

Sight and Sound

BOOKS

Changing the World Through Kindness
By Steve Sjogren, Regal, hardcover,
224 pages, \$.

With a simple but powerful message, author Steve Sjogren challenges Christians to use the oft-forgotten weapon of kindness to win unbelievers to Christ and help transform lives. In his latest book, *Changing the World Through Kindness*, Sjogren puts a practical handle on this spiritual principle.

Using colorful illustrations and vivid examples, Sjogren, who founded the Vineyard Community Church in Cincinnati, writes that kindness is every bit as important in spiritual warfare as casting out demons or praying earnestly for others. Kindness can penetrate the spiritually darkened hearts of people with God's love.

The author leads Christians to witness to nonbelievers in unconventional ways such as cleaning toilets at bars and stores, feeding expired parking meters and washing cars. "By serving in kindness we're building bridges to the unchurched that will transport them toward a relationship with God," Sjogren writes.

This book is a must-read for anyone who has ever thought they "weren't spiritual enough" to engage in spiritual warfare, or for those who are looking for ways to influence others with

their faith. The author is simply challenging Christians to be available to be used by Christ in word and in deeds.

Tracee N. Mason

Launching Your Kids for Life

By Bob and Cheryl Reccord,

W Publishing Group, softcover,

240 pages, \$.

All good parents want their children to grow up to be happy, productive and effective adults. And for Christian parents, they add to this determination the desire to see their children bringing glory to God by fulfilling His purposes for their lives. A daunting task, but with God's grace and wisdom—and with the insights Bob and Cheryl Reccord offer in their newest book, *Launching Your Kids for Life*—families can have more direction, vision and success.

The Reccords offer mental pictures, poignant parallels and practical steps to help parents create childhoods that lead to meaningful adulthoods. Consulting with NASA executives and astronauts, the authors weave an inspiring comparison between child “launching” and space-shuttle launching—both “launches” have similarities—from mission control (parents) to ground crews (grandparents, teachers, church staff and others).

The authors challenge parents to have the humility and the spiritual fortitude to “abort” a mission; in other words re-evaluate situations and begin again. For example, if extracurricular activities are distracting children from school or causing negative attitudes, parents need to stop the activities, decide what is best and then start again on a new, adjusted course.

These are tough decisions, but “it comes down to [parents] having the guts to make judgment calls, regardless of the criticism and hurt feelings that may result,” the authors write. It’s not easy to “abort” a mission. But regrouping can help parents learn what they did right, how to do better and what has to change in order to help their children become all that God created them to be!

Kristi D. Shores

MUSIC

Great River Road

By Jason Upton, Gotee Records.

Worship leader Jason Upton’s new release, Great River Road, is a collection of introspective acoustic worship tunes. Upton’s voice blends well with the low-key musical experience, which mixes elements of folk, pop and world music.

Upton fuses many flavors of international music on songs such as the orchestral “King’s Way,” “Chop Down the Tree,” which features spoken-word Scripture, and the melodic title track. “When It Thunders” speaks lovingly of a paternal relationship with God, and the romance of “Return to Me” parallels the far-reaching love of Christ. “Trust Again” is a solemn message of healing for the hurting.

Because Upton has been compared to music pioneer Keith Green, a fitting track to end on is a new pop version of the late singer’s “You Are the One.”

Great River Road is an intimate journey that will help create

a unique, relaxed time of personal worship.

DeWayne Hamby

It's My Time

By LaShun Pace, EMI Gospel.

LaShun Pace, a former member of the Anointed Pace Sisters, has provided inspiring gospel music for years. With an unbelievable vocal range and a powerful delivery, she has released a number of independent, top-five-charting albums.

She now offers her EMI Gospel debut, It's My Time, her first project in four years. During her absence, she endured the sudden death of her daughter Xenia, a divorce and illness. Songs such as the power ballad "For My Good," the catchy up-tempo "Hey" and the urban-touched title tune carry a special poignancy in light of her recent trials.

Other great church tracks include the traditional "Emotions" and the choir-backed "I Trust You." She also includes a tasteful remake of the church classic "The Lord Will Make a Way." One of gospel's best voices is back.

René Williams

Pressing On

By various artists,

Discovery House Music.

The apostle Paul receives a musical homage with the release Pressing On: Songs Inspired By the Journey of the Apostle Paul. This album features songs rooted deeply in scriptural references and a lineup of skilled vocalists, including Larnelle Harris, Michael O'Brien (NewSong), Travis Cottrell

and a reunion of the original First Call lineup: Bonnie Keen, Marty McCall and Melodie Tunney.

First Corinthians 13 gets a musical retelling courtesy of Harris, who belts out an inspiring call for brotherly love on “The Greatest of These.” The title song displays O’Brien’s vocals with a message of faithful determination. First Call fans will be thrilled to hear the trio’s return on “Living Sacrifices” and “Nothing Can Separate Us.”

Though the inclusion of musical pioneers and an “easy-listening” soundtrack make this release sound somewhat dated musically, it still proclaims timeless truths.

DeWayne Hamby

NEWS

Filming of Left Behind: World War III Wraps Up

Cloud Ten Pictures is in post-production of Left Behind: World War III. The movie, which is based on the popular Left Behind series by Jerry B. Jenkins and Tim LaHaye, is the third installment in the film series and stars Kirk Cameron (Growing Pains), Lou Gossett Jr. (An Officer and a Gentleman) and Gordon Currie (Left Behind II: Tribulation Force).

Directed by Craig P. Baxley (Storm of the Century), the film is based on the last part of the book Tribulation Force. It follows the story of the U.S. President (Gossett) who works against those who oppose the self-proclaimed messiah (Currie) until a surprising discovery forces him to change sides.

“There are two reasons I came back [and one] is that the script was really good,” said Cameron, who plays the role of Buck Williams. “It got better as we began working on it together. The second reason is that I’ve gotten so much positive response from normal, everyday people on the streets who like the Left Behind movies and say [the films] really brought some of the things from their childhood faith back to life. If the third movie can plant more seeds along those lines, then I think it’s worth it to give it our best shot.”

At press time, Cloud Ten Pictures was still in discussions regarding the film’s theatrical release date. Left Behind: World War III will be distributed on DVD and video by Sony Pictures Home Entertainment this fall or next spring.

Margaret Feinberg

MUSIC SPOTLIGHT

Paul Wilbur Offers Music and Mercy

When worship leader Paul Wilbur travels overseas, he often brings doctors, dentists and medicine—but not because he’s a hypochondriac. Wilbur believes that ministry to the poor is an integral part of true worship, and he makes sure his outreaches include not only music but also mercy.

On recent tours to Ghana, Nigeria, Nicaragua and El Salvador, for example, Wilbur’s team examined the sick, counseled with them and prescribed medicine. At each clinic 1,200-1,500 people were treated and had an opportunity to hear the gospel.

“We work with local pastors and leaders who meet with each

person individually and share a salvation message,” Wilbur explains. “As a result, there is a huge number of salvations. If we could double the number of doctors, we could double the number of salvations. ... We’re believing God for an increase of \$50,000 a month so we can do six outreaches this year.”

Wilbur, who is a Messianic Jew, recorded his latest CD, The Watchman (Hosanna! Music), live on Yom Kippur at Cornerstone Church in San Antonio. “The timing is significant,” Wilbur says. “Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement, was the one day of the year that the high priest was allowed to come into the presence of God with blood, making atonement for himself and all Israel.

“I believe this recording will carry that anointing in a very special way and will sweep many into the kingdom of God.”

Elisabeth Farrell