

Nº 04

# PROPEL

*Collective*



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PROPELWOMEN.org





# LEAD FOR ALL

**JESUS TURNED PROSTITUTES, HOUSEWIVES, MOTHERS,  
PROMINENT WOMEN, POSSESSED WOMEN, SINGLE WOMEN,  
MARRIED WOMEN, WIDOWED WOMEN, CHILDLESS WOMEN,  
WEALTHY WOMEN, CONNECTED WOMEN, POOR WOMEN, AND  
DISENFRANCHISED WOMEN INTO LEADERS IN HIS MOVEMENT.  
YOU ARE A LEADER BECAUSE YOU ARE A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST.**

+  
BY CHRISTINE CAINE  
FOUNDER, PROPEL  
+



As I travel around the globe, I've come to realize two things: First, coffee is an international love language, and second, women may be from different cultures, but we all struggle to internalize a leadership identity. I hear it all the time. "I'm just a mom, not a leader. I'm not a leader because I don't work full-time. My boss is the leader, not me. I haven't written a book or a blog, so I'm not a leader. I don't have a title so I'm not a leader. I'm in college and too young to be a leader. I don't have the right qualifications to be a leader. I don't want to be a leader because I only see men leading."

I could go on, but I think you get my point. My purpose in founding Propel is to help Christian women realize that, as followers of Jesus Christ, we are all called to lead people to Him. **Therefore, we are all leaders.** We are all in different seasons, circumstances, places, have different gifts, talents, and callings, but we all have a responsibility to keep moving forward as we follow Jesus, and to lead others to Him along the way.

It's important to remember that leadership is not simply building a public platform, being on a speaking circuit, standing behind a pulpit, a title, or working in an office. Nor is it a reserved parking spot, the corner suite, or a name plaque. We all have a degree of influence within our own sphere and have a responsibility to steward that influence for the glory of God. Being on maternity leave, homeschooling children, volunteering in a NGO, serving in your local elementary school, looking after aging parents, being a stay-at-home mom, or being in college doesn't disqualify you from leadership. Likewise, being a CEO, an entrepreneur, or the captain of a basketball team doesn't automatically guarantee you're a leader.

Our commitment to personal leadership development should be a primary focus of our lives. Since it is to our Father's glory that we bear much fruit (John 15:8) we should all desire to increase our influence and impact in the world that we live. Yes, you are a leader. When did I become a leader? The day I said yes to following Jesus, not the day I was given a position or a title. I recognize that seasons constantly change, but we never stop leading. Whether you are married or single, young or old, have children or not, educated or untrained, in a boardroom or in your living room, you are called to lead others to Christ. Leadership is not for an elite few. Don't excuse laziness, indifference, or apathy by saying, "I'm not a leader."

Life is always changing. When I married Nick, things changed. When I had my daughters, things changed. When I moved to the United States, things changed. When my daughters started getting older, things changed. When I started writing, things changed. When I started traveling to teach, things changed. When I started A21, things changed. When I started Propel, things changed. Things will always change because I am always moving forward and growing. Changing seasons does not denote a changing mandate.

My hope is that Propel will help thrust those of us who are operating in the full throttle of our leadership gifting even further than we have ever been, and that women who never thought they were leaders will begin to see themselves as leaders. We must change our language from ***I'm not to I am.*** We all should be committed to consistently:

**GROWING:**

Grow ourselves in order to effectively grow others

**LEARNING:**

Learn to be more effective in whatever we are called to do

**CHANGING:**

Change daily to the image of Christ

**STRETCHING:**

Stretch constantly to stay flexible

**ENLARGING:**

Enlarge our heart to serve people more effectively

**EXCELLENCE:**

Excelling is a by-product of being a Christian, not a CEO

**RESPONSIBILITY:**

Responsible to the commission we have been entrusted with

**INFLUENCING:**

Influence as salt and light in our world

**INCREASING:**

Increase our personal capacity

**MULTIPLYING:**

We are all called to make disciples

Jesus turned prostitutes, housewives, mothers, prominent women, possessed women, single women, married women, widowed women, childless women, wealthy women, connected women, poor women, disenfranchised women, marginalized women, and successful women into leaders in His movement. You are a leader because you are a follower of Christ. Change your ***I'm not*** into a bold ***I am!***

Cheers,

CHRIS



## DON'T GO ALONE

There are a million ways to be a good leader, of course, but one of the through lines, I think, for great leadership is connection. Leadership is always, only, ever about people. The quickest way to fall apart as a leader is to isolate yourself, and the surest way to thrive is to connect—to surround yourself with people who tell you the truth, especially when it's hard. The leaders I'm watching and learning from are the ones who lead with, not the ones who lead alone. And the biggest failures of leadership I've witnessed are always preceded by isolation.

If you want to lead, start by connecting. And if you want to get better as a leader, ask for help. Ask for feedback, ask for advice, ask for people who love you to reflect reality back to you. There's this image we have of leaders—they're like cowboys in the old west, lone rangers. They're running out ahead, blazing trails, taking hills. But the most effective leaders I know are around the campfire, shoulder to shoulder with their teams. They're around the table, asking questions, listening to stories, learning from other people's perspectives. Another way to say it: the best leaders create circles, not lines. They're less Pied Pipers,

asking people to fall in line behind them, and more Mama Bears, pulling their tribes around themselves, into themselves. Especially in crisis, the best leaders connect, even though many times the fear instinct tells us to pull away.

When things are falling apart, a team desperately needs their leader to show up. In stress or chaos, many of us feel the pull to analyze, to dive into information, to barricade ourselves with theories or research. But what teams need in that stress or chaos is connection with their leader. It's easier to analyze than connect. But gather your people, right in the mess, because leadership is about people. You don't lead theories or numbers. You lead living, breathing human people, and the only way through chaos is connection. When I find myself pulling inward or away from my tribe, these days I know that's a warning sign for my own leadership. I reach out, ask for help, push against that impulse to isolate, because I know that isolation is the worst thing for a leader. I think of the campfire, not the lone ranger. I put another log on that fire, and I settle in, because leadership is about relationship, not about lone rangers.

