

God's Christmas List

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When I was growing up, I never saw my mother stressed or worried about Christmas. Beginning in September, she would bake a Christmas treat every Sunday and then stow it away in the freezer. Looking back, I don't know how we each resisted the temptation to sneak a few treats. By October, she had each gift purchased and carefully wrapped. Some gifts were hidden away and some were set aside to be mailed to friends and relatives living far away. By November, each Christmas card was ready to be mailed with a personal hand written letter enclosed. This left the month of December to enjoy holiday parties, get-togethers and Christmas itself. All the preparation led to a wonderful Christmas celebration.

Is anyone that ordered and methodical today? Does even thinking about all that preparation make you feel overwhelmed and like a failure? Fortunately, those of us, like me, who are not as organized as my mother, can take heart. God does not have a checklist for us. He never looks down on us and thinks, "You did not get every thing done that I wanted you to do today." He is not disappointed if we don't get to our own checklist. When we really get down to it, God made all the necessary preparations for all Christmas celebrations for eternity.

We read about it in John 3:16: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (NIV)*. In this verse, we can hear God's heart that beats for us, His only creation that was made in His image. God is our Heavenly Father who cares. Because He loves us and out of His love for us, He gave us the most precious gift that we could ever receive, Jesus. Through believing in Jesus, we are given the gift of redemption and everlasting life. God is blessed when we turn our hearts toward Him.

In John 10:10b we read: *I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (NIV)*. In this verse, Jesus explains that He came for us so that we can have life to the full. When we look at the Greek meaning for life, we learn that "life" refers to "eternal life or spiritual life." Here, we learn that God's desire is for us to have eternal life. God loves us so much that He made a way for us to be with Him in eternity. Jesus willingly came to save us. He not only wants us to be with Him in this present life on earth but also in eternity. Our Heavenly Father wants His children with Him.

Our finite minds cannot comprehend the depth of God's love for us. His love is pure, unconditional and complete. He made all the necessary preparations for Christmas. If we find ourselves overwhelmed, anxious, lonely or fearful during this Christmas season, we can take heart and reflect on God's love. He wants us to rest in Him and experience His love. God wants to love us.

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