



The idea of dedicating a child to the Lord can certainly be found in the Bible.

1. Hannah was a barren wife who promised to dedicate her child to God if He would give her a son (1 Samuel 1:11).
2. Luke 2:22 begins the account of Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to the temple after forty days in order to dedicate Him to the Lord.



babydedication
committing our children to the Lord



A baby (or child) dedication is a symbolic ceremony undertaken by Christian parents. Although it's called a "baby/child dedication," in reality it's more of a "parental dedication." This special moment in the life of a baby/child's young life is intended to be a public statement by the parents that they will train their children in the Christian faith and seek to instill that faith in them through prayer, teaching, and most of all...a personal example of a surrendered life to Christ.



What's the purpose of child dedication?

The word "dedicate" means *"to set aside or commit to a sacred purpose."* The dedication means committing a child to God and God's purposes. In one sense, this is what every Christian parent wants to do, but in another sense, parents can't actually make this decision on behalf of their children – as much as they might wish to! Each child will one day have to make his or her own personal decision about whether or not to commit himself or herself to God. Parents can guide, teach, pray for, and lead their children, but parents cannot choose a life path for their child. So even though we speak of dedicating the child to the Lord, dedication is really a matter of parents dedicating themselves to the Lord.

With that in mind, we see two primary purposes for dedication:

1. For parents, joined by their church community, to celebrate the birth or adoption of a child, joyfully thanking God for this new addition to the family and to the church community.
2. For parents to commit themselves publicly to raise their child in the nurture and love of the Lord, and for the church to pray for them in their awesome responsibility as parents.

Who should have their child dedicated?

Dedication is primarily parents' publicly dedicating themselves to raise their children in the nurture and love of the Lord, these three things should be true of the parents:

They should be committed Christians. They should have reached a point of believing the Good News – that God invites them to be part of His kingdom, family and mission in this world. They have confidence that Jesus lived and died to pay for their sins and rose from death to give them a new life, that God loves them, and that they can have a growing relationship with God as a free gift of grace. They shouldn't just be Christian in name – but rather, Christians from the heart, with a sincere personal, committed faith.

They should be actively involved in the church. They should be committed to having their children in church, and even more importantly, to making God a part of their daily lives.

They should take seriously their responsibility to raise their children with a strong spiritual foundation. There are two beautiful passages that describe this type of parenting, one from the Old Testament, and one from the New Testament:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commands 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..." Deut. 6:5-7

"In the future, when your son asks you, 'What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees, and laws the Lord our God has commanded you?' tell him: 'The Lord commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the Lord, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today. And if we are careful to obey all this law before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness.'" Deut. 6:4-25

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