

## My Husband Always Wanted Twelve Kids

T. Jeon

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Today, it's become extremely unusual to have four kids. One or two is the norm, three raises eyebrows but four is just a bombshell.

I've commiserated with other "four plus" parents who have faced the same. The looks that are cast our way as our blob of chaos makes its way through stores or narrow sidewalks ... the questions that follow: "are they all yours?" "how many...?" Although no one ever means badly, at times, I am made to feel as though I am bungee jumping without a cord.

My latest defense against these kinds of comments has been, "my husband wants another." To which we always laugh. Five! When four is nearly ridiculous! But he does. In fact, he's always wanted twelve.

I'm not sure why he wants twelve. Somehow I've never gotten around to asking why because ... well because I don't actually take him seriously. But he does love kids and he's always been a great dad.



After we had two kids - a girl and a boy - I was pretty satisfied and didn't necessarily feel the need for another but I was okay for a third. Once she came along, we all fell in love and our family became (spiritually and emotionally) richer, with more socks, broken toys, laughs, and memories.

Then as the other side of thirty began to stare me in the face and my littlest one was finally toilet trained, my husband began, once again, to bring up another little one. This time I was a bit more hesitant and I put a few conditions upfront: "if A, we can discuss B"... and after a lot more discussion, we decided that another baby would be a blessing to our family.

As the opening of this indicated, we've since welcomed our fourth and each child has come with innumerable blessings, gifts, challenges, and wonder. My husband continues - even to this morning - to ask for another.

He certainly enjoys the four that we have. Reading books with the kids, swimming, hiking, and playing games, laughing, and watching movies. He particularly loves when I recount or reenact the funny but admittedly mundane stories from our day. He is always ready to take a kid or two to the bathroom in the middle of the night or clean up messes and take care of sick little ones. He thoroughly enjoys fatherhood and it shows. While I'm at times reluctant to eat at restaurants with our four messy, noisy kids, he easily laughs off the looks and the comments. I suspect he enjoys the attention.

Every father is unique and I believe that is part of God's infinitely wise, loving design. Every father - every person - has different quirks and colors and it's been fun finding all the different facets of this particular person. I find that ours is unusual in wanting twelve kids but I'm glad that he does and that he's who he is. I can say that twelve will never happen but I love that he wants them and that he loves the chaos of our lives, he loves the kids and is always a loving, wonderful father and husband.