

Why You Should Never Give Up on Your Child

I'm a hurting parent whose daughter struggles with addiction and mental-health issues. Some days I need a reminder to not give up but keep perspective. One spring, God gave me what I needed.

At the end of winter, much of nature looks dead, even in Florida where I live. Leaves turn brown, dry up and fall off trees, bushes and flowers. Most become dormant. In the backyard of our previous home, I had many flowering bushes. One year, they were seriously damaged by sub-freezing temperatures. It made me sad, because I had enjoyed an abundance of flowers I could see from the kitchen sink where I spent a lot of time. But they were reduced to a bunch of brown sticks and a few leaves. Certain there was no hope, I thought I had to dig them up and replant.

Don't Give Up Too Soon

However, a thought occurred to me. *Maybe I shouldn't give up too quickly.* Maybe if I pruned them and waited, refusing to believe the way they looked, they might come back in the spring. What could it hurt? And if they did, I would save myself a lot of work and money.

A few months later, small signs of life began to appear. Little green sprouts popped out all over the plants! Shocked and overjoyed, I couldn't believe my eyes. As the days passed, I continued to wait. More green leaves continued to appear until every bush was covered. In time, they were full of flowers. Those once dead-looking shrubs changed into lush bushes. The transformation was an unexpected and welcomed surprise.

I almost gave up too soon!

Then I had an *aha* moment: *It's the same with our children's lives.*

God gave me a visual example with my flower bushes to remind me of the promise of new life and the hope of rebirth for anyone who comes to Him.

Keep Perspective

Dear weary mom or dad, what looks hopeless to you isn't hopeless to God. We can't see what He sees—the seeds of new life are germinating within our children's hearts. When we have the proper perspective it makes all the difference. God has the knowledge and the power we don't have. Our job is to trust Him, wait and put our hope *in Him*.

Never give up. It might look like a lifeless winter in your child's life today—but spring could be just a few weeks away.

These Bible verses inspire hope in my heart:

- “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, made us alive together with Christ” (Eph. 2:4-5a).
- “But hope that is seen is not hope, for why does a man still hope for what he sees?” (Rom. 8:24b).
- “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted in me? Hope in God” (Ps. 42:5a).

Prayer:

Father, do your pruning work in my child's life. Teach my heart the message of spring. Remind me that You are at work even when I can't see any signs of it. Help me keep perspective as I trust, choose not to give up too soon, and hold on to hope. Thank you for the promise of new life and the very real hope of rebirth in Christ. In His name, amen. {eo}

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