

REVIEWS

Family entertainment • Documentaries • Resources for families • Books

For fun

And I said novels, didn't I? I have a couple of great stories to entertain and help you escape whatever stress you're suffering. Both authors are quite new to Christian fiction, but they both tell a gripping story with the maturity of a seasoned wordsmith.

I reviewed Buck Storm's *The Miracle Man* a few months ago, and his new title, *Truck Stop Jesus*, was released in November. It is the story of up-and-coming actress Paradise Jones who faces the challenges of whether to return to a place of danger because of a "big break" acting opportunity, or to pursue a simpler life that she fears will be her worst (i.e., boring) nightmare.

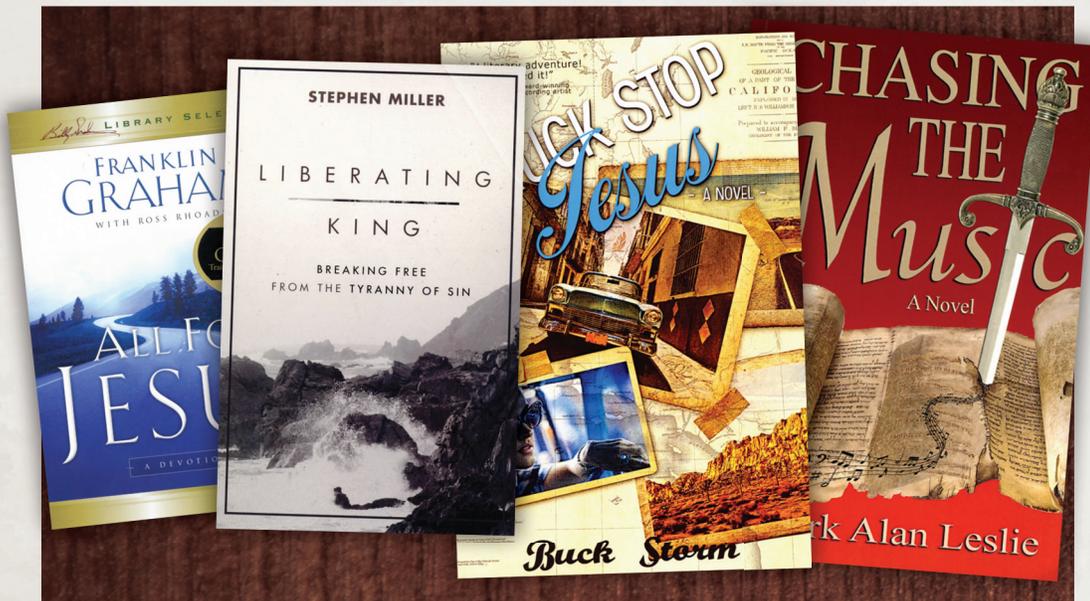
Storm's characters are

quirky, creative, and likable. He's also a songwriter, and has honed the craft of telling a story in a few lines of lyrics. But turn him loose with a novel, and he packs it with nuance, intrigue, laughter, engaging details, and fun.

Mark Alan Leslie, author of *Chasing the Music*, puts his setting in Israel, where black-ops veteran Max Braxton and archaeologist Kat Cardova are in fast-paced pursuit of original scrolls containing the Old Testament songs of David. The villains who pursue them and threaten their lives are determined jihadists.

It turns into a scary continent-jumping thriller. Really, I'll put this one in the class with John Grisham or other secular novelists touted for producing today's best fiction.

I highly recommend the work of both Storm and Leslie. Readers can't go wrong with their intricately woven plots, intriguing characters, and crisp writing styles. And for many readers I know, the absence of vulgarities, profanity, sexual innuendo, and other offensive content is totally refreshing. 



From the editor's bookshelf

BY RANDALL MURPHREE

In the course of my work at AFA, it is imperative that I read as much as possible from the great minds who cover cultural issues in our troubled times. However, because many days are impacted by the tensions and stresses that often accompany the culture war, I find my outside reading gravitating toward inspirational authors such as Joseph Stowell, Randy Alcorn, and Franklin Graham. And to fiction – I love a good novel.

I have reviewed various titles by Stowell and Alcorn, but I'm not sure I've ever covered one by Franklin Graham.

For inspiration

Graham's 2016 title *All For Jesus* is commendable for its in-depth devotional approach to a number of practical applications for Christian living. Subjects include how God intervenes on our behalf, forgiveness and how to pass it on, keys to worship and obedience, God's

promises, and the work of the Holy Spirit. It's a treasure chest with much wealth – great for the start of a new year.

Another inspiring title comes from an author I didn't know until a friend recently recommended it – *Liberating King: Breaking Free From the Tyranny of Sin* by Stephen Miller. The author is a worship leader who shares simple principles he has learned through the years, principles that illustrate how every aspect of life should be an avenue of worship. Worship is both an action and an attitude. When we eat breakfast with the family, as we answer phone calls and emails at work, as we wait on unpleasant customers in the retail store, when we repair automobiles for unhappy drivers – everything about a Christian's day should be approached as worship. It's 120 pages, short enough for any of us to tackle, and I promise it will enlighten, challenge, and enhance your walk with the Lord if you begin applying the principles Miller articulates.