

# Vibes

## **The Ten-Minute Marriage Principle**

**By Douglas Weiss, FaithWords,**

**Softcover, 256 pages, \$.**

Readers will find Douglas Weiss' latest work refreshing, as it is devoted to helping couples strengthen their marriages while also acknowledging the time pressures they are under on any given day. Executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., Weiss said his goal in *The Ten-Minute Marriage Principle: Quick, Daily Steps for Refreshing Your Relationship* is to help spouses use even small portions of time-perhaps only 10 minutes a day-to come together. The author advises readers to reconnect with their mates each day using the Ten-Minute Exercise Menu, which includes exercises such as "gazing," in which spouses are encouraged to spend time making direct eye contact with each other. Weiss' comparison of marriage to types of government also may help readers understand the dynamics of the marriage relationship according to God's plan. *The Ten-Minute Marriage Principle* is filled with practical ideas for quick and easy reconnecting between spouses. Weiss writes in a no-nonsense, how-to style that will resonate with readers yearning to build their marriages.

**Julie Daniel**

## BOOKS

### **Living as if Heaven Matters**

**By David Shibley, Charisma House,**

**Softcover, 224 pages, \$.**

Just getting through each day is sometimes hard enough. Who has time to think about heaven? But according to David Shibley, president of Global Advance, every Christian should.

In *Living as if Heaven Matters*, he points out that many Christians seem unaware that earthly life should be preparing them for life in heaven. Shibley unveils the intricate intertwining of our daily challenges and opportunities with their eternal significance. His vivid description of heaven is motivating enough, but each chapter also exposes more gems of encouragement as he shares insights on the Christian's blessed hope. Shibley provides plenty of biblical accounts and Scripture references to reinforce his call to more heavenly thinking. If you want to improve your outlook on life and further God's kingdom now, then set your mind on your eternal home and start living as if heaven matters.

**Jeff Friend**

### **Confident Parenting**

By Jim Burns, Bethany House,  
Hardcover, 192 pages, \$.

It's here—a guide to help you be more confident as a parent. Jim Burns offers essential tools and biblical principles for parents today. Burns humbly admits that he too is in the process of learning to be a confident parent, and he imparts the wisdom God has given him. He encourages parents to stand strong and decide that they want a godly family and gives biblical principles to equip them. He addresses generational patterns and actually gives hope to those parents who are dealing with “the sins of their fathers.” All parents will be encouraged to get back to essential basics such as honoring the Sabbath, using affection in communicating with their families, offering warmth and encouragement, and building a solid foundation to leave a lasting legacy for their children and their children's children. Parents who read these wisdom-filled pages will be inspired and encouraged as they become more confident parents.

**Kristi Shores**

## The Divine Mentor

By Wayne Cordeiro, Bethany House,

Hardcover, 224 pages, \$.

Wayne Cordeiro knows a secret—for real intimacy with God, consistent daily devotions are not an option. In *The Divine Mentor*, he not only explains the need for and importance of devotions but also provides a sensible plan based on Scripture reading and journaling. Cordeiro understands that the journaling aspect is the most intimidating for many people, so he gives plenty of examples and encouragement as starting points. He writes honestly and passionately but never in a condemning tone. Cordeiro wants his readers to mature in Christ and even anticipates some of their doubts and concerns (“But what if I just don’t have the time?”) in an appendix of frequently asked questions. Whether devotions are done individually or in a small group, Cordeiro provides all the insights and instructions needed to make them a refreshing time of spiritual growth.

**Jeff Friend**

## MUSIC

### Christmas: From the Realms of Glory

By Bebo Norman, BEC Recordings.

