

GOSPEL-CENTERED RESOURCES

for little hearts & minds



from guest blogger Elisabeth at

INSTAENCOURAGEMENTS.COM

BOOKS

5 Gospel-Centered Books For Little Hearts & Minds

One of the passions that my husband and I share is a love for books and reading. Additionally, we take great joy in sharing this love with those around us. My husband is constantly loaning out or simply giving away theology books from his seminary days to friends and family. While we tend to be more minimalistic when it comes to possessions or things, we make an exception when it comes to books!

When we became parents to our daughter, we agreed we wanted not only to instill a love for books but especially for books that would deepen her understanding of the Bible and cultivate a desire to know God. Therefore, from the very beginning, we've been building her little library with books that reveal God's character, who we are as His creation, and how we can know and love Him better.

Even at the tender age of three, we could see how these Gospel-centered books captured her attention and gave us precious opportunities to teach the truths of God's Word to her young heart.

As Christian parents, we want our daughter to personally know Christ and experience His saving grace. We want her to love God and His precious Word. These books and many others are stepping stones along that path. We can already see how God uses them to whet her appetite and capture her young heart and mind. Sometimes it is easy to think that little ones cannot understand these big truths, but they can grasp more than we know. As parents, we are tasked even now with cultivating the soil of her heart and planting good seeds! These books are great tools for teaching and allow us to be intentional in imparting biblical truths to our children!

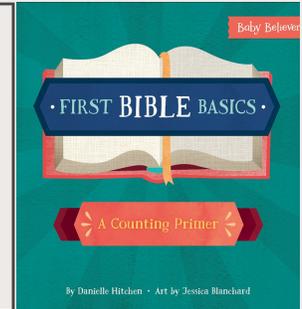
I hope and pray they will be a blessing to you, as well!

Books

RESOURCE LIST

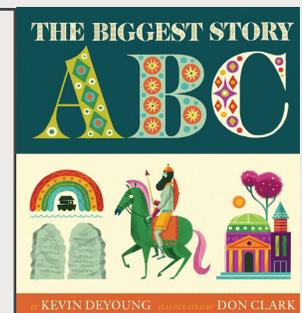
FIRST BIBLE BASICS

THIS WAS ONE OF THE FIRST BOOKS WE BOUGHT AND BEGAN TO READ TO OUR DAUGHTER WHEN SHE WAS JUST A BABY. IT IS A WONDERFUL, AGE-APPROPRIATE INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE.



THE BIGGEST STORY

WITH COLORFUL ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE ABCS, THIS BOOK TELLS THE STORY OF THE BIBLE PRESENTING THE FALL, THE WORK OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PLAN THROUGH HISTORY, AND HIS SACRIFICE AT CALVARY.



THE GOSPEL

EACH TWO-PAGE SPREAD COVERS A WORD RELATING TO THE GOSPEL ALONG WITH A SHORT EXPLANATION. EACH PAGE ALSO FEATURES PICTURES THAT ARE SIMPLE YET VIVID ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CONCEPT.



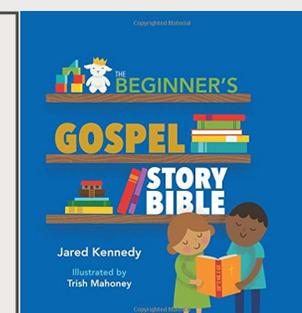
NEAR: PSALM 139

BASED ON PSALM 139, THIS BOOK TEACHES ABOUT GOD AND HIS FAITHFULNESS. IT HAS ALLOWED US TO TALK WITH OUR DAUGHTER ABOUT HOW GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US AND KNOWS AND CARES FOR US.



THE BEGINNER'S GOSPEL STORY BIBLE

THIS BIBLE STORY COLLECTION IS PERFECT FOR TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS! IT HAS 52 STORIES LAID OUT ACROSS THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS. THE LANGUAGE IS SIMPLE AND AGE-APPROPRIATE.



4 Gospel-Centered Music Resources For Little Hearts & Minds

MUSIC

Of the many gifts that God has given to His creation, music is one of my favorites. Music has great power. It can encourage and uplift. It can bring quiet and calm. It can be used to celebrate our greatest joys as well as console us in our deepest griefs. There have even been studies that show that music can improve our health. But of all the things that music can do, I find myself in awe of one in particular.

Music has great power to help us learn and remember.

When I worked in a Montessori classroom with three to six-year-olds, I was amazed not only at the amount of information these young minds could retain but also at how quickly they could commit it to memory, and all because it was set to music. These little ones could easily recall the seven continents, the days of the week, the months of the year, all fifty states (in alphabetical order), and more!

