

BABY DEDICATION IDEAS

Shaping Lifelong Faith Through: **Memory Events**

www.children.adventist.org.au/faith-shaper





BABY DEDICATION INTRODUCTION

By David Goodwin

PART 1. BABY DEDICATION

Baby dedication is not a time of salvation, nor is it baptism, but is a dedication on the part of the parents to bring the child up to love and serve the Lord.

"I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the LORD. For his whole life he will be given over to the LORD."

1 Samuel 1:27, 28 NIV

1. INTRODUCTION

Different churches have different practices and beliefs about Baby Baptism and Dedications. These notes will be of help to those churches that reserve baptism for people after they have made a decision to follow Christ. These churches believe that only people old enough to be able to make a personal decision should be baptised, something that is impossible for a baby. For these churches, a special service of baby dedication is usually held in order to give parents an opportunity to make a public commitment to raise their child in a Christian home and in a Christian manner. They ask for help and wisdom to carry out their responsibilities as parents.

For many families, the dedication service is an important first 'rite of passage' for the baby and if it is the first child, it is a 'rite of passage' for the parents moving into this next important stage in their lives when they become parents.

Baby Dedication will often be a family celebration followed by a meal or afternoon tea. This should be encouraged, as should the taking of video or photos of the service.

Baby Dedication is:

- A time for the parents to dedicate themselves publicly to raising their child, to love and serve the Lord
- A time of blessing for the child

- A prayer for God to protect the child until they are ready to make the decision to follow Christ for themselves
- A declaration of the church's responsibility in bringing the child up in the knowledge of Jesus Christ
- A 'rite of passage' for the baby, welcoming the baby to the family and to the church
- A 'rite of passage' for the parents as they move into parenthood

Baby Dedication may sometimes be called a 'naming ceremony'. The actual format of the service can be as flexible as the parents or minister wants. There is no legal requirement in Australia or NZ, however, churches should consider holding a register of baby dedications as a historical record and offer a certificate of dedication.

2. PRE-SERVICE COUNSELLING

When parents request that their baby be dedicated to the Lord, there should be counselling offered in order to explain to them what a baby dedication service means. This is an important opportunity for the pastor to share when one or both of the parents are non-Christian or do not attend church.

Some of the following counselling points could also be incorporated in a short message in the dedication service.

Counselling points (speaking to the parents):

A dedication service is a time of celebration of the birth of your child, praying for your child and praying for you as a parent(s).

The Word of God places great importance on children. Children are important to Jesus, and they are important to our church. We have a responsibility to pray for, to teach, and to nurture our children and to equip parents with the skills to raise their children.

Dedication is a good thing to do because it shows your desire to raise your child in the way of God and to care for whatever they need.

Dedicating your child to the Lord is a wonderful time of blessing your new baby. Jesus said: "Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God."

Baby dedication is about the responsibility of the parents. Baby dedication is not a time of salvation for the child but is a dedication on the part of the parents to bring the child up to love and serve the Lord.

The responsibilities God has entrusted to Christian parents include:

- Praying for their children (Job 1:5)
- Instructing them in the way of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6)
- Setting a godly example (Proverbs 20:7)
- Disciplining them as the Lord would discipline us (Proverbs 29:15, 17; 13:24)

Baby dedications can be done in a public setting as part of a public worship service or they can be performed at a home or other appropriate place.

At the time of dedication, parents receive a pastoral blessing, a blessing over their new child and a dedication certificate to mark the important occasion.

A baby dedication service is recognition by you as a parent, that your child is a gift from God.

"Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him."

(Psalms 127:3)

A dedication service is a time of asking for God's help in raising your child properly.

Before you dedicate your child to the Lord, you should first dedicate yourself to being the best possible parents you can be, to raise them according to God's Word and in a safe and caring way. You should commit yourself to obeying and submitting to Jesus and to giving your child your time, energy, devotion, and prayers.

Dedication is a time of promising to protect your child from all manners of abuse, including physical, psychological, sexual and neglect abuse.

Psychological abuse, meaning demeaning words, often comes to a child from parents and other significant adults in their life. It requires a determination on the part of the parents not to speak to their children in a way that could damage their self-esteem.

