance to change the world is at your feet?

Throughout this book, I have mentioned the incredible trend-setting power of sorority women. I have also noted your ability to stand out among your peers as smart, brave, and willing to be different. You are leaders in your generation; you do not need to follow the way it’s always been done or even the way Greek life is done today. You can be a trendsetter for good, for your faith, and for a better way to do Greek life.

Perhaps it’s a good time to talk about jumping off a cliff. Don’t worry, I have a point.

## Go jump off a cliff

“Mom, can I pleeeeeeeaaaassssee have a later curfew?

Everyone else can stay out later than me...*please?*”

I remember nagging my mom about this regularly as soon as I was able to drive. Her reply? Probably much the same as your mother's. She would fold her arms, raise one eyebrow, and stammer, “If EVERYONE were jumping off a cliff, would you?”

I always hated this answer, but it turns out our moms were on to something.

One of my favorite marketing books is the best seller, “Influence” the book explores a myriad of social phenomena from what we buy, to what we fear, and why we would jump off a cliff. Let me explain.

Native American's most hunted animal was the buffalo. These beasts were hunted for their meat, skin, bones, and even teeth. Nearly every inch of the buffalo was useful for the tribes. The only problem is these giants weigh approximately 1,100 pounds, over seven times that of the average man. What man lacked in size, he made up for in intellect.

Man discovered, “everyone is doing it” is a far more effective tactic than a bow and arrow when it comes to hunting buffalo.

Native American men would put on a buffalo skin and head disguising himself as a buffalo. The man would get the attention, not necessarily of the whole herd, just a few near the front of the pack. He would act as if he knew something the other buffalo didn't. Maybe a prairie full of fresh grass lay ahead, or the danger of a lion was near. Whatever it was, it was urgent, and the buffalo needed to start running in the direction of the decoy.

One buffalo would notice the decoy and start to head in his direction. Slowly another buffalo nearby would notice the first wanderer and follow him. Shortly after, a few more started to follow the loners as their pace picked up.

By this point, the few outliers have started a “trend,” and in a matter of minutes the whole herd takes notice and starts running full speed ahead. When buffalo run, they look to their left and right, never looking up to see what lay ahead. If the buffalo beside them was running, then by golly, they need to run too. Within minutes from the first wander an entire herd was looking not to the leader, but to their left and right following the pack to what MUST be something great, I mean everyone else is doing it!

Meanwhile, our man-dressed-buffalo has safely escaped the stampede to a nearby tree as he watches hundreds of buffalo continue to run at full speed, at this point, toward nothing. Not a single buffalo stops to ask why, not one questions where they are going, not one is even looking *where* they are going at this point they are just running because the crowd is which eventually leads TO THEIR DEATH.

The buffalo were charging straight toward a cliff no one saw coming. Leaders being thrust over by their followers and all the rest following on their own free will.

I’m pretty sure this scenario is what went down the first time I learned about upside-down margaritas at the Kappa Sigma house.

Tribes killed so many buffalo with this method they were hunted to near extinction!

Dr. Robert Cialdini, the author of *Influence*, has spent his entire career researching the science of this behavior, earning him an international reputation as an expert in the fields of persuasion, compliance, and negotiation.<sup>16</sup> He calls this buffalo example, “Pluralistic Ignorance.”

If everyone is doing something, we gather this social proof as evidence that something must be a good idea. This decision-making method doesn't require any effort or any time. It's a shortcut for our brains. From how to eat appetizers at a fancy party, where to throw the popcorn away after a movie, to what to wear to the next sorority mixer. We look to others for clues on how we should behave.

This is normal and healthy behavior but oftentimes needs to be checked to ensure it is functioning correctly.

If the buffalo were running from a lion, then it was a good idea for the herd to follow suit and begin running full speed. The problem lies when we go along with the crowd without taking a moment to step back and ask why are we running, and do we want to go where the crowd is headed?

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<https://www.influenceatwork.com/robert-cialdini-phd/biography/>

Theme park employees will often fake a long line with staff members to draw attention to an old ride. When the line gets long, no one asks if the ride is any good. If everyone wants to ride, it must be great! The same principle has been used with restaurants, shop owners, tip jars, and nightclubs.

Buffalo are not the only ones to follow the crowd. We are especially prone to Pluralistic Ignorance when we are unfamiliar with new surroundings.

A college freshman, for example, who finds herself in a new town, with new friends, and new parties, all have her looking around to others for how she should behave. What examples do you give her as her peers? Do you continue to keep your head down and only look to the left and right when there could be a cliff up ahead? Who is brave enough to stop running, look ahead, and question the direction of the crowd? The crowd isn't always right.

In the 1950s, EVERYONE smoked. Doctors even endorsed it. I'm not making this up! You can find Camel cigarette ads with doctors' endorsements in old magazines. It turns out, cigarettes kill people.

Around the same era, EVERYONE (especially in the south) thought schools should be segregated. But the God I know made us all equal.



In the 1980's EVERYONE had big hair. I don't even need to tell you what a travesty that hair disaster was.

For heaven's sake, at one point, EVERYONE even believed the world was flat!

