

Sight and Sound

BOOKS

Why Christian Kids Rebel

By Dr. Tim Kimmel, W Publishing Group,
Softcover, 256 pages, \$.

What if the thing you think will save your child is the thing that drives him or her away? Dr. Tim Kimmel, author of best-selling *Grace-Based Parenting*, does an excellent job of demonstrating why mere Christian formula and tradition can never replace a passionate relationship with Jesus in his new book, *Why Christian Kids Rebel: Trading Heartache for Hope*.

The author is quick to point out that there is nothing necessarily wrong with tradition and tried-and-true Christian disciplines. It is just that kids are looking for authentic relationships rather than empty activities, and they need the relationships before they see the value of the activities.

Kimmel talks to parents about their own relationships with God, challenging them to see in what areas they might have become religious rather than real. He also talks about parenting styles and claims the one that fosters the least rebellion is the grace-based parenting style.

The author helps parents identify what true rebellion is. True rebellion has little to do with bucking traditions and more to do with a heart deliberately turning away from the Christian faith and morality. Kimmel gives hope and wise counsel to parents of kids who are growing up and hopefully learning to

make the Christian faith their own.

Deborah L. Delk

Understand My Muslim People

By Abraham Sarker, Barclay Press,
Softcover, 304 pages, \$18.

Abraham Sarker, raised a Muslim in Bangladesh, gave his life to Christ in a conversion that took four years and a miraculous Bible—written in his native language and found in an American University—to complete. *Understand My Muslim People* opens with the amazing story of this courageous man and leads to a host of challenges related to reaching millions “blinded by Islam.” Sarker discusses why Jesus is greater than Muhammad and gives insights on winning converts.

Sarker desires to see Christians become like the apostle Paul, but sharing the gospel in Muslim centers of influence ranging from Asia to America. He wants them to handle Islamic history with care in order to open avenues of discussion.

Paul did use the surroundings of the idol-worshiping ancient Greeks to get their attention, but he nevertheless made plain the message to reject ignorance and accept the truth. Sarker adds compassion.

J. James Estrada

Desert to Destiny

By Wendy Yapp, Creation House,

softcover, 237 pages, \$.

Fulfilling destiny requires actively claiming the inheritance that God gives. *Desert to Destiny: The Daughters of Zelophehad* creatively retells the story of five daughters who, they they lived in an era when only males inherited property, were filled with enough faith and boldness to claim the inheritance of their father.

Author Wendy Yapp introduces Zelophehad's daughters, Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah, and revealing the meaning in their ancient Hebrew names. Each name's meaning is an element in character development that carries the women through the desert into the promise land. They demonstrated the ability to allow God to turn weakness into strength, to wait on the Lord's timing and pass His sifting process, to understand our position in our relationship with God and to bring destiny to pass through prayer, worship and clinging to His promises.

The backdrop of the culture from Egypt to Canaan is also illustrated with insightful details that make this journey come alive. Although this is primarily about women, it also has life lessons for all who would come into their destiny. Yapp proves to be an excellent teacher and storyteller, making this book a valuable find.

Deborah L. Delk

MUSIC

Bridges

By Various Artists, Waterfront Records.

Many have speculated about what the new trend in contemporary music is going to be, following years of a worship emphasis. Some have guessed hymns and, if new and upcoming projects are

any indication, they could be right.

Bridges: Classical Hymns, Modern Worship attempts to build a bridge between the modern-worship movement and the return to traditional hymns. The lyrics on the songs are hymns that the older generation will know and love but are handled in a contemporary fashion.

Artists on the collection include Paul Coleman, Michael Tait, Ginny Owens, Todd Agnew, GlassByrd, Jason Ingram, Jill Paquette, Leeland Mooring and Cherie Adams (formerly with Avalon). Hymns include “Come Thou Fount,” “Be

Thou My Vision,” “Fairest Lord Jesus,” “It Is Well With My Soul” and “How Great Thou Art.” Along with the songs, the enhanced CD includes guitar chords, piano sheet music, lyrics and a hymn history.

Though some of the songs have been taken from the artists’ previous recordings (Owens’ “Be Thou My Vision,” for example), under the direction of Marc Byrd (City on a Hill, God of Wonders), the collection has a cohesive feel and should be a welcome listen for modern-worship listeners looking to reconnect with their church music heritage.

DeWayne Hamby

Passionate Voice

By Lisbeth Scott, SHELTERRecords.

Even if you don’t recognize Lisbeth Scott’s name, you might recognize her voice. Scott was a co-lyricist and vocalist for The Passion of the Christ soundtrack. Her original songs and

vocal performances have also been featured on other popular films and TV shows, including Shrek, Shrek 2, Alias and Touched by an Angel.

Scott's Passionate Voice is captivating, with her lyrics and wide range of music and vocal styles. With a sound similar to Enya's, Scott offers pleasant surprises as she mixes breathy, ethereal melodies with songs that are earthy, raw and natural. One particularly unique offering is "Stones," with its cello music and allegorical lyrics about forgiveness.