Parents have a responsibility to teach, to train their children, and to provide for their educational needs.

Parents have a responsibility to meet the medical needs of their children.

The best way to train your children is to take time to build a relationship with them. This means to play with them, to walk with them, to talk to them. It means giving time to do normal things and using these opportunities to teach and to train. This is the way Jesus trained his disciples. He taught them as he walked with them.

3. POINTS TO DISCUSS WITH THE PARENTS

A. GODPARENTS

It is sometimes customary for parents to choose godparents. This is often only a symbolic title but the principle of godparents is a good one. The godparents promise to take an interest in the spiritual well-being of the child, particularly if the parents die while the child is still young.

Godparents may provide cards and gifts of a Christian nature for the child on birthdays and holidays.

Some may ask the parents from time to time, how they are doing in training their child

(Proverbs 22:6).

B. HONORARIUM

It is not normal for a charge to be made for dedications that are done in the church service. If the service is a private service or at a venue away from the church, or when the parents are simply employing the minister for a service, it would be appropriate for the minister to accept or charge an honorarium.

C. PARTICIPANTS

Write down the names of all the significant people that will form a part of the service. These include parents, godparents, grandparents and siblings. Do not assume all members of the family share the same surname.

D. BEFORE THE SERVICE

Arrange to meet the parents a few minutes before the service to practice where they will stand during the service and to go over any last minute arrangements.

E. PHOTOS

If there are photos or video to be included in the service, this should be organised.

4. SUITABLE SCRIPTURES

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 (CEV)

So love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength. Memorize his laws and tell them to your children repeatedly. Talk about them all the time, whether you are at home or walking along the road or going to bed at night, or getting up in the morning.

Deuteronomy 4:9 (CEV)

You must be very careful not to forget the things you have seen God do for you. Keep reminding yourselves, and tell your children and grandchildren as well.

Psalms 127:3-9 (CEV)

Children are a blessing and a gift from the Lord.

Mark 10:14-16 (CEV)

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me! Don't try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God. I promise you that you cannot get into God's kingdom, unless you accept it the way a child does." Then Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them by placing his hands on them.

1 Samuel 1:27, 28 (CEV).

The Lord gave me (this child) just what I asked for. Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will be the Lord's servant for as long as he lives."

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5. DEDICATIONS IN THE BIBLE

Samuel

The Lord gave me (this child) just what I asked for. Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will be the Lord's servant for as long as he lives."

1 Samuel 1:27, 28 (CEV).

Jesus

Luke 2:22

The time came for Mary and Joseph to do what the Law of Moses says a mother is supposed to do after her baby is born. They took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem and presented him to the Lord.

6. BASIC OUTLINE OR ORDER OF SERVICE FOR A BABY DEDICATION.

Out of consideration for the parents holding their baby, this service should be 8-10 minutes maximum.

1. Short Dedication message followed by a slide presentation of baby pictures.
2. Call the family to the front. The family may involve the parent's, their parents and other family members or invited friends of the family.

The mother or father holds the baby.

3. Personal, friendly history that includes some compliment to the parents and anything that will add to the feeling and knowledge that this baby is special.
4. Read a 'dedication' Scripture.
5. Share about the responsibility of the parents and the church to the baby. You may include the extended family and support friends.
6. Commitment for the parents that you ask and they say, "We do".
7. Have questions for the church that you ask their help in raising the child - maybe written out like responsive reading in the bulletin.

8. Prayer.



A CHILD LOANED

By Anonymous

“I’ll lend you for a little time
A child of Mine.” He said.
“For you to love the while he lives
And mourn for when he’s dead.
It may be six or seven year
Or twenty-two or three
But will you, till I call him back
Take care of him for Me?
He’ll bring his charms to gladden you
And should his stay be brief,
You’ll have his lovely memories
As solace for your grief.

I cannot promise he will stay
Since all from Earth return,
But there are lessons taught down there
I want the child to learn.
I’ve looked this wide world over
In my search for teacher’s true,
And from the throngs that crowd life’s lanes,
I have selected you;
Now will you give him all your love,
Nor think the labour vain
Nor hate Me when I come to call
And take him back again?

