

Vibes

Stand Strong

By Judy Jacobs, Charisma House,
Softcover, 224 pages, \$.

Author and conference speaker Judy Jacobs encourages men and women at risk of losing heart during life's trials to obey the scriptural imperative to "stand," even when it seems they have no power to change their circumstances. In *Stand Strong: How to Become Confident in Your Calling, Achieve Strength Through Your Trials, and Prevail Against All Odds* Jacobs writes that standing strong translates into six key traits: having confidence in one's calling, being strong in adversity, being balanced and developing godly character, being "violent" in faith or advancing God's kingdom by forging ahead, being persistent in prayer, and consistently practicing praise and worship. Calling Christians out of a "coasting" mind-set, she explains that standing is one of the most active things a believer can do. Jacobs seeks to motivate readers through scriptural teaching, present-day illustrations and sometimes-humorous personal examples. Acknowledging that her bold personality and Christ-centered heritage are assets in her ministry, Jacobs admonishes believers of all stripes to take a stand and watch what God will do.

Christine D. Johnson

BOOKS

When Necessary Use Words

By Mike Pilavachi, Regal Books,
Softcover, 144 pages, \$.

The founder of Soul Survivor, a London-based church—and home to a charity that seeks to empower young people to make a difference in the world—Mike Pilavachi adeptly raises the question of why the modern church doesn't have more influence. His answer is drawing clear threads between worship, evangelism and justice. In his view, without intertwining the three we lose the essence of God's character. Sadly, because of this disconnect, he says that "religion" has largely become a dirty word, with few people in serious trouble ever turning to the church for help. Don't skip the introduction, where the author tells of befriending a group of impoverished children in South Africa. Pilavachi and his friends took time to get to know these kids, who were homeless and so poor they couldn't afford shoes. Their reaching out and tangible offers of material assistance showed the love of Christ and changed seven boys' lives. A similar challenge awaits each of us.

Ken Walker

It's Not My Fault

By Henry Cloud and John Townsend,

Thomas Nelson, 256 pages, hardcover, \$.

Henry Cloud and John Townsend, co-authors of the best-selling *Boundaries* and multiple spin-offs, set their sights on the victimization-driven rationalizing that plagues modern society. One amusing example is women in California who complain they can't land dates because of the West Coast's rootless, fast-paced nature. The women say they would prefer living in the Midwest. At the same time, some Midwestern women complain they can't find prospective mates because of the region's closed, tight-knit flavor. They theorize it would be much easier to find dates in a place like California. The authors' point: Stop making excuses for whatever shortcomings you face and search for alternatives and solutions. They back up their advice with eight practical principles that can help

anyone set a better course for success. This may sound like just another self-help volume. However, their references to God and inclusion of scriptural principles make this a biblically based guide that is useful for small-group discussion and individual reflection.

Kem Walker

Dream

By Kenny Luck, WaterBrook Press,
softcover, 224 pages, \$.

How many men have chased a dream? How many men have achieved that dream? Most of us would have to admit to falling short. But was the dream God's or ours? In *Dream: What If He Meant You'd Find It Inside You?* Kenny Luck has made it possible for men to feel as if they've been hit over the head with a book while reading it. The reality is that we chase fantasies while ignoring God's chosen vision for our lives. That's a tough reality, but the facts are the facts. Luck peppers his narrative with "dream facts" that serve as stepping stones to an ultimate destination: finishing strong. Along the way we find gems such as: "God's dream for us is not something we chase. It's something we become."

J. James Estrada

God's Ultimate Passion

By Frank Viola, Present Testimony Ministry,
softcover, 296 pages, \$15.

Speaker Frank Viola shows God's relentless pursuit for a relationship with His creation. *God's Ultimate Passion: Unveiling the Purpose Behind Everything* chronicles how God created the universe to obtain a bride, a body, a house and a family. He details how Jesus acquired a bride through the

cross and parallels it to accounts of Adam and Eve. He also explains how the church functions as the bride and points out that God has a passion to have a home in His believers. Viola addresses concepts such as the relevance of the tabernacles of David and Moses and the place of suffering in God's scheme of life with theological depth and uncomplicated clarity. This book is excellent for anyone who struggles to see himself as special to God and find meaning in life.

Tracee N. Mason

The Beautiful Ache

By Leigh McLeroy, Revell, softcover,
256 pages, \$.