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Maybe, just maybe, our heavenly father, the one who made you and has your best intentions in mind, knows better for you than your nine-teen-year-old friends. -Katie Bulmer

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Pluralistic ignorance need not be how greek women make decisions but by taking a step back and asking, is this really the wisest thing to do? What are we chasing? Would we even want the "rabbit" if we caught it? Remember you are the trendsetters, thousands of people are watching where it is sorority women are running. What are you running toward?

## Shake Up Your "Everyone"

It's funny, we all say we want to be different, yet we all look to people around us to define normal. Have you ever thought to define, who are the people around you? Who is your "everyone?"

When you live in the same place for a while, you start to think the whole world is the “entire world.” I would never have said this out loud, but without even realizing it, my logic started to become, “If everyone around me acts this way, this must be how EVERYONE lives.”

In my small corner of the globe, we rarely see snow, people love sweet tea, and we say “y’all” not “you guys” or “you all.” It’s simply “y’all...and that’s how God intended for the phrase to be said. I know this may be shocking, but the whole world does not feel this way.

One summer my eyes opened up to how big this world truly is. There is this organization called “Up With People.” It’s a group of musically talented teens and twenty-year-olds traveling the world doing service projects and music performances everywhere they go. They rely on host homes in each city to house different members of the crew for the week. Since we have two little girls, we figured two big girls would fit right in, so we opened up our home to a nineteen-year-old from Sweden and a twenty-year-old from Vancouver Island, Canada.

The way we dressed, the food we ate, and the things we valued were just so different. One wasn’t superior or inferior, just different.

Ida, our Swedish daughter for the week, actually celebrated her nineteenth birthday the week she was with us. Wanting to make her feel special at her home away from home, I used the help of Google to give her a Swedish birthday party. The birthday song was in Swedish (thanks to YouTube) and I found all the best Swedish recipes I could find. To us, this meal was foreign and the happy birthday lyrics were unrecognizable, but to her, this was a reminder of what familiar, safe, and normal felt like.

During the week, we also met students from Germany, Mexico, New Zealand, and different parts of the U.S. We felt like we had traveled the globe in a week, yet we never left our home. God used this opportunity to completely open my eyes to the great, big, diverse world He made.

As I write this, it is 8:30 pm on a Sunday in the summertime. Well, at least it is for me. But also, at this same moment, in New Zealand, it is 12:30 pm on Monday in the wintertime! It's like they are living in the future in the opposite season! I am winding down my weekend and they have their lunch break on Monday! The southern hemisphere has completely opposite seasons as the US. They celebrate Christmas in their warmest months and break out the thick coats in July.

The summer we were a host home for Up with People, I realized my definition of “everyone” was embarrassingly microscopic. Our families “world tour” helped me to realize how limited my view had become.

When I was in college, I would have told you “everyone” partied, slept around, and drank Tequila. After God turned my life upside down, I met friends who had fun without hangovers and dated with integrity.

It turns out my view of everyone was just the people in my close friend group. When I changed the direction, I met an entirely new *everyone*.

Redefine your everyone by going on a mission trip or befriending someone outside of your comfort zone. Reach out to new friends seeking the Lord in collegiate ministries. You may be the “everyone” someone else needs.

I want to take a moment to note the friends I partied with are still friends I have today. You don’t have to delete one chapter of your life when you begin writing another, but you do need a core group of believers around you for accountability, support, and to be your *everyone*.

# The True “Everyone”

Today’s sorority women are rising up and pouring their energy into causes bigger than themselves. There is a gradual but undeniable awakening creeping across the horizon of your hearts.

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I see young people sick of being ordinary and starving to be extraordinary.     -Katie Bulmer

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I have a gut feeling we will look back one day and see this as being the day and age where eighteen to twenty-two year old’s took their dignity back. Start seeing past Friday night and started looking toward big world-changing goals.

From what I see, most young people are eager and ready to stand for more on greek row; they just need a little nudge. Well, friends, consider this book your permission slip to be the change our world needs to see.

I love the way Generation Ministries<sup>17</sup> puts it:

*Let it be recorded in the history books of Heaven, that the young Christians of this generation responded in radical obedience and dedication to the purposes for their lifetime. Perhaps we will discover that we came to the Kingdom "for such a time as this!"*

## Such A Time as This

You were created for such a time as this, for such a day as this, and to be such a girl as yourself by no accident. You have a glorious invitation to be a part of something so much bigger than you could ever imagine.

A perfect God left his kingdom in heaven. He walked on this earth and had dinner with adulterers and thieves. He invited the “not good enoughs” to be His people and offered brokenhearted girls quench for their thirst.

Sinful man made a big divide between a great, big, and perfect God and us. There was no way we could bridge that gap on our own.

Jesus said, “Put the punishment of sin on me,” and I’ll bridge the gap. This God loves all people; this religion is for all people; this was totally brand new.

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<sup>17</sup> [http://www.youthnow.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=231&catid=43&Itemid=58](http://www.youthnow.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=231&catid=43&Itemid=58)

The moment Jesus died, the Earth shook, and the only God in the history of God's to ever rise from the dead walked out of the grave to begin a revolution of love still going on today.

You are invited to play a part.