Bebo Norman waited years to release a Christmas album because he wanted just the right songs to go with foundational track “The Rebel Jesus” by Jackson Browne. Though this song is not a traditional holiday song, it carries a much-needed message. Listeners are challenged to live generously all year, not only at Christmastime when they might feel compelled to drop some coins in red, metal buckets. Norman surrounds this track with new songs and familiar carols to help celebrate this beloved season. New tune “Christmas Time Is Here” wishes us peace and laughter, and hope for the hopeless. “Joy to the World” is wrapped in a different rhythm and acoustic melody, offering a

lovely rendition of this classic. "What Child Is This," "Go Tell It on the Mountain," "Silver Bells" and other favorites get the Norman treatment. Lullaby "Mary's Prayer" is Mary's description of her Son's future: "Your feet will walk on water / Your eyes will pierce the dark / Your heart will save the souls of men / And Your hands will bear the scars." The songs on the Realms of Glory not only will help listeners celebrate the season but also may serve as a reminder that Jesus is the true gift, and we are to be that gift to others throughout the year.

**Leigh Devore**

Do You See What I See?

By Todd Agnew, INO Records.

Todd Agnew and friends offer a collection of new songs packaged between "Do You See What I See?" and "In the First Light." Agnew wrote each new song from the perspective of different people involved in the Christmas story. "No Room" features Joy Whitlock singing for the innkeeper. "This Is All I Have to Give," with Vince Lichlyter of Jonah 33, describes how Joseph might have felt as Jesus' earthly father: "I'd always hoped You'd have my eyes / And maybe a bit of the skill of my hands / But as I look into Your eyes / I see Your hands created mine." The gospel-tinged "Glory to God" features Anthony Evans and describes the angels' need to sing and shout because the Son had come to earth (be ready to feel chills listening to this one). Simeon, Elizabeth, the shepherds and others also share their songs. Agnew has packaged the Christmas story into one album, offering a special glimpse into the lives of those involved in this unfolding miracle.

**Leigh Devore**

All That Is Within Me

By MercyMe, INO Records.

MercyMe returns with an album of songs accessible enough to

appeal to nearly every fan of Christian pop music. Lead singer Bart Millard has a wonderful pop-country style that seems to get better as this album goes along. His vocals excel most notably on "Grace Tells Another Story," a moving track with the lyric, "We've been told the heart is just too far gone to save, but grace tells us another story." "All Right," a light, upbeat number, makes listeners want to tap their feet. Although the group's lyrics and music are sometimes straightforward, at other times they're more reflective, such as on "My Heart Will Fly," a song in which the band asks: "Why write the script with such an aching pain? Could there not have been an easier way?" The album ends with "Finally Home," a beautiful acoustic guitar number that describes how Millard will greet his father in heaven: "I'm gonna wrap my arms around my daddy's neck / And tell him that I've missed him." All 10 songs on this album prove that it's no accident MercyMe has sold millions of records. This is a talented band that reminds one of Third Day and Steven Curtis Chapman—artists whose lyrics meet evangelical pop music fans exactly where they are in life. All That Is Within Me is no exception. It's catchy pop music with a clear gospel message that will resonate with all of MercyMe's fans—a considerable group—and should win them a few new ones, too.

## **Cameron Conant**

### **Everyone Overcome**

By Desperation Band, Integrity Music

With the exception of one song, Everyone Overcome is a live recording by the Desperation Band—three worship leaders from New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colo. Unlike on some live albums, the passion and immediacy of the live show translate well here. The show gets off to a great start with haunting vocals and a big guitar intro, before settling into a fairly standard set of praise and worship songs. The lead vocals are a bit weak early on, but seem to find their way on "Counting

on God”—a pop-style praise and worship song. “Counting on God” is followed by “Overcome,” an emotive 12-minute song that doesn’t feel nearly that long. Other notable songs are “Good to Me,” a delicate piano ballad with female vocals, and “I Will Go,” which features clips of individuals making declarations such as, “I will go, I’ll live the life ... I’ll tell the world that you are God.” Overall, this album suffers from uneven vocals and too many predictable songs, but its strength lies in translating the emotion and energy from the live experience to the listener at home.

**Cameron Conant**

### This Moment

By Steven Curtis Chapman, Sparrow.

