



CHILD DEDICATION

HOW DO WE SCHEDULE A DEDICATION CEREMONY DURING A SUNDAY SERVICE?

- ✚ **Complete the Child Dedication Registration Form.** These can be found at the KidCentral Welcome Desk in the Children's Area or online at the church's website www.centralsf.org.
 - Return the form to:
 - Central Baptist Church 3102 W Ralph Rogers Road Sioux Falls SD 57108
 - Attention: Children's Ministry
- ✚ **Dedication dates** are listed on the registration form.
- ✚ **Complete the Child Dedication Booklet as a self-study.** After completion, contact Children's Ministries Department if you have questions.
- ✚ **Write a personal blessing for your child.** This needs to be 100 words or less and a scripture verse should be included in the blessing as well. Some parents have selected this verse as their child's life verse which is also used at their 1st Grade Bible Presentation and future Believer's Baptism Ceremony. Submit the blessing no later than one week prior to the dedication to angel.wallman@centralsf.org. Suggestions for scripture and further instructions are given below.
- ✚ **On the Sunday of your dedication:**
 - Arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to the service. Meet at the front of the Worship Center for final instructions. Family members or friends should plan to take care of your other children.
 - Encourage all participants to sit within the first 2 rows of the Worship Center.
 - You will be called forward at the appropriate time during the service.
 - Be prepared to make this a very special day in the lives of your family!

WHAT IS CHILD DEDICATION?

- An opportunity to thank God for the precious gift of your child. A child is a God-given trust (Psalm 127:3). Child dedication is a Sunday-morning ceremony that signifies your commitment to uphold that trust.
- An opportunity to publicly declare your intentions to raise your child in a Christian home. Although many of you have already done that in your hearts, the public announcement makes you accountable to hundreds of people. It is an event that symbolizes your pledge to raise your child in a Christian home and church where he or she can come to know, love, and serve Jesus.
- A benchmark you can return to time and time again. Parents also come praying that their child might one day trust Jesus Christ as Savior for the forgiveness of sin.
- A family dedication, where the parents commit themselves to abide by biblical principles and to raise their children according to God's standards. Not only are you dedicating your child to God, you are dedicating yourselves, as parents, to Christ and the church. Dedicating a child acknowledges God's sovereignty not



only over the child, but also Mom and Dad. Parents present their child before God and His people asking for grace and wisdom in carrying out their responsibilities. You are committing yourselves to maintaining a Christian home, where Christ is honored and the Word of God is held in reverence. A child's first impression of God comes from you, so you must strive to live Christ like lives at all times. Children sense our commitment to the Lord and are far more perceptive than we sometimes realize. For that reason, you need to be diligent in your own personal relationship with the Lord and the study of

His Word. Train up a child in the way he should go, but first be sure to go that way yourself.

- A commitment by the people of Central Baptist to provide a loving, biblical community that supports and prays for your family.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN CHILD DEDICATION?

Guidelines - Child dedication emphasizes parental promises and includes a mandatory dedication self-study booklet or class. So before the ceremony, parents are challenged to have a God-centered vision for their children.

Membership - Membership at Central Baptist Church is NOT a requirement to participate.

Children - While many parents dedicate very young children, your child does not have to be an infant. You can participate no matter what your child's age.

Parent(s) - If you have trusted in Christ as your Savior, you are invited to present your child in Christian dedication to the Lord. Child dedication is open to parents who can truthfully say, "I will commit myself to raising this child to know the Lord Jesus Christ by loving, disciplining, training, and setting a positive Christ like example."

Reflect on Deuteronomy 6:4-7. First, it commands parents to love God; if they truly wish for their child to one day love and follow God; their lives must be an example. Second, Deuteronomy makes clear that the duty of teaching children belongs to parents; Children's Ministry can provide weekly instruction, but parents must be the primary spiritual leaders and must seize the teachable moments that arise throughout life.



A Christian Parent's Covenant

You will not have to recite a pledge during the ceremony. You should, however, read and decide whether you are able to commit to this pledge:

“Declaring Christ as Savior and Lord and believing in my heart that God raised Him from the dead, I this day acknowledge that my children are gifts from God, that I am a caretaker by His grace and, therefore, accept the responsibility for raising my family to know and follow Jesus. As a Christian parent:

- I will demonstrate for my child Christian integrity in my personal life.*
- I will teach my child the meaning of fidelity in my marriage.*
- I will show my child the importance of meaningful worship, community and service through my church.*
- I will model my faith in my life, in prayer, and the application of the Bible's truth as I teach my child to follow Jesus as Lord.*

With God as my strength, I promise to give my child every possible benefit of home, school, church, and community. And I ask His blessing upon him/her to guide and guard through all his/her years. Amen.”



