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ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS



# A New Pair of Ears

by Alicia Bruxvoort

This holiday season we can all receive a precious gift through childlike faith. We can turn off the buzz of the media and the rush of the season and listen with our ears tuned to the whisper of our stable-born King.

“So what’s the best part about being four and a half years old?” I asked our eldest daughter Elizabeth one drab February afternoon as we frosted cupcakes for her half-birthday celebration at preschool. “Oh, that’s *EASY*,” Lizzy responded with a smile spreading across her chocolate-covered face.



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"I love my new ears." My eyes darted to Lizzy's ordinary looking four-and-a-half-year-old ears.

"Really?" I replied, "When did you get new ears?"

"I don't know for sure when it happened," Lizzy explained, "But one night God just slipped into my room while I was sleeping, and He cut off my old ears and put on these new ones for me!" Lizzy tugged at her ears with a satisfied grin and sighed with wonder. "I don't know how He did it, Mom. I didn't bleed or anything. God must have very special glue."

Stifling a giggle, I agreed that God is amazing and then asked one final question as we packed the cupcakes into boxes. "How are your new ears different from your old ones?"

"Oh," Lizzy said matter-of-factly, "My new ones hear Jesus. My old ones didn't do that."

And so began the adventure of Lizzy's *new ears* and the interesting conversations that followed. Ever since those new ears were glued on, Lizzy has slept with her Bible nearby just in case Jesus wants to read her a story in the middle of the night: "He likes to come when I'm feeling afraid of the dark, Mom." She has reported the whereabouts of angels, has welcomed messages of her Savior's love, and accepted divine words of advice: "I was going to take Hannah's blankie, but God told me not to!" The stories have changed from day to day, but the childlike faith that accompanies them has not.


While Lizzy's Christmas list is filled with wishes for Barbies and babies and ponies and paints, my list this year is brief. Forget the two front teeth; all I want for Christmas is a new pair of ears - a fresh set attached with special glue, or just a modification of the 34-year-old ones I've been living with. Doesn't matter to me, I just want the kind that hear Jesus.

While the media reports how many shopping days remain and the speaker systems in every store echo with strains of "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas," I would love to hear

the simple whisper of my stable-born King. I'd let Him read me a story, or tell me His own, complete with glorious details of angels and shepherds and bright shining stars. I'd welcome messages of His love and would even accept some Savior-submitted advice ("I know children are precious in your sight, Lord, but what do YOU suggest I do with my precious 2-year-old who's throwing a tantrum on the grocery store floor right now?") I don't know about you, but I'd love to start the New Year with a newfangled pair of ears.

Maybe I'll start by slowing down during this fast-paced season long enough to listen. Maybe I'll trade in a few hours of fancy holiday baking for a take-out-pizza picnic with my kids at the foot of the Christmas tree. Or turn off just one of those Christmas specials on TV and grab my Bible instead. And if I really get on a roll, I may even spend a little less time at the mall so I can share a quiet night in December with my husband counting our blessings instead of adding up our credit card bill.

I don't know if I'll find a pair of new ears stashed in my stocking on Christmas morning, but I have a feeling that if I took time to turn this old pair toward the manger, I might decide that listening to my Savior's whisper is the best part of being 34-and-a-half years old!

*Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth... He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak... those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint (Isaiah 40:28, 29, 31 NIV).* 

A freelance writer and speaker, Alicia makes her home in Pella, Iowa. She loves the sounds of Christmas music, her children's chatter, and her husband's laughter. Currently, Alicia is working on her first book and preparing to welcome her fourth child into the family just in time for Christmas.