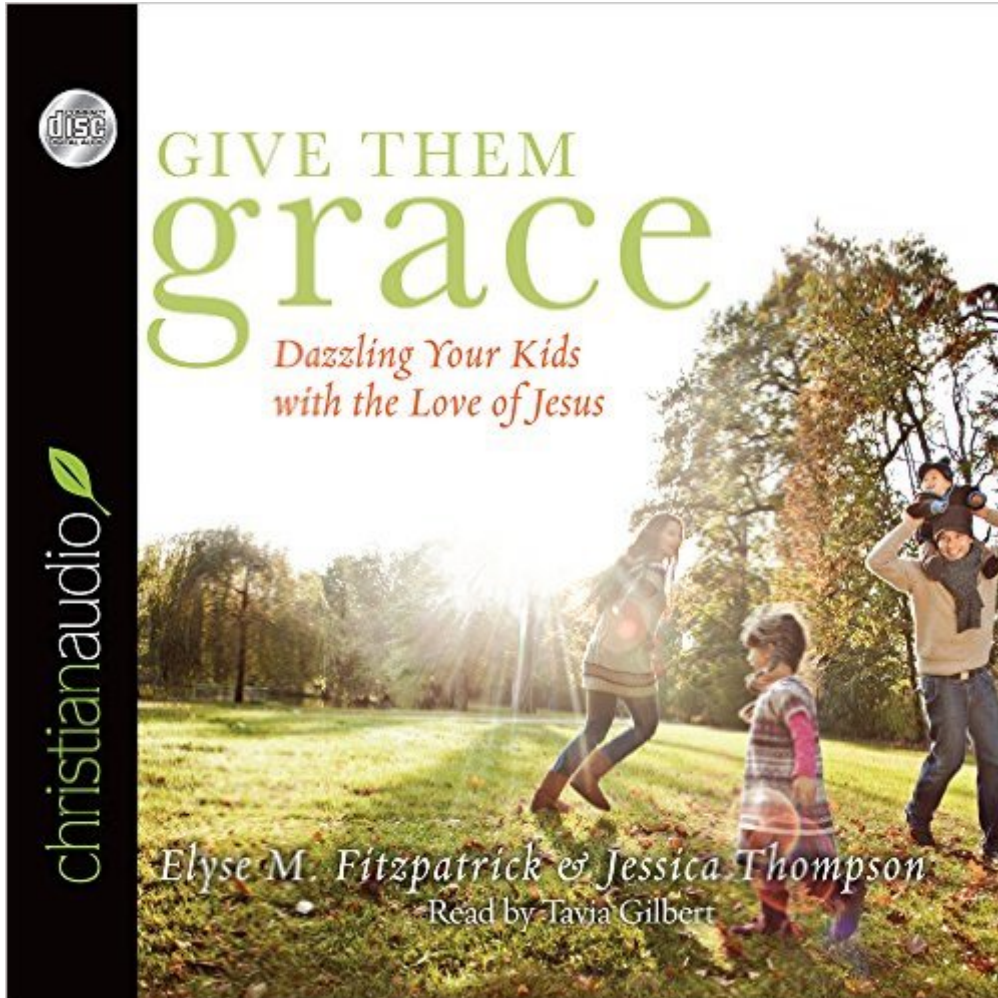


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Give Them Grace: Dazzling Your Kids With The Love Of Jesus



Synopsis

A guide to help Christians parent their children with grace and an emphasis on the cross. How are parents to raise children so they don't become Pharisees (legalists) or prodigals (rebels)? It's all about grace-filled, gospel-driven parenting, says the mother/daughter team of Elyse Fitzpatrick and Jessica Thompson. Christian parents, in their desire to raise godly children, can tend toward rule-centered discipline. There is, however, a far more effective method--a grace-motivated approach that begins with the glorious truth of God's love for sinners. In *Give Them Grace*, parents will learn how to connect the benefits of the cross--especially regeneration, adoption, and justification--to their children's daily lives. Chapters address topics such as our inability to follow the law perfectly, God's forgiveness and love displayed at the cross, and what true heart obedience looks like. Fitzpatrick and Thompson also discuss discipline, dealing with popular culture, and evangelism as a way of life. Parents will find this book a great resource for raising grace-filled, Jesus-loving kids.Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Elyse Fitzpatrick and Jessica Thompson explain what makes Christian parenting unique: it isn't merely about turning out "good" kids; it's about pointing all of our kids to the Savior. While rules are a necessary part of parenting, Elyse and Jessica say, they aren't the primary theme, the work of Christ is. The law doesn't transform the heart...It only hardens them in pride (because they're successfully obeying it) or despair (because they aren't pg. 68).One of the strengths of *Give Them Grace* is that it not only encourages the parent to give grace to his/her children, but it also gives a

