



Exploring Grace Together: 40 Devotionals for the Family

Jessica Thompson , Elyse M. Fitzpatrick (Foreword)

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Children need more than behavior modification--they need the gospel. But sometimes it's hard to communicate the truth of God's Word in a way that engages the hearts, minds, and affections of the little ones we love so much. Assisting parents with this high calling, Jessica Thompson, coauthor of the popular parenting book *Give Them Grace*, offers an alternative to merely telling kids what they must do to please God and be a "good Christian." The book's 40 short devotionals help parents point their children to the transformative grace of God through engaging stories, key memory verses, simple reflection questions, and suggestions for prayer that can be read together. Designed for families with children ages 6 to 10, this collection helps kids understand and experience the grace of God while bringing together the whole family.

Exploring Grace Together: 40 Devotionals for the Family Details

Date : Published February 28th 2014 by Crossway Books (first published February 1st 2014)

ISBN : 9781433536915

Author : Jessica Thompson , Elyse M. Fitzpatrick (Foreword)

Format : Paperback 127 pages

Genre : Parenting, Nonfiction, Childrens, Religion, Christianity, Christian, Theology

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From Reader Review Exploring Grace Together: 40 Devotionals for the Family for online ebook

Doug Hibbard says

Today, I want to look at a family devotional book called Exploring Grace Together. It's by Jessica Thompson and published by Crossway Books. This is book of 40 devotionals aimed at a family audience. The first thing I would note on Exploring Grace Together is that we are not looking at a Bible Story book. These are devotionals hinging on overall Scripture concepts rather than extracting meaning from a particular narrative.

Second, I would note that while every devotional in Exploring Grace Together is headed by a Scripture verse, these are not proof-text style verses. They are verses that illustrate the concept in the chapter, and work well as memory verses.

Third, Exploring Grace Together is an easy read. There is a tendency toward simplicity. This develops the usability of the devotionals for families with younger children. Once past middle school, though, this will be a bit too light, but children through the middle ranges can be challenged to think more deeply than early elementary siblings and grow through the process.

That leads to one of the better ideas for use of Exploring Grace Together. This is a great start point to let your older children lead your younger ones, if there's a wide age spread there. Let your pre-teen read aloud and ask the questions, watch the conversation develop. That is how we will be digging into this as a family. Overall, there are the usual drawbacks of a family-oriented devotional here. It could be too short at times, too long for others. If you are a homeschool family, devotionals about "kids at school" can be harder to find application for.

That does not diminish the engaging style in Exploring Grace Together. The discussion questions can pull thoughts out from many, and each chapter fits well into a dinnertime time slot. Doctrinally, this one is right down the middle, and I didn't see anything to be concerned about wherever you fall in evangelical Christianity. Obviously, if you're not a Christian, this book will make precious little sense unless you stick in the first two chapters and come to the faith.

I see no difficulties recommending Exploring Grace Together.

(I received a copy of this book from Crossway in exchange for the review.)

LaRosa Jr. says

Leading your family in a time of devotion can be a challenge, especially when you have younger children. You want to teach them the truths of Scripture and various doctrines that will one day lead to their salvation; but, how you do put it in terms that they can understand and interact with? That's a challenge for me, and one that many parents have. That's why I'm glad I received the opportunity to read Jessica Thompson's book Exploring Grace Together.

What is Exploring Grace Together? To state the obvious, this is a book containing 40 devotionals for the family. Like most devotionals, this one has a theme, but this is one that your kids can get on board with. Instead of taking the approach that you're going to be studying the Bible, which your kids may find boring or unappealing, you're presented with the idea that you're embarking on a treasure hunt. Now that is something that a kid can get interested in! Who doesn't like a good journey with a reward at the end? With that as the

premise, as a parent you're leading your kids on a journey to discover the ultimate treasure in Jesus Christ and the gospel.

The format that Jessica takes in this book is quite approachable and easy enough for just about anyone to implement. One of the keys to family devotions is that they shouldn't be long and drawn out, particularly when younger children are involved because they just don't have the attention span. With that in mind, each devotion only takes two or three minutes to read aloud to your kids, presenting them with a story that they can relate to, while presenting some nugget of Scriptural truth and a Bible passage for reference. For example, the first devotion is about a kid named Shane who can't seem to do anything right, but it seems that everyone else is. That's something that all kids can relate to, and it leads them to understand the biblical truth that we are all sinners who need the good news of the gospel (Romans 3:11-12). This is then followed up with some questions to get your kids talking and thinking about the subject matter on a level that they can relate to. So, while they may think that they're just listening to short stories, they're actually learning basic biblical principles that lead them to their need for a savior.

As a whole, I like the approach that Exploring Grace Together takes. While I wouldn't recommend using this exclusively for family devotions, it is a great companion to use alongside regular Bible reading. The book has a knack for helping kids relate to the truths that they need to understand, so that they can truly embrace the gospel. I'm going to continue using this with my kids as I continue to pray that this is something that the Holy Spirit will use to lead them in the truth. If you're a parent with young kids (under 10?), I highly recommend adding this book to your library.

Esther says

short, simple, packed with gospel truth. My kids loved it and found it so relatable. We hope there will be a sequel.

Joel Rockey says

These short devotionals are written from the perspective of a child or teen. They were awesome! Jessica Thompson does a fantastic job at applying the gospel to real-life situations that children face. (Which is something I often struggle with.) I'll be coming back to this book again. The target audience is a little older than my kids right now, so I'll be adapting them somewhat for their age. Highly recommended for parents.

Jason says

Our family all agrees...