WHY SHOULD WE DEDICATE OUR CHILDREN?

Because children belong to God, it is only proper and appropriate that children be dedicated back to God.

Psalm 127:3 proclaims, “Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him.” As Christians we are called to recognize that children belong first and foremost to God and are given by grace as gifts to parents. Parents not only have the awesome responsibility of caring for this gift, but

also the wonderful privilege of enjoying the gift.

The dedication of children is taught in the Bible.

We are told in I Samuel 1 that Hannah presented her son Samuel to the Lord. In Luke 2:22 we read that Mary and Joseph brought their baby Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem in order to present him before the Lord. In the same way, parents today bring their son or daughter, presenting first themselves and then their child before the Lord our God.

IS DEDICATING OUR CHILDREN CONSIDERED BAPTISM OR SALVATION?

The dedication of your children is not a baptism, nor a sacrament of the church. Rather you, as the parents entrusted by God, are demonstrating a commitment to Him. You are committing and seeking to do everything that is in your power, as God gives you wisdom, to see that your children grow up to respect and honor God and to love and serve Jesus Christ. This “setting apart” is an act, by you the parents, a powerful declaration of your acknowledgement of your stewardship over God’s children.

The Dedication Ceremony is not the salvation of your children, but a public expression of the fact they belong to God.

Child dedication at Central Baptist Church is not the same as infant baptism. We believe that baptism is a public statement of faith that can be made only by someone who has personally believed in Christ. Infants cannot make a personal decision to believe in Jesus. When the child is old enough to make its own decision, she or he may decide to accept Jesus as Savior and be baptized. For us it is important that becoming a Christian is a decision each person makes and is old enough to remember. Older children, however, can make that personal decision. So, we do offer baptism for children.

However, we do believe that the Bible exhorts parents and families to raise their children in a Godly fashion. The child dedication ceremony becomes an opportunity for parents to declare their intent publicly before people and God. A prayer is offered for God to help the parents fulfill their part of the dedication and for the child to be led by the Spirit at the right time into a decision to make a commitment to Christ.

We have confidence in a loving God who welcomes the little children. Jesus said, *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these..."* (Matthew 19:14 NIV).



PREPARING YOUR CHILD'S BLESSING

During your child's dedication you will be asked to personally read a blessing that you have prepared for your child.

“A family blessing begins with meaningful touch. It continues with a spoken message of high value, a message that pictures a special future for the individual being blessed, and one that is based on an active commitment to see the blessing come to pass.”

”The Blessing by Gary Smalley & John Trent



The Basic Elements of the Blessing

Meaningful Touch was an essential element in bestowing the blessing in Old Testament homes. So it was with Isaac when he went to bless his son. Genesis 27:26 “come near now and kiss me my son.” This was not an isolated incident. Each time the blessing was given in the Scriptures, meaningful touching provided a caring background to the meaningful words that would be shared. The act of touch is a key to communicating warmth, personal acceptance, affirmation-even physical health!

A **Spoken Message** or good words are necessary to provide genuine acceptance. For children in search of the blessing, silence is confusing. Children who are left to fill in the blanks for what their parents think about them will often fail the test when it comes to feeling valuable and secure. Unfortunately, even a lack of negative words does not translate into a spoken blessing. Simply being present does not communicate the blessing. A blessing becomes so only when it is spoken. God has always been a God of the spoken word. When God blessed us with His Son, Jesus, it was His Word that “became flesh and dwelt among us”. John 1:14 Abraham spoke his blessing to his son

Isaac. Isaac spoke a blessing to his son Jacob. Jacob gave a verbal blessing to his twelve sons and to two of his grandchildren.

In Hebrew, the word *bless* literally means “to bow the knee”. This word was used in showing reverence, even awe, to an important person. Words of blessing should carry with them the recognition that this person is valuable and has redeeming qualities. In the Scriptures, recognition is based on who they are, not simply on their performance. In blessing his son, Isaac says “Surely the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed...Let the people’s serve you and nations bow down to you” Genesis 27:27,29. That word picture depicts a very valuable person! A blessing should **attach high value**.

A blessing **pictures a special future** for the person being blessed. Isaac says to his son Jacob, “May God give you the dew of heaven, the fatness of the earth.” Genesis 27:28 Even today Jewish homes are noted for picturing a special future for their children. As parents today, we cannot predict another person’s future with biblical accuracy. We can, however, encourage and help them to set meaningful goals. We can also convey to them that the gifts and character traits they have right now are attributes that God can bless and use in the future. With this fourth element of the blessing, a child can gain a sense of security in the present and grow in confidence to serve God and others in the future.



