

BABY DEDICATIONS

*Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven”
(Matthew 19:14).*

CHILDREN ARE A HERITAGE

The Bible says that children are a heritage and a reward from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). God has given Christian parents the tremendous responsibility of raising their children in the ways of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). He entrusts parents with the responsibility of establishing a foundation built upon Jesus Christ early in the lives of their children.

WHY CHILDREN SHOULD BE DEDICATED

In view of this responsibility, baby dedications are actually “family dedications.” It is a time for entire family to be lifted up in prayer so that the parents will be empowered to keep their responsibilities.

The Bible gives us an example of dedicating a child to the Lord through the account of Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:11, 26-28. Unable to have children, Hannah wept before the Lord because of her condition. As she was weeping, she made a promise to God 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...” (1 Samuel 1:11, emphasis added).

God honored Hannah’s request and gave her a son named Samuel. Hannah kept her promise and dedicated (which means “to set apart”) Samuel to the Lord.

REQUIREMENTS FOR DEDICATION

To dedicate a child to the Lord is to make a promise to completely submit your child to the will of God and raise that child in the ways of the Lord.

Parents who have not placed their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord will be unable to submit their children to God's will and His ways, because they themselves do not know the ways of the Lord. As a result, we must decline any requests to involve an unbelieving parent in the dedication of a child. We view this as an act of protection rather than rejection, as we cannot encourage someone to make a vow to God that we know he or she cannot keep.

Our desire is to sit down with the parent or parents and review the Biblical foundation of the home. In situations where a believing parent wishes to dedicate a child independently of an unbelieving spouse we simply ask that that parent discuss it with a Pastor. We also recognize there may be some other unique situations that will call for a discussion with one of our pastors.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CHRISTIAN PARENT

Christian parents are to do all they can do to "set apart" their child to God until that child can make his or her own choice regarding a relationship with Jesus Christ. By dedicating a child to the Lord, parents make a promise to raise their child in God's ways and not their own. They commit themselves to this promise and must do all they can do to keep it.

The responsibilities God has entrusted to Christian parents include continuously praying for their children, instructing them in the way of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6), setting a godly example (Proverbs 20:7), and disciplining them as the Lord would discipline us (Proverbs

29:15, 17; 13:24). These responsibilities can only be fulfilled in Christ's strength (Philippians 4:13).

As a parent, your devotion to God, or lack of it, will make a resounding impression on the next generation. May your legacy be a godly one.