You're invited to be a part of an adventure so much bigger than what you see around you — an invitation to be part of the biggest motion picture that was or will ever be. The story is already in progress, but it would be so much more exciting with you. The way you're passionate about the things that matter to you, your infectious smile, passionate voice, and every other detail about you can be used for the bigger story.

Think about it, what name do we even know from 2,000 years ago? Just Jesus and those who were a part of His story. I wonder how many others didn't follow the call of God because they were "too busy." Now there all too important life is long forgotten.

Jesus looks at you with love and says: I love you too much to see you chase so hard for all of this unattainable happiness that won't last. I see a perfect daughter in you, and I want you to be a part of this adventure. Come be a part of something bigger. Come join this story.

## World Changing Action Steps

1. Were your parents greek? What was the stereotype of their greek days?
2. Who would you define as your everyone? Have you ever been outside of your everyone? How did it feel?
3. Have you ever ran with the crowd to a dangerous place? How could you take a step back and question their direction next time?
4. What are you chasing? Would you know if you found it?
5. Have you ever heard the gospel? I suggest starting in Matthew in your Bible (or get the free bible app). Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are four different guys accounts of what happened when Jesus walked the earth. They are similar stories yet told from each of their unique perspectives. It's interesting stuff.



## CHAPTER 7

### BE BRAVE

I have never met you, but I feel confident you desire a husband one day that will love you unconditionally, a hunger to give generously to your community, a faith that will move a generation, and a desire for deep and meaningful friendships that spark each other on toward greatness.

The problem doesn't lie in our desire to change the world; it lies in the steps we take (or don't take) toward this goal.

I live in Chattanooga, TN. If I want to visit Florida, I get on I-75 South. If I want to visit the Great Lakes, I get on I-75 North. No one argues this point. To reach your destination, you take the path headed in the desired direction.

The friction lies when the same principle applies to life. If I say I want to run a marathon but never lace up my running shoes, I would never get that medal. I could say I want to save money, but keep shopping. frivolously. I could say I want to learn a new skill, but never sign up for classes.

I have talked about this concept in other chapters but it all boils down to this:

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Action steps eat good intentions for breakfast.

-Katie Bulmer

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Maggie and Holly were two college freshmen in my small group. They were best friends since high school and came to college committed to living above the influence of the college party scene.

Maggie began playing keyboard with the worship team at a local college ministry. She surrounded herself with friends who were also strong in their faith. By second semester she became a small group leader to a group of freshman girls. Maggie also met a guy who played the drums on the worship team.

Maggie and her drummer boy Dave went on dates, played music together, and sang at the top of their lungs as they drove around their college town but they never put themselves in tempting physical situations.

Early in the relationship, they decided they didn't want to know "how far is too far"; instead, they wanted to ask how to best honor and protect each other.

Meanwhile, her best friend Holly loved hearing Maggie play in the worship band on Tuesday nights, but Holly also loved going to Tequila Tuesday at the local Mexican restaurant after the service. Holly would always limit herself to just one small margarita, but by the second semester, she needed two and, on occasion, three.

Holly met a guy named Mark, who also loved Tequila Tuesdays. Mark was handsome and friendly, and after too many margaritas often convinced Holly, they should hang out his place.

Holly had to continually remind Mark of the physical boundaries she didn't want to cross, but when they started staying the night together, those physical lines kept getting more and more blurry. She started to feel like a nag when she asked him to stop, so she didn't ask him to stop anymore.

Mark also had a very addictive personality. It started innocently enough but over the course of their dating relationship, he went from alcohol to pills, to porn, and every form of finding a high. Holly NEVER would have chosen a guy who had these habits but as we discussed in the sex chapter, Mark and Holly have "concreted" themselves to each other. No one wants to tear up bound together concrete.

Holly wished Mark had better habits but she knew there was no changing him, it wasn't long before Holly was experimenting with his addictions as well.

Maggie would ask Holly if Mark dated her, treated her with respect or if the same things that mattered to her a semester ago still mattered.

Holly made excuses for Mark which eventually pushed a wedge into their 5-year long friendship.

Holly eventually stopped showing up for small group. I asked Maggie one night, "Hey, is Holly okay?"

Maggie paused I could see the look of a concerned friend wash over her. She looked down and softly said, "She hasn't talked to me in about a month. I think she just forgot where she wants to go...ya know?"

Maggie summed everything up perfectly; her friend simply forgot where she wants to go.

From this standpoint, I could see these girls both started freshman year with the same goal, the same intentions, and "final destination" in mind. However, they chose much different paths, which lead to much different destinations.

Just as choosing the interstate heading north or south will affect my final destination, the path you choose in college will determine where you end up.

We tend to think God is out to steal our fun. But in fact, He came to give us life and give it more abundantly. It's the enemy who comes to steal, kill, and destroy.

Sin is alluring, and it's attractive. The apple in the garden of Eden wasn't rotten or ugly; it was shiny and even sexy.

If I were the enemy, I would set out to steal, kill, and destroy with traps that look "fun."

No one wants to go down a path that leads to addiction, depression, looniness, and heartbreak, but there are roads that lead in each direction.

It is important to check in with your road map at least once a week. Where do you want to go? What steps are you taking to get there?

There is an entire book I highly recommend on this subject called *The Principle of the Path* by Andy Stanley.