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**SHAUNA NIEQUIST**

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## THE KEY TO HAVING THE LIFE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED

All of us have some sort of dream or vision—areas of our lives where, with God’s help, we want to better ourselves or achieve more. Maybe it’s to get in shape or have better physical health. Maybe you want greater financial stability or greater success in your business. Or you may be believing for greater ministry opportunities. Whatever your goals are, there’s one thing for certain—it will be almost impossible to get there without discipline and self-control. There was a time in my life when I would think, *If I eat one of those chocolate chip cookies, I’ll have to eat a dozen.* Why? Because I had no self-control...and I had absolutely no faith in myself ever changing. **But here’s the truth: We can change.** By the grace of God, we can begin making right choices and developing new habits that will help us enjoy a better life.

### Know Your Power Source

First and foremost, living a disciplined life and establishing new habits requires a lot more than just willpower. I’ll never forget the time I heard a teaching about the power of words. That day, I left church and said, “That’s it! I’m going to shut my mouth and not say one bad thing. I’m going to discipline myself!” You can probably guess how that turned out. Actually, I did manage to keep quiet, but then I realized I was depressed. The Lord spoke to my heart and said, “You shut your mouth, but nothing on the inside has changed.” Here’s the lesson: Even when God asks us to do something, we still cannot do it successfully unless we lean on Him. John 15:5 has changed my life. It says, “...Apart from Me you can do nothing” (NAS). Take a little time each day to read God’s Word and talk to Him in prayer. Some of my greatest breakthroughs have been the result of simply sitting quietly in His presence, knowing that I can’t do anything if He doesn’t make it happen.

### You Can’t Have the “Perks” Without the “Works”

Years ago, people were expected to work at their jobs for a long time before getting raises, vacation days, and

special benefits. Today, these things are expected up front. I’m all for people having great benefits, but there’s a sense of entitlement today that can actually hurt us. I believe a lot of people want the “perks without the works.” In other words, they want to have all of the good results without having to discipline themselves or take any of the responsibility to get them. Football coach, Vince Lombardi famously said that he was going to teach his players how to discipline themselves so they could have what they said they wanted to have. You see, although today we can microwave a meal, there’s no such thing as “microwave Christianity.” Actually, I like to call God’s process “The Law of Gradual Growth.” Why? **Because little by little, as we make right choices, the Lord brings us to the place we need to be.** Yes, in the beginning, disciplining yourself will be difficult. It won’t feel good and you won’t like it. But every time you make a choice to do the right thing, the next time it gets a little easier. And you get one step closer to your goal.

### Truth or Consequence?

The Bible teaches us that wise people think about the consequences and care more about later on than right now. Yes, you can live a lazy, undisciplined life and still go to heaven. But you won’t have peace, you won’t be happy, and worst of all, you won’t glorify God with your life the way He intended. I encourage you to start viewing discipline and self-control in a whole new way... as helpful keys to good health, peace, prosperity, great relationships, and the satisfaction of fulfilling your purpose. And remember, whatever your goal is—whether it’s to get in good physical shape or change a negative attitude—you have what it takes. So start drawing on God’s grace to help you achieve it. As you do—little by little—you’ll begin to live the life God has for you...and find more freedom, more success, and more fulfillment than you could ever imagine.

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**JOYCE MEYER**

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UNSTOPPABLE:  
She follows the  
call of GOD





## SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The thing that encourages me the most about leadership is that it is not about getting ahead, it is about getting behind. What? It sounds ridiculous. How can being behind put you in a leadership spot? Admittedly, if you're a Christ follower, Christ is your example. In following His example, we read in the letter from Paul to the church at Philippi: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Phil. 2:3-8).

Jesus led by listening and obeying, but he also led by putting others ahead of himself. Verse 3 says, "but in humility, value others ABOVE yourself." Be more mindful of someone other than yourself. Get behind someone. Elevate them over you. Intentionally place yourself at the back of the line. In my experience, not only is this helpful to the one you're behind, but also a principle of leadership that is often overlooked.

In delving further at this, consider two points:

**1. Everyone is led before leading.** If you don't know where you're going, it's difficult to forge the path. Whether it is through prayer, or through the leadership of team members or sometimes just plain common sense, each of

us is led. As a young kid, I was already a strong leader. My energy and pace for life were unquenchable. Yet, I was extremely sensitive to others and wanted to make sure no one was left behind. As I look back now, I can see how this was a part of my leadership gift.

**2. Leading is serving.** We lead each other best when we serve each other the most. Leadership is not about your gifts or abilities; it's about your heart. Isn't everything? I love how Colossians 3:17 encourages, "Whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to the father through Him." Seems like it's not as much about what we do, as it is about the heart in which it's done. Now that's freeing. Finding the will of God can be tricky if it's a needle in a haystack, but if it's not as much about what it is as about how it's done. That frees us. Go with your heart! Do what you're gifted in. Just make sure you do it in a way that brings glory and honor to God.

Are you already leading something well and want to become an even better leader? Or are you hoping that someday you will lead something great and you have no idea how to go about it? Be the best servant of the bunch and do it in a way that brings ALL glory to your maker. Being an advocate for someone ahead of yourself is a game-changer. That, my friend, will get you to the back of the line and you'll be ahead in no time.

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**SHELLEY GIGLIO**

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Shelley Giglio is the chief strategist, director of label operations and artist management for *Sixstepsrecords*, an Atlanta-based record label, as well as leader of the *Passion Movement* with husband, Louie Giglio.

You could follow Shelley at @ShelleyGiglio.





