

Opening Prayer

Reader 1. When I was born, I was totally dependent on you to take care of me. Whatever I needed, you managed to get it for me. When I was hungry, I was fed. When I was cold, you made me warm. When I cried, you held me in your arms. When I was sick, you took care of me. I probably even woke you up in the middle of the night, yet you still loved me.

Reader 2. When I was two, I was a little more confident and wanted to do things on my own. When I wanted to walk, you held me up. When I wanted to swing, you pushed me. When I wanted to feed myself, you let me make a mess. When I wanted to go with the "big kids," you kept your eye on me. I probably kept you running after me, yet you still loved me.

Reader 3. When I was five, it was time to learn more about other people and the world. When I went to school, you made sure I got there and home safely. When I learned to read, you encouraged me and told me how proud you were of me. When I came home with hurt feelings, you listened to me and made me feel better. When I brought home artwork, you hung it on the refrigerator. I probably was starting to grow up too fast, yet you still loved me.

Reader 4. When I was ten, I was starting to want my own independence. When I wanted privacy, you didn't come into my room. When I wanted to play sports, you managed to get me to all the practices. When I wanted to sleep over at a friend's house, you made sure I packed everything I needed. When I wanted to eat just junk food, you tried to set me straight. I probably didn't think about how you felt when I stopped kissing you in front of my friends, yet you still loved me.

Reader 5. When I was fourteen, I wanted to spend more time with my friends. When I went out on Friday nights, you wanted to know whom I was with. When I bought new clothes you didn't like, you wanted to know why I wanted to look that way. When I insisted on listening to the radio in the car rather than talking to you, you just let it go. When I wanted to stop visiting my grandparents, you made excuses for me. You probably didn't like all my decisions, yet you still loved me.

Reader 6. Now I am even older, and I sometimes think I just don't need your help as much. But please understand this, you have given me my roots and wings. You have helped shape who I am today. Even if I don't tell you or show you, I really do love you.