This experience reinforced the truth of music's power to teach both academically and, even more importantly, spiritually.

I believe that introducing our children to Gospel-rich literature at a young age is critical to planting and cultivating truth in their hearts. I believe it is equally important to expose them to theologically sound music that will help them commit these truths to memory and allow those truths to take root, blossom, and grow in their hearts and minds.

Especially over the last year, my daughter's fascination and enjoyment of music have flourished. It's been exciting and amazing to see how the music we listen to is impacting her knowledge and awareness of the world around her, but even more so how it is helping to shape her view and understanding of God, His Word, and the Gospel.



follow



We don't often think of children's music as being meaningful or substantial. But music geared toward children, especially good biblical music, shouldn't lack weight or dumb down truth.

Gospel-centered, theologically deep music for children just presents the truth with simplicity. I have found that much of the music that we listen to for our daughter has even challenged my thinking and walk with the Lord.

I believe that music first and foremost exists as a means to worship our great God. But it is also a gift that He has given to us for encouragement, instruction, refreshment, and more. As an educator and a parent, I've seen how powerful music is to impact and teach young hearts and minds.

The older our daughter gets, the more we realize how quickly time is passing and how urgent our call is, as her parents, to teach her the truth while we can. My husband and I want her to know God—not just know about Him or be able to recite facts. We want to reach her heart with the truth. But that begins with the mind.

We are busy planting seeds in these early years that with time and tending will yield fruit in the years to come. Music is one of the tools we are using to do just that! These resources and more are helping us to be faithful gardeners in the soil of her heart.

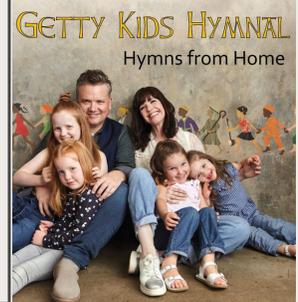
I hope and pray they bless you as they have us!

Music

RESOURCE LIST

GETTY KIDS HYMNAL

THE GETTYS HAVE FIVE ALBUMS ENTITLED GETTY KIDS HYMNAL. EACH INCLUDES BOTH OLD AND NEW HYMNS SUNG BY CHILDREN. THE HYMNS INCLUDE THEOLOGICALLY PROFOUND AND ESSENTIAL TRUTHS.



ALL CREATURES

THESE SONGS ALL COME FROM PSALMS AND SPEAK ABOUT GOD AS OUR CREATOR. WE ESPECIALLY LOVE "TELL ME" WHICH ANSWERS THE QUESTION IN PSALM 119—WILL GOD ALWAYS HEAR OR EVER LEAVE ME?



HIDE 'EM IN YOUR HEART

THESE TWO ALBUMS BY STEVE GREEN ARE ANOTHER GREAT EXAMPLE OF TEACHING CHILDREN TO SING THE SCRIPTURES. IN TOTAL, THERE ARE 41 SONGS ACROSS THESE TWO TRUTH-PACKED VOLUMES!



THE OLOGY: ANCIENT TRUTHS EVER NEW

THIS ALBUM TEACHES CHILDREN CORE DOCTRINES OF OUR FAITH IN AN UNDERSTANDABLE, CREATIVE, AND MEMORABLE WAY. IT FOCUSES ON SALVATION, SANCTIFICATION, THE CHURCH, AND MUCH MORE.



PODCASTS

5 Gospel-Centered Podcasts For Little Hearts & Minds

Over the last few years, I have become a big fan of podcasts, and I feel fortunate to have found several that I regularly look to as supplements for my spiritual walk and growth.

Biblically enriching podcasts are a wonderful blessing of our time. They allow us to connect with other believers, whom we may not otherwise ever meet on this side of eternity.

We can learn, be encouraged, and be challenged by the truths they share and the experiences through which God has grown them.

While they are by no means a replacement for the faithful teaching of a local church or our personal time in God's Word, theologically sound podcasts are a wonderful addition to our pursuit of holiness.

Additionally, unlike TV or other forms of screen time that can overstimulate and waste so much of our time and thoughts, biblical podcasts help us to engage our minds in a useful and edifying way. We can listen to them while we get ready in the morning, in the car, while we do other daily tasks around the home, and even when we are unwinding and relaxing at the end of the day.

Recently, it dawned on me to search out theologically sound and instructive podcasts for my daughter. No matter how much we try to avoid overuse or dependence on screens, the temptation is always there. That's why I am glad for a better alternative to offer her when she needs direction for something to do. And yes, children still have to use a device to listen, but because they are listening rather than watching, they are actively using their minds and imaginations!

