

Introduction

From Jaye

It is such an honor to introduce you to *Women Leading Women*. It has been years in the making. For more than 20 years I have served in full-time ministry to and with women. They have learned from me, and I have learned from them, and I love them all. I love the ones who served with me into the wee hours of the morning setting tables, and I love the ones who drove me insane with all the things they wanted me to do for them. I love the ones who had a passion for Christ and His Word, and I love the ones who don't even know Him. I love serving with women for the cause of Christ.

Out of this love for women and our Lord, I write this work. God has a plan for women. He desires for us to have the finest and the best that He has to offer. I write because I am concerned that in so many ways the world has wormed its way into our churches and into our ministries. I want us to get back to the basics of what I know that God has called us to do.

God has called us to lead women. I want women to serve the Lord by knowing what the Bible says and how to lead like a godly woman. I want women to know how to serve with men.

God knows that women can reach women like no one else can. He knows that women can nurture and disciple women in such a way that they will get it. He knows that women can minister to women like no man could. God knows that women can train girls

to be godly young women. He knows that women can support the church in caring and incredible ways. God knows that women can lead women and that they can do it through the local church. Let's get back to what God's intention was in the beginning. Let's get back to women leading women to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. There is no better way.



From Terri

I have a saying (some students call it my mantra) that I use in every course I teach: you have to know what you believe and why you believe it. I have been reminded in recent days of the battle that we are fighting to uphold biblical truth in the world. In the midst of writing this text, I have stood before media defending the family, the Titus 2 model, and a Proverbs 31 woman. I have listened to more than one former student tell me that she did not realize how much the world (and the church) would challenge her beliefs about women. I have lived a painful family crisis and watched how those with and without Christ have struggled. I have talked to pastors who did not know what to do with their women, and I have had women's ministry leaders cry on my shoulder, trying to figure out how to do "it."

I have also seen the work of God in the lives of women. I had the opportunity to share Christ with a secular media reporter who had never heard the gospel and allowed her to ask the tough questions. I have been able to pray with and talk to family members as never before. I have been able to challenge students to stand firm on what they know to be true, even if they are the only one. I have been able to encourage pastors to hold their women's ministries accountable and have assured struggling women's leaders that God can use them in His kingdom.

We do not live in days when we can fake it. The world will challenge us at every corner, and we are to be ready to stand firm on truth. There are women who need to know Christ, believers who need to grow in their faith, and still others who are dying to find a

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place of service and connection. My prayer is that we do not allow ourselves to be driven off course from God's original plan for His church and His daughters. I hope that you will embrace the freedom that comes by living a life that reflects a God culture bringing light to a dark world. It is not an easy road to walk, but oh, is it worth it!

OUR PASSION

We have a passion for the Lord, a passion for the local church, and a passion for women. The truth is, we love to see the three come together the way they were intended. Throw out what you might have seen and heard about women and the church, and let's look at what God's intention was from the beginning. What does God say about the church? What does God say about women? Through years of study for both of us, we have found that God has a passion for the church and a passion for women. He loves the church, and He loves us.

While God loves the church and loves women, sometimes things get mixed up when we try to sort it all out. We have seen churches that don't allow women to do anything and churches that allow women to do everything. We have seen churches with a biblically based ministry to women and churches who do not allow a ministry to women in any shape or form. We have seen women's ministries that are so far from being under the leadership of the church that it is downright scary. We have seen churches allow their ministries to women to have no direction, and we have seen women with attitudes with which any Christian would be disappointed. Frankly, we have seen what God intended for good to be taken to such extremes that it can be hard to find any difference between these ministries and the community charity leagues. These are the things that have compelled us to write.

This is not another book that tells you how to do women's ministry. In the pages that follow, you are not going to find the 10 steps to a successful Bible study or organizational charts for your leadership team. Many good resources are available that focus on the nuts and bolts of women's ministry. The purpose of *Women Leading Women* is to paint a picture of what women's ministry should look like based

upon Scripture. We wholeheartedly believe and are operating from the assumption that actions flow out of what one truly believes.

Who will help us get back on track with what real ministry to women needs to look like? Who will equip herself, study the Word of God, and passionately teach what God says? Who will stand up for what is right and lead like a godly, Spirit-filled woman? Who will reach women, teach them, and send them out to do ministry? Who will tell the next generation, and who will do all this under the authority of the local church? Who will help women know that God loves them, sent Jesus to die on the cross for them, and has a plan for their lives? Who will help women know that the local church *is* the plan of God for ministry? Who will stand up and teach what needs to be taught and change what needs to be changed?

We pray that it is you. We pray that you will agree with us that it is time to lead like godly women. It is time to be proud to be a woman who leads other women to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. We pray that you will join us in our charge to bring the ministry to women back under the leadership of the church. We pray that you will join us to make a difference in our homes, in our churches, and in the lives of women and girls.

Women Leading Women: The Biblical Model for the Church is for the kingdom. It is a work that flows out of our passion for the Lord, our passion for the local church, and our passion for women. We pray that together we can make a kingdom difference and that we can make it with women and under the authority of the local church. Jesus died for each of us, but Christ also died for the church. He loves us both. Let's get together.

Now to Him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think—according to the power that works in you—to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen (Eph 3:20–21).

Jaye Martin and Terri Stovall