## 5 WAYS TO RAISE LEADERS

I want my five sons to grow up to be leaders. This doesn't mean that I necessarily wish for them to be CEOs, or heads of state, or be in charge of large groups of people. But that's not my definition of a leader. A leader is someone who obeys the calling God has for their lives. A person who isn't swayed by popular opinion or the whims of the world. Leaders are not made by their title or position, but by their actions and their heart. **A leader leads and influences others by the way they live life and love others.** Whether you are a parent, aunt, coach, or mentor to a young person, you have the great honor of being able to help raise a future leader. Here are five ways my husband and I parent our five sons to help build leadership qualities in them.

### 1. Let Them Fail

If you aren't occasionally failing, you aren't attempting to try new things. Many adults are ashamed of failing, but we never should be. Failing means we are trying, we are living, and we are learning. I want my boys to understand failure is the mark of a strong person who takes risks. Without failure, a future leader will never develop perseverance.

### 2. Praise Their Effort

We all want our kids to have a solid sense of self-esteem, and it can be tempting to bolster their egos by letting them know how proud we are of everything they do. But constantly praising a bigger kid like he just won a Nobel Peace Prize when he only carried his socks to the hamper doesn't serve him well; it will dilute the impact of your praise, and it can also reduce their motivation if they start to believe they are always amazing. Leaders are intrinsically motivated, not motivated by praise of the world.

### 3. Let Them Be Disappointed

Of course children need to trust their parents for a feeling of safety and constancy. That doesn't mean that we need to be all things to them at all times. It's okay if they are disappointed they can't join their friends for an afternoon movie, or you can't play a game with them right now, or they can't have the toy all of their friends want. Saying "no" is a part of parenting; learning how to handle minor letdowns will give them the skills to handle life's bigger disappointments with maturity.

### 4. Let Them Do Their Own Work

We've all heard the stories of parents contacting their college-aged students' professors to ask why they didn't get a 4.0. Of course that impulse comes from a place of love and concern, but at some point those "children" need to stand on their own two feet. I start young with my boys; for example, I don't assist with projects unless they need something only an adult can do. On the wall in the classroom? It's obvious that my boys' projects are actually made by a child, not his parents.

### 5. Teach Them To Lead With Love

Being a leader doesn't mean you get to boss around your friends on the ball field, at school, or out in the world. Real leaders influence others because of their love. Jesus modeled servant leadership to his disciples because real leadership, the kind that changes hearts and minds, always leads with love. From the marketplace to the ministry to the playroom, as leaders ourselves, we are meant to raise up leaders around us.

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ALLI WORTHINGTON

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Alli is COO of Propel, for more info visit [AlliWorthington.com](http://AlliWorthington.com).





## JUSTICE: MAY THE ODDS BE EVER IN YOUR FAVOR

Two years ago I was given the *Hunger Games* trilogy as a gift and scoffed at the idea of reading teen literature. But within the first couple chapters I wanted to change my name to Katniss, date Peeta, and stand in a three finger pose while whistling like a Mockingjay. But layered deep beyond the districts and demise, there was something disconcerting about the trilogy. Clearly, the series is a depiction of the world we are living in today. The capital. The districts. The people. The oppression. [Insert Mockingjay whistle here].

This may sound insane, but around the globe people are working tirelessly for little or no pay, many suffer from disease or malnourishment, and many others live in squalor and poverty, relegated to societies and structures they were born into. Continents like Africa face death and disease daily. Countries like India and China are forcing women into slave labor. Cities like Bangkok and Amsterdam exploit women by commodifying their bodies.

But in the United States [aka The Capital], the average American woman will be on Facebook for over 75 minutes a day. The average American woman will watch three hours of television a day. The average American woman will consume 4.5 meals of gluttonous proportions, but 74% of average American woman will spend two billion dollars on diet pills and weight-loss products.

I refuse to believe that our generation of women want to be categorized as average. We have an opportunity to think upon and fight for what is good, true, and right (Phil. 4:6). In light of God’s command in Isaiah 58:6, we are to make loose the cords of injustice and set the oppressed free. In the original Hebrew text, Isaiah 58 is a list of imperatives—go and do. In short, you’re not to just think about doing justice, you are to GO and DO justice.

It’s easy to be overwhelmed with the weight of the world, which always gives one more thing to do or cause to care about. However, we cannot be a people group who relegate our compassion to dropping change into a homeless man’s empty cup, checking off our weekly church attendance, or getting sad while watching a commercial about abused dogs to a Sarah McLaughlin music track.

**God doesn’t want religious obligation, He wants radical living.**

“Do you know what I want?  
I want justice—oceans of it.  
I want fairness—rivers of it.  
That’s what I want. That’s all I want”  
Amos 5:24 (MSG)

My fear is that we are prone to ignore, prone to turn away from the pain in the world because we don’t have the time, space, or margin to care. I get it. I’m a wife and step-mom who works full time, travels for work, and I’m involved in church. But as Christians, as people leading other to Christ, scripture isn’t written for us to pontificate points of poverty or depravity. The Gospel is more than a mindset; it’s action oriented. **The Gospel is more than religious activity; it’s radical living.**

Don’t pray for righteousness, live righteously.  
Don’t talk about justice, live justly.  
Don’t play church, be the Church.

As we speak with Propel women across the nation and globe, I’m hopeful. Yes, our world is facing a horrible reality. But our reality is not our destiny. It never is. The attraction to Katniss Everdeen is the reality that she could be you, she could be me. At the core of us is a desire to do what is right, good, true, and just. The sacrifice is big. The risks are daunting. But reward is worth it. We have a chance to stand before the world and do what we’re called to do: change the world.

Here’s to side braids, freedom, and archery. But better yet, here’s to a generation of Katniss’, Peetas, and Prims who know that their valiant acts could very well change history.

