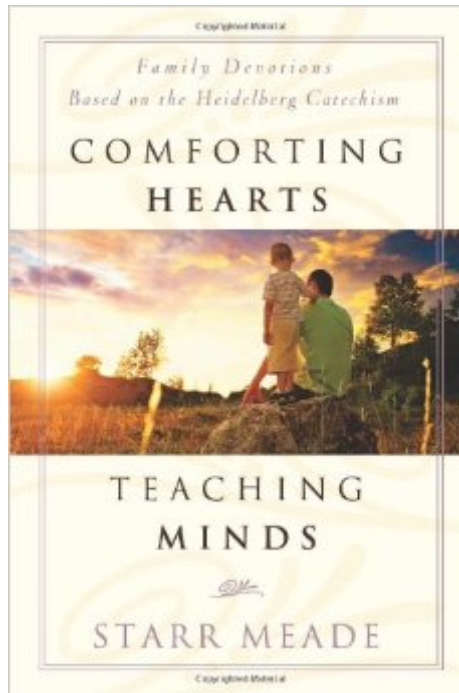


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# Comforting Hearts, Teaching Minds: Family Devotions Based On The Heidelberg Catachism



## Synopsis

Starr Meade enables families with school-age children to participate in satisfying devotions together by taking them through The Heidelberg Catechism explaining its answers in short devotional readings accompanied by relevant Bible passages.

## Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: P & R Publishing (May 23, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1596384654

ISBN-13: 978-1596384651

Product Dimensions: 8.9 x 6 x 0.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (19 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #108,210 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects > Protestantism > Presbyterian](#) #47 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Worship & Devotion > Catechisms](#) #401 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Family](#)

## Customer Reviews

Recently there has been a resurgence, especially within Reformed circles, to revive the evangelical churches attention to utilizing catechisms for discipling believers at church and at home. This is a wholesome emphasis that will only bear good fruit for generations to come. Catechisms have a way of narrowing down the essence of a particular belief in a way that is conducive to memorization. They provide the church with a helpful teaching tool regarding the truths of Scripture. Starr Meade is well known for her solidly biblical and theological books for children such as *Grandpa's Box: Retelling the Biblical Story of Redemption and God's Mighty Acts in Creation and Salvation*. Her first book, *Training Hearts, Teaching Minds: Family Devotions Based on the Shorter Catechism*, wonderfully introduced Christians to how catechisms can be used not just in the church setting but also for family devotions in the home. Thirteen years later Starr has made her second devotional book with a catechism based on the Heidelberg Catechism, *Comforting Hearts, Teaching Minds: Family Devotions Based on the Heidelberg Catechism* published by P&R. If you are familiar with *Training Hearts, Teaching Minds* then this book follows the same pattern. The entire Heidelberg Catechism is separated into 52 weeks of devotional material in which one or more questions and

answers are dealt with over a five day period. Each chapter begins with the questions and answers to be covered for the week. No doubt, it will be beneficial to review these each day before reading through the daily discussion and accompanying biblical text. This will also aid in memorizing the catechism should you decide to do that.

I was first introduced to Star Meade by a pastor who was encouraging me to engage my family in some strange activity called "family worship". Apparently, some families would sit together nightly, or multiple times a week, and pray together, sing together, read scripture together and even study something called a "catechism" together. Huh?!? Seemed weird to me, but I became convinced that there could be something to what he was saying. So I picked up a copy of Training Hearts, Teaching Minds by Starr Meade and we began to blaze our path down the Family Worship trail. It turned out that, while a great resource, my boys were just a bit too young for Training Hearts, Teaching Minds. We settled on the modified catechism for the kids and used a great story Bible (The Jesus Storybook Bible) to begin our journey. That was a couple of years ago and I was incredibly excited when I found out that Starr Meade would be releasing another book along the same lines, but this time utilizing the Heidelberg Catechism. I cannot overstate how much I love the Heidelberg Catechism. If I had to pick one book outside of Scripture to have as my only book, I would pick the Heidelberg Catechism without hesitation. (I might pick Ursinus' Commentary on the Heidelberg, since it includes the Heidelberg...but that is probably cheating.) Since my kids are older and we have a more established, if still sporadic, family worship schedule, I decided that we would give this new book from Meade a try for family worship. (A decision to own a copy was never made...making a decision seems to imply the possibility of an alternate outcome, and there was never a chance that we wouldn't possess a copy of this book!) My family loves it.

I wasn't sure what to expect when requesting Meade's Comforting Hearts, Teaching Minds. I had heard a lot of good things about her other books and obviously P&R is solid. Needless to say I was blown away by this devotional. This is a book I will frequently return to as my children grow up and one I will use with my wife regularly. First, Meade addresses the refrain that catechizing is hard work. Does memorizing a catechism require hard work? Does discussing it thoroughly take time and discipline? Of course. Will working through catechisms always be fun? Will your children--or you for that matter--always feel like doing it? Of course not. Olympic athletes don't always feel like training either. But they know the reward it might bring. Even though that reward is perishable and uncertain, the athletes believe it to be of great enough value to make all their sacrifice and training well worth

it. of how much more value is it to train our children to stand strong in the face of life's greatest demands? (9)As a new-comer to catechisms, I frequently struggle with consistently teaching my children. My parents were converts from Roman Catholicism and were skeptical of the word "catechism." We had family devotions growing up, but not a methodical and consistently biblical rich one. Catechism like the Heidelberg (HC) provide this. If the prize is knowing Christ, the toil of catechizing is worth the effort.I also see this book helping two kinds of people. First, for people who have interacted those in reformed churches who seem smug, who seem like they have all the answers, and who seem dry--this book will show that it's a result of their sinful heart and not a result of the catechisms used.

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