

Vibes

Getting in God's Face

By Dutch Sheets, Regal,
softcover, 144 pages, \$.

"A lack of endurance is one of the greatest causes of defeat, especially when it comes to prayer," says Dutch Sheets in his book *Getting in God's Face: How Prayer Really Works*. Written for Christian youth, this book provides solid answers for those hard questions about prayer such as "Is prayer really necessary if God can do what He wants anyway?" and "I thought God wanted to save [my non-Christian friends]. Then why do I feel as though I'm trying to talk Him into it?" Each chapter ends with thought-provoking, introspective questions in a section titled "Things That Make Ya Go Hmm" A "Discussion Leader's Guide" at the end of the book is great for small-group interaction. Sheets, a Colorado-based pastor and veteran intercessor, uses a fun, story-telling teaching style to offer students what many adults wish they had at that age—an understanding of how prayer works and how to pray effectively.

Jevon Bolden

BOOKS

Static

By Ron Martoia, Tyndale House Publishers,
softcover, 275 pages, \$.

Many authors take controversial stands only to attract readers to their work. Then there are authors such as Ron Martoia who is sparking debate by simply separating urban myths from the

purity of God's message. In *Static: Tune Out the 'Christian' Noise and Experience the Real Message of Jesus*, Martoia demonstrates that what is often coming out of the mouths and lives of the average Christian is simply mingled noise to those not intimately involved in the traditional church. Martoia has incredible insight into the cultural backgrounds of both the Old and the New Testaments, which helps us to understand what was truly meant by certain biblical words, phrases and stories. He then takes the core meaning of what was intended by the author of the Scriptures and converts it to today's vocabulary. This intriguing book will force readers to examine their thinking and allow them to grow in biblical truth.

Rob Duford

A Match Made in Heaven

By Zev Chafets, HarperCollins,
hardcover, 240 pages, \$.

American evangelicals remain strong supporters of Israel. That would seem to be great news for American Jews. But in *A Match Made in Heaven*, Jewish journalist Zev Chafets investigates the mistrust the American Jewish establishment has for the evangelicals' motivations. Although Christians maintain their support for Israel and Jews is based on God's declaring them His Chosen People and His promise to "bless those who bless Israel," Jews are wary that evangelicals ultimately want to convert them. Chafets' evenhanded analysis covers a variety of issues, both political and spiritual, that divide the two groups, and provides insight into the reasoning of both sides. He also discusses the Israeli perspective of the American government's support over the years. Chafets concludes that "evangelical Christians are not the enemy" and that Jews should welcome their support and develop more positive attitudes toward them.

Jeff Friend

Created for Influence

By William L. Ford III, Chosen,
softcover, 224 pages, \$.

American society has developed a “victim mentality,” and even Christians can feel as if they have little control over what happens to them or their nation. But in *Created for Influence*, William L. Ford III explains that Christians should be people of influence, exerting power through prayer and faith over their own lives, their cities and their nations. Ford gives abundant examples of how God has used people from all walks of life throughout history to make significant changes in society through their godly influence and steadfast integrity. He notes that Christian influence needs to become active in such areas as overcoming racism, improving work environments and turning America back in the right direction. His powerful testimony gives insight into his crusade to end abortions. With God’s power and favor, Christians are not helpless victims. They are people who can positively influence the world.

Jeff Friend

By Love Transformed

By R.T. Kendall, Charisma House,
hardcover, 382 pages, \$.

R.T. Kendall, who served as pastor of Westminster Chapel in London for 25 years, is a well-known international speaker and teacher and has written more than 40 books. *By Love Transformed* is a collection of 365 daily readings excerpted from Kendall’s books, including *Total Forgiveness*, *The Thorn in the Flesh*, *A Vision of Jesus*, *All’s Well That Ends Well*,

When God Shows Up and others. Each entry includes a Scripture verse that coordinates with the daily message and indicates which book inspired the reading. These devotionals were handpicked to offer readers encouragement to face everyday life situations and to challenge them to go to the next level spiritually.

Leigh Devore

MUSIC

All the Lovely Losers

By Jason Gray, Centricity Records.