May the odds be ever in your favor...

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**BIANCA JUAREZ OLTHOFF**

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Bianca is Chief Storyteller at A21 and Creative Director for Propel Women.

You can connect with her at [BiancaOlthoff.com](http://BiancaOlthoff.com).





# WALK **FOR** FREEDOM

Join A21 as we #WalkForFreedom to heighten awareness of modern-day slavery and raise funds to rescue and restore the lives of human trafficking victims.

From Sydney to Los Angeles, London to Cape Town, the #WalkForFreedom will shed light on the 27 million men, women, and children who are still in bondage today.

## OCT. 17, 2015

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TURN YOUR STAND FOR JUSTICE  
INTO A #WalkForFreedom

REGISTER TO WALK: [A21.org/Walk](http://A21.org/Walk)

 @A21

 @TheA21Campaign

 @A21

## THREE LEADERSHIP TIPS: PHIL HYLDGAARD

A21 Global Operations Director



### 01 What is one characteristic you believe every leader should possess?

Teachability. It's a quality most people have when they first start out, but something we can easily think we graduate from when experience comes along. Staying teachable is key to growing and increasing our capacity as leaders. Keeping a humble spirit will earn respect from our leaders and allow them to invest in us to make us greater leaders. Arrogance and pride can so easily sneak in when we have success but a good leader recognizes that they can always be better and that we never graduate from learning.

### 02 What advice would you give someone going into a leadership position for the first time?

Be yourself. There is no one better at being you than you, and you have to believe that you were given the opportunity because of who you are and the potential that is in you.

### 03 What's the biggest challenge facing leaders today?

The biggest challenge to leadership is leading people who are not looking to be led. Today's culture seems to be all about self and being self-made. But there is no such thing; we're all products of influence and the sooner we recognize this, the bigger our leadership and influence can be.

# IT'S ALL ABOUT THE JOURNEY

## **WHAT IS YOUR TESTIMONY WHEN YOU FEEL AS THOUGH GOD HAS BLESSED YOU WITH A LIFE OF ABUNDANCE?**

You see my husband happened to be the #2 NBA Draft pick straight out of high school to the Chicago Bulls. I was very quickly plucked from a life of anonymity to a life where people know my name simply because of someone I love.

In the seasons where it seemed that I was “just” a homemaker, or “just” a mom, or “just” an NBA wife...I was so much more. I was a child of God and my Father was preparing me to lead in an industry that is desperate to know Him.

To read Kimberly's full article, visit [PropelWoman.org/Articles](https://PropelWoman.org/Articles)

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**KIMBERLY CHANDLER**

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**JENNI CATRON**

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Jenni is Executive Pastor at Menlo Park Pres, author, and leadership coach.  
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## CREATING EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY TEAMS

When I get exasperated, I ramble. This particular day I was rambling to my counselor about the frustration I was feeling with my own growth challenges. After patiently waiting for me to finish my blathering, she shared a concept that I had never considered: emotional maturity doesn't necessarily parallel our physical maturity. Perhaps that should have been obvious, but I had the false assumption that we naturally grow in emotional maturity as we get older. My counselor proceeded to explain that while our bodies naturally grow into adulthood, our emotions can stay trapped in childish patterns if we haven't been given the tools to mature in our emotional health. That explanation provided some relief from the frustration I felt for the immaturity I was recognizing in my life, and at the same time made me aware of the amount of work that was ahead of me.

I'm sure your leadership landscape is peppered with the scars of immaturity. The frustrated remark you made to your boss. The snarky comment you said to a co-worker. The door you slammed. The meeting you stormed out of. The cold shoulder you gave someone who didn't support your initiative. Not only is your leadership marred with your less-than-stellar moments, you've been on the receiving end of these emotionally unhealthy zingers as well. The scathing email from a volunteer who disagreed with your decision. The passive-aggressive tweet from a staff member following a difficult conversation. The employee who always has an excuse for under-performance. It's important to understand that leading yourself and others in emotional growth is part of leadership. I've spent too many years frustrated at myself and others, expecting different behavior rather than engaging where we are and seeking to lead us better. When we encounter immaturity in our team, we must choose to engage. To ignore unhealthy patterns only serves to support greater dysfunction throughout the team.

Here are my thoughts and suggestions for getting the maturity train going in the right direction: Look in the mirror. Reflect on some of your immature moments. Do you see patterns? Do you know what triggers

your emotionally unhealthy reactions? **You must lead yourself well to lead others better.** Evaluate yourself first to see where your emotional immaturity may also be impacting the team.

Get feedback. Even with your best intentions, you still may have blind spots. Seek out a trusted friend, spouse, or Christian counselor to help you assess what you can't see on your own. Call it out. When you see immature behavior call it out. Kindly. Gently. In a God-honoring way, but don't ignore it. Employ the counsel from Matthew 18:15 to engage in conversations. With love, care, and with a spirit of unity, seek to share what you've observed in the other person. Challenge them in love, encourage them with hope, and pray with them for growth.

Encourage communication. Seek to establish a culture with your team that creates open dialogue about the areas in which growth is necessary. Make it safe for them to bring their struggles to you. **Open communication helps to create a culture where concerns, frustrations, issues, or ideas are shared before they fester into emotionally unhealthy reactions.**

Define a growth plan. Growth doesn't happen without deliberate action. Once you've identified patterns or triggers of emotional unhealth, create methods for accountability. Consider next steps such as professional counseling, a small group study devoted to growth in the area of need, weekly check-in conversations, books to read or study, etc.

Leading yourself and others to emotional health is perhaps the most challenging leadership work you will do. Skills and culture can be taught and caught, whereas maturity must be coached and mentored. It will take time. It will take patience. It will require tough conversations, but it's also extremely rewarding. Embrace the opportunity to lead yourself and others toward growth that impacts every aspect of our lives.