The last element of the blessing deals with the responsibility that goes with giving the blessing. For the patriarchs, not only their words but also God Himself stood behind the blessing bestowed on their children. Several times, God spoke directly through the angel of the Lord to the patriarchs confirming His **active commitment** to their family line. Parents today, in particular, need to rely on the Lord to give them the strength and staying power to confirm the children’s blessing. They too have God’s Word through the Scriptures as a guide, plus the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Words alone cannot communicate the blessing; they need to be backed up with a commitment to do everything possible to help the one blessed be successful.

The following list of scriptures provides you with a wide range of verses other parent's have used in the past. You can choose one of the verses listed or come up with a different verse that you would like to use.

Inspirational Bible Verses For and About Children

Exodus 20:12

Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Numbers 6:24-26

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.

Deuteronomy 4:9

Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on 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.

Deuteronomy 12:28

Be careful to obey all these regulations I am giving you, so that it may always go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is good and right in the eyes of the LORD your God.

Joshua 24:15

As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.

1 Samuel 1:11,26-28

And she made this vow: O Lord of Heaven's Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the Lord, his hair will never be cut... Sir, do you remember me?" Hannah asked. "I am the woman who stood here several years ago praying to the Lord. I asked the Lord to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will belong to the Lord his whole life." And they worshiped the Lord there.

1 Sam 2:21

The boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.

Psalm 22:10

From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother's womb you have been my God.

Psalm 127:3-5

Behold children are a heritage from the LORD. The fruit of the womb is His reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them.

Psalm 139:13-18

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous - how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!

Proverbs 6:20

My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

Proverbs 8:32-33

Now then, my sons, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it.

Proverbs 20:11

Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.

Isaiah 44:3

For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

Isaiah 49:1

Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the LORD called me; from my birth He has made mention of my name.

Isaiah 54:13

All your sons will be taught by the LORD, and great will be your children's peace.

Matthew 18:5

And Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Matthew 19:14

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing these 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 anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them."

Luke 2:40

The child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

John 16:21

A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

Acts 2:38-39

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Colossians 3:20

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. Honor your father and mother. This is the first commandment with a promise: If you honor your father and mother, things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

Galatians 1:15

But when He had set me apart before I was born...and had called me through His grace.

1 Timothy 4:12

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

3 John 1:4

I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children are following the truth.

Sample Blessings

Sample #1

You have brought love into our home and lives since the day you arrived. Each day that we watch you grow and learn brings us such joy. God has blessed us in so many ways and you are the most wonderful blessing of all. You are vibrant and beautiful. We look forward to all the moments and miracles to come. We thank God for giving us time in this life to love and teach you.

It is our commitment to you and to God that we will raise you to know, respect and love Him. May you one day seek Christ for yourself and accept him as your savior and King on the throne of your heart. It is our prayer that through our example and with the support of our family, friends and the church you will grow to understand God's power and love in your life. May you find comfort and strength in God's mercy and grace.

Sample #2

God smiled upon our family on the day of May 22nd as we welcomed you into our household. There wasn't a day that went by that we didn't pray for your health and well being as we anticipated your arrival.

As it is written in James 1:17, "every good and perfect gift comes from above," and it is with that we thank God for such a miraculous blessing; you truly are an amazing gift from heaven.

It is our prayer that you will grow up knowing Jesus as your Savior and exemplify Christ in your daily life. Today we declare our commitment to raise you in a household with Jesus Christ as the foundation and it is our intent to actively build on that foundation day in day out. We love you so much, Mommy and Daddy

Sample #3

From Psalm 103:17 "God's love is everlasting and will be with those who fear him from children to children".

We promise to provide a Christ-centered home for our children. We will teach from the Scriptures and show how to live a life based on Christ. We love you and will pray for you to grow up knowing Christ.

Thank you Jesus for our healthy, happy, baby boy; what an awesome miracle of life! You are such a blessing and fun addition to our family. As you grow into a loving and faithful young man, may the light of Jesus shine through you.

We pray God will lead and guide us as we bring you up in the knowledge of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We pray for wisdom and patience to allow you to learn and grow in His ways, so that one day you will accept His grace and make Jesus Lord and Savior of your life.

Sample #4

Ephesians 1:18-19

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.”

You were placed in our heart even before you were born. Long before we met you we prayed for you. We prayed for your mom and dad in Guatemala, we prayed for your precious little heart, and we prayed for God’s hand to bring you safely to our family. From the moment we laid eyes on your picture, we knew you were OUR SON.

We pray now that you would grow up to KNOW the truth. The truth that you are loved. The truth that you are wanted. The truth that God is sovereign. The truth that you are our son.

We also pray that you will know God and will grow to love Jesus. To walk intimately with Him. To live passionately for Him. To trust Him. We pray that your story and life will bring Great Glory to our true Father in Heaven.