

# 6 RESOURCES TO UP YOUR CHRISTIAN MOM GAME

*By Melissa Meyer*

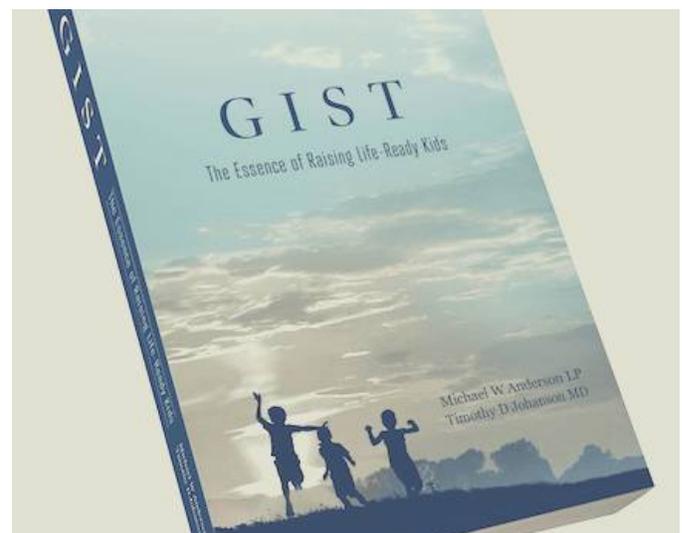
If you were to ask me what makes for a perfect mom, I would say to you (in my best Dwight Schrute imitation), “Trick question. There’s no such thing as a perfect mom.” Because there isn’t. I dare you to find one perfect mom. She cannot be found.

Every Instagramming mom whose feed is full of her elaborate birthday parties/made-from-scratch-organic meals/adorable wardrobe pieces, every blogger with ALL the parenting advice, every woman you sit next to in church, every mom crushing it in the boardroom, every homeschooling-stay-at-home-mom...they ALL make mistakes. Moms yell, forget stuff that’s important, unjustly punish their kids, fear that they’re messing up this parenting gig, have guilt about something they feel they’re lacking in, argue with their kids, and the list goes on.

Because there are no perfect moms, we all need a little extra help at times as we navigate this giant responsibility of raising humans. This is a list of six resources that have helped me, given me good things to ponder, pointed me in a better direction than I was headed, and have been aids in upping my game as a Christian mom.

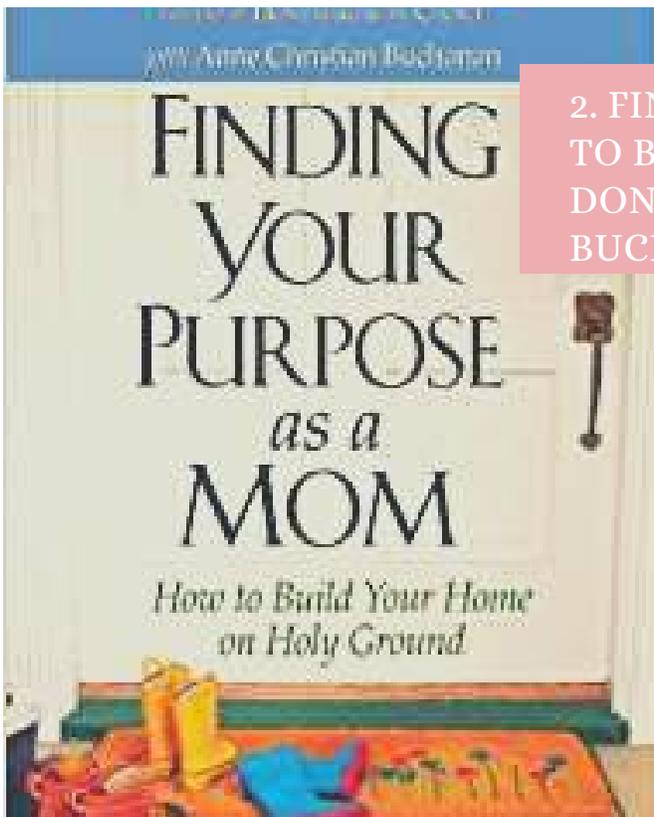
## 1. GIST: THE ESSENCE OF RAISING LIFE-READY KIDS BY MICHAEL W. ANDERSON, LP & TIMOTHY D. JOHANSON, MD

