

# ABOUT ANN

More than likely you've seen Ann Downing as a regular on the popular Gaither Homecoming Video series, however, the majority of her time is spent maintaining a full schedule of church concerts and speaking engagements throughout the United States, Canada, and parts of Europe.

Apart from her affiliation with the Gaither Homecoming Friends, Ann's own versatile music style appeals to a wide range of musical tastes and age groups beyond Gaither Video fans.

Ann's unique presentation style is also appealing as she comes down from the platform to communicate with the audience on a very personal level. Her spontaneous, off-the-cuff delivery gives the feeling of a conversational visit rather than a rigid formal program.

Raised on a cotton farm in rural Mississippi, Ann grew up dreaming of the day she'd sing Gospel music all over the world. Right out of high school she began to realize her dream by securing a position with the legendary Speer Family. Five years later she met Paul Downing. Suddenly, Ann's dream of singing with the Speer Family for the rest of her life seemed like something she should reconsider. Paul proposed- twice. That's quite the story! Soon after marriage, Ann and Paul co-founded a group that helped shape Gospel music as it exists today. Ann became the winner of her

industry's highest honor—the Dove Award—for Female Vocalist within a year of co-founding the Downings and went on to be inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame for her work with the Speer Family.

Today, Ann continues to expand her mark on Gospel music through solo ministry. She is also a speaker and author (*Skidmarks on the Road of Life*). Ann enjoys speaking at women's events and retreats, seniors' events and retreats, and lay retreats. Her favorite event every year is the women's retreat she and Paul were planning just before he passed way, Middle Tennessee Women's Retreat.

Her Gospel music career spanning more than fifty years, Ann enjoys various awards and accolades, but she's open in sharing that standing on stage or in front of a camera makes her no different than her greatest fan. Fading success; she's been there. Crumbling marriage or financial ruin; she's been there, too. Lost a spouse or experienced a devastating trauma in your family; Ann can relate.

What do you do when you can't "fix" what's wrong in your life or the lives of those you love? What do you do when circumstances beg the question, "Do you really believe what you've said about trusting God?" Ann's intensely personal story is one that reaches us right where we are and helps us hold firmly to the promise "Earth Has No Sorrow That Heaven Can't Heal."