

Hey my name is Holly. You met my husband, Ben in the other video. Together we have two daughters and I remember the first time my daughter, Lilah, got sick. She was only eight weeks old, and she had a runny nose and a fever. I mean, obviously I was stressed out. I'd never had a kid before, and I was just getting used to taking care of a healthy baby, much less a sick one.

Of course I called the doctor and I took her, but I didn't stop there. I called my mom, my aunt, my sister, my mother-in-law, and my best friend. I widened the circle of people I had surrounding my problem. I wanted their opinions. I wanted their opinions on my doctor's opinions. I wanted their opinions on each other's opinions. I wanted them to tell me that my baby was going to be okay, and that *I* was going to be okay. I needed someone to help me because I didn't want it to just be Ben and me making the decisions about Lilah's health.

And the truth is we are all better when we invite other voices into the process— when we widen our circle. And I'm not just talking about diagnosing a cold, but in all of parenting. We need help—me especially. I need help!

As you're planning who you will invite to your child's dedication celebration, we'd love for you to ask yourself these questions: Whose voice do I need to hear? Whose voice does my child need to hear? Think about the words and characteristics you wrote down that you'd like your child to eventually become. Do the guests you're inviting live lives that reflect those words?

Let the answers to those questions determine who is on your guest list for babyD.

Sure, the grandparents are invited, and maybe even your siblings and their kids, but we'd like to challenge you to invite someone

who you are intentionally asking to be inside your circle of direct influence. And when you invite them, let them know. Say, 'Hey, Gina. I would really love to see you at Lilah's baby dedication service because I want you to be in my circle. I want you to hold me accountable. I want you to give me advice on parenting. I want you to speak into my life, and my child's life, too.'

Because it's true—we're just better when there are other perspectives sharpening our choices.

In Deuteronomy chapter 6 Moses calls together a group of people to talk to them about how to raise the Israelite children. Ben talked to you about this passage before, when Moses said the most important thing we can give our children is a knowledge of their Heavenly father.

Now, in this group of people are aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends. It's not just the parents that Moses is talking to—he was making this charge to *all* the Israelites. Because Moses knew that the parents would need the help of the entire Israelite community to raise their children.

There's someone else you are going to need to widen your circle for—the church. Your church wants to play a role in helping shape and mold your child and their faith.

We have hand-selected people whose voices we think your child should hear. But even better, we think these are voices that your child will *want* to hear. These are our volunteers. We think the relationships our volunteers can form with your kids have the power to change the course of their lives. Especially as your child gets older.

Now, that's not to say that we think can make your child have a faith of their own, or "fix" them but we share a common goal with you—

we want your child to know that God made them, God loves them, and that Jesus wants to be their friend.

As a church, we plan to give you as many simple, easy-to-use tools as we can to help you parent with the end in mind. We want to link arms with you, to be a part of your circle.

Your homework for this video is to decide who you are going to invite to babyD, and to invite them.

You'll also be attending an orientation soon where you will receive more details about the baby dedication event, and you can ask any questions you have.

You don't have to do this alone. You *shouldn't* do it alone. Widen your circle to invite in adults who you trust and respect. Widen your circle to include us, your church.