

BABY DEDICATION - EXPLANATION & APPLICATION

Psalms 127:3-5 says,

“Behold, children are a gift of the LORD;
The fruit of the womb is a reward.
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.
How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them...

Our children are a blessing given to us by God. They are also a great responsibility because we are commanded to bring them up in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). The following application will try to explain what a “Baby Dedication” is all about and have you work through materials that explain what it means to raise a child in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

The precedent for the ceremony of a baby dedication is found several places in Scripture. For example, the presentation of Samuel by his mother Hannah (1 Samuel 1:28), of Jesus by Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:22), and the children brought to Jesus (Luke 18:15-17). In addition Paul reminded Timothy that “from a child” he had known the Holy Scriptures. However, a “baby dedication” is not to be confused with baptism or a “christening service.”

In some churches a tradition has been established to “baptize” a child at a “christening” service. The Roman Catholic church teaches that baptism is a means of grace that brings the infant into the family of God and therefore into salvation. Other churches practice infant baptism with the idea that it is either the means or the recognition of the infant being brought into a covenant relationship the parents have with God. However neither practice is Biblical and practices of infant baptism distort the clear teaching of the Bible concerning baptism. Baptism cannot save a child, give grace to a child or enter the child into any covenant. Baptism is an act of obedience that demonstrates the commitment of a person who has already accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Every example in the Bible of baptism is upon a person who has reached an age where they can think and make decisions for themselves. (See the paper on “Baptism” available from the pastor for further explanation).

The purpose of a baby dedication is really to be found in the dedication of the parents to raise the child in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord.” It is a public commitment by the parents to fulfill the responsibilities God has given them in the Scriptures.

Several items are attached.

- 1) A sample copy of a Parental Dedication Certificate. This has on it the resolutions you would be committing yourself to fulfill. Consider each charge carefully, as God does not pleasure in those that do not fulfill their vows (Deut. 23:21; Eccl. 5:4).
- 2) A copy of “The Duties of Parents” by J.C. Ryle.
- 3) An Application and Work Sheet based on “The Duties of Parents”

Those who would like to participate in a “Baby dedication” must complete the Application and Work Sheet form and meet with the pastor.

BABY/PARENT DEDICATION

Application & Work Sheet

Parenting is a serious responsibility requiring much work on the part of both the father and mother. However, God has placed the primary obligation for directing the rearing of the child(ren) on the shoulders of the father (Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21; etc.). With that in mind we ask that the following application and worksheet be completed by the father. Please bring this with you when you meet with the pastor. Please print the names clearly as this application will be used in preparing the Dedication Certificate.

Father's Name _____
(First) (Last)

Mother's Name _____
(First)

Child's Name _____
(First) (Middle)

(If more than one child being dedicated, please indicate)

Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord & Savior? _____

Does your wife know Jesus Christ as her personal Lord & Savior?

Have you both read “The Duties of Parents” by J.C. Ryle?

Have you filled out the work sheets for “The Duties of Parents”?

Have you both read the resolutions printed on the Parental Dedication Certificate and are you willing to publicly commit yourselves to fulfilling these promises to the best of your abilities?

(Father's Signature)

(Mother's Signature)

Date met with pastor

Date completed all assignments

Date set for Dedication Ceremony

Work Sheets for “The Duties of Parents”

Please complete the sentences for each section as written in your book.

I. Train them in the way they should go, and not in the way that they would.

- 1) Children are born with a decided bias toward evil, and therefore if you let them choose for themselves, _____

- 2) If then you would deal wisely with your child, you must not _____

- 3) Train him in the way that is Scripture and right, and _____

II. Train up your child with all tenderness, affection, and patience.

- 1) Few are to be found, even among grown-up people, who are not _____

- 2) We must not expect _____
- 3) Try hard to keep up a hold on your child's affections. It is a dangerous

III. Train your children with an abiding persuasion on your mind that much depends upon you.

- 1) Our character takes the form of that mold into which _____

- 2) Beware of that miserable delusion into which some have fallen, -- that

- 3) But I know also that God says expressly, “Train up a child in the way he should go,” and that He

IV. Train with this thought continually before your eyes -- that the soul of your child is the first thing to be considered.