This book is really for any mom or dad. And it isn’t faith-based at all. But I heard about this book on a Christian podcast and was very intrigued by the interview of the two authors. This book was written by a Licensed Psychologist and a Pediatrician. It covers foundational principles of life, such as love must evolve, learning & anti-learning, and the difference between fun & joy (all of these are chapter titles). It also talks about core development children need, such as self-esteem, telling the truth, and not being over-parented. If you would have



asked me before I read this book if I were over-parenting, I would have said no. But the bar Anderson and Johanson set for over-parenting is not nearly as high as I had it. I am over-parenting. One of their biggest points is “words don’t equal parenting.” Meaning oftentimes parents talk too much at their kids, instead of making their point and letting it be.

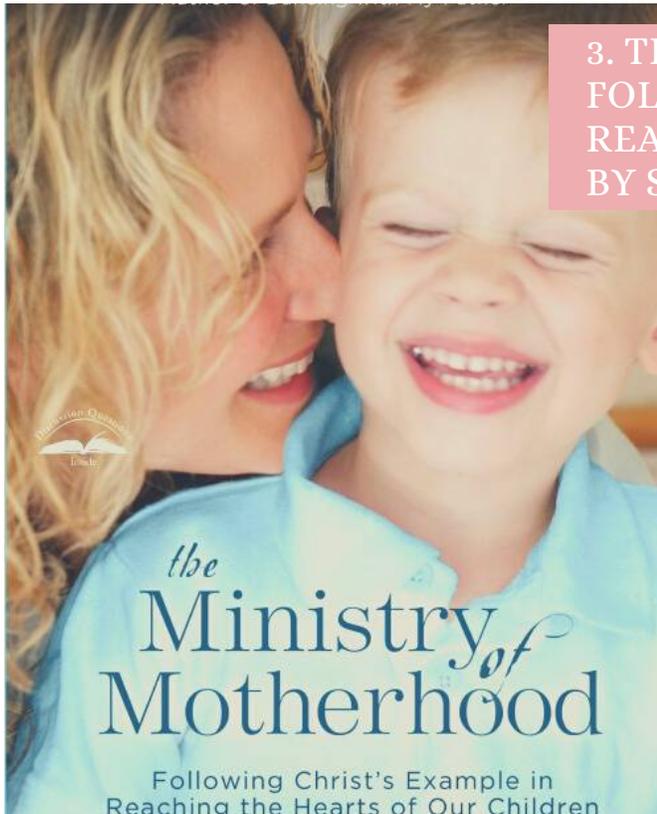
At times the book is a bit dry as it gets a little bit into clinical topics. And I was hoping it was bit more set up as, “This is the issue your child has? Well, this is how you can address it.” But it was more of a “warning” book, giving examples of ways kids are raised that does not get them life-ready, without many “solutions.” However, there were a few nuggets of wisdom I gleaned and now have in my bag of parenting tricks if I need them.



## 2. FINDING YOUR PURPOSE AS A MOM: HOW TO BUILD YOUR HOME ON HOLY GROUND BY DONNA OTTO WITH ANNE CHRISTIAN BUCHANAN

I think I heard this author being interviewed on a podcast as well and promptly ordered her book. This book covers ways to make your home a holy ground, no matter your age or stage of life. Donna examines ways to make your home a place of love and peace, a place of growth, and a place of service. There are questions to reflect on at the end of each chapter and she gives some practical, Biblical advice to make your home a ministry to others – both those who live in it and those who visit it. There is a page in this book where Donna wrote out what could be a creed, or roadmap to making a Christ-centered home. I tweaked her words a bit to make it personal, wrote it on a piece of cardstock, and stuck it somewhere I have seen it every day for the past three years. It’s a good reminder of what I’m aiming for when building our home on holy ground.