# WHAT IS A *propel* WOMAN?

**UNAPOLOGETIC**  
She is a *WOMAN* who **LEADS**

**UNPRETENTIOUS**  
She is *real*,  
DOWN TO EARTH,  
& accessible

**UNASHAMED**  
SHE DOES NOT MINIMIZE  
or hide who **GOD**  
has made her

**UNSHAKABLE**  
SHE IS *rooted*  
& grounded  
IN THE  
**LOVE & GRACE** of **GOD**

**UNSTOPPABLE**  
She follows the  
call of **GOD**

**UNBOUND**  
her **HISTORY** will  
NOT define  
her **DESTINY**

**UNLIMITED**  
her potential in *Christ*  
is **LIMITLESS**

**UNSTUCK**  
SHE moves *gracefully*  
from one season to the next

**UNTAMABLE**  
She is **DANGEROUS**  
TO THE KINGDOM  
OF DARKNESS

**UNLEASHED**  
She is not held  
CAPTIVE to OLD PARADIGMS  
OR STEREOTYPES

**UNMOVABLE**  
SHE WILL  
NOT BE  
MANIPULATED

**UNDEFEATABLE**  
She knows NO weapon  
formed against  
HER will prosper

**uncommon**  
SHE IS NOT chasing  
worldly success,  
FAME, or fortune

**UNSELFISH**  
She is **GENEROUS**  
with her words,  
thoughts,  
RESOURCES, &  
relationships

**UNDONE**  
SHE is *undone* by the love, grace  
goodness kindness & mercy of **GOD**

WHO IS A PROPEL WOMAN?  
*you are*





## SUPERVISOR EFFECTIVENESS

Where I work, employees are required to take an annual survey that measures supervisor effectiveness and individual job satisfaction. It's a big deal. Something we prepare for. Track and report. Have plans against, striving for stellar scores above 90%. In short, it's a report card where a team anonymously rates their boss and the company overall. A few years ago (November 1, 2011 precisely, not that I kept track or anything), I received an F on this report card. A 69% to be exact. It was the first F I have ever received in my life and it was awarded to me by my team, reviewed by my boss, stamped on my soul like the scarlet letter.

Like many of you, I would cry and be terribly disappointed in myself in getting a C or even a B- back in my scholastic days. Therefore, getting an F in corporate America was arguably the worst day of my career. I cried the ugly cry. Of course not in front of anyone because leaders don't cry. And it gets worse. Do you want to know the question that dragged my score down? Brace yourselves. "I trust my immediate supervisor." What was my score on that question? Brace yourselves again. Fifty-seven percent. That's, what, an F minus minus minus? Yes, yes it is. May I remind you that I'm a Christian? A Christian who apparently, at that time, could not be trusted.

For the following weeks and months, I prayed. Cried. Prayed more. Blamed others. Plotted a plan to fire everyone. (Kidding.) Grieved the F. And grieved more. Then finally, I looked myself in the mirror, peeled back a few layers, and came to understand the best leadership lesson I've ever uncovered: I was leading like the world leads, not like Jesus led. I was focused on performance, not the hearts of people; I was focused on my reputation, not the depth or quality of my relationships; I was focused on self-promotion, not serving others; I was focused on self-investment, not investing in others. I led with caution, not care or courage. Alas, I was focused on the labor, not the love.

Operation Jesus Leader quickly fell underway. I went against most leadership books, blogs, and speeches and had one simple strategy: to be friends with and love my team. **I was going to blur the lines of work and personal.** And I was going to put the personal above the work.

I got to know each person. Like really know them. I spent time with them. Inside our office and outside our office. I celebrated with them and cheered them on. We laughed and we cried. I met their boyfriends, their parents, and their dogs. I slowed down and said, "Thank you." I put their needs above my own. I listened. And listened more. I had tough conversations. I prayed for them. I asked them for help. I began to understand their struggles, their fears, and their personal and career desires. I shared my own fears and desires. I admitted my mistakes and I asked for forgiveness. With Colossians 3:12-15 as my guide, I realized that being humble and authentic were springboards to building trusting relationships, especially in corporate America.

Humility opens the door to real conversations, and to real life. It affirms that, although our titles are different, our struggles are the same. When we hurt others, we are called to ask for forgiveness. With God, the transformation happened day after day, month after month. We became a happier team. Stronger. Better. Messier. More successful. Real. We blurred work and personal and it was glorious. God helped me rebuild myself and my leadership by creating an environment that was authentic, that went against typical corporate America standards, emulating the way Jesus led. In 2012, I received an A on my supervisor effectiveness and an A on job satisfaction. And in A in 2013. And in A in 2014. Coincidence? I think not.

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**ANN UENO**

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**LISA BEVERE'S HUSBAND, SONS, AND GRANDSON**  
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## DISARMING THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES

The battle of the sexes began thousands of years ago in the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve forgot their purpose and lost their place, they began to misuse their strengths. They wielded the dominion they'd been given against, rather than for, each other. Have we learned anything in all the years of pain that have followed? While many treat the roles of men and women as interchangeable, the man's position is not up for grabs, just as it is not his to give away. Likewise the woman's role is not the man's for the taking, nor is it hers to forfeit. Perhaps we have forgotten that what is considered weakness in one gender is often strength in the other. We need each other! Men and women were formed for increase, order, and cultivation. The day will come when all weapons will be laid aside in favor of this mandate. But right now there are problems, enemies, and battles much bigger than the one between the sexes.