- 1) No part of them should be so dear _____

- 2) To pet and pamper and indulge your child, as if this world was all he had to look to, and this life the only season for happiness-- _____

3) He that has trained his children for heaven, rather than for earth, -- for God, rather than for man,

V. Train your child to a knowledge of the Bible.

1) See that your children read the Bible _____. Train them to look on it, not as the word of men, but as it is _____

2) See that they read it _____. Train them to regard it as _____

3) See that they read it _____. You need not shrink from _____

VI. Train them to a habit of prayer.

1) Prayer is the very life-breath of true religion. It is one _____

2) Parents, if you love your children, do all that lies in your power to train them up to a habit of prayer. _____ them how to begin. _____ them what to say. _____ them to persevere. _____ them if they become careless and slack about it.

3) Let it not be your fault _____

VII. Train them to habits of diligence, and regularity about public means of grace.

1) Give them plainly to understand, that so long as they are under your roof it is the rule of your house for everyone in health to _____

2) Samuel, in the days of his childhood, appears to have ministered unto the _____

3) Set it before their minds as high, holy, and solemn duty, and believe me the day will

VIII. Train them to a habit of faith

1) I mean by this _____

2) Reader, you train your children to little purpose if you do not train them to a

3) But in the meantime if you say a think is right, it must be enough

IX. Train them to a habit of obedience.

1) Early obedience has

2) Teach them to obey while young, or else they will be fretting against

3) Parents, if you love your children, let

X. Train them to a habit of always speaking the truth.

1) Reader, I would have you remark how often God is spoken of in the

2) Press upon them at all times, that _____ than the truth is a _____.

3) You will find it a mighty help indeed,

XI. Train them to a habit of always redeeming the time.

1) Idleness is

2) It is the still water which becomes

3) Teach them the _____ of time and try to make them learn the habit of

XII. Train them with a constant fear of over-indulgence.

1) Now it is the shortest way to spoil children to let them have their own way, -- to

2) I call on you to remember, it is your first duty to consult their

3) Learn to say “_____” to your children. Show them that you are able

XIII. Train them remembering continually how God trains His children.

- 1) Reader, if you would train your children wisely, mark _____

- 2) Fear not to withhold from your child _____

- 3) Reader, be not _____ than God; _____

XIV. Train them remembering continually the influence of your own example.

- 1) Instruction, and advice, and commands _____

- 2) Fathers and mothers, do not forget that children _____

No school will _____
- 3) He that preaches to his children what he does not practice, _____

XV. Train them remembering continually the power of sin.

- 1) It is painful to see how much corruption and evil _____

- 2) Never listen to those who tell you _____

ANSWER SHEET

Work Sheets for "The Duties of Parents"

Please complete the sentences for each section as written in your book.

I. Train them in the way they should go, and not in the way that they would.

- 1) Children are born with a decided bias toward evil, and therefore if you let them choose for themselves, *They are certain to choose wrong.*
- 2) If then you would deal wisely with your child, you must not *leave him to the guidance of his own will.*
- 3) Train him in the way that is Scripture and right, and *not in the way that he fancies.*

II. Train up your child with all tenderness, affection, and patience.

- 1) Few are to be found, even among grown-up people, who are not *more easy to draw than to drive.*
- 2) We must not expect *all things at once.*
- 3) Try hard to keep up a hold on your child's affections. It is a dangerous *thing to make your children afraid of you.*

III. Train your children with an abiding persuasion on your mind that much depends upon you.

- 1) Our character takes the form of that mould into which *our first years are cast.*
- 2) Beware of that miserable delusion into which some have fallen, -- that *parents can do nothing for their children, that you must leave them alone, wait for grace and sit still.*
- 3) But I know also that God says expressly, "Train up a child in the way he should go," and that He *never laid a command on man which He would not give man grace to perform.*

IV. Train with this thought continually before your eyes -- that the soul of your child is the first thing to be considered.

