

# Preach It, Sister!

These women aren't letting their gender stop them from being powerful preachers of the gospel.

## Lisa Bevere

Twenty years ago, Lisa Bevere was a relatively unknown minister, preaching mainly to women. Today she reaches mixed audiences in both the U.S. and abroad.

In this season of her life, Bevere sees her role as a new grandmother as a reflection of her current assignment. "I see myself as a mother in ministry," she says. "God wants me to tell His daughters to live their lives *now*. Don't wait."

Lisa and her husband, John, founded Messenger International, based near Colorado Springs, Colo., in 1990 to spread the gospel. Both are itinerant preachers as well as authors and hosts of their own television program, *The Messenger*.

In her book *Fight Like a Girl*, Lisa shatters the myths associated with women in ministry. "We've been taught to be feminine, but that does not mean don't be confident."



## Christine Caine

When Christine Caine was born, her birth certificate read "2508 of 1966." She had no name because she was abandoned by her birth mother. No other relative claimed her.

Thirty-three years passed before Caine's adoptive mother told her the truth. But the family secret didn't shake Caine's faith in God; it strengthened it.

"I was unnamed and unwanted, but what's most important is *God*

wants me," she tells audiences.

Growing up in a staunch Greek Orthodox family in Sydney, Australia, Caine had no examples of women ministers. But when she joined Hillsong United Church at age 21, the Word came alive to her, and she discovered God wanted to use her in His service.

"I was in a life-giving church at Hillsong. The anointing is there, and it became apparent to me that the Holy Spirit is not gender-biased," she says.

After a long season of training with pastors Brian and Bobbie Houston, Caine and her husband, Nick, started ministering in churches and conferences, equipping pastors in leadership and preaching the gospel.

### **Sharon Seay-Eiland**

Sharon Seay-Eiland has been singing since age 3. Her passion gave way to opportunities for her to preach the gospel, and today her ministry takes her throughout the U.S. and other countries.

"I was a singer, but my pastor saw the gift of God on my life, and he allowed me to preach," Seay-Eiland says.

Though it was not customary for women to preach ahead of elders in her church except during special women's functions, the pastor pushed tradition aside to give the aspiring evangelist opportunities.

Seay-Eiland attends Revival Center Family Church in Tullahoma, Tenn., near Chattanooga. She has two sons and is a single parent—but this soccer mom is determined to raise well-rounded boys.

Her advice to rising female ministers is to strike a balance between family life and ministry.

“Women in ministry must be careful not to sacrifice their families for one more speaking engagement,” she says.

## **Tamara Graff**

Tamara Graff’s late father, John Osteen, started Lakewood Church 51 years ago in a converted feed store. Her brother Joel became the pastor of the Houston church in 1999, when their father unexpectedly passed away. And with more than 32,000 members and a worldwide TV ministry, Lakewood is the largest church in the country.

But Graff is leaving her mark on the world in her own unique way. She is an associate pastor at Faith Family Church in Victoria, Texas, working alongside her husband, senior pastor Jim Graff.

She oversees the women’s ministry at her church, speaks occasionally at events and assists her husband in his work as founder of Significant Church, a network of churches located in small towns.

Graff told *Charisma* that growing up in a pastor’s home with her siblings was a good experience that instilled in her a love for ministry.

“My parents did a great job living what they taught,” she says. “My five siblings and I saw a real God at work in their lives, and that was something we wanted in our lives.”

Because two of the Graffs’ four children are young, Tamara balances her life as a mother and a ministry worker. She tells other women to also be true to their callings.

“I would say to any woman: ‘Just be yourself. Don’t try to be anybody else,’” she says. “Embrace who God made you to be, and be the best.”

## **Chené Tucker**

A full-time instructor of clinical social work at Oral Roberts University, Chené Tucker is using her education and ministry calling to help educate a generation of believers and help others find freedom in Christ.

Tucker says she sensed the call of God on her life when she was 14 and chose the social work route to bring unbelievers to Jesus.

“People whose lives are in turmoil find it hard to connect with a God who loves them. I am called to reach people and make His love for them tangible and practical,” she says.

Tucker is the founder of Polished Arrows International, based in Tulsa, Okla., and travels the U.S. and abroad preaching the gospel. She says women must develop an intimate relationship with God before launching into ministry.

“Women have to wait on the Lord and cultivate a secret life with Jesus so that when He opens doors for them, they can minister out of intimacy with Him and not head knowledge,” she says.

## **Rebecca Greenwood**

For more than 18 years, Rebecca Greenwood has led people to Christ by preaching about spiritual warfare, deliverance, intercession and more. Her itinerant ministry has opened doors for her to minister in Egypt, Nepal, Italy, Turkey, Ukraine and Russia.

With regard to being a woman in ministry, Greenwood says women face fewer challenges today.

“We are being received in the body of Christ, and now is the time for the Deborahs to come forward,” she says.

Greenwood believes a woman must first develop a relationship with God, pray about His plans for her life and then wait for His leading.

“Without godly direction, a woman will always be unsure of herself,” she says.

Greenwood and her husband have a bent for prayer and intercession and spent six years at Eddie and Alice Smith’s U.S. Prayer Center in Houston. Now they train teams in intercession, deliverance and prophetic ministry.

Greenwood is the author of *Authority to Tread: An Intercessor’s Guide to Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare* and *Breaking the Bonds of Evil: How to Set People Free from Demonic Oppression*.