
Baby Dedication

What is a baby dedication?

This is a great question. The Bible doesn't specifically address it! In many religious circles, unfortunately it has taken on a definition of what it is ***not***. Therefore, we begin by addressing what a baby dedication is *not*. It is not baptism. Some people believe in the idea of infant baptism, which is often referred to as a christening. Christians who follow this tradition baptize their children very early in life (usually within a few weeks of birth). They believe this act has certain spiritual significance concerning a child's spiritual condition. Here at Cornerstone, we do not follow this practice. We believe baptism is reserved only for those who are able to make a voluntary, public profession of faith in Jesus, after trusting him for salvation. (Acts 2:38, Romans 6:3-4)

So, if a baby dedication isn't a baptism or a christening, what is it?

It is a special time for parents to announce to their church family the desire to raise their child in the fear and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). Paul's teaching in the New Testament concerning how we should raise our children is based on the teachings found in Deuteronomy chapter 6. In Deuteronomy, God instructs His people to train up their children to follow all the commands of God found in the Law. Parents were to make this training an everyday part of their lives.

Following this idea, a baby dedication is a time where parents stand before their church and make known their intention to raise their child in the ways of Christ. In doing so, these parents are also asking their church to come alongside them in helping them raise their child in this manner. The baby dedication is truly a time for the church to come together to see their collective assignment from God to raise up the next generation to know the gospel and the Word of God.

Because of this, there are a few things parents need to understand before a baby dedication. First, parents themselves need to be born again. At times, one parent may not be a Christ follower, but the other is. In this case, the church promises to come alongside the one Christian parent in helping him/her raise their child. Second, If parents are asking the church to come alongside them as they raise their children, they need to be a recognized part of Cornerstone themselves. Ideally, the parents would be members of Cornerstone. Third, while all people are sinners, parents need to be free of *open, unrepentant* sin. Sins such as living together without being married, being involved in a homosexual relationship, or having an illegal drug habit would constitute these types of sins. Parents need to biblically address these sins before participating in a baby dedication.

With that said, we want to encourage parents that are taking steps to grow in their faith and want to have a baby dedication. Our hope at Cornerstone is that we can meet people where they are in their spiritual walk and help them take the steps they need to take to grow in their faith.

What next?

If after reading this paper you want to proceed with a baby dedication, you would need to sign-up online. Once you have signed up, an elder would meet with you to go over a everything you need to know about a baby dedication and make sure everyone knows what is going on.