- 1) No part of them should be so dear *to you as that part which will never die.*
- 2) To pet and pamper and indulge your child, as if this world was all he had to look to, and this life the only season for happiness-- *to do this is not true love, but cruelty.*
- 3) He that has trained his children for heaven, rather than for earth, -- for God, rather than for man, *he is the parent that will be called wise at the last.*

V. Train your child to a knowledge of the Bible.

- 1) See that your children read the Bible Reverently. Train them to look on it, not as the word of men, but as it is
in truth, the word of God
- 2) See that they read it Regularly. Train them to regard it as
Their soul's daily food - as a thing essential to their soul's daily health.
- 3) See that they read it ALL. You need not shrink from
bringing any doctrine before them.

VI. Train them to a habit of prayer.

- 1) Prayer is the very life-breath of true religion. It is one
of the first evidences that a man is born again.
- 2) Parents, if you love your children, do all that lies in your power to train them up to a habit of prayer. Show them how to begin. Tell them what to say. Encourage them to persevere. Remind them if they become careless and slack about it.
- 3) Let it not be your fault *if they never call on the name of the Lord.*

VII. Train them to habits of diligence, and regularity about public means of grace.

- 1) Give them plainly to understand, that so long as they are under your roof it is the rule of your house for everyone in health to
honor the Lord's house upon the Lord's day, and that you reckon the Sabbath-breaker to be a murderer of his own soul.
- 2) Samuel, in the days of his childhood, appears to have ministered unto *the Lord sometime before he really knew him.*
- 3) Set it before their minds as high, holy, and solemn duty, and believe me the day will *very likely come when they will bless you for your deed.*

VIII. Train them to a habit of faith

- 1) I mean by this *you should train them up to believe what you say.*
- 2) Reader, you train your children to little purpose if you do not train them to a *habit of implicit faith, faith in their parent's word, confidence that what they say must be right.*
- 3) But in the meantime if you say a think is right, it must be enough
for them, they must believe you, and be content.

IX. Train them to a habit of obedience.

- 1) Early obedience has *all scripture on its side*.
- 2) Teach them to obey while young, or else they will be fretting against *God all their lives long, and wear themselves out with the vain idea of being independent of His control*.
- 3) Parents, if you love your children, let *obedience be a motto and a watchword continually before their eyes*.

X. Train them to a habit of always speaking the truth.

- 1) Reader, I would have you remark how often God is spoken of in the *Old Testament as the God of truth*.
- 2) Press upon them at all times, that less than the truth is a lie.
- 3) You will find it a mighty help indeed, *to be able to trust their word*.

XI. Train them to a habit of always redeeming the time.

- 1) Idleness is *the devil's best friend*
- 2) It is the still water which becomes *stagnant and impure: the running, moving streams are always clear*.
- 3) Teach them the value of time and try to make them learn the habit of *using it well*.

XII. Train them with a constant fear of over-indulgence.

- 1) Now it is the shortest way to spoil children to let them have their own way, -- to *allow them to do wrong and not to punish them for it*.
- 2) I call on you to remember, it is your first duty to consult their *real interests, and not their fancies & likings; to train them, not humor them; - to profit, not merely to please*.
- 3) Learn to say “NO” to your children. Show them that you are able *to refuse whatever you think is not fit for them*.

XIII. Train them remembering continually how God trains His children.

- 1) Reader, if you would train your children wisely, mark *well how God the Father trains His*.
- 2) Fear not to withhold from your child *anything you think will do him harm, whatever his own wishes may be*.
- 3) Reader, be not wiser than God; *train your children as He trains His*.

XIV. Train them remembering continually the influence of your own example.

- 1) Instruction, and advice, and commands *will profit little, unless they are backed up by the pattern of your own life.*
- 2) Fathers and mothers, do not forget that children *learn more by the eye than they do by the ear.*
No school will *make such deep marks on character as home.*
- 3) He that preaches to his children what he does not practice,
is working a work that never goes forward.

