

Child Dedication

By Melanie Stone

Child dedication is a special way we as parents, guardians, families and a church can make a public commitment to the Lord, our children, and each other. As a Christian church, we understand that each person must make their own decision for Christ and that child dedication does not assure the child's salvation. While child dedication is not a scriptural requirement, it is a commitment we cherish and celebrate.

There are several reasons why we publicly dedicate our children:

- **CONSECRATION**
Parents/guardians who dedicate their child or children are consecrating the child, or setting the child apart, for the Lord. They acknowledge the Lord as the One who gave the child and the One to whom the child belongs. The parent or guardian accepts they are a steward of the gift he or she has been given and accepts responsibility as the primary representative of God in the child's life.
- **COMMITMENT**
Parents/guardians who dedicate their child are acknowledging a child's spiritual life is an integral part of the young person's development. They dedicate themselves to raise their child to know the Lord and to guide the child to one day make their own decision for Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. They pledge to be an example for their child to imitate by demonstrating a love for God, a respect for the Bible, honor for the Holy Spirit and responsibility to do their part in and through the local church.
- **PRAYER**
Parents/guardians who dedicate, are leaning on God in faith, asking Him for help to train, guide and protect their child. They are inviting the Holy Spirit into their home for His leading, empowerment and anointing in the lives of the family.
- **SUPPORT**
Parents/guardians who dedicate, are asking their church family for their encouragement and support. The home is the child's primary source of Christian influence and education. The church's role is to support the parents, to partner with them to confirm Bible teaching, lead a worship experience and provide an atmosphere for Christian friendships. Parents/guardians are agreeing to demonstrate the value of service and faithfulness to a local church with the anticipation their children will adopt the same value as they grow up.
- **CELEBRATION**
The church gives witness to the parents/guardians dedication and celebrates the children who are part of the church family.

Child Dedication Scriptures

1 Samuel 1:27-28 (Hannah) "I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord."

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 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."

2 Timothy 1:5 "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also."

2 Timothy 3:15 "...from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."

Luke 2:22 "When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord."

Luke 2:40 "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him."

Psalms 8:2 "Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies."

Psalms 127:3-5 "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from Him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them..."

Psalms 37:5 "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this."

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 "These commandments that I give you today are to be on 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."

Proverbs 22:6 "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it."

Ephesians 6:4 "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

1 Corinthians 4:2 "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."

See also: Proverbs 3:1-13

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The church usually encourages family and friends to be present for the dedication. Special seating may be available. Photos and video are welcome to record the special day.

The church typically asks the parent to submit their names and the name and age of the child for the dedication and for a certificate of the event as a keepsake.

The pastor will typically share a brief admonition for the congregation, introduce the parents and child to the congregation, and pray over the child, laying hands on the child as a point of contact for the anointing. *Mark 10:13 "...parents brought their children to Jesus so He could touch and bless them..."*

One suggestion for parents/guardians is to write a letter to each child, expressing their hope for their child's developing relationship with God, seal it in an envelope, and read it to the child after they graduate High School.