My 10 year old said, "I think this book is good because all of the stories related so much to my life. The book was life changing. This was the first book we read as a family and I loved it!"

My 8 year old said, "I like this book because every single story is like what I do... Every single time it's like, compare this to Jesus and He never did anything wrong. We can change when we remember what Jesus has done. "

My 6 year old said, "I like the stories because it has all of the stories and it helps us remember that we make mistakes and we can't erase our mistakes, but because of Jesus we are alive."

My 4 year old said, "I like the book because I love God."

My wife commented, "As a parent I like the every day life scenarios and how everything was always brought back to the Gospel. The discussion questions were a great way to foster good discussion."

It's challenging to make the Gospel relevant to Legos, but the author does a great job! I appreciate that Jessica was grace and truth. The kids felt conviction for making idols out of their stuff, but we always left the dinner table celebrating God's incredible grace.

Scott Kennedy says

I saw this book online and ordered it, mainly because I wanted to have something to help me springboard from the Scriptures into conversations about God's grace when I read the Bible with my children each night. So I've read the book, and I just love the way Jessica Thompson has little stories that a child can relate to, that show how we need God's grace, and how God's grace can be accessed for every situation and challenge we face. I guess I was hoping for slightly more story like stories (the ones in the book are very short). However, I am very excited about trying this book out with my kids and seeing what kinds of conversations result.

Ebookwormy1 says

A solid family devotional that features a Biblical passage, a situational story about children in which we see the principle applied or neglected and discussion questions at the end. We made it about half way through the first time before we abandoned it for a reason lost to time.

The second time through, we started about where we left off and allowed kids to pick between this and another title, proceeding back and forth through both. This was more palatable to all.

Overall, a solid offering, but somehow not fantastic - though I cannot figure out why. Maybe it's just us. I'll check back when we go through it again.

Kara says

A few years ago I shared what is probably my very favorite parenting book of all time with you.

Give Them Grace: Dazzling Your Kids With the Love of Jesus is a primer on how the gospel should transform our parenting, and it's a must-read in my book! Now, co-author Jessica Thompson has given us Exploring Grace Together: 40 Devotionals for the Family.

Exploring Grace Together puts the principles discussed in Give Them Grace into action through a series of simple family devotions. Our family has been going through the book this summer, though we haven't

managed to read every single day, so it's taking us a bit longer to get through the entire book.

A short introduction to read to your children portrays the devotions as a "treasure hunt" to find Jesus in everything we do, in every circumstance. The first several readings work through a basic explanation of the gospel using Romans 3:11-12, 23, 6:23, 8:38-39, and Ephesians 2:8. The rest of the readings build on that foundation, covering such topics as feeling misunderstood, feeling alone, family discord, blame shifting, lying, materialism, grief, and more. Each reading ends with several discussion questions to provoke more thought and conversation.

[Click here to read the entire review.](#)

Jessica says

tried this in May 2015, but Levi isn't into it. maybe a few years from now.

Gabrielle says

A fabulous devotional for our family, this will be read again and again.

Mandy J. Hoffman says

The Overview

As an individual I struggle to grasp even a basic understanding of God's grace in my own daily life, let alone try to explain it to my children. Over the past 5 years I have wrestled with the difficult task of teaching my children such important truth and so I actually cried when I read the "Letter to Parents" at the beginning of this book. God has lovingly equipped Jessica Thompson to write 40 devotionals to read with our children to help us help them understand the mind-boggling truth of the gospel grace. Each devotional is delightfully deep with theology, yet refreshingly simple. *Exploring Grace Together* takes the truth that Jesus is all we need and shows our children what this means in their every day moments.

The Readability

The entire book is only 127 pages making each devotional only 2 to 3 pages. Each one starts with a verse, or two at the most, followed by a story that leads into a handful of questions to talk through with your children. While the target audience is probably older elementary, I think it can be used for a broad range - both older and younger. This delightful devotional brings to life some of the deepest theological truth in a way that children can begin to grasp the concepts.

The Highlights

This book helps a parent explain the gospel easily to their children. So many times I find myself fumbling for an example to illustrate the verse I'm trying to explain and Jessica has already done this - and done it eloquently. She has also provided engaging questions that will dig below the surface of what I often ask of

my children in order to get to the heart of what they are thinking. I appreciate the tender guidance Jessica offers in the opening pages to get you started on a stress-free 40 day journey with your kids.

The Downside

There is no downside to this book in my opinion. It's delightful, and both my children and I are learning from it. However, I need to point out that this is a devotional not a Bible study. While each chapter begins with a verse, the bulk of the chapter is a story that shows the children the daily impact of the passage you just read. If you are looking for something to use where you sit down and go through a longer passage and answer multiple questions, this is not what you are looking for.

The Recommendation

For the parent who has a strong understanding of God's grace to the parent who is still learning how it applies to our life each day, this book a gift. I encourage you to get a copy of this beautiful tool to aid you as you endeavor to teach the next generation about God's amazing, fabulous, mind-blowing grace!

(I received a courtesy PDF copy of this book from Crossway Books but the opinion expressed is my own.)

Davina Sinclair says

I would thoroughly recommend this book of devotions to anyone who has or works with children. My children aged between 3-12 are not always too keen on "devotions" but listened to the stories about the children in the book and the things they treasured. One day my 7 year old said the most beautiful prayer "dear lord Jesus please help us to make you our treasure". The concepts of grace, propitiation and other theological terms that I don't completely understand are simply explained using children's everyday experiences. The kids have also asked some great questions as a result of reading this book which led to some interesting discussions. Overall both me and the kids have learned a lot and been challenged by the book.
