



# Raise Your Voice

*'If she have the necessary gifts and feels herself called by the Spirit to preach, there is not a single word in the whole Book of God to restrain her, but many, very many, to urge and encourage her.'*

**Catherine Booth**



## **GOD'S DESIGN FOR GENDER EQUITY**

A Bible study from creation to Jesus, and beyond.

*Introduction*



# *Raise Your Voice*

## God's Design for Gender Equity

Edited by Ingrid Barratt

A publication of the Gender Equity Committee

The Salvation Army New Zealand Fiji, Tonga & Samoa Territory

Find out more about **Raise Your Voice** at

**[women.salvationarmy.org.nz](https://women.salvationarmy.org.nz)**

*For our foremothers  
who embraced equality  
so we could be  
all sons and daughters.*

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*‘The waters are rising, but so am I.*

*I am not going under, but over.’*

**Catherine Booth**

*Salvation Army Co-Founder*

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# Introduction



## Raise Your Voice

by **Commissioner Julie Campbell**  
Chair, Gender Equity Committee

**On behalf of the Territorial Gender Equity Committee, it is my pleasure to commend this Bible study series to you. The goal of the Gender Equity Committee is to see The Salvation Army in New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa continue to be a movement in which God's intention for all people to flourish is realised.**

The Salvation Army in New Zealand commenced following a letter to General William Booth from the courageous and bold Miss Arabella Valpy, asking for officers to be sent to New Zealand. She even included a bank draft to assist with the fares. In 1883, George Pollard and Edward Wright arrived, and the mission of The Salvation Army rapidly grew throughout New Zealand.

For almost 140 years, women and men of all ages and cultures have faithfully served the Lord using our gifts and abilities as the body of Christ in The Salvation Army Aotearoa New Zealand. The mission of The Salvation Army has been in Fiji for 50 years, 37 years in Tonga and 5 years in Samoa. We have a vibrant and colourful history.

We have always held a strong belief in the equality of women, and the ability of women to be leaders (although this has not always been realised). Some of us don't know, or are confused by, the reasons behind this belief. But that's about to change!

*Raise Your Voice* provides a robust Biblical foundation for gender equity. Although this study focuses primarily on women, it is not a women's Bible study. My hope is that women and men will embrace this resource: we all need to be allies in gender equity.

We've used the term 'gender equity' throughout this study. In God's creation story, we are created to be equal and mutually share resources. But... if everyone is given the same or equal resources, it doesn't mean we all have equal outcomes. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances, and allocates the resources and opportunities they need in order to achieve an equal outcome.<sup>1</sup> Equity gives us the building blocks to achieve real equality.

I am grateful to Ingrid and the writers of this series of studies, which highlights, unpacks and clarifies significant passages of scripture. Some of these have been used as 'clobber' verses against women, but many more remind us of God's intention and design for all of us—as we raise our voices together to declare and demonstrate the love and life of Jesus.

In a time when women were not always seen or valued, throughout the Bible we read many inspiring stories of women who were used by God to draw people to his love. I love reading the conversations and encounters Jesus had with women. They clearly demonstrate that the love and salvation of God is for everyone, all are welcome in the kingdom of God and commissioned to share the good news of Jesus.

My own journey as a woman leader has been inspired by the first appearance and instructions of Jesus to Mary Magdalene and the group of faithful women disciples who were last at the cross and first at the tomb: "Then Jesus said to them, *"Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me"*" (Matthew 28:10).

The message of love, hope and life, in all its fullness in Jesus, inspires me to be a faithful and confident disciple of Jesus. This important message was given to the women to go tell the other disciples.

*My own journey as a woman leader has been inspired by the first appearance and instructions of Jesus to Mary Magdalene and the group of faithful women disciples who were last at the cross and first at the tomb.*

We all have an important part to play in continuing to raise our voices and provide opportunities for everyone to confidently share the transforming love of Jesus.

*All of us together—partnering with God to fulfil His mission.*



## Endnotes

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