

Vibes

A New Kind of Conservative

By Joel Hunter, Regal Books, hardcover, 224 pages, \$.

In his instructive, thought-provoking book, Florida pastor Joel Hunter expands the list of issues he thinks Christian conservatives ought to embrace. Along the way, he accomplishes another aim: exposing as a myth the idea that theocracy is the preferred form of government. Among reasons Hunter details for not supporting a theocratic model are humans' sin nature, the fact that the church's role is to use influence rather than force, and the abysmal historical record of mixing church and state. In addition, he releases Christians from the guilt trips that they should favor one particular political party, style of candidate or certain sacred political cows. And, while saying people should care about the sanctity of life and marriage, Hunter writes that a well-rounded, biblical emphasis will encompass such concerns as poverty, justice, peace and the environment. This book also serves as a primer on democratic participation, explaining how and why Christians should be involved in government as a way of caring for all members of society.

Ken Walker

BOOKS

Don't Leave God Alone

By Hank Kunneman, Charisma House, softcover, 224 pages, \$.

Hank Kunneman was inspired to write *Don't Leave God Alone* after God beckoned him to spend more time in prayer by pleading, "Don't leave!" The experience forever changed him and inspired a book urging believers to pray constantly and churches to "create a house of prayer environment." Kunneman points out a pattern in Scripture that shows men from Jacob to Bartimaeus imploring God even though it seemed He wanted to be left alone. When we refuse to quit, Kunneman asserts, God will respond to our determination with blessings, public power,

victory and even changing His mind. This book offers a fresh perspective on ceaseless prayer and spiritual persistence, two scriptural principles that modern believers often neglect. Because man primarily exists for God rather than God existing for man, some of Kunneman's applications are problematic. Several chapters, including "I will not leave You alone until You change," "I will not leave You alone until You bless me" and "I will not leave You alone until my issues stop," will undoubtedly miff some readers as they seem to picture God more as a heavenly bellhop than a sovereign King whose thoughts, ways and will are above ours.

Jonathan Merritt

I Want to Believe

By Mel Lawrenz, Regal Books, hardcover, 256 pages, \$.

Written for those exploring options for a belief system, Mel Lawrenz's book invites readers to contemplate not only the choices of faith, but also why humans wrestle with ideas about creation and a creator and what the response should be if such a being exists. A Christian pastor for 25 years, Lawrenz does not chastise his readers for having doubts. He maintains that to have an honest faith, a person will have to ask honest questions and find satisfying answers. Although he doesn't evaluate every religion, he does evaluate the main types of religious belief. His style is very readable for teenagers, with a presentation that is concise and to the point. But his work is not just information and logical arguments. Lawrenz urges readers to make sure their hearts are open and ready to respond rightly to the truth.

Deborah L. Delk

Can't You Talk Louder, God?

By Steve Shultz, Destiny Image, 208 pages, \$.

If you think God doesn't talk to you because you've never heard a burning bush speak or listened to an audible voice,

Steve Shultz reveals that God does indeed speak today—we just need to be aware of how He communicates. In *Can't You Talk Louder, God?*, Shultz explains that God speaks to His children through such sources as His Word, music, people, dreams, thoughts, nature, or a simple impression or urging. According to Shultz, God is constantly speaking, and Christians need to learn to be more attuned to Him. Shultz's conversational style and interesting examples deliver his points without being preachy. He also answers some common questions about prophecy, the focus of his ministry. Whether read individually or in a small group, this book to help Christ's sheep recognize His voice.

Jeff Friend

Dominion!

By C. Peter Wagner, Chosen, hardcover, 224 pages, \$.

Bringing to tangible reality the closing request of the Lord's Prayer, C. Peter Wagner shows the body of Christ how to make God's "kingdom come and His will be done on earth" in his new book, *Dominion!: How Kingdom Action Can Change the World*. Wagner effectively lays out the aggressive strategy for believers to transform the world and disciple nations. This transformation will take place as the people of God shift their paradigm and go outside the four walls of the church. With "workplace apostles" and "extended church leaders" in position, the kingdom of God will take dominion in business, government, arts and entertainment, media, family and education. This cultural mandate of social transformation, Wagner says, can be made possible only through the "operational power of the Holy Spirit among believers." *Dominion!* is a motivating read for those who want to use their influence to advance Christ's kingdom and "occupy" until His return.

Jevon Bolden

MUSIC

Worship in the Waiting

By FFH, Kindred.

Inspired by six months in the mission fields of South Africa, *Worship in the Waiting* is a collection of traditional praise and worship covers and original pop songs. It's been two years since FFH's last CD, but it was worth the wait. From the moment the CD opens with "You Are God Alone," it's clear that FFH developed the kind of maturity that comes when someone has actually been through what they are singing. The title track is the highlight of the project—full of spirit, persistence and surrender with lyrics such as: "If You choose to be silent I'll be silent too. / I will worship in the waiting, quiet before You / Until Your voice like manna from the sky falls." They sing like firsthand witnesses who know what it's like to battle through spiritual impasses and wake the next morning ready to trust in God again. This is a great CD for the traditional worshiper.

Jevon Bolden

Roadmaps and Revelations

By Parachute Band, Integrity Music.

Originally fronted by husband and wife Wayne and Libby Huirua (writers of popular worship anthem "All the Earth"), New Zealand's Parachute Band now features five young men from various churches around the island. The personnel change has brought significant changes on the creative front with a sound much more akin to its Australian counterparts Hillsong United. On the band's latest project, *Roadmaps and Revelations*, the opening track is especially telling. "The Way" relies on big guitar tones and hectic drum riffs that at times seem a bit overdone. "I Belong to You" also leans toward an excessively busy arrangement. But with the album's third track, "Surrender All" (a piano-driven rock ballad), Parachute Band settles into

a comfortable groove that leans toward simple melodies and straightforward worship songs. In fact, that simplicity is the biggest positive of this project.

Chad Bonham

CONTEMPORARY

Leaving November

By Deborah Raney, Howard Books, softcover, 384 pages, \$.

Vienne Kenney is determined to escape her reputation as the town drunk's daughter. She goes to law school but fails the bar exam—twice. She returns home to run her mother's café and befriends Jackson Linderr. Though God has helped him with his addiction to alcohol, Vienne has a hard time trusting him and not allowing her father's legacy to continue to keep her from finding happiness.

HISTORICAL

My Heart Remembers

By Kim Vogel Sawyer, Bethany House, softcover, 352 pages, \$.

Orphans Maelle, Mattie and Molly are sent to Missouri for adoption. Maelle, the oldest, but only 8 years old, wants to keep her family together, but each child is adopted by a different family. Seventeen years later Maelle is still looking for her brother and sister. Will they ever be together again?

MYSTERY

My Name is Russell Fink

By Michael Snyder, Zondervan, softcover, 368 pages, \$.

Russell Fink, 26, has a lot of issues to work through. He

needs to move out on his own for good; he hates his job; his ex-fiancee won't leave him alone; and he thinks he gave his twin sister cancer when they were 9. Then his basset hound, Sonny, is found murdered. As Russell works to solve the mystery, he confronts everything about his life.