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Lauren Harvey • lharvey@crossway.org
1 (630) 682-4300, ext. 6031 • crossway.org

INTRODUCING ARLO AND THE GREAT BIG COVER-UP
New Picture Book Teaches Children the Freedom Found in Confessing Sin to God

WHEATON, Ill.—For Christian parents, teaching children about sin and disobedience can be difficult. As children learn the difference between right and wrong, they naturally try to cover up their disobedience and hide it from their parents. Along with teaching their children how to do right, parents need to help children learn how to confess when they have done wrong.

In Arlo and the Great Big Cover-Up (Crossway, June 2020), a new picture book published in partnership with the Gospel Coalition, author Betsy Childs Howard shows children ages 3–7 the freedom that comes through confessing sin rather than trying to cover it up. “Ever since the Garden of Eden, men and women (and boys and girls) have been trying to hide their sin from God,” Howard writes. “We instinctively know that sin damages our relationship with our Maker, yet our impulse to hide sin only makes matters worse.”

With easy-to-understand language and vivid illustrations by Samara Hardy, Arlo and the Great Big Cover-Up tells the story of a little boy who colors on his bedroom wall and then tries desperately to hide his actions from his mother. Arlo’s cover-up only creates a bigger mess, but he eventually finds relief when he confesses his disobedience.

Through Arlo and the Great Big Cover-Up, Howard brings the words of Proverbs 28:13 to life: “Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.” Children will learn along with Arlo that although they cannot hide their sins from God, confession opens the door to mercy and reconciliation.

In a “Note to Grown-Ups” at the end of the book, Howard writes, “We hope that children will remember Arlo’s story when they disobey and are tempted to cover up their sins. It is never too early to learn to come out of hiding and into the light, where the blood of Jesus cleanses us and our loving Father welcomes us into his arms!”
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Betsy Childs Howard (MA, Beeson Divinity School) is an editor for the Gospel Coalition and oversaw the New City Catechism project. She is the author of Seasons of Waiting and lives with her husband, Bernard, in Manhattan, where they planted Good Shepherd Anglican Church in 2017.

betsyhoward.com
twitter.com/BetsyCHoward

Samara Hardy is a freelance illustrator and designer who creates artwork for greeting cards, stationery, housewares, children’s books, and more. She has worked with clients across the globe such as Hallmark, Trader Joe’s, Oxford University Press, and American Greetings.

samarahardy.com
instagram.com/samara_hardy

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