## A Few Brave Steps

At a sorority worship night, I noticed a phenomenon I had seen before, but never fully grasped until that evening. Once a year at Georgia Southern University they shut down traffic on greek row, set up a band at the end of the road and invite greek men and women to come out and pray for each other. It's truly a wonderful experience. What struck me on this occasion was the number of times the band invited people to come to the altar to pray.

The music was playing, the sun was setting, the stars were rising, and hearts were stirring. One girl would take a few brave steps forward. I can imagine her thinking, "What will people think? Maybe I can just pray where I am. Do I really need to step forward?" But she does. A few seconds (that feel like a few hours) later, her friend comes to pray beside her. Then something amazing happens. The flood gates open up, and the altar is full of people praying.

This was interesting; however, what I found fascinating is this same series of events happened each of the three times there was a call for people to pray. It starts with one girl's few brave steps, then one brave friend... then a movement starts — every time.

When one brave girl decides to have fun in a way that's different than puking up Vodka all night, when one brave girl says no to going home with a guy because nothing good will come of it, when one brave girl looks different than her peers, guys take notice, other girls take notice, and change starts to happen.

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If you want to do something new, you can't keep doing things the way they have always been done. You've got to push past the fear of the unknown and leave familiarity behind.

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## Speak up

My husband's grandparents had a long-standing tradition of making fish casserole on Christmas Eve.

I know you are probably thinking, "What the HE double hockey sticks is she talking about? When did this turn into a recipe book?" I know, I know, but trust me, I have a point.

The Fish Casserole was a standard holiday staple around their home for over a decade. It's a labor-intensive dish his grandmother would begin making days before they gathered to eat. Days of soaking, hours of chopping, and just the right amount of baking made this dish...well terrible. Everyone pretended to like it because Grandmother slaved in the kitchen for three days to make it. What's even crazier is Grandmother hated the taste of it herself but always went the extra mile because her family liked it so much (or so she thought).

Finally, one Christmas Eve, my husband, who was an outspoken pre-teen at the time, exclaimed with a curled up nose, "This casserole is gross." The family looked at each other awkwardly around the dining room table until Granddaddy said a hearty, "You got that right."

Grandmother was stunned, "I make this every year for all of YOU." Yet everyone around the table would be happy if the fish casserole became a "Ghost of Christmas Past."

Eventually, the conversation turned to laughter, and the fish casserole was fed to the family pets. That was the last year Grandmother had to work so hard for something no one even wanted, thanks to someone willing to speak up.



My point to this fish casserole story is it is exactly what I see play out with a lot of college friendships.

I think back to all the parties I really didn't want to go to, or the guys I know I really shouldn't have dated all because I *thought* that was what others expected of me. Just like Grandmother assumed everyone wanted fish casserole, sometimes fish casserole is just not all that good in the first place, yet someone has to be brave enough to ask for something different.

Take Catherine and Michelle, for example. When I first met these college freshmen, they had been friends since they were toddlers. It was spring semester when we settled in to have coffee, and they both opened up about going "wild" their first semester of college. They reached out to me because they were curious about a better way to go greek but didn't even know where to start. They were going through the motions of what "everyone else" was doing.

Both of them wanted to speak up that they didn't want to party anymore, but neither of them was brave enough to speak up first.

As we talked more, Catherine quietly mentioned how she had decided to stop drinking. She went on to apologize for it, justify it, and careful not to make eye contact with Michelle in fear of what her best party pal may think.

Her words were, “I’m just tired of living for boys and parties. I feel like I’ve tasted all the world has to offer, and it just left me more empty than before.” She tore her napkin into 1,000 tiny pieces as Michelle hung on her every word.

I could tell Catherine was terrified of putting those words out there. Would Michelle think she was judging her? Would Michelle still want to hang out with her? Was their lifelong friendship in jeopardy?

I watched as a wave of relief washed over Michelle, “I don’t want any of that anymore either!” Michelle said in agreement. That lifestyle just left me more empty too! I am so relieved you are with me on this.

It wasn’t long before Catherine and Michelle became friends who were much less concerned with the bars and boys and busy changing the world instead.

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“You cannot discover new lands  
until you have the courage to leave the shore.”

-Andre Gide

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Just like the fish casserole, neither of the girls really liked partying they just needed someone brave enough to admit they wanted something more. Is there any “fish casserole” that you keep eating just because you think you should? You may be surprised how many people are relieved when you boldly step out and say you don’t like it after all.

The first step is never the biggest, but it will be the hardest. Deciding to take a stand for your faith, suggest a service social, or walking away from an unhealthy relationship will be hard. People may call you crazy, but the alternative is they will call you normal.

Of all the adjectives God uses to describe his children, “normal” is not one of them.

Normal is highly overrated. It’s time to define a new normal on Greek row.

## One Breath at a Time

We are almost to the end of this book, and I haven’t told you I am also a part-time yoga instructor. Yes, I’m a marketing rep, author, speaker, podcaster, mom, wife, and yoga instructor. When people ask me what I do, I say, “Grab a seat...it’s gonna be a minute.”

I started practicing yoga for strength and flexibility, but what I didn't expect was a whole new way of looking at, well, everything.

