

# Child Dedication FAQs

## **What is the biblical purpose for child dedication?**

The scriptural root of child dedication is found in 1 Samuel 1:27–28 (NASB), where a godly woman named Hannah prayed year after year for God to give her a child. He answered her prayer and she gave birth to a son, whom she named Samuel. When Samuel was born, Hannah prayed these words: "For this boy I prayed, and the Lord has given me my petition which I asked of Him. So I have also dedicated him to the Lord; as long as he lives he is dedicated to the Lord."

A New Testament example is in Luke chapter 2. Following the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus to the temple and dedicated him.

In both Scripture passages, the parents entrusted their child completely to God. The writings of Moses, found in Deuteronomy 6:5–9, describe God's plan for how a parent should raise up a child: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 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. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

## **Does Intentional Church baptize infants?**

Scripture provides evidence that baptism follows an individual's decision to trust Jesus alone for salvation (Acts 2:41, 8:12, and 10:47–48). In the Bible, we find parents bringing their children to Jesus. He held them, prayed for them and told us to welcome them. But He did not baptize them and He did not tell anyone else to baptize them. Intentional Church believes baptism is for those who have made a personal decision to trust Jesus alone for their salvation, once they have the maturity and ability to understand what that means.

Dedication is not a sacrament; nor does it impart grace or salvation to a child. Salvation comes only through faith in Jesus Christ as each person recognizes their sinfulness and receives forgiveness and eternal life through him and his work on the cross.

Rather than baptizing infants or children, Intentional Church encourages Christian parents to dedicate their children. This is a special moment in our church service where parents formally call upon God's blessing for their child and publicly commit to raise him or her in accordance with scripture.

### **Can a single parent participate in a child dedication service?**

Yes! Child dedication signifies the commitment of parents (including single parents) to do their best to raise their child to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Additionally, we highly encourage single parents to dedicate their child as they commit themselves to raise him or her without the presence or partnership of a spouse. The decision to dedicate a child is not dependent upon the beliefs of the ex-spouse; however we encourage single parents to discuss child dedication with their ex-spouse. Ideally, both parents—even if not married—would still commit to the dedication of their child to God. We acknowledge that this is often not possible and that it takes extra effort for a single parent to raise a child. As a church, Intentional is committed to supporting single parents in providing a Christian foundation for their child's upbringing.

### **Can parent(s) assign godparents?**

Although the term "godparent" is not used at Intentional, we do welcome parents to invite friends and family members committed to supporting them. The presence of these significant adults symbolizes their commitment to play a supportive role in the child's spiritual development. During the ceremony only immediate family members are invited up to the front or on stage, but special seating may be available for family and friends.

### **What should we wear on dedication day?**

Parents and children are welcome to wear whatever makes you feel most comfortable. You will be in the front of the worship center, so please choose appropriate attire.