XV. Train them remembering continually the power of sin.

- 1) It is painful to see how much corruption and evil *there is in a young child's heart, and how soon it begins to bare fruit.*
- 2) Never listen to those who tell you *your children are good, and well brought up, and can be trusted.*

Parental Dedication

“Behold, children are a gift of the LORD;
 The fruit of the womb is a reward.
 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
 So are the children of one's youth.
 How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them...

Psalm 127:3-5

We, _____, the parents of _____, do solemnly resolve before God to do all within our power to raise _____ in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and follow the pattern for teaching children about God as set forth for parents in Deuteronomy 6:4-7. We do solemnly resolve to:

1. Recognize this child to be a gift from God and give heartfelt thanks for God's blessing.
2. Commit ourselves to be an example to _____ by following the Lord God in our own daily lives, in seeking to know Him, in loving Him and obeying Him with all of our hearts, minds and strength.
3. Commit ourselves to be diligent to teach _____ the truth of God's Holy Word and instruct him how to love and obey God.
4. Commit ourselves to love _____, to protect him, guide him, and endeavor to provide an environment that is nurturing, loving and honest.
5. Commit ourselves to loving, honoring and respecting each other, carrying out the Biblical roles for a husband and wife in remaining committed and united in our own relationship so that _____ will have the security of a true home and understand how to have proper relationships with others.

Father

Mother

Pastor

Date

Baby Dedication

Psalm 127:3-5 says,

“Behold, children are a gift of the LORD;
The fruit of the womb is a reward.
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.
How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them...

We rejoice in the blessings that God has given to us in our children, But we also understand the great responsibility that parents have before God in rearing those children. Today we want to come both to rejoice in the blessing God has given to _____ in bringing into their lives this precious child _____; and to _____ in bringing into their lives this precious child _____

The precedent for the ceremony of baby dedication is found in several places in Scripture. For example, the presentation of Samuel by his mother Hannah (1 Samuel 1:28), of Jesus by Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:22), and the children brought to Jesus (Luke 18:15-17). In addition Paul reminded Timothy that “from a child” he had know the Holy Scriptures.

We understand that within part of the Christian church a tradition has been established to “baptize” a child at a “christening” service. That is not what we are here to do today. We do not believe that baptism saves a child. We believe that baptism is an act of obedience that demonstrates the commitment of a person who has already accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Every example in the Bible of baptism is upon a person who has reached an age where they can think and make decisions for themselves.

The purpose of a baby dedication is really to be found in the dedication of the parents. Today, we are here to witness the commitment of _____, and _____ in raising their respective children: _____ in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord” - Eph 6:4. In Deuteronomy 6:4-7 the parents were charged to teach their children both the “how and why” of following God. The LORD, speaking through Moses said, “Hear, O Israel! The LORD our God is one LORD: and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

TO THE PARENTS:

_____, and _____, God has given you a precious and wonderful gift in _____, but along with this gift comes the responsibilities of raising _____ properly before God. You are standing here today to commit yourselves in front of these witnesses to raise _____ according to the will of God.

As I read these statements of commitment, respond “I DO” if they express your desire and commitment to carry them out.

1. Do you recognize this child to be a gift from God, and give heartfelt thanks for God's blessing?
2. Do you commit yourself to be an example to _____ by following the Lord God in your own daily life, seeking to know Him, love Him and obey Him with all of your heart, mind and strength?

3. Do you commit yourself to be diligent to teach _____ the truth of God's Holy Word and instruct him/her how to love and obey God?
4. Do you commit yourself to love _____ , to protect, guide, and endeavor to provide an environment that is nurturing, loving and honest?
5. Do you commit yourselves to loving, honoring and respecting each other, carrying out the Biblical roles for a husband and wife in remaining committed and united in your own relationship, so that _____ will have the security of a true home and understand how to have proper relationships with others?

You have answered affirmatively to all these commitments before all these witnesses.

TO THE CONGREGATION:

As the Christian brothers and sisters of _____ and _____ , Will you endeavor to carry out your God given responsibilities to both encourage and help _____ to carry out these commitments they have just made to raise _____ in the nurture and admonition of the LORD? (We will)