



BABY & CHILD DEDICATION CLASS

WHY DO WE DEDICATE CHILDREN?

Dedicating a child acknowledges God's sovereignty not only over the child, but also the parents. Parents present their child before God and His people asking for grace and wisdom in carrying out their responsibilities. Parents also come praying that their child might one day trust Jesus Christ as their Savior for the forgiveness of sin.

Before the actual dedication ceremony, it is crucial that parents understand the meaning of dedication. One of the best Scripture passages for this purpose is found in Deuteronomy 6:4-7 (NLT):

⁴ "Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵ And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. ⁶ And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. ⁷ Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up."

Notice that this passage commands parents to love God. If you truly wish for your child to one day love and follow God, then your lives must be an example.

Second, this passage also makes it clear that the duty of teaching children belongs to parents. The church can provide weekly instruction, but parents must seize the teachable moments that arise throughout life. Teach your children how to pray. Teach them to pray at meal times and before going to bed. Encourage them to read Bible stories aloud for devotions, or if they are not old enough to read, you, as the parent, should read the stories to them.

Another passage of Scripture is found in Mark 10:13-16 (NLT):

¹³ One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw what was happening, he was angry with his disciples. He said to them, 'Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.' ¹⁶ Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them."

When we dedicate our children, it is a way of bringing them to Jesus for His blessing. We bring them to Him, recognizing that they are His and He has given them to us for a time. As Christians, we understand that all we have has been given to us from God. One day we will answer to Him for how we have managed what He has entrusted to our care, including our children. When we dedicate our children we are acknowledging Jesus' Lordship over our family.

Also, by bringing our children before the Lord and the church, we are making a vow that we intend to raise our children in the nurture and admonition of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul wrote:

4 “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4, NLT

Because of this, parents considering taking this step of formally dedicating their children need to consider the seriousness of the commitment. It’s a serious time because vows we take before God, He expects us to fulfill. Dedicating our children is not some kind of one time religious ritual. It is a sober dedication of the *parents* to the ways of the Lord in raising their child.

The vow, made to the Lord, is witnessed before the church, much like a wedding. It is the church’s duty to pray for and hold the parents accountable to their vow in the months and years to come.

WHAT DEDICATION IS NOT

Dedicating a child does not make that child a Christian. That is a decision the child will have to make for him or herself when he or she reaches the age of accountability and understanding. A dedication service does not replace baptism. Baptism is a step of obedience that *believers* are to take when they understand and are ready to make their own personal commitment to Jesus Christ.

A FINAL WORD TO PARENTS

The Word of God says, *“Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery.” (Hebrews 13:4)*. God sees living together without being married as being wrong. In order to raise your child as God instructs every parent, you need to be married. This would be the first step you would take before you dedicate your child.

Also, it’s not uncommon for a mother or father to be married to someone who does not share their commitment to the Lordship of Christ. Since the dedication of children is a solemn vow to God to raise them in the nurture and knowledge of Christ, this places a burden on the unbeliever they may not be comfortable with. For that reason, we ask you to consider seriously what you are doing. What do you believe about God? Why are you wanting to dedicate your child? It may be that you are uncomfortable making such a vow. If so, and your mate desires to proceed, you might decide to let them go ahead with the dedication while you do not join them in the ceremony.

Finally, we recognize that many single parents may want to dedicate their children. As long as the parent attends Core Church and adheres to the Biblical standards laid out above, we happily extend the invitation to dedicate these children.



BABY & CHILD DEDICATION APPLICATION

Father's Name: _____

Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord & Savior? Yes No

Mother's Name: _____

Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord & Savior? Yes No

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Father's Cell: _____ Father's Email: _____

Mother's Cell: _____ Mother's Email: _____

How long have you attended Core Church? _____

Child to be Dedicated: _____

DOB: _____/_____/_____ Gender: M F

First Middle Last

Child to be Dedicated: _____

DOB: _____/_____/_____ Gender: M F

First Middle Last

Child to be Dedicated: _____

DOB: _____/_____/_____ Gender: M F

First Middle Last

Child to be Dedicated: _____

DOB: _____/_____/_____ Gender: M F

First Middle Last

BABY & CHILD DEDICATION COVENANT

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. Deuteronomy 6: 5-7

1. I desire to publicly acknowledge that my child is a gift from God and to give Him the thanks for this blessing.
2. I recognize that my child was created by God and for God and His glory, and it is my desire to publicly dedicate them back to God for His purpose.
3. I realize that my child will experience real life (Ps 16:11) only as they learn to love God and to walk in His ways... And I pledge, with God's Fatherly help, to take my place as the earthly shepherd for this life.
4. I will give myself diligently to learn to love God with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind. I will make it a personal priority in my weekly schedule to have times to study God's Word and to pray on my own. I will make every reasonable effort to participate as a parent in the Sunday worship service and any other program Core Church has designed for my spiritual growth.
5. I will bring up my child in the "instruction" of the Lord. I will commit myself to make every reasonable effort to walk along side of them using daily real life experiences as training moments to teach them to interpret all situations through what God says. I will, with patience and love, build the Word of God, the character of Christ, and the joy of the Lord in their life. I will make every possible effort to have them participate in the Core Kids ministry made available to assist me in this training process.
6. I will, with God's help, pray regularly that, by God's grace, they will come to trust in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of their sins and for the fulfillment of all His promises to them, even eternal life; and that, in their faith, they will follow Jesus as Lord and obey His teachings.
7. I promise to provide, through God's blessing, for the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs of my child, looking to my own heavenly Father for the wisdom, love, and strength to serve them and not "use" them to meet my longings and needs.

Father's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mother's Signature: _____ Date: _____