

Gloria Gaither Launches New Bible Project

Gloria Gaither and her husband, Bill, have written more than 700 songs. They are the hosts of the *Homecoming* show, which has aired on TBN, Christian TV Network and other networks and has been distributed worldwide. The show is the “who’s who” of Gospel music. Gloria is also the recipient of numerous Grammy and Dove Awards and was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame. As if those achievements weren’t enough, Gloria is launching another project close to her heart, the *Gaither Homecoming Bible*, published by Thomas Nelson.

Charisma magazine recently visited with Gloria via Skype to talk about her latest project. Despite the accolades, Gloria is down home, simple and refreshingly real. She wrote 89 articles for the *Gaither Homecoming Bible* project.

SpiritLed Woman: Tell us more about the *Homecoming Bible* project. Why did you take this on, and how long did it take to pull it all together?

Gloria Gaither: At first, when Thomas Nelson approached us about the idea, I thought we didn’t need another Bible. But the more talked, we realized that we had a huge *Homecoming* audience that’s beyond Pentecostal or evangelical. They are broad and worldwide. There are people who left the church, and we want them to read the Bible again. [Through the Bible] we wanted to speak to regular people where they are with the issues they are dealing with in life. The guests on the *Homecoming* show are regular people who have children and families. They travel together and help each other take care of their kids.

We wanted to reach this generation with the hymns and gospel

songs of an older generation that had family devotions. We wanted to preserve gospel songs for another generation. We surveyed the artists on the *Homecoming* show and asked them to pick their favorite gospel songs. They are great testimony songs, and they helped us choose a compilation of 20 or 30 Gaither songs that are included in this Bible. I worked with an editor at Thomas Nelson, and she researched the stories behind the hymns. There are written stories behind our songs. This is a fabulous resource because the songs are next to the Scripture related to that song.

The Scriptures highlighted in green are related to music and singing. We wanted to show what music had to do with people of faith. This is a beautiful feature and required pretty extensive research and editing.

The little gold sidebars are my commentary, insights that the Holy Spirit gave me when I read certain Scriptures. There are a lot of features of this Bible that makes it very practical. The feedback has been incredible.

SLW: How were the stories gathered from the *Homecoming* artists? Did each artist get assigned a certain book in the Bible or a Bible character?

Gaither: I asked them to contribute personal experiences from their own Bible reading when they are on the road. I placed their devotion near the Scripture that was the basis of their commentary. This makes the Scripture very personal and shows how it applies to real life situations.

SLW: Your poems are also in this Bible. Tell us how you get inspired to write poems or songs.

Gaither: I've spent years writing papers, magazine articles, lyrics and poems. Lyrics and poems are two different things. At first I balked at all of my poetry because it isn't that religious. It's gut level, and people to need know that your main thrust in life is real-life issues. Some of my poetry

reflects doubts and deep insights.

SLW: Who is your favorite Bible character, and what's your favorite Bible story?

Gaither: "If I were to take one book of the Bible to a desert island, it would have to be either Colossians or Ephesians. My favorite Bible character is Peter, who is the disciple that doesn't get it. But it was to him that God revealed who Jesus is. Jesus said, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter, of all of the people, said, "You are the Christ." God is able to tell us what we need to know, whether we're too dumb or too smart. He can reveal the truth in such a way that we get it.

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