On his major label debut, Jason Gray proves a talented and vulnerable newcomer, serving up a solid first offering, All the Lovely Losers. Using his struggles with chronic stuttering and a broken home life as a backdrop for his full-disclosure style songwriting, Gray consistently delivers pop-infused folk tunes that bridge genres and break musical boundaries. On opener "Blessed Be," Gray's mellow, rock-tinged voice and melodic song style pair up for a memorable and thought-provoking hook that is bound to stay with you long after the first listen. The second track, "Sing Through Me," takes the listeners on an acoustical journey of heartfelt lyrics and solid rhythmic nuances. On the love-inspired "Grace," a pleasant nod to Gray's vulnerability in songwriting, he sings "I'll never be good enough for her," and one can't help but feel his sincerity through the purity of his vocals. Other highlights come from the impressive guest collaborators, such as PFR's Joel Hanson, Andrew Peterson, Waterdeep's Lori Chafer, and Sara Groves, who joins forces with Gray on the CD climax "The Cut" to deliver a double punch of passion and power. Gray is sure to succeed with his simple formula of honesty and good music.

Elisabeth Burns

Complete

By LaShun Pace, EMI Gospel.

Well known as a member of the groundbreaking The Anointed Pace Sisters, LaShun Pace comes from a family of powerhouse singers. Now a solo artist, she's just released her seventh project, Complete. This live recording allows her to shine in her element. Having endured broken marriages, a lengthy illness and the sudden loss of her daughter, Pace knows suffering. But on cuts such as the lead single "All Things Working," she declares that it all works for our good. She continues to go back to her church roots on songs such as "The Blood Completes It All" and "The Old Fashioned Church Medley." A vocalist extraordinaire and the album's principle songwriter, LaShun becomes transparent throughout the project's 10 tracks. "Close to You," preceded by a personal testimony, is a certain highlight. Although most cuts are traditional in nature, the title song borrows sounds from today's contemporary gospel music. Few can deliver a gospel song like Pace. She's known for putting her all into each song and Complete is no exception. Fans of her ministry will not be disappointed.

Andrea R. Williams

The Book of David: Vol. 1 The Transition

By Dave Hollister, Gospel City

Those well versed in the arena of R&B will know the name Dave Hollister as a former member of the multi-platinum selling group Blackstreet. Hollister, now a born-again Christian, delivers The Book of David: Vol. 1 The Transition, layered with thick funk, beat-banging bass lines and urban-influenced, innovative songwriting. Hollister's first time out of the gospel gate begins with a prayer from a man with a repentant

heart. An air of transparency and vulnerability catches the ear on beat one. Songs such as the gratitude-laden “Nothing But God,” a tight, slick track, and “Help Me,” another urban-heavy song, help Hollister take the musical style he’s known for and bring it into the confines of the church. “What Do You Do?,” the lead single, is certainly one of the strongest in this impressive collection. Other great cuts include the mellow “Reach Out to Me,” the reflective “I Let Heaven Down,” the beat-driven “Questions” and the smoothed-out “Pray (Til I Get An Answer).” Moving in a more traditional vein, he sings “The Potter,” an Andraé Crouch tune. He closes out the project spreading the funk thick with “No One” and relaxing it out with “Take Me Back.”

Andrea R. Williams

For more film or music reviews visit or.charismamag.com/tuned-in.

Fiction

FAITH-BUILDING

Over Her Head

By Shelley Bates,

FaithWords, softcover, 256 pages, \$.

Can a mother believe her daughter, Anna, is capable of murder? Laurie Hale is put to this very test when one of Anna’s classmates is killed and evidence points to Anna and other teenagers. Laurie has to face her fears and learn to trust God, as He is the only one who can provide answers and reveal the truth.

CONTEMPORARY

Prints Charming

By Rebeca Seitz, WestBow Press,
softcover, 320 pages, \$.

Like quilting bees of old, scrapbooking offers Jane Sandburg and three friends a chance to bond. Jane is getting over her divorce from her cheating husband—who wants to reconcile. Her buddies have their own trials—adoption, marital problems and more. The four crafters help one another as they try to make sense of their lives.

SUSPENSE

Finder's Fee

By Alton Gansky, Zondervan,
softcover, 352 pages, \$.

It's up to Judith Find to save kidnapped Abel Palek, 8. If she calls the police, he will die and the kidnapper will reveal the businesswoman's darkest secret. Judith joins stranger Luke Becker in the search for the boy, but both have to learn to trust each other. Through this rescue journey, Judith discovers a faith and life she never knew was possible.