I fancied that I heard them say,
"Dear Lord, They will be done,
For all the joy Thy child shall bring,
For the risk of grief we'll run.
We'll shelter him with tenderness,
We'll love him while we may,
And for the happiness we've known,
Forever grateful stay.
But should the angels call for him
Much sooner than we planned,
We'll brave the bitter grief that comes
And try to understand."



CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

By Dorothy Law Nolte, PhD

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.

If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.

If children live with ridicule, they learn to feel shy.

If children live with jealousy, they learn to feel envy.

If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.

If children live with tolerance, they learn patience.

If children live with praise, they learn appreciation.

If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with recognition, they learn it is good to have a goal.

If children live with sharing, they learn generosity.

If children live with honesty, they learn truthfulness.

If children live with fairness, they learn justice.

If children live with kindness and consideration, they learn respect.

If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those
about them.

If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is a nice place in which to
live.

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CHILDREN LIVE WHAT THEY LEARN

Abridged

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If a child lives with encouragement,
he learns confidence.

If a child lives with fairness,
he learns justice.

If a child lives with security,
he learns to have faith..

If a child lives with approval,
he learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,
he learns to find love in the world.



BABY DEDICATION COMMITMENTS

Compiled by Julie Weslake

Parents:

1. As parents we pledge to recommit every day to the following:
2. We promise to talk to you about Jesus every day.
3. We promise to never correct you in anger.
4. We promise to be the kind of people we want you to grow up to be.
5. We promise to love you unconditionally, and never let our anger or criticism get in the way of our love message.
6. We promise to say 'I love you' at least once a day.
7. We promise to never put you to bed without a good night prayer.
8. We promise to listen more than we tell.
9. We promise to thank god for his forgiving grace.

Extended Family:

We, the _____ family, pledge today at the dedication of _____ that we will go out of our way to take notice of _____ and to be an encouragement to her as she grows up in the Seventh-day Adventist Church family. We will keep this in our Bibles as a reminder to always remember her.

Signed: _____

Church Family:

We, the _____ family, pledge today at the dedication of _____ that we will go out of our way to take notice of _____ and to be an encouragement to her as she grows up in the Seventh-day Adventist Church family. We will keep this in our Bibles as a reminder to always remember her.

Signed: _____



OUR DEDICATION COVENANT

We, _____, parents of

do here this day...

...present our child to the Lord,
and pledge ourselves to "bring her up
in harmony with the counsels of the Lord;"

...recognise her as a gift from God,
and give heartfelt thanks for God's blessing;

...dedicate her to the Lord who gave her;

...promise to give her every possible benefit
of home, school, and church;

...ask God's blessings upon her to guide,
to guard, and to direct her through all her life.

Father: _____ Mother: _____

Witnesses 1: _____ Witnesses 1: _____

Minister: _____ Date: ___/___/___



HEART OF A CHILD

Selected

Heart of a child #1

Whatever you write on the heart of a child
No water can wash away.
The sand may be shifted when billows are wild
And the efforts of time may decay.
Some stories may perish, some songs be forgot;
But this graven record – time changes not.
Whatever you write on the heart of a child,
A story of gladness or care
That heaven has blessed or earth has defiled,
Will linger unchangeably there.

Heart of a child #2

Whatever you write on the heart of a child
No water can wash away.
The sand may be shifted when billows are wild
And the efforts of time may decay.
Some stories may perish, some songs be forgot;
But this graven record – time changes not.
Whatever you write on the heart of a child,
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That heaven has blessed or earth has defiled,
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Heart of a child #3

Whatever you write on the heart of a child
No water can wash away.
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DON'T MESS WITH MOM

Received from Jason Lee 10.18 on 14/08/2003

My son came home from school one day, with a smirk upon his face.

He decided he was smart enough, to put me in my place.

Guess what I learned in Civics Two, that's taught by Mr. Wright?

It's all about the laws today, The "Children's Bill of Rights."

It says I need not clean my room, don't have to cut my hair.

No one can tell me what to think, or speak, or what to wear.

I have freedom from religion, and regardless what you say,

I don't have to bow my head, and I sure don't have to pray.

I can wear earrings if I want, and pierce my tongue & nose.

I can read and watch just what I like, get tattoos from head to toes.

