

## Yes, Dear Children Called Grand There is a Santa Claus

I remember learning as a child Santa Claus was real. I never wavered in this belief even though it wasn't until I became an adult and started writing that I did research proving it. When I was young, our family tradition was to leave our Christmas wish lists in our stockings hung, of course with care, on the mantle of the fireplace on the feast of St. Nicholas or *Sans Nicholas*, December 6<sup>th</sup>. Sometime during the night the good Saint came and picked up our lists leaving candy, nuts, and a clementine in the stocking. Back then, in the nineteen sixties, clementines were rare in our part of the country. It was the only time in the year you got one.

If your behavior was not up to the standards set by the Master, our own and St. Nick's being the same One, the possibility existed there may be coal and/or a stick referred to as a switch left in your stocking. Sometime around the age of six to eight I did find a 'switch' along with the aforementioned treats. I do remember being mischievous during that age. And in a loving but very strict Roman Irish Catholic upbringing, where corporal punishment was an integral part of discipline, I did feel the impact of the switch yielded by my father.

Most psychologists of today would drop their jaw hearing of such a thing, insinuating I was 'scarred for life' by this. Personally, I always viewed it as a badge of honor. Though I am sure I deserved that switch, I am also sure I was always a rebel, much like my Master is sometimes defined as (an erroneous and incomplete description). This is my first memory of 'breaking the rules'. All my life I believed that rules outside of those given by the Creator, in all His Triune-ness, were there for one reason. ***Rules are made to be broken.*** Employing that theory I participated in sensational turn-arounds of four companies with financial difficulties in the eighties and nineties. They became unbridled successes.

I passed on the knowledge and accompanying tradition of the real Santa to my children. When peer pressure tempted them to believe that Santa Claus was not real, I simply stated the facts of his reality and his true existence. I pointed out you see so many of his 'helpers' dressed like him because his spirit, divinely created by The Spirit, lives on in millions of people.

I will never forget my wife telling me about the time our oldest lost a tooth and put it under his pillow. He failed to mention this to her. I was, often the case then, out running the sky in a Northwest jet. I called this looking for cash. I was an independent rep selling packaging for three companies. My customers existed coast to coast. My suppliers included one in Mexico City. I averaged eighteen airplanes a month for around ten years. Twenty years later I still have miles earned to use.

So when our eldest came down the steps from his bedroom upstairs one morning when I was away on one of those 'looking for cash' sojourns, with tears running down his cheeks and said to his mom, "The tooth fairy didn't come."

He followed that with, "The tooth fairy isn't real is she mom?"

Mom answered, "No." I cannot remember the rest of her explanation. I do not think I would have dispelled the myth of the tooth fairy.

But my kid answered quite convincingly and even bravely, "Well, at least there is still a Santa Claus!"

And promptly turned around and walked back up the steps before Mom uttered any more words.

I hope with all my heart, that now, even in his upper thirties, he still believes.

Clement

Do you know there are more churches named after St. Nicholas than any other saint? The only exceptions being the Master Himself and His Mother.

*The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara in Asia Minor. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.*

*Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. The prisons were so full of bishops, priests, and deacons, there was no room for the real criminals—murderers, thieves and robbers. After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. He died December 6, AD 343 in Myra and was buried in his cathedral church, where a unique relic, called manna, formed in his grave. This liquid substance, said to have healing powers, fostered the growth of devotion to Nicholas. The anniversary of his death became a day of celebration, St. Nicholas Day, December 6th (December 19 on the Julian Calendar).*

Source: <https://www.stnicholascenter.org/who-is-st-nicholas>