Even as a kid, I was a mile away from touching my toes in gym class. I was laughed out of cheerleading tryouts and the only thing I could ever nail in gymnastics class was jumping on the trampoline. I mean, I'm kinda awesome at jumping on my butt and doing a flip, but I don't mean to brag.

As a 30-year-old mom, I showed up to my first yoga class with no idea what those fancy yoga terms meant and how in the world to make my legs do whatever-the-heck the teacher was instructing. After my first class, I thought the teacher should be charged with attempted murder. I hurt for days afterward. Muscles I didn't even know I had screamed at me for such yoga type behavior. My husband said I whined so much he thought he was raising three little girls.

After I could get out of bed without my muscles screaming, I looked at the gym calendar and decided to give yoga another try. The class was still insanely hard, and I was convinced some of the poses she suggested were only possible for circus employees.

**BUT I JUST KEPT SHOWING UP**

I was not naturally good at any of the poses. None of it came easy. I fell the first 100 times I tried every pose.

I had a turning point one day in class from the teacher's instructions. It was simple yet profound. She said, "I know your muscles are screaming right now but choose to change your focus. Tell your muscles, "I hear you, but instead of focusing on the burn, shift your focus to one breath at a time."

That simple sentence revolutionized my practice. I no longer had the goal of standing on my head in some unpronounceable contortionist move. Now, my goal was to take one simple breath at a time. The goal was so much more realistic and attainable. One breath at a time I started to hold poses longer, try poses I never thought I could get...just for a breath.

After a few months, I started to be able to balance better, my muscles started to show they existed and I know miracles can happen because eventually, I could touch my toes without bending my knees.

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No one gradually falls into  
“better,” it takes WORK

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Fast forward a few years, and now I teach yoga classes. When the gym owner first asked if I would consider getting my teaching license, I thought, “But I can’t even...well, I used not to be able to....wow, I guess I can do everything the teachers can do” I never, ever, thought I would be able to one day teach yoga, but again...One breath at a time...I just kept trying. I never planned to become a yoga instructor; I just planned to take one breath at a time.

Do you see a theme here?

One breath at a time, one class at a time and one day at a time, this is how we conquer anything hard.

In the writing of this book, I have no idea what I’m doing. I am learning a lot of things the hard way, but I am persistent, and I will just keep showing up to a date with my keyboard, praying God will be made strong in my weakness.

In Yoga, they say, “When you want to come out of the pose, that is when the pose begins.” Translation: When you are tired and you want to give up, that is when the magic happens.

If you truly want to change the world on Greek row, you have to decide today, not for the rest of your life, but just today that you will seek the more abundant life as a sorority girl. For you, that may mean signing up for a mission trip, changing the channel from sex-saturated movies, or not calling him back (it's ok if you need to highlight the part about not calling him back).

Start attending a Bible study, stop putting yourself in tempting situations, surround yourself with positive people and the word of your Heavenly Father.

It may not sound like much, but one breath at a time leads to a lifetime. What brave thing will you do with your breaths?

One breath at a time, one tiny step at a time in the right direction, can mean HUGE shifts just a few months down the road. Little decisions lead to big decisions, and before you know it, you are changing the world, one breath at a time.

## World Changing Action Steps

1. Think of a time when someone you know stepped out bravely into an “unpopular” yet respectable opinion. Did you admire her for it?
2. At the beginning of this chapter, Katie talked about how your direction determines where you end up. Have you ever found yourself where you didn’t want to be in life? Can you look back and see the wrong turns that led you there?
3. Do you identify with Michelle or Catherine? Maybe neither of you even like “fish casserole” anyway. What is something new, productive, and world-changing you can do with your friends instead of getting drunk?
4. Think of an example from your life like yoga. Did you ever start something that seemed impossible only to find you later became really good at it?
5. What is an area of your life where you need to take a few brave steps?



## CHAPTER 8

### SOMETHING BIGGER THAN OURSELVES

When I joined a sorority my freshman year of college, it was the first experience I remember realizing I belonged to something bigger than myself. Our chapter president would always say to us at meetings, “You are always wearing your letters.” At the time, I didn’t think much about that sentence but when I transitioned to be a leader in my junior year, I finally understood, my actions no longer affected only me, I now represented a larger organization.

For eighteen years, I lived under the false notion that my actions affected me and only me. This concept of belonging to something “bigger than myself” was completely foreign, yet somehow magnetic. As crazy as it sounds, belonging to a sorority was my first taste of what it felt like to belong to a church. Sorority was my first church. I say that because it was the first time in my life I was part of something. I had accountability, standards, but more importantly, I stood for something.

Just as our sorority president used to say, “You are always wearing your letters” I have also heard it said, “You may be the only Bible someone will ever read.”

While I am likely the only person to compare faith and sorority membership, I think this concept is near identical.

People may know nothing about your sorority but they know you. How you conduct yourself may be their only view of what your sorority stands for.

The same applies to Christianity. Someone you know may never step foot in a church, but they know you, and if you are a Christian, what message are they reading?

If you are reading this book, you are more than likely in a sorority, which means your decisions reflect your sisters, your founding members, and your organization as a whole.

If you are a Christian, how do you represent Jesus? You are always wearing His letters. How would He serve, live, and love as a college student?