And if you ever spank me, I'll charge you with a crime.

I'll back up all my charges, with the marks on my behind.

Don't you ever touch me, my body's only for my use,

Not for your hugs and kisses, that's just more child abuse.

Don't preach about your morals, like your Mama did to you.

That's nothing more than mind control, And it's illegal too!

Mom, I have these children's rights, so you can't influence me,

Or I'll call Children's Services Division, better know as C.S.D.

Of course my first instinct was to toss him out the door.

But the chance to teach him a lesson made me think a little more.

I mulled it over carefully, I couldn't let this go.
A smile crept upon my face, he's messing with a pro.

Next day I took him shopping at the local Goodwill Store.
I told him, "Pick out all you want, there's shirts & pants galore.
I've called and checked with C.S.D. who said they didn't care
If I bought you K-Mart shoes instead of those Nike Airs.

I've canceled that appointment to take your driver's test.
The C.S.D. is unconcerned so I'll decide what's best.
I said "No time to stop and eat, or pick up stuff to munch.
And tomorrow you can start to learn to make your own sack lunch.

Just save the raging appetite, and wait till dinner time.
We're having liver and onions, a favourite dish of mine."
He asked "Can I please rent a movie, to watch on my VCR?"
"Sorry, but I sold your TV, for new tires on my car.

I also rented out your room, you'll take the couch instead.
The C.S.D. requires just a roof over your head.
Your clothing won't be trendy now, I'll choose what we eat.
That allowance that you used to get, will buy me something neat.

I'm selling off your jet ski, dirt-bike and roller blades.
Check out the "Parents Bill of Rights," It's in effect today!
Hey hot shot, are you crying, Why are you on your knees?
Are you asking God to help you out, instead of C.S.D..?"



A CHILD'S TEN COMMANDMENTS TO PARENTS

1. My hands are small; please don't expect perfection whenever I make a bed, draw a picture, or throw a ball. My legs are short; please slow down so that I can keep up with you.
2. My eyes have not seen the world as yours have; please let me explore safely: don't restrict me unnecessarily.
3. House work will always be there. I'm only little for such a short time – please take time to explain things to me about this wonderful world, and do so willingly.
4. My feelings are tender; please be sensitive to my needs; don't nag me all day long. (You wouldn't want to be nagged for your inquisitiveness.) Treat me as you would like to be treated.
5. I am a special gift from God; please treasure me as God intended you to do, holding me accountable for my actions, giving me guidelines to live by, and disciplining me in a loving manner.
6. I need your encouragement and praise to grow. Please go easy on the criticism; remember you can criticise the things I do without criticising me.
7. Please give me the freedom to make decisions concerning myself. Permit me to fail, so that I can learn from my mistakes. Then someday I will be prepared to make the kind of decisions life requires of me.

8. Please don't redo things for me. Somehow that makes me feel that my efforts didn't quite measure up to your expectations. I know it's hard, but please don't try to compare me with my brother or my sister.

9. Please don't be afraid to leave for a weekend together. Kids need vacations from parents just as parents need vacations from kids. Besides, it's a great way to show us kids that your marriage is very special.

10. Please take me to Sabbath School and Church regularly, setting me a good example for me to follow. I enjoy learning more about God

Adapted from Dr Kevin Leman

Parenthood Without Hassles (Well Almost)

Certificate of Dedication

was dedicated to the Lord on

at the

by

Certificate of Dedication

was dedicated to the Lord on

at the

by

Just for Kids...

Understanding
our Church

Dedication

Dedication is:

Dedication is a time for parents to tell the church they'll do their best to raise their kids to know and love Jesus. Its also a time for the church to tell parents that they'll help raise their kids in the faith.

In **1 Samuel 1:27-28**, God gave Hannah a son named Samuel. After Samuel was born, Hannah prayed: "For this boy I prayed, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For His whole life he will be given over to the Lord."

In **Luke 2:22-40**, after Jesus is born, His parents, Mary and Joseph, took Jesus to the temple and dedicated him.

What do you think Jesus' dedication looked like?

Draw or describe the dedication you see today:



ADVENTIST CHURCH *in the South Pacific*

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ADVENTIST CHURCH *in the South Pacific*

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