

baby

Dedication



Establishing a foundation

As Christians, there is tremendous responsibility given to us when the Lord blesses us with a child. He entrusts us with the responsibility of bringing up that child in the ways of the Lord and establishing early in his/her life a foundation built upon Jesus Christ. It is this responsibility that causes us to think of baby dedications as "family dedications." We feel that the whole family unit needs to be lifted up to the Lord so that each member will be able to keep his or her commitment.

What exactly is involved in "dedicating" your child to the Lord?

As mentioned in our theme scripture, children are a heritage from the Lord. He gives them to us to bless us, and because of this, we must be willing to give them back to Him. We too, must be willing to totally submit our children to the will of our Father.



A perfect example: In 1 Samuel 1:11, 26-28, Hannah, being barren (without child) for many years, was weeping before the Lord because of her condition. As she was weeping, she made a vow to God. "Then she made a vow and said, 'O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life...'"

God heard Hannah's request and gave her a son named Samuel. Hannah, in keeping her vow, dedicated (or set apart) Samuel unto the Lord.

Pray & instruct

We see here a beautiful example of what our attitudes should be toward our children and their relationship with God. We are to do the most we can to “set apart” our children to God until the day that they can make their own choice (something all of us must do at one time or another). By dedicating your children to the Lord, you are making a vow to raise them in His ways and not your own. You are committing yourselves to this promise and must do everything possible to keep it. The following is a list (though not exhaustive) of some of the things parents should do as part of keeping their vow:



Pray constantly for your child:

A parent's responsibility to pray for our children does not end at their dedication, but continues until the day the child commits their own life to the Lord. Job gives us an example of this in Job 1:5. "...Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, 'It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.' This Job did regularly."

Instruct your child in the way of the Lord:

We are taught in Ephesians 6:4 to “bring them (your children) up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” And Proverbs 22:6 adds, “Train up a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” If we, while our children are young, instruct them in His ways, we would be able to lay a foundation for our children to make a life-long commitment to the Lord.

Be a living example of Christ to your children:

It does not do your child any good to instruct him in the way of the Lord if you yourself do not walk what you talk. Therefore, you must always be examining yourself and your witness to your children. In Proverbs 20:7, the Bible says, “The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed (happy) are his children after him.” The main reason for the blessed state of this man's children is that they have someone to look up to and follow as an example, even as Christ is our example.

Discipline our children the same way the Lord disciplines us:

As you can see, by chastening or disciplining your child, you are showing your love for him. This brings us to the motivation of discipline. Any discipline you give to your child should be done for their profit and not as a release for your anger and/or frustration. Remember that you are to discipline your child in the same way the Lord disciplines you. God never strikes at His children in anger, and you should not either.

The book of Proverbs teaches us many practical aspects concerning the discipline we are to provide for our children. Some of the scriptures that relate to this subject are as follows:

Proverbs 29:15, 17 ~

“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Correct thy son and he shall give thee rest, yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.”

Proverbs 13:24 ~

“He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him early.”

Proverbs 19:18 ~

“Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.”

Proverbs 22:15 ~

“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”



Do not break their spirit:

As parents, we are not in the business of breaking our children's spirits, but instead, we are to encourage their spiritual growth. Explain to them why you must discipline them, carry out the discipline, and then, most importantly, LOVE THEM. If you are able to do this, then you will be disciplining your children in the way the Lord wants you to. Colossians 3:21 reads: “Fathers, do not provoke or irritate or fret your children – do not be hard or harass them lest they become discouraged and sullen and morose and feel inferior and frustrated.”



a Parent's calling

As mentioned previously, these are but a few of the responsibilities that God calls us to as parents. It needs to be said that if you are not a born-again Christian, these responsibilities will be impossible to keep. Calvary Chapel South Bay (CCSB) will decline any requests to dedicate children if the parents do not know Jesus as their personal Savior and are not in attendance here on a regular basis. We will dedicate your child along with the parent who does, in fact, have a relationship with Jesus Christ, but it would be an act of hypocrisy for us to allow a parent who does not know Jesus Christ to make a vow to Him that he cannot possibly keep. Here are some scriptures relating to this point:

- *Proverbs 20:25*
- *Deuteronomy 23:21-23*
- *Numbers 30:2*
- *Ecclesiastes 5:4*



There are instances recorded in the Bible where vows have been made by individuals to the Lord and have not kept them. As a result of breaking their vows, these people were dealt with severely by

God. We cannot allow people to make a vow unto the Lord if they do not have an understanding of the responsibilities that go along with making that vow. We view this as an act of protection, not as an act of rejection. Hopefully, you can now understand our viewpoint as being totally Biblical.

The dedication of your family to God is something too serious to be entered into lightly. It is hoped that this has helped you to recognize the extent of this commitment that you will be making.



Getting Started

If you have read and understood this brochure and would like to continue to have your child dedicated, you may pick up a Baby Dedication application form at the Welcome Center on Thursdays and Sundays during main services or at the Church Office during business hours. When completed, please turn in your application at the Church Office. You will receive a call to schedule a meeting with a pastor to go over the application and answer any questions you might have. The attire you select should be made with modesty in mind (1 Tim. 2:9-10), that it may bring honor to the Lord. Business casual is acceptable and Dads are not required to wear ties. For Moms, please see the following guidelines:

What is acceptable attire?

- ♥ The neckline of any dress or blouse/top must be above the cleavage area.
- ♥ The length of any dress or skirt must be at the knees or longer.
- ♥ The back of any dress or blouse/top must completely cover the average brassiere line.

What is unacceptable attire?

- ♥ A bare midriff/cleavage or plunging neckline.
- ♥ Sheer clothing.
- ♥ Thin spaghetti straps or a strapless dress or blouse/top.
- ♥ Slits on the dress or skirt passing above the knee.



The host couple is instrumental in preparing you for your child's dedication. The week of your baby dedication, the couple will give you a call to answer any questions you might have, explain the order of events, and fully assist you on the day of your dedication. When inviting friends and family to the dedication, please emphasize the importance of staying for the service. Our services are designed primarily for adults. Please inform your guests who are bringing children that classes are offered in the Children's Ministry from Nursery to High School age. Children age 10 and older may be in the sanctuary when accompanied by a parent. We do not allow other family members or friends backstage before or after the dedication. This is a great time to invite family members and friends who do not know the Lord so that they can hear the gospel message and see the love of Jesus. If you have any questions or need clarification, please call the Church Office to speak to Pastor Stef Mitrano in Children's Ministry.



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