From the beginning women were created for solution. Our origin was an answer to the very first problem:

**Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him"** (Genesis 2:18 ESV). Women bring God's goodness to their world. We were fashioned with unique strengths that offer solutions to the most pressing problems around us. Yet many of us have wasted time asking others to empower us when God has already empowered us. 2 Peter 1:3 (ESV) tells us: **"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence..."**

We will see a turnaround as women use their intuition, influence, and wisdom for building what has been broken. Women respond in different ways than men do to domestic, educational, governmental, and corporate problems. We need to wield all our weapons against these issues, with men

fighting like men and women empowered to fight like girls. Only then will we all win! God has given all that you need to be all you were created to be. "The Lord announces victory, and throngs of women shout the happy news. Enemy kings and their armies flee, while the women of Israel divide the plunder" (Psalm 68:11-12 NLT).

This battle is won. God has declared victory, and it is time you lived out loud what was already won. As we live and declare this truth, the enemy kings and armies will flee. In the wake of their departure, we will find the riches and treasures of truth, so long lost, restored. Is that not our passion and our mandate? When Adam and Eve rebelled against their Creator, humankind's vision was darkened. In the dark, it is easy to mistake enemies for friends and friends for enemies. In the realm of shadow, we often perceive differences as threats. Men and women have wrestled each other for far too long, and the time of awakening is at hand. We are not enemies. We are allies. Let's live like it!

**I leave you with some questions:**

- Do you see your gender as an asset?
- What are some of the unique strengths of women?
- How do you express them at home, in your marriage, in your worship, and in your workplace?
- What are some ways you can improve the way you work with men and women as allies?
- What is the victory God has won, and how can you help proclaim it?

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**LISA BEVERE**  
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Lisa is a best-selling author and co-founder of *Messenger International*.  
 To learn more, visit [MessengerInternational.com](http://MessengerInternational.com)



## FAITHFUL IN ALL SEASONS

Everything was falling into place. My first book had been published and it was out there in the world changing lives, I was travelling to preach the Gospel, and I was involved in meaningful social justice work. My family was onboard, thriving, and supportive. And then - surprise! - we were expecting a new baby. Now I needed to figure out a way to remain faithful to my calling and my vocation while still being faithful as a mother. Some people were worried: What would this mean for me as a leader? I needed to travel! To preach! To write another book! Couldn't someone else look after the baby while I was out saving the world? Couldn't I just work harder and cram more into my life? Others worried about what it meant for me as a mother. How would my children—a new baby in particular—fare if I kept my hand to the plow? People asked me which life I would choose: motherhood or ministry?

And yet I didn't believe that the Spirit was asking me to choose an "either/or" situation. Instead, I believe that as a woman after God's heart, I can be "both/and," embodying a seamless life of wholeness. Or at least try to. I can be a mother and I can be faithful to my vocation. In fact, being a mother enriches my leadership and being faithful to my vocation enriches my mothering. I am showing up with what I have to give in my whole life and I am trusting God will make it more than enough. That's all we ever do, anyway. We think that if we work harder or longer, playing by someone else's rules, that we are earning something or making something happen whether it's in ministry or motherhood. Since when did it all depend on me anyway? There isn't the Gospel in more hustle or self-importance. There isn't room for the Spirit to dance if I compartmentalize my life into false camps of sacred and secular.

**It's only ever and always the Spirit taking our portion and turning our something into God's everything.** We take our offering, however big or small

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**SARAH BESSEY**

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Sarah is an author, speaker, blogger, and mother. To connect with her, visit [SarahBessey.com](http://SarahBessey.com).



## PROPEL WOMEN HIGHLIGHT: ANJELAH JOHNSON

### 01 When and why were you called to comedy?

Well, I started in 2007. I don't know that I could tell you why I was "called" to comedy; it's not what I thought I would be doing, but I'm glad that I get to do it.



### 02 As a christian we can overlook laughter. Why is comedy and laughter important?

I believe that laughter is medicine and some people need healing that comes in this form. Also, we shouldn't take ourselves so seriously! We need to learn to laugh and be easygoing. That's why I think some people don't like to hang out with Christians. Some Christians seem so stuffy like they walk around with a rule book enforcing the law. Who wants to hang out with that guy?

### 03 What things have you learned in your field that you could share with other leaders?

Do you, and do you well. Don't try to be like someone else or emulate their career or their gift. Why would you want to be an imitation version of someone else when you could be an original masterpiece?



### 04 If you could teach women one thing you've learned in your career, what would it be?

Knowing what you want, how you want it done, and refusing to settle for anything less, doesn't make you a diva; it makes you a strong, powerful leader.



### 05 In pursuing your calling, what was something you wish you would have known before?

I mean, I wish I had a blueprint of what to expect. I wish I had that for the next part of my journey, too!

UNSELFISH  
She is GENEROUS  
with her words,  
thoughts  
RESOURCES, &  
relationships

+  
ANJELAH JOHNSON

+  
Anjelah is a comedian and actress. To follow her, go to [Anjelah.com](http://Anjelah.com).



## STARVING AT THE BANQUET:

### RELATIONAL ISOLATIONISM IN AN AGE OF SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY

Inmate William Blake has been in solitary confinement at the Elmira Correctional Facility in South Central New York for more than 27 years. In 1987, Blake shot two police officers—killing one and critically injuring the other. For an hour a day, he is allowed outside, alone, in a concrete enclosed yard. Blake describes his sentence as “a fate worse than death.” From the Apostle John’s exile to Patmos, to the banishment of Seneca to Corsica, to the contemporary shunning of religious dissidents, relational isolation has always been viewed as a most severe punishment. Relational isolation is the condition in which inadequacy in personal relationships impedes personal health and professional performance. In a time of unprecedented social connectivity, relational isolation is endemic to our culture as a whole. We’re standing in a river and dying of thirst, starving at the banquet.