## Live Like It

We live in the “information age” where you can access the world wide web from a tiny computer in your back pocket at any point in time. Yet, are we any smarter?

When I googled “exercise plan,” I got 409,000,000 results. We have plenty of ideas and methods of getting fit, yet sixty-eight percent of Americans are overweight. We don’t have a lack of information problem; we have a lack of execution problem.

Many of us believe Jesus is real, but very few of us live like it.

“The gospel costs nothing. We cannot buy it or earn it. It can only be received as a gift, compliments of God’s grace. So it costs nothing, but it demands everything. And that is where most of us get stuck — spiritual no-man’s-land. We’re too Christian to enjoy sin and too sinful to enjoy Christ.

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“We’ve got just enough Jesus to be informed,  
but not enough to be transformed.”

-Mark Batterson

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Bars, boys, and booze have so been done before.  
It’s time for you to discover the world-changer within yourself.

The Bible calls it “taking off the old self” and “putting on the new self” (Romans 13:12; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:7-10, 14).

I don’t want to just leave you with some inspiring words, that make you think while you read them but then stay on a shelf in your apartment. That is a waste of both of our time. I want you to discover the world-changer within yourself and “put on this new self.”

In every generation, God has been faithful to bring spiritual awakening to nations. In almost all cases, those movements were most evident among young people.<sup>18</sup> -Hillsong

I have never been more sure, sorority women are *world changers*. You are the trendsetters that can turn any fad into a multi-million-dollar market. Leading organizations look to you to define “cool.” Men would do anything it takes to win your heart. Your generation loves service and generosity. You share lifelong, deep, and true friendships. If anyone should live a bold and courageous world-changing life of faith, it’s you.

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If the parties and the boys didn’t deliver what they promised, maybe it’s time to try something new.

-Katie Bulmer

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Today is your day to be brave. Everyone is just waiting for someone else to go first. If you are willing to stand up for your faith and start something that matters, those first few steps will be hard, but I can guarantee you will have a friend to come beside you and share with you those treasured words, “me too.”

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<sup>18</sup>[http://www.youthnow.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=231&catid=43&Itemid=58](http://www.youthnow.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=231&catid=43&Itemid=58)

I hope I have inspired you to realize the world-changing potential you have with your power of influence simply by being a sorority girl. I hope you protect your heart and your body by realizing you are worth more than what the world is teaching you. I pray you change your community with service and generous giving.

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I hope you never settle for normal, because sorority girls are better than normal.

-Katie Bulmer

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## Dream for a difference

I will leave you with a true story that is the best evidence I have for the movement I see happening on Greek row.

In January of 2019, I put on my vision board a goal to speak at the University of Georgia. I grew up around Atlanta, so UGA has always been the “bee's knees” of schools in my eyes. At the time I wrote this on my board I had no contacts at the school and no idea how this would happen.

Exactly one year after I wrote down that goal, I got the opportunity to speak at the University of Georgia. As you can imagine, I was looking forward to this opportunity for months. When the day finally arrived, my overzealous self showed up an hour earlier than I should have.

Right when I pulled into the parking lot, I met my local contact chatting with a woman I didn't recognize. I parked the car, pulled out my bags, and walked toward the chatting women.

I walked up to a young college pastor who had planned the event, and a 6'5" woman in her 50's wearing a shawl around her shoulders. As I step up to say hello, I realize they are already in deep conversation about some world-changing topics.

The tall stranger told us how she moved to Athens to pray specifically about the great awakening starting with college students.

There was no, "Hi my name is", we just got right into why she believes college students are the ones who are about to change the world.

She began talking about prayer warriors and prophets on all seven continents who have had visions of a “Revival started by college students and birthed out of Athens, Georgia.”

Athens Georgia?? We all asked in bewilderment? “YES!” she said, as if she had never been more sure of something in all her life. “Prophets in Australia, Africa, Europe and all around the globe have talked about the revival in Athens starting with the college and spreading worldwide. People often ask if they mean Athens Greece, but dozens of people are all pointing to a small college town outside of Atlanta, Athens Georgia.”

She continued to talk about how she is confident the next great revival begins with young people, and the time is now.

She paused, looked at us and said, “I’m not sure why you guys are here, but God told me to pray for the white building straight ahead, so that is where I’m headed.”

The white building she pointed to is where I was scheduled to be the keynote speaker in 2 hours.

WHATTTTTTT!???

I needed to sit down. A woman I had never met is saying people from around the globe have prayed and had visions about young people rising to lead thousands to the faith, and it starts right here in Athens, Georgia then spreads worldwide? Moreover, you feel led to pray over the building where I am supposed to hold a microphone? What is happening here?

The next day after the event, I was sitting at my kitchen table, replaying the events from UGA in my brain. My body was tired. I got back home from Athens after midnight and had to get up at 6am to get our kids to school on time. I didn't sell a single T-shirt at UGA, and only 30 girls showed up for the event. I started to get grumpy and irritable wondering why I even went for just 30 girls, no sales, and an exhausting trip.

Then I heard a that still small voice whisper, "Who said any of this was about you?"

**BOOM**

If God can change the world with twelve disciples imagine what He can do with 30 college women in Athens Georgia who are already being prayed for around the world.

This wasn't the first divine reminder I have had about the visions for greek row.



