



Child Dedication

at Riverwood Chapel

Why do we dedicate children?

Throughout generations, God's people have practiced various forms of dedicating their children to the Lord. Though the Bible does not command this practice or give instructions on how to practice child dedication, this act can be a significant moment in the life of the parents, the child(ren) and the church.

Scripture does tell us of Hannah dedicating her child Samuel to the Lord (*1 Samuel 1-2*) and Joseph and Mary taking Jesus to the temple to dedicate him (*Luke 2:22-38*), which was an act of obedience to the Jewish instructions of childbirth purification (*Leviticus 12*) and the redemption of the firstborn son (*Exodus 12:13*).

We dedicate children to the Lord to commit ourselves as parents to raising our children in a God-honoring home, to symbolically give our children back to God as He has entrusted us to their care and to commission them to the Lord's service with their lives.

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall **teach them diligently to your children**, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Proverbs 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Ephesians 6:4

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but **bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord**.

Psalms 127:3

Behold, **children are a heritage from the Lord**, the fruit of the womb a reward.

Who's Dedicating Whom?

Through the practice of child dedication at Riverwood, the parents of the child and the congregation are dedicating themselves to guiding the children to turn away from sin and to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

What does it mean for the PARENTS?

Child dedication has great significance for the parents. Through dedicating their child, parents express their understanding that their child belongs to the Lord and that they have been entrusted to raise them in a God-honoring way. Parents express their intent to raise their child up in the Lord with the hope that he or she will come to faith in Jesus.

In child dedication, parents commit themselves to these four statements:

1. I have placed my own faith, trust and hope in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of my sins and have committed my life to following, loving and serving him.
2. I will seek to follow personally God's word and to be a Christ-like example of his love and holiness as I relate to others in my home, church and community.
3. I will seek to help bring my child to faith in Christ and to keep him/her under the influence of the local church and its ministries so that he/she can grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.
4. I will train my child in the way he/she should go, will impress the commands of God upon him/her and will parent with an understanding that my child(ren) belong to God.



What does this mean for the CHILD?

The act of child dedication means very little for the child. Dedicating a child to God does not mean that the child is a Christian, for they are too young to place their faith in Jesus Christ. The child is not necessarily blessed in any way with special grace and is still responsible for responding to God's word and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Additionally, child dedication is not comparable with baptism, as baptism is an act of faith and obedience after salvation.

What does it mean for the CHURCH?

Child dedication is also significant for us as a church. As a church body, Riverwood is committing to prayerfully and practically support the parents and children and to provide a place for spiritual growth based on the truths of God's word, the power of the Holy Spirit and the encouragement of Christian fellowship.

Next Steps

If you are interested in taking a step toward dedicating your child, please email info@riverwoodchapel.org or visit riverwoodchapel.org/child-dedication to register for the next child dedication service.