I’ve listened to the stories of Christian leaders for over a decade, and what I’ve heard, again and again, are stories of relational isolation: the CEO feared by her direct reports, the pastor with no one to turn to, the female vice-president alienated by her male colleagues. The reasons are many but the results are the same—relational isolation is crippling the ministerial effectiveness of many Christian leaders. Understanding and combating relational isolationism is key to thriving as a leader. Corresponding with the rise of relational isolation is the rise of a hypersexualized culture in which the value of persons is reduced to the sexual. Many are the ways to love others, but in Western culture, it’s Éros, the sexual, romantic love that is most emphasized. We know little to nothing about real love. In his book, *The Four Loves*, C.S. Lewis beautifully elucidates the four classical loves: *storgē*, *philia*, *agápe*, and *éros*. Many have never experienced these loves in all their fullness.

*Storgē* is affection, most clearly exemplified in the love a parent has for their children. Many come from homes bereft of this affection, where parents are distant or addicted. Many children suffer because the full weight of parenthood rests on the shoulders of a single parent.

*Philia* is friendship. Lewis argued that friendship is the least valued of all the loves because so few people actually experience it. We can have a thousand “friends” on Facebook and still be socially isolated. Few are the examples we see of actual friendships.

*Agápe* is gift-love. Defining *agápe* is so elusive that Lewis hardly knows how to describe it. *Agápe* love is not a matter of emotion, but a matter of will: we’re commanded to demonstrate it to others regardless of how we feel about them. *Agápe* love gives itself up selflessly for another. It is a love impossible to experience apart from the grace of God.

*Éros*, rightly understood in the context of the other loves, is intimate and romantic love. *Éros* is “a passionate, intense desire for something; it is often referred to as a sexual desire, hence the modern notion of “erotic” (Greek *erotikos*).” But when separated from the other loves, it is twisted into an unrecognizable form. We are starving for love, and in our relational poverty we turn to a distorted form of *éros* to fill all our needs for love.

#### Here are three critical steps to combating relational isolation for leaders:

Accept you can’t do it alone. We cannot do good work or good ministry without help from others.

Evaluate your personal relationships. Apart from romantic relationships (*éros*), how are your family relationships (*storgē*), friendships (*philia*), and your relationship with God (*agápe*)? Where do you feel the most lack?

Work on gaining the necessary skills for personal relationships, such as authenticity, transparency, and compassion.

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**HALEE SCOTT, Ph.D.**

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## DO WE THINK WELL?

Let's be honest: it doesn't matter how much public success we achieve, a private war with our jeans can level us flat in five minutes. We expend a lot of emotional energy in the never-ending cycle of thoughts: the war of good foods versus bad foods, the shame of secret snacking, the discouragement from stepping on the scale, the satisfaction we feel when we sweat it out in a power flow class, and the days we hide in sweatpants because we can't seem to care.

While I agree there is a perverted cultural ambition for women to be thin, I also believe we willingly participate in bad thinking about wellness. For instance, in conducting a campaign, Kellogg's found that 67% of women engaged in self-shaming talk weekly, labelling parts of their body with words like "kankles" or "muffintops." The truth is that we struggle to think well about our bodies. We are created for beauty, strength, and dignity, but our thoughts often do not reflect that reality. Although I believe in cognitive strategies as a clinician, I am here to remind you that God has a more powerful plan for us than positive thinking: He invites us to a life of radical thinking.

In Matthew 5 and 6, Jesus gives us a higher goal than living for ourselves or for other's approval—He points us to the right desires (righteousness), He teaches us to trust (daily bread), He tells how we should eat (for Him, not others), how to turn our eyes away from comparison so that we are filled with light, and most importantly, not to live in constant anxiety about our size, our diet, or acceptance because He loves us. The Word of God is the foundation for thinking well.

As our thoughts start to change, we start to believe what God says about us, and we are empowered to practice being well. A track of right thoughts leads us away from limited cultural or self-imposed definitions of health that are dangerous, and towards the truth that sets us free. Then, we can leave the shame and fear that paralyzes us behind and pursue obedience through faith.

Being well is a lifetime work. It's not about achieving a number on a scale that will change today, tomorrow and every decade, or by eating the perfect amount of calories. We are practicing wellness, not perfecting it. We are participating in the masterpiece God began at birth. Our aim should be to honor that by working toward a healthy weight, eating foods that nourish our activity, and stewarding our bodies for a lifetime.

How are you nourishing your body with healthy foods for the tasks you have today? Maybe you need to eat a solid breakfast to fuel the sprint of motherhood; or to choose a healthier lunch when you dine with colleagues; and, for all of us, to make the time to add more vegetables to our plates. When we slow down to think well and to practice being well, we honor the bodies God gave us, we find the motivation and strength to make smart choices for today and for long-term wellness.

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**NORA SHANK**

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Nora Shank is a registered dietitian and nutritionist who owns a telemedicine nutrition practice in the Washington, D.C. area, where she lives with her husband and three children.

## 5 Summer Food Tips from Nutritionist, Nora Shank

Being fit and healthy is easy when we have some tips! Follow these helpful hints to not only enjoy the summer, but be healthy as well.



### Chopped Asian Salad

- 4 cups Napa cabbage, thinly sliced
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro

Combine in a large bowl and drizzle with dressing. Serve chilled; can add a variety of toppings such as shelled edamame, grilled chicken, grilled pineapple, sesame seeds or sliced almonds.

### Honey-Ginger Dressing

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt (or 1 tsp sea salt)
- 2 Tablespoons fresh ginger root, minced
- 4 Tablespoons rice wine vinegar
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tablespoons Tamari (or soy sauce)
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 2 Tablespoons sesame oil
- 1/4 cup grapeseed oil

**1. Don't reheat it.** Cold or room temperature foods are perfect for lighter summer meals. This is the season of farm-fresh delights, so try cooking double the vegetables one night and serving the remainder cold with a simple vinaigrette the next day.

**2. Cast iron is your summer friend.** Grilling is great, but if you can't, think panini sandwiches or quick sautés on the stove in a heavy skillet to get the job done with the least amount of heat.