Scott uses traditional piano and guitar, mixed with the unique sounds of the duduk from Turkey; the ocarina, a wind instrument from Pakistan; and the harmonium and dilruba from India. The different instruments infuse the lyrics, some in ancient Hebrew and Aramaic, with emotion.

Inspired by The Passion of the Christ, the original music and lyrics of Passionate Voice seem to extend the emotional stirring of that film.

Leigh DeVore

MOVIES

Luther

MGM Home Video,

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

Luther (now available on DVD and video) brings history alive. Joseph Fiennes' portrayal of Martin Luther is emotionally charged yet thought-provoking, as he changes from a tormented soul who struggles with an image of a wrathful, damning God to a joyous man delighted with God's abundant grace and love.

Luther's joy, however, is mixed with anger and sorrow over the corruption of the church. This film shows that he was not intending to bring a revolution but was trying to compassionately teach liberating truth. After he clashes with the greedy indulgence sellers who claim salvation can be bought, he is unable to back down for the sake of his conscience and the people's spiritual welfare.

Sir Peter Ustinov's performance as a German nobleman caught in the middle of the political struggle is particularly enjoyable. Clearly, Luther's transformation affects not only the church life but also his entire culture.

Today's church reformers will undoubtedly identify with Luther as he deals with those who privately agree with him but put unity before holiness, or followers who allow a vindictive spirit to rule their responses, or leaders who have completely lost the point of the gospel and are intent on building their own kingdoms.

Deborah L. Delk

Because of Winn-Dixie
Twentieth Century Fox, Walden Media.

An adaptation of the best-selling book *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo came to life on the big screen February 18.

The people of the rundown town of Naomi, Florida, get a new lease on life from an unlikely source: a stray dog. Reminiscent of classic canine heroes Benji and Lassie, who saved people and animals from danger, Winn-Dixie rescues

hearts. This dog seems to know which people are most in need of a friend.

First on Winn-Dixie's list to save is India Opal Buloni. The two become fast friends. AnnaSophia Robb, as Opal, is such a natural on-screen that moviegoers will be surprised to learn that this is her big-screen debut.

Opal is the daughter of the town's new preacher and struggles with being separated from her parents: her father, who is emotionally absent, and her mother, who actually left the family. As the dog and girl duo make new friends, Opal learns valuable lessons.

"Preacher" (Jeff Daniels) is still hurting from his wife's abandonment. He is a good father to Opal, but they both need a little help to begin to connect in a loving relationship.

Oscar-winner Eva Marie Saint plays local librarian Miss Franny Block, a woman who seems reluctant to embrace the outside world. Yet her wisdom and friendship enrich Opal's insight and compassion for others.

Dave Matthews of The Dave Matthews Band makes his film debut as Otis, a man misunderstood and misjudged. Opal discovers that there is more to Otis than the past he's trying to forget.

Casting Dave Matthews as Otis, a gifted musician, is ingenious. Matthews' fans will be pleasantly surprised to see and hear a favorite artist on the big screen. And Matthews is likely to gain new fans as moviegoers experience a taste of his obvious talent.

Legendary actress Cicely Tyson gives a perfect performance as Gloria Dump. It might seem she is a recluse, but Gloria is not a loner in spirit and eagerly embraces Opal and Winn-Dixie as friends. This sweet woman's hard-earned wisdom and personality are softened by an innocence and a vulnerability that make her seem childlike at times.

Winn-Dixie is the biggest character of all. Children and adults alike will fall in love with his grand personality, antics and visible grin.

Topics such as alcoholism, incarceration and spouse abandonment are mentioned but are not so blatant that parents would have to explain them to younger children. Parents of older children could use this film as a discussion starter for these issues but would not feel forced to do so.

Though this movie does not offer an overt presentation of the gospel message, it does clearly demonstrate godly principles through the lessons Opal learns. Because of Winn-Dixie is a story of transformation from sadness and loneliness to hope and friendship. This film is an entertaining reminder that we need to see others for who they really are and reach out in love.

Leigh DeVore

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

Calling for Compassion

Chad W. Thompson presents a truthful approach balanced by love in his book Loving Homosexuals as Jesus Would ().

Thompson says the church is the last place a homosexual would go for help. But church should be a safe place where homosexuals can come and be accepted and loved. One way we can create a haven is to change our language.

He says we have to stop using the phrase “love the sinner, hate the sin.” He explains that homosexuals honestly believe they were born this way so “to them it’s an identity. In their eyes it’s impossible for you to love the sinner and hate the sin.”

Thompson also challenges us to listen. “There are so many things that the gay and lesbian community is trying to tell us. They’re trying to tell us how to love them. And they’re trying to show us what they need in order to live lives that are free from harassment and ridicule and discrimination.

“And the church is not listening. ... Yes, homosexuality is wrong. Yes, it doesn’t fall in line with God’s design for marriage and family and how society’s supposed to work. ... But we’re so focused on trying to get them to change, that we’ve missed the point.

“We’re called to love them, as they are, where they are, just as Christ [does]. That doesn’t mean we don’t call them to change. But we still need to love them whether or not they choose to change.”

Leigh DeVore