After winning numerous awards and selling a gazillion records, Steven Curtis Chapman has earned the right to rest on his laurels. Fortunately, instead of taking a break, the singer-songwriter-musician extraordinaire just keeps writing great songs and singing them with his signature crystal-clear tenor voice. On his 16th studio album, *This Moment*, Chapman manages to take his fans on journeys to both the familiar and the unexpected. “Yours” finds Chapman waxing philosophical about his international travels, utilizing the trademark driving acoustic rhythm he introduced 20 years ago. “Something Crazy” puts a new twist on his popularized, bouncy, pop-rock style as he describes the unpredictable nature of love. Chapman continues his quest to prove he’s got some rock left in him on songs such as “Children of God,” “You Are Being Loved” and the rhythmically quirky “Broken.” Another surprise is the Beatles-like number “Definition of Me,” which could just as easily have been found on a Michael W. Smith record. Of course, there are still plenty of tender moments, including the anthemic ballad “One Heartbeat at a Time” and the tearjerker “Cinderella,” which follows Chapman as he watches time fly by through the life of his oldest daughter, Emily. *This Moment* will please longtime fans and may earn Chapman a new

generation of supporters as well.

**Chad Bonham**

### Songs 4 Worship: Country

By various artists, Time Life.

Mainstream country artists have long been apt to interject faith into their music. That's why no one should be surprised to learn of the popular genre's foray into the worship scene with a various artists project simply titled Songs 4 Worship: Country. A slim majority of the songs can be categorized as corporate-worship favorites—classics such as Diamond Rio's bluegrass-flavored take on "Open the Eyes of My Heart," Rachel Robinson's graceful rendition of "You Are My King" (complete with steel guitar and flawless fiddle instrumentation) and Bryan White's interpretation of "God of Wonders." Several other songs are simply Christian-themed narratives such as Collin Raye's fun-loving, church house toe-tapper "Get Up in Jesus' Name" and mega-band Rascal Flatts' country-rock power ballad "He Ain't the Leavin' Kind." With plenty of big names contributing (including Ricky Skaggs, Marty Raybon, The Oak Ridge Boys and Emerson Drive), Songs 4 Worship: Country provides the genre's true fans with some spiritual meat that has been sorely lacking in recent years.

**Chad Bonhan**

### The Word of Promise New Testament Audio Bible

Thomas Nelson.

The Word of Promise New Testament Audio Bible is a dramatic recording of the New King James Version of the New Testament, featuring more than 120 actors' voices, including Marisa Tome as Mary Magdalene, Richard Dreyfuss as Moses, Michael W. Smith as Cleopas, John Schneider as James and James Caviezel as Jesus, which is particularly fitting in light of his stellar performance as Jesus in The Passion of the Christ. This is a complete theatrical reading, with sound effects and an

original soundtrack, creating a whole new way to experience the Scriptures. Especially moving are the miracle stories such as the woman with the issue of blood and verses in Luke about Jesus' crucifixion. This 20-disc set includes 21 hours of audio and behind-the-scenes footage.

**Leigh Devore**

FICTION

CONTEMPORARY

The Yada Yada Prayer Group Gets Decked Out

By Neta Jackson, Thomas Nelson,

Softcover, 288 pages, \$.

Jodi Foster is prepping for family holiday festivities and a New Year's party with her Yada Yada sisters. But in the midst of all this she has to deal with a former student, a crime, a quickly planned wedding and a child who forever changes her family. Now more than ever these praying friends need each other.

**HOLIDAY**

Boo Humbug

By Rene Gutteridge, WaterBrook Press,

Softcover, 176 pages, \$.

It's Christmastime even in Skary, Ind. Lois Stepaphanopolis is directing her own stage version of A Christmas Carol. While preparing, she learns that a team member hates Christmas. Then Lois discovers that the audience is expecting a different play and the actors have to improvise. But the new show might help the town's own Scrooge understand the true meaning of Christmas.



## SEASONAL

### Unwrapping Christmas

By Lori Copeland, Zondervan,

Softcover, 160 pages, \$.

Rose wants everything to be perfect for Christ-mas, but she is feeling overworked and overwhelmed. And at a time when families should feel the most connected, Rose's family seems distant and aloof. Even so, God uses unexpected circumstances to teach Rose to slow down, and she discovers the true meaning of giving.