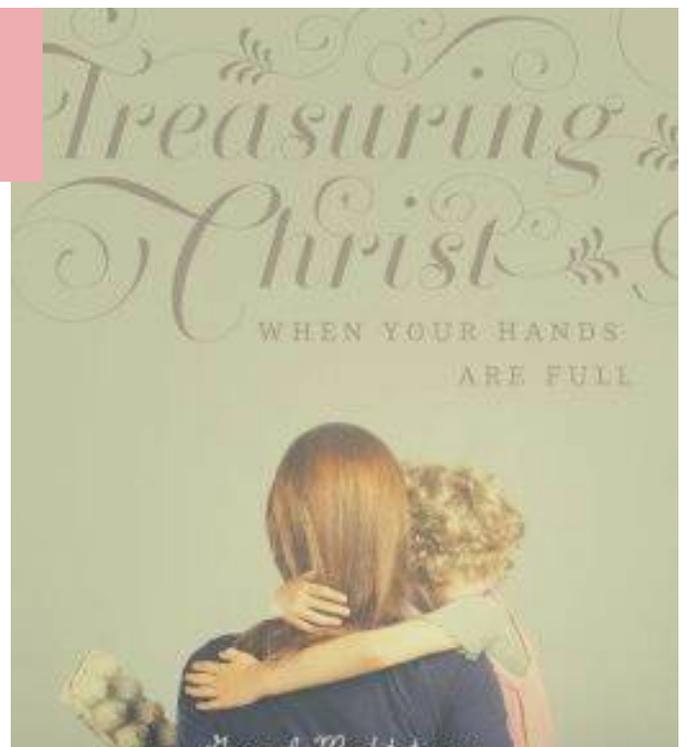
### 3. THE MINISTRY OF MOTHERHOOD: FOLLOWING CHRIST'S EXAMPLE IN REACHING THE HEARTS OF OUR CHILDREN BY SALLY CLARKSON

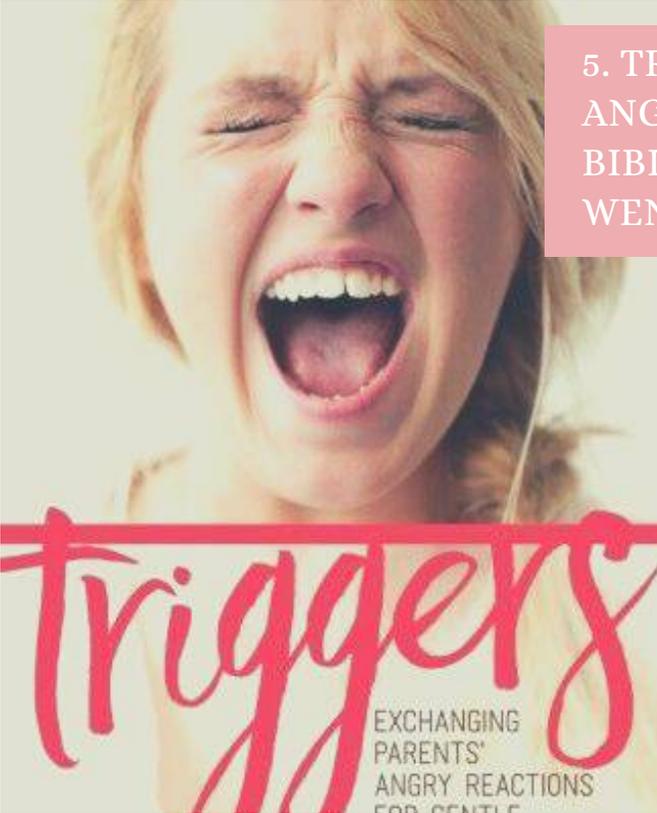


This book really challenged me in both my role as a parent and how I need to step up my perseverance in my relationship with Jesus. This book encouraged me to make my faith a higher priority, without guiltting me into feeling that way. This book covers the many gifts a mother can give to her children. Sections are broken out into the gift of grace, the gift of inspiration, the gift of faith, the gift of training, and the gift of service. This book was easy to read with short chapters I could consume in small or big chunks. Sally has a way of retelling stories from the scripture, showing us how Jesus gave those he lived with (his disciples) the gifts discussed in the book as well as reaching their hearts. He was the ultimate example of ministering to those closest to him.

