

# Philosophy of Child Dedication

## What the dedication of children is not:

1. It is not a guarantee of the child's salvation.

*We know from scripture that children are innocent before the Lord. It is not until they become conscious of sin in their life that they need a Savior.*

2. It does not take the place of infant baptism.

*In the New Testament only those who had faith and the ability to repent were baptized. The only baptism the New Testament recognizes is baptism by immersion for a person who is old enough to respond in faith.*

3. It is not some kind of spiritual protection for the child against heartache or disease.

*Trouble and sickness are part of the life in this fallen world. And just because a child is dedicated to the Lord does not mean they will never be the source of heartache or disappointment.*

4. It is not passing the child-raising responsibilities from the parent to God or to the church.

*Children are a gift from God. But with the gift comes responsibility--the responsibility as God's steward to raise this child by providing nurture, protection, instruction, and discipline. We may delegate some of these tasks to others, but we remain ultimately responsible before God for how they are raised.*

## What the dedication of children is:

*"For this boy I prayed, and the LORD has given my petition which I asked of Him. So I have also dedicated him to the LORD; as long as he lives he is dedicated to the LORD." (I Samuel 1:27-28, NASB)*

In a sense, that is what is happening today. You are dedicating your children to the Lord. The word "dedicate" means "to set apart for religious purposes, consecrate, to set apart for special use." You are giving your child to God to be used for his purposes.

**What I am committing myself to:**

But there are some things you as parents have to commit to in order to make this happen: will you reaffirm these promises by answering “I will”?

1. Do you promise to demonstrate your faith in Jesus Christ for your child in how you live?
2. Do you promise to teach your child to know, trust and live by the Word of God?
3. Do you promise to make attending and participating in church a priority in your child’s life?
4. Do you promise to create a home where God’s love is evident?
5. Do you promise to instill in your child a sense of right and wrong according to God’s Holy Word?
6. Do you promise to seek ways for God to use your child in service to Him?

**To the church:** Will you pray for these families, encourage their Christian growth, and be a positive example for these children? If so, please stand and answer “we will”.

**To the parents:** Having said these promises to God, please repeat this dedication after me.

I understand my child belongs to God and that parents are to be faithful guardians. I commit to raising my child by the principles and authority of God’s Word. I willingly give my child back to the Lord to be used for His purposes. Today I dedicate my child to the Lord.

**Individual Prayer of Dedication with Each Child and His/Her Parent(s).**

During this time, you will be given the opportunity to read a brief Scripture passage that you have chosen as you think about your child. This verse (or few verses) could pertain to how you see your child, why he/she was given the name he/she has, and/or the dreams you have for your child. You do not have to read a passage if you do not desire to.