

Your Christmas Wish List as a Parent in Pain

As the mother of a daughter who has wrestled with addictions, self-injury, mental illness and suicidal tendencies, my wants during the holidays are few.

If I could be a child again, I'd climb up on Santa's lap and have a very different kind of wish list to share with him.

Material things mean nothing when one of our children is suffering.

We'll never be the same.

What do we really want for Christmas? Nothing money can buy. Your list is probably a lot like mine. It's more like a prayer.

All I Want for Christmas:

1) A "do-over" for my daughter.

To be able to turn back the clock; erase the trauma and damage that's been done; wipe away all memory of the terrors she's experienced and make her internal and external scars disappear, including the ones on my own heart.

2) My daughter healed completely, on every level—physical, emotional, social and spiritual; no more addiction, damaged health, mental illness or broken relationships—with others and with her Creator.

3) A spiritual awakening that cannot be quenched or dampened by anything or anyone, lasting for the rest of her life.

4) For her to embrace the dreams her heavenly Father has for her; great purpose for the pain and a compelling reason to

live no matter what trials she faces in the future.

5) **A protective shield covering** to keep her safe from the destructive plans and schemes of the evil one.

6) **The peace of Christ in my heart** to accept whatever may happen.

7) **Invincible faith** that believes as long as she's still breathing there's still hope.

8) And lastly, **strength to persevere, not grow weary or give up.**

Too Old for Santa, But ...

I'm too big and too old to sit on Santa's lap these days, *but* through prayer, I can climb up on God's lap anytime I want. I don't have to go to the mall or wait in a long line, either. I can bring my heart's desires to Him whenever I'm ready. He'll give me His undivided attention and all the time I need, with a heart full of compassion and empathy. I'm never too big or too old for that.

After this comes the hard part—waiting and trusting. Like a child anticipating Christmas morning, it's hard to wait for what we want so badly.

I think I'll write out my list and put it in my God Box. Do you have one of those? I'll tell you more about it another time.

This Bible verse always helps:

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with gratitude, make your requests known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will protect your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7).

Dear God, there's so much I could put on my Christmas wish list. It's overwhelming. If I wrote them all down I could fill the pages of many books. Please show me how to give my desires to You. Fill me with the courage to wait on Your timing. Help me trust with what I don't understand. Remind me this week how much You love me and my child—enough to exchange Your glory for a manger to prove it. You came into our world to die so that both of us could really live. This is my true comfort. This is my true joy. In the name of the Prince of Peace. Amen.
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