### 4. TREASURING CHRIST WHEN YOUR HANDS ARE FULL: GOSPEL MEDITATIONS FOR BUSY MOMS BY GLORIA FURMAN

This book examines how moms who are overwhelmed with all sorts of parenting aspects need to lean on Christ. It gives advice regarding treasuring Christ with gospel-centered wisdom, without being a “how-to” book. The book on viewing motherhood as worship is a quick read.



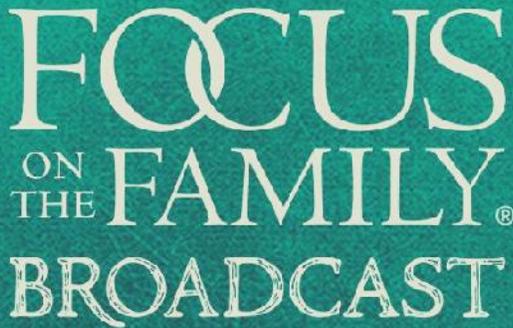


5. TRIGGERS: EXCHANGING PARENTS' ANGRY REACTIONS FOR GENTLE BIBLICAL RESPONSES BY AMBER LIA & WENDY SPEAKE

This has been the most helpful book I've ever read on Christian parenting. I yell at my young children WAY more than I want to. I do not like being the yelling mom and the guilt over it can be crushing to my spirit. And it's not God-honoring behavior. Once again, this was a book I heard about when the authors were interviewed on a podcast. The first half of the book examines external triggers, or behaviors our children exhibit that can cause our anger to be

triggered. Chapters cover behaviors like disobedience, backtalk, lying, sibling rivalry, video game addiction, and ignoring instruction. The second half of the book looks at internal triggers, or areas where we can personally struggle which can trigger anger. Chapters cover areas like running late, going it all alone, messy homes, stress, feelings of guilt, and challenging relationships with in-laws. There are helpful scripture passages throughout the chapters, to remind readers what God says about these topics. There is also a prayer at the end of each chapter, and I have dog-eared a few of those prayer pages so I can go back to them again and again. This book sits on my nightstand so I can pick it up and read a quick chapter when I'm struggling with anger. The chapters are short and there are 31 of them so you can read it in a month if you read one each day.

## 6. FOCUS ON THE FAMILY PODCAST

The logo for 'Focus on the Family Broadcast' is displayed in white, serif, all-caps font against a dark teal background. The text is arranged in three lines: 'FOCUS' on the top line, 'ON THE FAMILY' on the middle line, and 'BROADCAST' on the bottom line. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the right of the word 'FAMILY'.

So what is this podcast I've been referring to, the one where I've heard so many authors interviewed? It's the podcast from the Christian Ministry, Focus on the Family. Years ago, before I even had a family, I used to listen to their broadcasts on a local Christian music

radio station during my commute. When the station dropped the broadcasts, I went years without listening. Then I discovered a few years ago they have a podcast. Not every episode is about parenting. Some are about marriage, cultural issues, or testimonies of incredible Christ followers. But many episodes cover parenting topics. Recent episodes have included: How to Raise Strong Believers, Rising to the Challenge of Parenting, Homemade Meals for Busy Families, Trusting God With Your Adult Children, and Raising Boys to be Godly Young Men. All episodes are about 30 minutes and some topics have two episodes. Many an episode has brought me to tears as I stood at my kitchen sink, washing dishes. It is my favorite podcast to listen to because it is so helpful and inspirational. If you don't listen to podcasts, you can access their broadcasts directly from their website.

There are so many great resources out there to help us raise our children as we seek to glorify God. We all have shortcomings and it's nice when you find a book that "gets you" and offers you some ideas as you lean on Christ for wisdom and guidance.

Books on my "to read" list for the upcoming year include Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours by Dr. Kevin Leman, The 5 Love Languages of Children: The Secret to Loving Children Effectively by Gary Chapman & Ross Campbell, The Power of a Praying Parent by Stormie Omartian, I Can't Believe You Just Said That!: Biblical Wisdom for Taming Your Child's Tongue by Ginger Hubbard, Mama Bear Apologetics: Empowering Your Kids to Challenge Cultural Lies by Hillary Morgan Ferrer & Nancy Pearcey.