



CHILD DEDICATION

You and Your Child's Dedication

*Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD:
The fruit of the womb is a reward. Psalm 127:3*

We, as Christians, have a tremendous responsibility given to us when the Lord blesses us with a child. In blessing us, He entrusts us with the privilege of raising up that child in the way of the Lord and establishing early in their life a foundation built upon Jesus Christ. It is this tremendous responsibility that causes us to think of child dedications as 'family dedications'. We feel that the whole family unit needs to be lifted up to the Lord so that each member will be able to fulfill his or her responsibilities.

You might now be wondering what exactly is involved in 'dedicating' your child to the Lord? As mentioned previously, children are a heritage from the Lord. He gives them to us to bless us, and because of this we must be willing to give them back to Him. Referring to the loss of his own sons and daughters, Job proclaimed, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD" (Job 1:21). Job realized that the Lord God had given him his children and that He was also the only one who could take them away. We too, must be willing to totally submit our children to the will of our heavenly Father. A perfect example of "dedicating" a child to the Lord is given to us in 1 Samuel 1:11, 26-28. Hannah, being barren (or without child) for many years, was weeping and petitioning the Lord. "And she vowed a vow, and said, 'O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant, and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life...'" God honored Hannah's request and gave her a son named Samuel. Hannah then, in keeping her vow, dedicated (or set apart) Samuel unto the Lord.

We see here a beautiful example of what our attitudes should be towards our children and their relationship to God. We are to do the most we can to "set apart" our children to God until the day that they can make their own choice. By dedicating our children to the Lord we are making a vow to raise them in His ways and not our own. We are committing ourselves to this promise and we must do all we can to keep it. The following is a list of just some of the things we as parents should do as part of keeping our vow.

1. Pray constantly for your child.

A parent's responsibility to pray for their child does not end at his dedication; but, continues until the day he commits his own life to the Lord. Job gives us an example of this in Job 1:5, "Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning, and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, 'It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.' Thus Job did regularly."

2. Instruct your child in the way of the Lord.

We are taught in Ephesians 6:4 (NIV) to “Bring them (your children) up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” Proverbs 22:6 adds, “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” If we, while our children are young, instruct them in His ways, it is very likely that following the Lord’s ways will develop into a life-long commitment for them.

3. Be a living example of Christ to your children.

It does not do your child any good to instruct them in the ways of the Lord if you yourself do not walk what you talk. Therefore, you must always be examining yourself and your witness to your children. In Proverbs 20:7 (NIV) the Bible says, “The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed (happy) are his children after him.” The main reason for the blessed state of this man’s children was that they had someone to look up to and use as an example to model their own behavior. We, as parents, must strive to be that example to our children even as Christ is our example.

4. Discipline our children in the same way the Lord disciplines us.

The book of Proverbs teaches us many practical aspects concerning the discipline we are to provide for our children. Some of the scriptures that relate to this subject are as follows:

“The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul.” Proverbs 29:15, 17

“He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves Him disciplines him promptly.” Proverbs 13:24
Other references: Proverbs 19:18; 22:15

As you can see, by chastening or disciplining your child you are showing your love for him. This brings us to the motivation for discipline. Any discipline you give to your child should be done for his profit and not as a release of your own anger and frustration. Remember, you are to discipline your child in the same way the Lord disciplines you. God never strikes at His children in anger, and you shouldn’t either. Colossians 3:21 (Amplified Bible) reads, “Fathers, do not provoke or irritate or fret your children – do not be hard on them or harass them; lest they become discouraged and sullen and morose and feel inferior and frustrated; DO NOT BREAK THEIR SPIRIT.” We, as parents, are not in the business of breaking our children’s spirits; instead, we are to encourage their spiritual growth. When disciplining, explain the reason for the action, carry out the discipline promptly and then most importantly, LOVE THEM. If you are able to do this, then you will be disciplining your children in the way the Lord would have you to.

As mentioned previously, these are but a few of the responsibilities that God calls us to as parents. It hardly needs to be said that if you yourself are not a born-again Christian; these responsibilities will be impossible to keep. This is why we here at Calvary Chapel of Moreno Valley will decline any request to dedicate a child whose parent(s) does not know Him as their personal Lord and Savior. We will dedicate a child and the parent who does have a relationship with Jesus Christ; but, it would be an act of hypocrisy for us to allow a parent who does not know Jesus Christ to make a vow to Him that he cannot possibly keep. We read in Proverbs 20:25 (Amplified Bible), “It is a snare to a man to utter a vow (of consecration) rashly, and (not until) afterward inquire (whether he can fulfill it).” Other scriptures relating to this point are Numbers 30:2, Deuteronomy 23:21-23 & Ecclesiastes 5:4. There are instances recorded for us in the Bible where individuals have made vows before the Lord and then not kept them. As a result of breaking their vows, these people were dealt with severely by God, i.e. Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-11. We cannot allow people to make a vow unto the Lord if they do not have the ability to fulfill the responsibilities that go along with making that vow. We view this as an act of protection and not as one of rejection.

Hopefully, you can now understand our viewpoint as being totally Biblical. The dedication of your family to God is something too serious to be entered into lightly. It is hoped that this information has helped you to recognize the extent of this commitment that you will be making. If you have any questions concerning anything that has been said, or not covered here, please call the church office at 485-6080.

“But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’” Matthew 19:14



Before you are able to have your child dedicated

1. Two "Child Dedication" forms are included in this packet. Both parents must complete a form if they both want to be up on stage. Please complete the forms and return to the church office. If you have more than one child you want to dedicate, put all their names, birthdates, and city where they were born on the form. (You do not need a form for each child.)
2. Upon receipt of dedication forms, a pastor will contact you and set up an appointment to meet with you prior to your child's dedication. At that time a date will be set for your child's dedication.

The Day of your child's dedication

1. Check in with the head usher when you arrive. He will give you your child's dedication certificate and bible.
2. You may sit with your family if you have them sit on a side aisle.
3. If your child begins to cry, please go to the foyer.
4. The Pastor will call you up.
5. Siblings may also go with you onto the stage.
6. After the dedication, please exit through the glass doors on the side to go check your child(ren) into their Sunday School Classes.
7. After you have checked your child(ren) into their class, you may return to your seat by using one of the side aisles.



Child Dedication Application

It is our desire at Calvary Chapel of Moreno Valley for the parents of each child being dedicated to the Lord to have a Biblical understanding of what 'child dedication' signifies. With this as our goal, we would like you to help us by answering a few brief questions. Please be assured that all information is confidential, and is only used to assist us in preparing for your child's dedication.

Your Name _____ Age _____

Address _____ City _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Child's Name _____ Child's Name Spelled Phonetically _____

Child's Birthdate _____ City child was born in _____

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

How long ago? _____

Briefly describe your conversion experience: _____

How long have you been attending Calvary Chapel of Moreno Valley? _____

What does having your child dedicated mean to you?



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