I also love that someone else is speaking into my child's heart and mind. This may sound weird at first, but my husband and I don't want to be the only ones speaking into our daughter's life. She needs a multitude of teachers—godly men and women speaking the same truths to her heart! The more people and places she can hear the truths of God's Word shared with her on her level of understanding, the better!

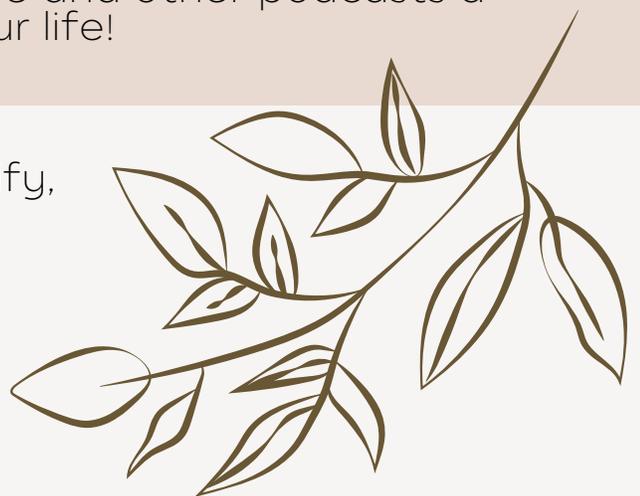
So, I would love to share with you five of our favorite Bible podcasts for little hearts and minds! This isn't just for parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, babysitters, Sunday school teachers, or anyone who regularly interacts with children—these podcasts are great resources for children themselves and you as well! They are a great reminder of how to share big truths simply.

The truths of God's Word are deep and profound. But sometimes, I think we are tempted to act in such a way that betrays we don't think children can understand what the Bible has to say. This simply isn't true. We don't have to dumb down theology for children. At its core, the Scriptures are simple, clear, and accessible. This is why Jesus welcomed time in His earthly ministry spent with children (Matthew 19:13-15) and even rebuked His disciples by telling them they needed to have faith like a child (Matthew 18:1-4).

Theology is for everyone, and that includes children! Whether you are a parent, grandparent, family friend, teacher, or just plain anyone—we all ought to equip ourselves to teach the Scriptures to the next generation. There is no greater topic we can discuss with children than the Gospel, and biblically sound and enriching podcasts are a great tool for both children and adults!

I hope and pray that you will find these and other podcasts a blessing to you and the children in your life!

These podcasts are available on Spotify, Apple, Google, iHeart Radio, Tune In, Stitcher, Podbean, Instagram, and Castbox platforms.



Podcasts

RESOURCE LIST

THE BIGGEST STORY

IF YOU ARE A FAN OF THE BIGGEST STORY BY KEVIN DEYOUNG, THEN THIS PODCAST IS FOR YOU! THIS PODCAST HELPS CHILDREN TO CLEARLY SEE GOD'S REDEMPTION PLAN FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION.



TINY THEOLOGIANS

EACH EPISODE IS ABOUT 15 MINUTES LONG AND IS TOLD FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF TWO CHILDREN, TORY AND HER YOUNGER BROTHER TJ, AS THEY DISCOVER THE MANY ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.



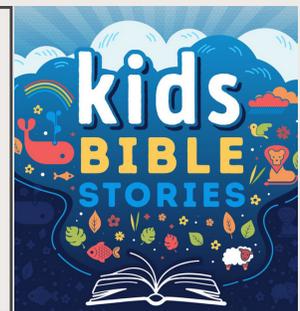
GOD'S BIG STORY

EACH 15-20 MINUTE EPISODE TEACHES STRAIGHT FROM THE BIBLE OR INSTRUCTS CHILDREN ON BIBLICAL TOPICS LIKE WORSHIP, CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE, PRAYER, THE CHURCH, AND MORE.



KIDS BIBLE STORIES

WITH ALMOST 300 EPISODES, THIS PODCAST IS A WEALTH OF STORIES FROM GOD'S WORD TAILORED SPECIFICALLY FOR CHILDREN. EACH 5-15 MINUTE EPISODE PRESENTS A NARRATIVE FROM SCRIPTURE.



KNOWING GOD

THIS PODCAST HAS A CASUAL, CONVERSATIONAL FORMAT AND INVOLVES CHILDREN IN THE PRODUCTION. AT AN AVERAGE OF 15-20 MINUTES, IT'S ONE OF THE LONGER PODCASTS WE LISTEN TO.

