

Baby Dedication Class

Explaining and Understanding Baby Dedication

Baby Dedication vs. Infant Baptism

Why not baptize?

- **Baptismal Regeneration**
- **Covenantal Infant Baptism**

*“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”
(Hebrews 8:10-12)*

- **Believer’s Baptism**

“The New Testament authors wrote as though they clearly assumed that everyone who was baptized had also personally trusted in Christ and experienced salvation.”

–Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 970

Baby Dedication: A surrendering of the child to the Lord

- Our children do not belong to us. They belong to the Lord.
 - Abraham surrendering Isaac – **Gen. 22**
 - Hannah surrendering Samuel – **1 Sam. 1-2**
- Having *God’s* priorities for our children.
- We’re called to be faithful. But we cannot control or determine who our children will be. That ability belongs to God alone. This is both sobering and freeing.

Parent Dedication: Covenant commitment to the Lord and the child

Biblical understanding for parenting children. God gives *divine imperatives* to parents.

- **Heart of God:** *Desire for a people for his glory.*
Is. 43:7 – ‘created for my glory’;
Ps. 139:13 – ‘knitted me in my mother’s womb’
- **Command of God:** *Fill the earth.*
Gen. 1:22; 9:1 – ‘be fruitful and multiply’
- **Design for Parent:** *Instruct what you behold and know.*
Gen. 18:19 – God chose Abraham to command (direct) his children in the ways of God;
Deut. 6:4-9 – ‘teach them diligently’;
Eph. 6:4 – ‘bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord’
- **Design for Child:** *Follow the example set before you.*
Ex. 20:12 – ‘honor your father and mother’;
Eph. 6:1 – ‘children obey your parents in the Lord’

“As a father and mother, you do not exercise your rule over your jurisdiction, but God’s. You act at his command. ...You must undertake all your instruction, your care and nurture, your correction and discipline, because God has called you to. You act with the conviction that he has charged you to act on his behalf. ...You are the authority over your child, because God has called you to direct (Gen. 18:19). You provide direction from God’s authority. You need not be *tentative* or *overbearing*. You are God’s agent to teach his ways to your child. You are God’s agent to help your child understand himself as a creature of God’s world. You are God’s agent to show the need for God’s grace and forgiveness. You look to God to give you strength and wisdom for your task.”

–Tedd Tripp (*Shepherding a Child’s Heart*)

- Parents are the primary source of instruction for their children; the church is a secondary means of grace for parents’ equipping and the child’s instruction.
- Parents are to respond to the Gospel first for salvation and live by faith and grace all their days.

- Making a covenant promise to the Lord and to the child to live in a way that models and communicates the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the salvation and grace of God so the child will see the example of Christ.
- Committing to the Lord to walk in a manner worthy of the Gospel
- Committing to our child to walk in a manner worthy of the Gospel so as to give as best as reflection of the effect of the Gospel as we can for our child.
- Commitment to heart-motivated change (*sanctification*—in the lives of both parents and children).
- The power of John Paton’s father’s example

“The closet was a very small room between the other two, having room only for a bed, a little table, and a chair. This was the Sanctuary of that cottage home. Three times a day, oftentimes a day, generally after each meal, we saw our father retire, and 'shut to the door'; and we children got to understand by a sort of spiritual instinct (for the thing was too sacred to be talked about) that prayers were being poured out there for us, as of old by the High Priest within the veil in the Most Holy Place. We occasionally heard the pathetic echoes of a trembling voice pleading as if for life, and we learned to slip out and in past that door on tiptoe, not to disturb the holy colloquy. The outside world might not know, but we knew, whence came that happy light as of a new-born smile that always was dawning on my father's face: it was a reflection from the Divine Presence, in the consciousness of which he lived. ... Though everything else in religion were by some unthinkable catastrophe to be swept out of memory, or blotted from my understanding, my soul would wander back to those early scenes, and shut itself up once again in that Sanctuary Closet, and, hearing still the echoes of those cries to God, would hurl back all doubt with the victorious appeal, 'He walked with God, why may not I?'” –**John Paton**

Parent Covenant

Resources for Parenting

- *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp
- *Instructing a Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp
- *Loving the Little Years: Motherhood in the Trenches* by Rachel Jankovic
- *“Don't Make Me Count to Three!": Heart-Oriented Discipline* by Ginger Plowman

Resources for Children

- *The Jesus Storybook Bible* by Sally Lloyd-Jones
- *The Gospel Story Bible* by Marty Machowski
- *Long Story Short* and *Old Story New* by Marty Machowski
- *Thoughts to Make Your Heart Sing* by Sally Lloyd-Jones