**3. Skip take-out and cook at home.** A study from Johns Hopkins shows that people who cook at home eat less carbohydrates, fat and sugar. A simple, fresh meal is still a step towards wellness; even if you just make breakfast again.

**4. Lighten up your drinks.** Add no-calorie or low calorie naturally flavored seltzers to your favorite beverages to halve the calories. Also skip the cold, coffee-based drinks that can dehydrate you and pack in the calories.

**5. Think beyond kale.** There are many other leafy greens that score higher in phytonutrients. Kale is a fall and winter vegetable, so branch out into seasonal, summertime favorites like a peppery watercress salad with grilled steak, chopped Asian salad with Napa cabbage, or tabouleh with parsley.





## THE WORTHY RISK OF JOYFUL LEADERSHIP

A giggling five-year-old wearing a floral bikini and charging into the sea may not resemble a miracle to you. Especially if you're sprawled out on a chaise near that boisterous peanut and were hoping for solitude and silence on your beach vacation. Or if you're clueless to the fact that darling imp has only been a U.S. citizen for a year and was given little chance of survival as an orphan diagnosed with HIV, tuberculosis, severe malnutrition, and a host of other medical issues in Haiti. But I happen to know that little girl galloping across the sand with braids flying behind her like party streamers because I'm her adoptive mama. And I think my child is a joyful, miraculous warrior! Watching Missy brace herself for oncoming waves—after she'd already been knocked down several times and had come up spitting seawater and waddling off-balance because of the sandy load in her bathing suit bottom—then howl with glee right before a breaker crashed into her again was wonderful.

I can almost feel stretch marks forming on my heart in an attempt to hold onto bliss every time I get to see her enjoying new experiences like that. Because even when the novelty is woven with something scary (i.e. an ocean wave towering toward her the very first time) my daughter tends to tackle it with squared shoulders and a face-splitting grin. She seems to have made up her young mind that the exorbitant pleasure of being all in is totally worth the pain of a skinned knee or chaffed bottom. Which is a great template for leadership because much like Missy's oceanic debut, we are going to get walloped. There's no doubt about it. Relaxing weekends will often be followed by hair-on-fire Mondays. Conservative budgets will still probably have to be adjusted. Human staffs will definitely beget drama. Great employees will be prone to weekly brain lapses. Good employees will be prone to daily brain lapses.

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LISA HARPER

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Lisa is an adoptive mom, author, and Bible teacher.

To learn more visit [LisaHarper.net](http://LisaHarper.net)





## THE GIFT OF RESISTANCE: SURPRISING BENEFITS OF THE TOUGH ROAD

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I'll be the first to admit: I hate resistance. When I want to get something done, I want to do it on time, under budget, and with flying colors—and anyone or anything that stands in the way of that feels like an obstacle, not an opportunity. It's easy in the face of resistance to either back down, compromising vision, or to power up, compromising relationships. But I've found that embracing resistance has surprising benefits. Here's four ways you can reframe tough times in your leadership:

**Resistance purifies our passion.** Sometimes we have no idea how highly we value something until we have to explain it and stand behind it. It's often in heated discussions that I hear myself standing passionately for a value I believe in—one that I may have never articulated if it hadn't been for the fight. Conversely, we may find that resistance tells us that something we thought was of the utmost importance has lost its luster when we have to put energy behind it. If it's not worth fighting for, then it's not worth doing.

**Resistance sharpens our character.** I have discovered the best and worst about myself in the face of opposition. Resistance—and my reaction to it—always reacquaints me with my true self—more insecure and fearful, less loving, and more impatient than I would like! But in graciously revealing my true nature, I'm forced to remember my daily and deep need for God's lovingkindness: He sees who I really am and loves me even still. When we let opposition introduce us to our real selves, we have the opportunity to grow. When we face the (inevitable) next conflict with more patience and faith than we had before, we can celebrate that God is growing something stronger in us!

**Resistance strengthens our relationships.** A great temptation when you meet resistance is to doubt your position and God-given authority. It is often in these times where we most need others in our life to remind us of who we truly are. The gift of friendship with our spouse, our tribe of fellow leaders, and within our community keeps us from becoming isolated and disconnected. The paradox of vulnerability is that our weakness opens us up to greater intimacy and consequently, frees us toward authentic leadership! Feeling broken and desperate is not a sign that you need to quit; it is an invitation to allow others to stand with you. Even Jesus asked his friends to pray and "keep watch" in his time of need (Mark 14). Should we expect anything less in our own times of weakness?

**Resistance clarifies our calling.** I have never come out of a conflict unchanged. There are times when that resistance has led to discouragement and distance from God. But thankfully, I can look back at more times where God has used great resistance in my life to develop me into the specific instrument He intends for me to become. It's better to endure the furnace of refining than to remain a useless tool in the hands of our God.

If you are facing resistance of any kind—to your leadership, your ideas, or even within yourself, remember that God comforts, coaches, and corrects those He loves. Dallas Willard says, "God does not need to test us to know what is within us." But He will test us to make sure we know what is within us—the great capacity to stand in the face of opposition and to bring our unique and powerful gifts to bear for the world God loves.

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**NICOLE UNICE**

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Nicole Unice is the Ministry Director at Hope Church in Richmond, VA, and is the author of *Brave Enough*, releasing August 2015. To learn more visit, [NicoleUnice.com](http://NicoleUnice.com).

# PROPEL WOMEN

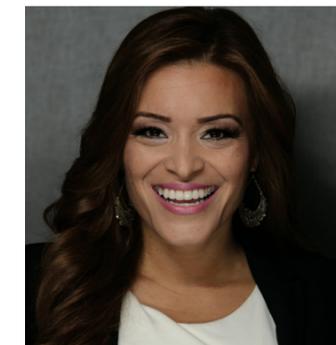
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