

Parent / Child Dedication

What is Parent / Child Dedication?

Parent / Child Dedication is a church tradition. According to Webster's Dictionary, dedication is "to set apart for sacred uses; consecrate." The Parent / Child Dedication service is a time for parents to make or renew their commitment to set apart their children to grow and learn in a Christ-centered home.

What is the purpose of Parent / Child Dedication?

Christian parents desire for their children to grow in a loving relationship with God. While the decision to embrace Christ is a decision that each person must make for himself or herself, parents create the environment for spiritual growth in their children. While a specific Parent / Child Dedication ceremony is not prescribed in Scripture, we can find examples and principles that encourage parents to set their children apart for God's work and his care. Dedication is ...

A TIME OF REMEMBRANCE

In the account of the Passover in Exodus, the Lord instructs Moses to "consecrate to me every firstborn male" (13:1-2). Each firstborn animal was to be sacrificed; each firstborn son was to be redeemed (bought back) with an offering. The purpose of this consecration was to remember the Lord who redeemed Israel from slavery in Egypt. Dedication is a time to remember the God who saves all men and women and sets them apart as his chosen sons and daughters.

A TIME OF RENEWAL

As God gives Moses the laws recorded in Leviticus, He tells the Israelites to "consecrate yourselves and be holy" (20:7). The context for this passage is the admonition for the Israelites to be distinctively different from the pagan cultures surrounding them. Dedication is a time to renew our commitment to be distinctively different from our culture because of God's transforming work in our hearts.

A TIME OF RELEASE

In I Samuel, Hannah fulfills her promise to give Samuel "to the Lord for all the days of his life" (1:11). Upon leaving Samuel at the temple, Hannah tells Eli "so now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord." In gratitude for the gift of her long awaited son, Hannah releases Samuel to God's service. Dedication is a time for parents to release their child into God's purpose and care for that child's entire life.

A TIME TO RECEIVE

In the gospel of Luke, Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the temple “to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”) (2:22-23). Following the model established for the Israelites in Exodus, Jesus is set apart as holy to God, then he is redeemed with an offering to God. Dedication is a time for parents to acknowledge that they have received their child from God and they are committed to teaching that child to know God.

Parent / Child Dedication is an opportunity for parents to remember God, to renew their commitment to him, to release their children into his care, and to receive their children anew with the promise to guide them to grow up loving their Creator.

Who should have their child dedicated?

- Parents who have a committed love relationship with God through Jesus Christ guided by the Holy Spirit.
- Parents who are actively involved in the ministry of the local church.
- Parents who take seriously the commitment to raise their children in a home that honors God.

According to God’s Word, parents are the primary spiritual guides for their children.

“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. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” Deuteronomy 6:4-9

What does a Parent / Child Dedication service involve?

Your participation in this service indicates your desire to guide your child to grow up loving God.

Prior to the service, you will participate in a Parent / Child Dedication class. You will complete a Family Information Card. You will also choose a life verse for your child. The life verse should reflect your understanding of God’s will for your child’s life and your lifelong prayer for your child’s spiritual growth.

During the service, you and your family will be introduced and your child’s life verse will be read. Your child will be presented with a Bible as a symbol of your commitment to teach your child the truths of Scripture and as a symbol of our church’s commitment to support your family as we grow together. Our

church will read aloud a corporate blessing for your child expressing our desire for your family, and our pastor will pray over your family.

What is the blessing?

May the Lord bless and keep you.

May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and give you peace

So that all will know that Jesus Christ is Lord.

This blessing is taken from the Priestly Blessing in Numbers 6:22-27 along with a New Testament affirmation of Christ's lordship.

What should I do if I would like to participate in a Parent / Child Dedication?

Call the church office to register (447-9496). We will call you about the next dedication class and the next dedication service. If you have further questions, please call Jennifer Foster.