Before I had a book, podcast, or had spoken to anyone besides a small group, I decided to start prayer walking around greek row. Call it conviction, call it craziness, but I decided to start praying a circle around Greek row. As in, getting out of my car and being the random “grown-up” walking by all the beautiful mansions in prayer.

We lived near Georgia Southern University at the time so I drove to greek row once a week and started praying boldly, in the powerful and matchless name of Jesus that his precious sons and daughters would be taken back into his arms. Rebuking the devil and claiming those big beautiful homes to become houses of worship (all quietly lest I get arrested for people thinking I was drunk).

Before heading to prayer walk one day, I was reading “Walls Fall Down For Victory” a plan from the bible app<sup>19</sup> when I came across this verse:

*“Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred...No one went out and no one came in. Then the Lord said to Joshua, ‘See, I have delivered them’.” (Joshua 6:1-2, NIV)*

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/992-walls-fall-down-gods-un-usual-plan-for-victory/day/1>

The words stood out of my iPhone and into my spirit. I knew this verse had something to do with my prayer walk but what? The verse left me bewildered, confused, and a little excited. First of all, what in the ever-loving world does this verse even mean?

No one is coming in, no one is coming out. The walls are securely barred and God says (I imagine totally nonchalantly with a little bit of “I mean duh” to his voice) “I have delivered them.”

I knew there was something big there but I didn’t know what. Later that same day, while listening to the audible version of *The Circle Maker*<sup>20</sup> by Mark Batterson,

Batterson mentioned praying over a property for their church that seemed impossible, insurmountable, and just pretty much absurd to even ask for, but he began walking around the property in prayer.

When he felt overwhelmed, defeated, and crazy for even trying, you know what verse God brought him to?

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<sup>20</sup> [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0310330734/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_il\\_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0310330734&linkCode=as2&tag=imperpeopl04-20&linkId=45QJ3ORZLHV62DTW](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0310330734/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0310330734&linkCode=as2&tag=imperpeopl04-20&linkId=45QJ3ORZLHV62DTW)

*“Now the gates were securely barred. No one went out, and no one came in. Then the Lord said, ‘See, I have delivered them.’” (Joshua 6:1-2, NIV) paraphrased*

We are both praying what seems like impossible prayers for impossible dreams. but God says, ”See, I have already given it to you,” God says. “Yes, it looks impossible, but you are looking through your eyes, not mine.”

I almost laughed at the parallels of Greek row where the walls seem so high. The search for significance in sex, drugs, and rock and roll are encouraged in the name of YOLO. Yet, the giving away of our bodies in casual relationships, the hangovers, and the endless search for significance leaves nothing but emptiness...and God says, “See, I have delivered them.”

I began praying and circling that day, and guess what!!?? At the end of the row, there was a tarp WALL put up surrounding the perimeter of the most popular fraternity house on row. It’s all a “joke” to hide the shenanigans that take place during their philanthropy party week.

A wall surrounding the city...and God says, “I have delivered them.”

I walked a little slower around the tarp wall, celebrating what seems impossible, is just an invitation for us to pray.

In the midst of all of this craziness happening, I have a friend named Ashley, who was one of my sorority sisters in college.

A few years ago, Ashley had a dream that her little family (husband and two kids) would serve as missionaries in Peru. She dreamed of the exact place, the ocean waves, and dozens of vivid details. Today, Ashley and her family live in the mountains of Peru, living in the same white home she distinctly saw in her dream.

Ashley, who was thousands of miles away at this point, had no idea about the “walls fall on Greek row” day I had when Ashley sends me this message,

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“Did I ever tell you about the vivid dream I had while in college about Greek row becoming houses of worship?”

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I literally fell to my knees and wept when I got this message. Jesus is taking back his sons and daughters on Greek row, my friends. I am a messenger, a motivator, and a guide but I am not the world-changer I am just the cheerleader. YOU, sorority women. YOU are the change our world needs to see.

“You can look back at the pages of history to see groups of young people who came together in the face of great opposition and said, “Enough is enough” and made choices beyond themselves. Because of them, the world has never been the same”. -Hillsong

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Write it down in the history books, sorority  
girls can change the world!      -Katie Bulmer

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# World Changing Action Steps

1. What is one thing in this book you need to re-read right now to absorb truly?

2. Do you believe in the power of prayer?

3. How could you pray for your sorority? I made you a free prayer guide with prayer prompts which can be found at [KatieBulmer.life](http://KatieBulmer.life)

4. Do you have any friends you can invite to prayer walk around greek row with you? At first it may seem awkward but God can do incredible things when we get out of our comfort zone and pray.

Tip: I highly recommend putting Lauren Daigle's, song "Dry Bones" in your ears as you walk around praying for your greek brothers and sisters.

5. Changing the world doesn't stop when you close these pages. Please join us on social media [@katiebulmerlife](https://www.instagram.com/katiebulmerlife) and [@sororitygirlscanchangetheworld](https://www.instagram.com/sororitygirlscanchangetheworld)

## EPILOGUE

### THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE YOU

We have talked about some inspiring world-changing ideas in this book, but sometimes we just need to see someone go first. Below are six sorority women I have had the pleasure to see grow beyond anyone's wildest dream. They are fearless leaders, lovers of Jesus, and live the dream of being a true sister to their friends. These brave women are the ones lighting the way through the narrow and worthwhile journey to beautiful faith in their generation.