good measure of grace to the parent. Here are a few quotes to whet your appetite: We must trust in His "ability to transform hearts, not in our ability to be consistent or faithful...Freedom to love and enjoy our children flows out of the knowledge that God saves them in spite of our best efforts, not because of them. Salvation of the Lord" (pg. 53). It's not up to me; it's a work of God. "When we're quietly resting in grace, we'll have grace to give our children, too. When we're freed from the ultimate responsibility of being their savior, we'll find our parenting burden becoming easy and light" (pg. 55). Elyse and Jessica touch briefly on idolatry and unbelief as it pertains to parenting: "We have far too high a view of our ability to shape our children and far too low a view of God's love and trustworthiness. So we multiply techniques and try to control the outcome" (pg. 57). In *Give Them Grace*, Elyse and Jessica also make much of God. This book is encouraging, Gospel-centered, and grace-filled through and through. In spite of all of the strengths of this book, I do have a few reservations.¹

In the forward to *Give Them Grace* by Elyse M. Fitzpatrick and Jessica Thompson, Tullian Tchividjian says it's "the best parenting book [he's] ever read, because it takes the radical, untamable, outrageous nature of the gospel seriously and applies it to parenting." And the authors do take the gospel seriously. The difference between their book and other Christian parenting books, they say, is that theirs emphasizes grace rather than law: "Most of us are painfully aware that we're not perfect parents. We're also deeply grieved that we don't have perfect kids. But the remedy to our mutual imperfection isn't more law, even if it seems to produce tidy or polite children." These two experienced mothers don't pretend that they are perfect, that their children are perfect, or that they have the secret key to perfection. They don't give readers a formula for parenting; there are no "three steps," or even specified rod dimensions (though they do say that an open hand is okay, regardless of what other parenting books have said). Instead, they remind us that it is God, and not parents, who determines a child's destiny in this life and the next, and that we need His grace as much as our children do. They also give lots of encouragement to weary, imperfect parents: "[God] doesn't treat his dear children as 'disappointments' whose disobedience and failures take him by surprise or shock him. He does not suspend his love until they get their acts back together. He already knows the worst about you (in yourself) and loves and approves you nonetheless (in Christ).

This is the book I wish had been published twenty years ago. I've made plenty of mistakes as a mother, and I know I'll make plenty more. Yet each year the Lord seems to help me see more clearly my need for the grace of the Gospel in my life and in my parenting. I've discussed with

friends, with my pastor, at church potlucks, "What does it look like to reflect the Gospel in our parenting relationships?" Increasingly these discussions of the Gospel and grace in parenting are taking place among moms in playgroups, in churches, on blogs. But very few books have been published that really address this question in a fundamental way; very few books to pass along to friends and to say, "Hey, this really encouraged me to look to the grace of the Gospel as a mom." Enter Elyse Fitzpatrick and her daughter Jessica. (What a perk, writing as a team! One with the wisdom of experience, one with the fresh "this is what it feels like in the trenches" perspective.) Key points that I really like about this book: * Give them Grace differentiates between moralism and the Gospel: "Mormons, Muslims, and moralistic atheists all share the belief that law can perfect us, but Christians don't. Christians know that the law can't save us; what we need is a Savior." * It warns against formula parenting: "Giving grace to our children is not another formula that guarantees their salvation or obedience. Grace-parenting is not another law for you to master to perfect your parenting or your children.

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