

## *A Child's Request*

Dear Mommy and Daddy,

- Hold me, touch me, snuggle me often... for it is through your love that I flourish.
- Watch me, listen to me, and don't hurry our time together. Even though you've read "Green Eggs and Ham" a thousand times, put your heart into it –and no skippin' pages... for I judge my importance by how important I am to you.
- I will remember your open arms and the way that your face lights up when you see me more than the fancy clothes you buy me. I will remember your butterfly kisses, dancing in the rain with you and our shaving cream fights long after the toys you buy me.
- Be patient and seek to understand me... for it is through our interactions that I learn to interact with others.
- Value my wants no matter how silly they seem to you... for it is here that I learn that what I want is important.
- Be firm with me even when I'm screaming at the grocery store... for it is through your courage to be firm that I learn to stick to my convictions.
- Don't bribe me, reward me or punish me... for you rob me of the opportunity to listen to my own internal voice.
- Please don't yell or hit me... for this teaches me to use force to get my way.
- Forgive yourself quickly... for my spirit is resilient.
- Instead of remembering my footprints on the inside of your windshield, my dirty socks full of sand and the magic marker on the wall, remember the day I discovered my shadow, my arms around your neck and the delight of my giggles.
- At the end of our bad days, remind yourself of how much you love me. Watch me while I sleep. Marvel at my eyelashes, cheekbones and fingertips.
- When my teacher calls or when I get in a fight, assume the best of me and expect the best for me.
- Stand by me, and yet let me fight my own battles... for it is here that I develop confidence and build character.
- Let me watch respect and cooperation flow between you two...for it is here that I learn how to interact with the other sex. Having a good relationship is one of the greatest gifts you can give me.
- As I grow up, support my ever-changing dreams. I need someone to believe in me when I don't.
- Trust me as a teen, even though there is no evidence that you should. Trust that you have taught me well.
- Even though I make you walk far behind at the mall or not allow you to kiss me in public, I still need you.
- Allow me to express who I am and make my life's decisions, even though they may differ from yours.
- Lastly, make nothing other than God more important than our family... for it is here that I discover who I am.