Here are their words:

Man, oh man, we serve a cool God. The kind of God that sees our flaws, our pimples, our fifty-three on our History final, and says, "you are beautiful." The kind of God that created puppies, carbs, and mountains --yet STILL loves our messy hearts more. I love my sorority and the community it has given me. Although through my sorority I have found friends for life, I have also been reminded God wants us to join His Kingdom-- a unity greater than any letters. So ladies do your squats, wear your letters with joy but never forget our worth is in our creator and our purpose is to serve HIM!

Grace Valentine

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

Founder of The Enough Movement

Something in me told me that I could not take that path that I did in high school. I couldn't go to that dark, cold, and scary place again. I needed to do something different. I needed to FEEL better- physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

So...I ran to Jesus. Not only did I run, but I full-on sprinted. During college, I truly found my relationship with Christ, but still felt some uncertainty when it came to trusting Him with all of my beings. All I knew is that at this point, I had to hand everything over to Him. I spent my days and nights in prayer, the Word, and in Christian fellowship. I asked Him to help me trust Him because it was hard. I prayed for Him to give me strength and peace, and let me tell you... He was so faithful.

Faith Williams

[www.christinafaith.blog](http://www.christinafaith.blog)

I didn't know it at the time, but I looked for my identity in guys. I needed someone to tell me I was beautiful. I needed someone to text me and tell me they loved me. I just love feeling loved. But, as I searched for love in guys, tried living life my way and in my control, and tried satisfying myself with everything this world has to offer, I found out time and time again that it simply does not work.

Abbie Deal

@abbiedeal



I was finding my identity in Christ during my freshman year of college when I was asked to start writing for the Odyssey Online. If I accepted this offer, I would really be putting myself out there by sharing my faith and stories with everyone on the internet! This was scary for me at first, but when I began writing and sharing what God was doing in my life, He began to bless my writing. People began reaching out to me with stories about how they want to grow closer to Jesus and how my writing inspires them. It really humbled me and made me realize that when we take big leaps of faith towards Jesus, He blesses those leaps far more than we can ever hope for. Now, I have my blog and I love sharing with the internet what God is doing in my life. God has broken down my wall of insecurity, and He has replaced it with vulnerability and trust in Him. Through my writing, I have learned that when we show God our faith and trust in Him. He blesses it beyond measure!

Jenny Way

[brokenvesselsforjesus.wordpress.com](http://brokenvesselsforjesus.wordpress.com)

I knew God before India, but something shifted in me there. It was like a key to my heart had been unlocked in that city. In India, I decided in my heart that God was going to be Lord of everything in my life... Lord of my time, my finances, my relationships, my thought life, and my actions. Every decision I would ever make was to be centered around God. I knew after this trip that the only reason I was alive was to glorify God and invite my brothers and sisters to join me on this vastly exciting journey of leading (serving) people into his heavenly kingdom.

Gabrielle Howard @therealgabbyhoward

Coming into college, I knew that I wanted more for my life. After experiencing all of the shame and regret that came with a past like mine, I was ready to find out who this “Jesus” guy was. I came to college and prayed for a godly group of friends that would lead me and encourage me in my faith, and God gave me my sorority. They encouraged me to step out of my little comfortable box and be bold. They prayed for me while I gathered the courage to share my testimony, and that’s exactly what I did.

I shared my story that consisted of sex, drugs, alcohol, and an abortion. I shared my story so that others would know we CAN experience true freedom. Because of the way God has forgiven me and loved me so generously, that is the only reason I have been able to forgive myself. And none of that would have been able to happen without girls like these. Being a Christian in college seemed boring and hard before I experienced the true joy and freedom that comes with finding your purpose in Jesus.

Carli Anderson @carlianderson1

<http://the-lovely-truth.weebly.com/>

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Alpha Delta Pi, you taught me what it means to exemplify the highest ideals of Christian womanhood. You taught me about sisterhood and gave me some of my best friends. I am forever grateful to be an ADPI.

“Greek world changers,” the group we created as more and more girls wanted to hear what it looked like to live a life for Christ and be in a sorority. You guys say I’m the leader, but really you taught me more than I could ever teach you. You are inspiring and amazing women who will totally *change the world*.

Our two little girls. Hannah and Ava, as I write this, you are nine and seven. I see you love fiercely and cheer loudly for your sister. You are hilarious, brave, and the kindest little girls I have ever met. I couldn’t be more honored to be your Mama.

To Bryan. You always saw a writer in me even when I didn’t see it in myself. Thank you for supporting me as this book came together and the wisdom behind many of these truths. Thank you for being the guy who loves me the way Jesus does.

Alia Lewis for editing this book. @ceo\_alia [www.clippings.me/alialewis](http://www.clippings.me/alialewis)

Ashlyn Cathy for the photo on the front cover @ashlyn-catheypphoto

<http://www.ashlyncatheypography.com>

Abbie Deal for designing the front cover @abbiedeal

Jesus, the lover of my soul, my foundation, my rock, and my helper. I can do all things through the one who gives me strength.