



# Infant Dedication

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**What is infant dedication?**

**Why should I dedicate my child?**

## The Joy Of Children

Among the many gifts that God has given us, few are more wonderful than the gift of a child. The birth of a baby brings with it many hopes and joys, and most importantly a feeling of great gratitude towards God.

Every child has an important place in God's love. In Mark 10:13-16 we read the account of Jesus blessing the little children. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these". Jesus wishes to bless our children in the same way today.

It is important that as parents and as a church family we play our role in making that blessing effective in the child's life. It is right and proper then that we bring our children before God as an act of dedication and thanksgiving, and that we promise by God's help to give our child a loving, Christian upbringing.



## What Is An Infant Dedication?

The dedication and thanksgiving of a child is a simple service where the parents and relatives of the child and the church family do 4 simple things.

- 1. An infant dedication is a thanksgiving to God, by the parents, with the church, for the gift of the child.**

*Every good and perfect gift comes from the Lord. Indeed your child is a sacred trust placed in your care (Psalm 127:3).*

- 2. An infant dedication includes a recognition and promise by the parents to bring the child up in a Christian way, pleasing and honourable to God.**

*You owe to your child the best that you can give them. You are answerable only to God in a way that no one else can before it is your responsibility as parents to bring your child up in the way of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)*

- 3. An infant dedication includes an acknowledgement and support of the parents by the whole church family.**

*The task of bringing up a child in a way that is pleasing and honourable to God is something that can be quite daunting. Yet you are not alone. Your church family promises at this service to support you, encourage you, help you and to stand by you in prayer.*

- 4. An infant dedication is a call for God's blessing upon the child, parents and the church family.**

## What An Infant Dedication Is Not!

Below are some misconceptions people have concerning what infant dedication is.

### **1. An infant dedication is not an Infant Baptism.**

*Many denominations of the Christian Church perform Infant Baptism. This is where a baby of professing Christians is baptised by semi immersion, or the sprinkling or pouring of water. Baptists do not practice infant baptism, we practice believers baptism. A person is only baptised when they are old enough to make their own decision of faith, that is, when they are old enough to consciously turn away from their sins and accept for themselves the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour.*

### **2. An infant dedication does not give a child a ticket to heaven.**

*The dedication of a child is not some magical ceremony or rite that will cause him or her to become a child of God. When a child is old enough to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ then they need to make their own decision whether to accept Christ or reject Christ. We are all sinners before God. Dedication of an infant will do nothing to change that status.*

### **3. An infant dedication will not make a child a Baptist or a member of the Church.**

### **4. An infant dedication is not a naming service.**

## An Example Of A Service:

Children are very special and important to God. They are a great gift that God has given us.

Today ..... have come with their baby (or child) .....to give thanks to God for the creation and birth of this beautiful child.

They have come secondly to make a promise that they may, relying on God's help, endeavour to bring this child up in a way that is pleasing and honourable to the Lord. As a church we promise to the parents and to the Lord, that we will help them in this task, that we may support and encourage them, and that we may stand by them in prayer.

Today we also come to pray together for this child. We pray that God's blessing may descend and rest upon this child. We pray together as this child grows, that he/she, may respond in faith to Christ as his/her Lord and Saviour.

Let us read two short passages from the Bible;

**Deuteronomy 6:4-7,**

**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 to you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them upon 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.**

**Mark 10:13-16,**

**People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he was indignant. He said to them "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it. Then he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.**

*The parents are asked to come to the front with their baby or child.*

We welcome you this morning and in the name of the Lord Jesus I ask you:

Do you give thanks to God for His goodness in the gift of your child, and do you accept the responsibility by prayer, instruction and example to give him/her a Christian upbringing.

*Parents; We do.*

Will you do all you can, by God's help, to ensure that within your home and family life your child will be constantly surrounded by Christian example and influence?

*Parents; We will.*

*If there are godparents there will be a question for them as well.*

Now to the whole congregation, do you as members of the Church, acknowledge and accept the responsibility in partnership with the parents, of teaching and training this child, and of standing by this child in prayer. Do you also promise to encourage, support and stand by the parents, and to pray for them. If so please stand now to show that you are willing to accept this responsibility.

*The person leading the service takes the infant into their arms to say the blessing and pray;*

.....may the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace. Amen (*Numbers 6:24-26*)

*After the infant is returned to his or her parents a short prayer is said for the child and the parents.*