

Child Dedication

Luke 2:22-27, 39-40, 52

Bible Baptist Church loves children. Our ministries reflect our on-going commitment to reach children for the Lord: A trained nursery staff... Sunday School classes dedicated to teaching God's Word from the Cradle Roll through our adults... Patch Clubs and EPIC (Wednesday nights); Vacation Bible School in July, etc.

We believe the future of success of Bible Baptist Church is in our children. Therefore, it is vitally important that we parents recognize our responsibility to dedicate our children unto the Lord.

I. **The ORIGIN of child dedication.**

- Child dedication must never be confused with “baptism.” Some religions practice baptizing babies. The Bible does NOT teach infant baptism. *Before* a person can be baptized the Bible requires they must FIRST believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41; 8:36-38). The order is “*believe and be baptized*,” not the other way around (Mk. 16:16; Acts 8:12-13; 10:47; 18:8). Don't get the “cart before the horse.”
- A. The **precedent** of “child dedication” grew out of God's command in Exodus 13:2, 12, 15—After the birth of a firstborn son, he was to be dedicated wholly to the purposes and service of the Lord.
- B. Accordingly, Samuel's parents brought him to the house of the Lord, to dedicate him unto God (1 Sam. 1:20-28).
 - Rightly understood, **child dedication begins with the dedication of the parents**. Before Elkanah and Hannah could dedicate Samuel to the Lord, they had to be dedicated themselves.
- C. Joseph and Mary also observed this practice when they brought the child Jesus to the temple “**to present him to the Lord**” (Luke 2:22). They recognized their child was to be “**holy to the Lord**” (Luke 2:23). The word “*holy*” means to be *set apart* for God. In effect, Joseph and Mary were publicly presenting Jesus to be “set apart” for God's purposes.

II. The **OBSERVANCE** of child dedication.

- Since Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses, we are no longer bound to observe this O.T. ceremony today. However, parents must still recognize children belong to the Lord and we have a responsibility bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
 - Psalm 127:3—*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD...—* Children are entrusted to us from God to be raised on His behalf! As parents we are “stewards” of children God has given us! Someday we will stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ and give account of how we raised our children for God.
 - Proverbs 22:6 — *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*
 - Ephesians 6:4—*And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*
- There is no greater... no nobler... nor more difficult task than to raise a child to live for God the rest of his life. Parenting is not for wimps!

III. The **OBJECTIVE** of child dedication.

- We see no better example of child dedication in the New Testament than in the life of Timothy (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15).
 - A. Lead a child to a saving knowledge of Christ (2 Tim. 3:14-15).
 1. Child dedication alone will not save a child. But, child dedication is *a step* towards a child eventually being saved when he/she reaches an age when they understand the Gospel of Christ.
 2. Lois and Eunice realized if Timothy was to be saved, he must be taught the Scriptures (Rom. 10:17).
 3. They could not teach Timothy what they did not know themselves.
 - B. To raise up another godly generation. Timothy was a THIRD generation Christian.

➡ Timothy's Christian heritage began with the FAITH of his GRANDMOTHER (2 Tim. 1:5). If there was no faith found in Timothy's grandmother, it is unlikely there would have been any faith found in Timothy!

Mother's Day and Father's Day are well known. But, did you know that President Jimmy Carter proclaimed the first Sunday after Labor Day "Grandparents' Day" as a national holiday.

1. Barb and I are **first generation** Christians—We were not raised in a “Christian home.”
 - How many **second generation** Christians are here today? [Your parents are first generation Christians.] If your parents are saved, you are very fortunate!
 - How many **third generation** Christians are here today? [Your parents are Christians and your grand parents are Christians.] If your grandparents are saved, you are even more fortunate!
 - Do we have any **fourth generation** Christians here? [Your spiritual heritage goes back to your great grand parents.] If you have saved great grandparents, you are blessed beyond measure!
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A study in *Leadership* magazine (Vol. 2, number 3) found...

- If both Mom and Dad attend church regularly, 72% of their children would remain faithful in attending church.
 - If only Dad attends regularly, 55% remain faithful.
 - If only Mom attends regularly, 15% remain faithful.
 - If neither attend regularly, only 6% remain faithful.
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2. 2 Tim. 3:14— Timothy saw the faith of his grandmother and mother **demonstrated** in the way they lived. Do your kids **see** your faith? What kind of example are you giving them?
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“Kids want to know if the Christian faith really works. One way they can know is by observing it working in the lives of their parents. In the end, Christianity is not simply taught,

it's caught. If you ain't got it, your kids won't catch it. So I say to parents, "Live for God—not simply for yourself, but also for your children and your children's children." (Dawson McAllister in *Marriage Partnership*, Vol. 10, no. 2.)

SUMMATION: *"I call to remembrance the unfeigned **faith** ... which dwelt **first** in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother, Eunice..."* (2 Tim. 1:5).

The **greatest spiritual treasure** a man or woman can have is FAITH (Heb. 11:6). The world may cry, "What is a man without money?" The Christian answers, "What is a man without faith?" In Hebrews 11, the only thing all the heroes of the Old Testament are remembered for is their faith. We read it in verse after verse: "*By faith Abel*" (Heb. 11:4), "*By faith Enoch*" (Heb. 11:5), "*Through faith ... Sara*" (Heb. 11:11), "*By faith ... Rahab*" (Heb. 11:31), and so on.

➡ Cats raise kittens. Dogs raise puppies. Eagles raise eaglets. Should not Christian parents raise Christian children? It starts with dedicating yourself to God then dedicating yourself to the task of raising up a godly generation that will live and serve God?