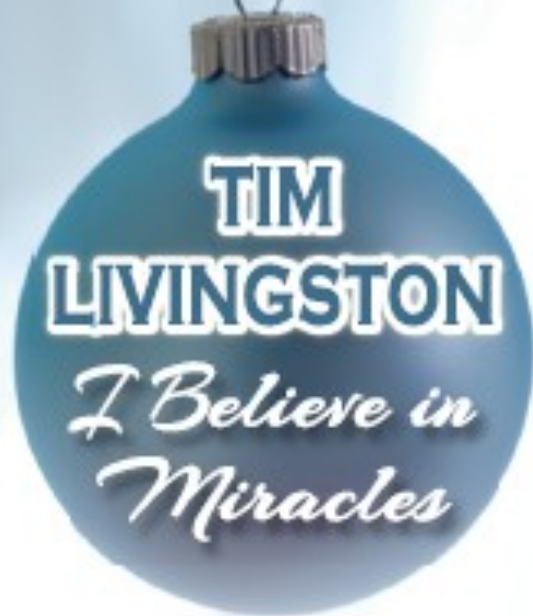


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# CHRISTIAN VOICE

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**Byron Gage: Still Serving a Great and Mighty God**

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# BYRON CAGE

Still Serving a  
Great & Mighty God

By Andrea R. Williams

Who could have imagined a young kid from Grand Rapids, Michigan would grow up and change the landscape of a genre? Urban praise and worship hasn't been the same since Byron Cage entered the scene. Songs like "The Presence of the Lord," "I Will Bless The Lord" and "Broken But I'm Healed" are just a few of the songs by this psalmist, songs heard in choir stands nationwide Sunday after Sunday.

From the reverence of spirited worship to the energetic power of dynamic praise, Byron Cage flows easily from one style to another. Although the gospel vocalist has received numerous accolades including six Stellar Awards and a Soul Train Award as well as GRAMMY, Dove, NAACP Image and BET Award nominations, this gifted musician gives God all honor and glory. Recently, the noted worship leader and Verity Gospel recording artist added another song to the burgeoning list of hits, "Great and Mighty." A riveting and worship-filled anthem, "Great and Mighty" showcases Cage at his finest. The lead single from his just-released ninth CD, *Memoirs of a Worshipper*, is setting the gospel music charts on fire, already placing in the Top Ten.

Cage, who reportedly was singing tunes in his crib, was clearly destined for music. He performed his first church solo at the age of four years old and as a teen honed his saxophone and choir director skills at Greater Grace Church in Detroit, Michigan. He trained under the tutelage of gospel great, Thomas Whitfield. Cage credits him with assisting him in understanding the importance of worship and admired the way he "had the ability to lead the corporate worship experience where the presence of the Lord would be ushered in." Growing up in Detroit, Cage was surrounded by the greats of gospel music and was influenced largely by Minister of Music James Abney in addition to Whitfield. Another great mentor for Cage was gospel music pioneer Donald Vails, known for his dynamic choir directing and masterful arrangements.

After attending Morehouse College in Atlanta, he joined New Birth Cathedral, at that time with only 700 members. Cage released two moderately successful albums in the late 90s, but rose to fame with the 2003 release of his self-titled *GospoCentric* debut which spawned his mega-hit, "The Presence Of The Lord" as well as "Psalm 3" and "There Is A Name." The project netted a number of Stellar Awards including Best Male Vocalist and Best CD Of The Year, a Soul Train Award for Best Gospel Album and a Dove Award Nomination for Contemporary Gospel Album of the Year.

Next came *An Invitation To Worship* which contained the hit "I Will Bless The Lord", which hit number one on the Hot Gospel Songs chart and earned him another Stellar Award for Song of the Year. *An Invitation To Worship* also contained the emotive "Broken But I'm Healed" which peaked at #4 on the Hot Gospel Songs Chart. The project, hitting #2 on the Billboard Gospel Albums chart, earned Cage his first GRAMMY Award nomination and two NAACP Image Award nominations. *Live At The Apollo: The Proclamation* followed suit giving fans songs like "With All Of My Might" and "Royalty," both fan favorites and consistent titles on the gospel charts. *Faithful To Believe* was next which spawned

hits like the lead single and "I Give You Praise," giving Cage his sixth Stellar Award, this time for Male Vocalist of the Year and a BET Award Nomination for Best Gospel Album.

*Memoirs of a Worshipper* is Cage's latest project and it gives fans just what they expect from the anointed songwriter and singer. The project's lead track, "Great and Mighty," is a rousing track about the amazing characteristics of God. Already hitting the Top Ten, the track is leaving worshippers with hands lifted. The CD also features a sermonette as the intro for "Good Anyhow" delivered by chart-topper Pastor Charles Jenkins of "Awesome" fame. Other songs like "Out Of Them All," "Troubles Away," and "Victory" featuring Fred Hammond show that Cage still has the Midas touch when it comes to praise and worship.

Cage is thrilled about the new release. "For this new CD, I collectively put songs together with Aaron Lindsey that I felt would be the next level of worship. The times are changing; the sounds of keyboards and instruments are changing. What I really wanted to bring out on this CD was to share with everybody what I'm writing and what's in my memoirs. Although I'm still giving the message of faith and a message of hope, this is a stronger worship album. Some of the songs that I selected are so strong, worship wise, that it's really a vertical message that I'm not talking about my problems anymore. I'm talking about God who can solve all problems."

Cage was recently tapped as Minister of Music at St. Paul's Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia, where Dr. Lance Watson serves as Pastor. Already serving for the past 15 years as the Senior Minister of Church Worship and Music Administration at Ebenezer AME Church in Fort Washington, Maryland, under the pastorate of Rev. Drs. Grainger & Jo Ann Browning, Cage relishes the opportunity to serve at two great mega-churches simultaneously.

Not one to sit on his laurels, Byron Cage is tackling even more new roles. He's been named the new Sunday Joy radio personality on Washington, D.C.'s Radio One's Praise 104.1FM. D.C.'s Inspiration Station welcomed Cage to its Sunday afternoon slot where he hosts from noon to 4 PM. He is thrilled about the opportunity to expand the reach of his ministry. "I am overjoyed to have been asked to be a part of the Radio One announcer family," says Cage. "I have been tied to Gospel radio for 20 years as an artist. As God enlarges my territory, I look forward to serving with humility, integrity and excellence. Favor ain't fair, but it's a lot of fun."

As one of today's most popular praise and worship leaders, he is pouring his wisdom from over 25 years of ministry into a book on praise and worship by adding the title of "author" to his already jammed-packed resume.

There's no doubt that Byron Cage will continue to be part of the new wave of praise of worship in today's churches.

