

# CORNERSTONE CHURCH

## BABY DEDICATIONS

*Revised Dec. 2007*

### **Introduction**

It's exciting whenever a new child enters a family. There's no greater moment when parents sense that children are a gift from God. In these joyful moments, pastors have the privilege of sharing how parents can express their full appreciation to God through baby dedication.

A Baby Dedication is a ceremony in which believing parents, and sometimes entire families, make a commitment before the Lord to submit a child to God's will and to raise that child according to God's Word and God's ways.

Here at Cornerstone Church, we practice Baby Dedication instead of infant Baptism for this is what the Bible teaches and we find examples of in the Scriptures.

### **Examples of Baby Dedication in Scripture**

*"Hannah bore a son and called his name Samuel. And she brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh to Eli and said, For this child I prayed; and the Lord has given me my petition: therefore I have granted him to the Lord, as long as he lives."* **1 Samuel 1:20, 4-28; 3:19**

The joy of Jesus' birth was shared with the people of God in the house of God. Like most Jewish parents in that day, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple to be presented to God.  
**Luke 2:21-22,25,28-30,33,40**

And to this day, parents bring their children to God, asking for his blessing.

### **Responsibilities Involved in Baby Dedication ... Deuteronomy 6:4-7**

**1) The Bible 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.

**2) The Bible makes clear that the duty of teaching children belongs to parents;** Christian Education at church can provide weekly instruction and is designed to augment what is happening at home. Parents must seize the teachable moments that arise throughout life and demonstrate the value of prayer at family devotions, meal times, and before bed.

**3) Christian parents who dedicate a child are making a promise to the Lord to do everything within their power to raise the child in a godly way, prayerfully, until he or she can make a decision on his or her own to follow God.**

Parents who make this vow of commitment are instructed to raise the child in the ways of God, and not according to their own ways. Some of the responsibilities include teaching and training the child in God's Word, demonstrating an example of godliness, disciplining according to God's ways, and praying earnestly for the child.

**4) Sometimes it is a custom for parents to choose godparent(s).**

Many godparents assume responsibility to provide cards and gifts of a Christian nature for the child on birthdays and holidays. Some periodically ask the parents how they are doing in training their child (Proverbs 22:6). Still others have arranged that in the event of the parents' unexpected death, the godparents will take the child into their home (This of course requires legal documentation) and/or raise them according to their parents religious beliefs.

## ***Conducting the Ceremony***

On the day of dedication, the parents will come forward when called upon by the pastor to stand in front and facing the congregation.

With the pastor standing front and center in the sanctuary with his back to the congregation, the father and mother of the child should stand immediately in front of the pastor, accompanied by any other children.

Godparents/grandparents or friends should stand on either side of couple dedicating their child.

The wife will hold the baby as the family comes forward. During the service, the wife will pass the child to the father for the vow of dedication; the father holding the child during this time symbolizes that the husband is the family's spiritual head. Afterwards, the father will then pass the baby to the pastor for the prayer of dedication.

Children will be anointed with oil and prayed for by the pastor with an elder assisting him. A baby dedication certificate will be prepared beforehand and presented to the after the dedication.

Parents are welcome to have photos taken during this time, except when the Pastor prays.