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SONGS FOR SAPLINGS

By Lee Gatiss

These new CDs are a treat for Christian children and their families alike. Based on a children's version of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, each song in the three *Questions with Answers* CDs has a question, an answer, and at least one Bible verse. So very quickly the whole family is singing about how to glorify God and enjoy him forever by loving him and doing what he commands while reciting (and learning) Micah 6:8. Because the catechism is not just doctrine but also anchored in the plot-line of the Bible we also learn, for example, the story and text of Genesis 1-3 at the start of the first CD as well as its theological ramifications. The songs are short (about 1-2 minutes each) and in a variety of interesting genres produced to a high musical standard with catchy and memorable tunes. Musically it is less eccentric than some rather bizarre but popular kids songs from Australia that you may come across which means it will suit a wider range of temperaments. On the other hand, its American origin should not put a British audience off, because it is far from schmaltzy or trite. Good meaty theology that kids will want to sing again and again, and adults will enjoy learning from in the car on long journeys too. They would make excellent Sunday school songtimes and help a new generation to hide God's word in their hearts.

Another perfect grandparent or godparent gift is the *Songs for Saplings* CD from the same stable, which has a series of very short songs (c. 1 minute) from A-Z each based on a single memory verse. Singer-songwriter Dana Dirksen has a bit of fun with snappy tunes or lilting bedtime melodies to teach verses from all over the Bible (Gospels, Epistles, Psalms, Proverbs, even Zephaniah and Habakkuk!) in a memorable way. There are also verses to sing at the beach, camping, harvest time, on Valentine's day, Father's day and other occasions in order to redeem the time and make the most of every opportunity. Great for last thing at night or first thing in the morning before school. Kids will soon learn "The word of the Lord endures forever 1 Peter 1:25" (track 5) and that "Happy are the people whose God is the Lord, Psalm 144:15" (track 8). Parents will particularly appreciate the reminder of track 16, "Be patient with everyone, 1 Thess 5:14" when the kids want to listen to it all over again!

Lee Gatiss

[For further information and ordering options see: www.churchsociety.org/store/saplings.asp]