



BASIC TRUTH

GOD LOVES ME

SAY THIS

WHO CAN HELP YOU?
GOD CAN HELP YOU.

DO THIS



MORNING TIME

When you go in your baby's room this month say, "Good morning sweet boy/girl! Mommy/Daddy is here to help you because I love you."



FEEDING TIME

Look into your baby's eyes as you feed him/her and say, "Let Mommy/Daddy help you. There you go! God wants to help you too. He will always be with you to help you because He loves you. God loves you sooooo much."



CUDDLE TIME

Cuddle up with your baby this month and pray, "Dear God, I am so thankful you will always be with (name of child). I pray as he/she grows up that he/she will go to you when he/she needs help. Thank you for the way you love us. I love you, God. In Jesus' name. Amen."



BATH TIME

As you bathe your baby this month say, "God gave you Mommy/Daddy to help you. I help wash your hair and your tummy and your feet...Mommy/Daddy helps dry you off and dress you. Mommy/Daddy loves you, and God loves you too!"

This is an excerpt adapted from the book *Parenting Your New Baby* by Kristen Ivy and Reggie Joiner

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Regardless of how many friends, family members, and perfect strangers try to paint an accurate picture of parenthood, there's nothing anyone can say that adequately prepares you for that heart-stretching moment you hold your newborn for the very first time. And, the sentiments only grow exponentially from there. There aren't words in any language capable of conveying the myriad of emotions you will experience as a new parent.

Maybe that's the best word to describe the new baby phase: emotional. It's emotional for you. It's emotional for them. But, despite the crying—both yours and theirs—there is something indescribably wonderful about that first year of life. Somewhere in the delirium of teething and feedings and diapers and sleep schedules, something almost magical takes place. It's in the way your baby smells after a bath, wrapped in a towel and laying on your chest. It's in the way their eyelids flutter when they sleep. It's in the shape of their perfect little mouths, the length of their tiny fingernails, and the velvety feel of their skin against yours. There's something

alluring about the way they are totally and completely brand new.

There is a great sense of promise that adds to the allure of this age. Literally, anything is possible. The pages of their story are gleamingly blank, striking with potential. This is the beginning. You have a fresh start. And even though it's scary and you don't know what you're doing (none of us do), you have everything you need. Despite the thousands of mass-market baby products available, there is only one thing your baby really needs right now—your baby needs you.

Some days it may seem like they need you a little too much, a little too often, or a little too immediately. Don't worry. With every passing month, they will discover a new ability that lets them need you a little less. But for now, in this fleeting new baby phase, they need you. And you are enough.

- **Holly Crawshaw**
Preschool Director, Educator, & Author

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