

BABY & CHILD DEDICATION

The dedication of children is a voluntary act in which believing parents publicly present their child and themselves to the Lord as an outward expression of their gratitude to Him for their child and as a formal appeal to God for His assistance in the rearing of the child. Such intentional parenting will lovingly lead a child to accept Christ as his Savior, receiving forgiveness for his/her sins and choosing God's plan of salvation.

Because the child is a gift from God, the parents promise, as God's stewards, to bring up the child entrusted to them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21).

In dedicating one's child in the presence of fellow believers, parents are publicly dedicating themselves to the faithful fulfillment of their parental responsibilities (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Proverbs 22:6) and are acknowledging their need of prayerful support and encouragement from fellow believers (Ephesians 6:18; Hebrews 10:24-25).

The act of dedication becomes meaningful only as the parents explain to the child the meaning of this act and consistently carry out the promises made before God and the congregation at the time of dedication.

The dedication is more than a service – it's a commitment of parents to honor the will and the Word of God. As part of this dedication, you are asked to:

- Publicly affirm your personal faith in Christ, and renew your dedication to Him and His Word.
- Pray daily for God's direction in your lives and in the life of your child.
- Faithfully participate in weekend worship services with your child.
- Teach your child the truths of God's Word in your home.
- Anticipate and seek to lead your child to a personal faith in Christ as soon as they are ready.
- Recognize that your child belongs to God and has been born to experience His love and to serve Him.

TEACHINGS OF SCRIPTURE

I. Jesus Christ's Example

Luke 2:22 – “When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.”

II. Jesus Christ's Teaching

Mark 10:13-16- “People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

III. The Example of Hannah and Samuel

I Samuel 1:10-11 – “In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord. And she made a vow, saying, ‘O Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.’” I Samuel 1:26-28- “and she said to him, ‘As surely as you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood beside you praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I have asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord.’ And he worshiped the Lord there.”

IV. The Responsibility of Godly Parents

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 – “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” Ephesians 6:4 – “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” In order for a child to be dedicated, the dedicating parents must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. If only one parent is a follower of Jesus or only one parent is living for the Lord, this dedication can still take place. Only the believing parent, or the one living for the Lord should dedicate the child(ren).