Christians often feel out of place and long for heaven. But in *The Beautiful Ache: Finding the God Who Satisfies When Life Does Not*, Leigh McLeroy masterfully explores "that fleeting pang that reminds us of home. Not the home we've always known—the home we've never seen." She insightfully examines topics such as death, loss and failure with candid personal stories and biblical examples that help the reader better understand those gentle heart-tugs that remind Christians of God's presence now and in the future. "Aches" such as persevering, hope, trusting, expecting and grief reveal both the pain and the joy of life's journey. McLeroy's heart-baring style provides encouragement to keep pressing on.

Jeff Friend

So Free!

By William Sudduth, Chosen Books,
softcover, 272 pages, \$.

William Sudduth presents the age-old topic of spiritual warfare in a precise, detail-oriented, Bible-based way. He

walks oppressed people and those working with them through the process of becoming free in Christ. Sudduth addresses topics such as whether a Christian can be “possessed” by a demon, how demons enter people, and how to minister deliverance and inner healing. Because of the prevalence of the Internet, video games and other technologies that bring opportunities to sin into the home, Sudduth writes that more people will face oppressing situations, and the church needs to be ready to minister to them. From the written testimonies to the confidential questionnaire that helps pinpoint areas of demonic oppression or emotional issues, *So Free! An In-Depth Guide to Deliverance and Inner Healing* is full of practical help and training.

Tracee N. Mason

MUSIC

Beautiful People

By Jason Upton, Integrity Music.

Frequently compared to Keith Green and Rich Mullins, Jason Upton recently released *Beautiful People*, which features his musical skills and vocals throughout a lengthy live personal worship experience. The opening title track is a piano-led call for unity while other songs such as “You Decide What’s Beautiful” and “I Will Never Leave You Children” have more of a spontaneous feel, repeating words and phrases as the music builds. “Lullaby for a Petrified Sacred Society” is a hard-hitting rebuke against spiritual compromise: “Our prophets are nicer / And kinder and sweeter / We’ve partnered in their great reward.” Upton translates well his passion through his music, seeming to be more concerned about the messages than fitting songs into four-minute, radio-friendly statements. With that in mind, *Beautiful People* will more likely be

embraced by listeners looking for a cohesive worship album.

Dewayne Hamby

Let Love Win

By Daniel Kirkley, Centricity Records.

In the vein of vocal greats such as Josh Groban and Steve Green, Daniel Kirkley releases Let Love Win. The collection, which includes songs by Nichole Nordeman, Cindy Morgan, Chris Eaton and others, provides Kirkley an epic background to showcase his strong vocals, alternating between adult contemporary and pop. Kirkley soars on the inspirational “Lay It Down” and easily tackles pop on “Heavenly.” The acoustic-folk “Sacred Moment” is a narrative of love, a prayer of consecration while dating a girl. The title track and “Everyday People” both center on sharing love with others, while the grand-piano-based ballad “My New Dawn” opens the disc in a big way. The songs of Let Love Win are memorable and polished, giving Kirkley a chance to shine.

Dewayune Hamby

Freedom

By Sound of the New Breed, Integrity Gospel.

Grammy Award-winner Israel Houghton’s latest venture is producing a worship series called Sound of the New Breed, featuring his talented musicians and vocalists. The first installment, Freedom, is a 10-track CD focusing on freedom in Christ. There are some differences from previous Israel and New Breed recordings. Houghton is featured on only the production, allowing New Breed to showcase its remarkably tight vocals and musicianship. And Freedom features fewer intricate, musical layers. It takes on a more smooth jazz approach and presents a collection of worship songs that

churches could easily implement. The album opens with the Caribbean-flavored "Arise" and the exuberant praise "I Am Free." New Breed puts a jazzy spin to the Hillsong classic "Made Me Glad" and offers soulful remixes of Houghton's previous hits "Alpha and Omega" and "Breakthrough." The title track brings the CD to a joyous end.

Twanna Powell-Green

New on DVD

Epicenter

Tyndale

\$

Based on the best-selling book Epicenter by Joel C. Rosenberg, this documentary, filmed in the Middle East, sets out to answer questions such as "Are we living in the last days?" Rosenberg and Skip Heitzig, author and pastor, explore how current events are shaping our future.

Bridge to Terabithia

Buena Vista Home Entertainment

\$

Best friends Jess Aarons and Leslie Burke imagine the world of Terabithia. As warriors they defeat make-believe enemies and develop courage for the real world. Though this is an entertaining film, some situations will open the door for discussion. This film is rated PG.

God Made You Special

Big Idea Inc.

\$

The brand-new VeggieTales story “Bob’s Vacation” demonstrates that we are special. Also featured on this DVD are three classic Big Idea stories, two Silly Songs and bonus activities, including Sing-Along Songs, games, trivia and stories from VeggieTales fans.