

## Why Dedicate Your Child?

As a parent, it is good that you are considering the opportunity to participate in an Infant/Child Dedication Service. We applaud your devotion to your child. As you contemplate this event, please consider the following. Look up the Bible passages and contemplate how they relate to what you are considering.

1. Psalm 24:1 says that the world and all who dwell in it belong to the Lord. Dedicating your child to the Lord is really acknowledging that your child belongs to Him.
2. Psalm 127 says that it is absolutely useless to try to raise children without Jesus at the center. By dedicating your child to Him, you're acknowledging this.
3. Psalm 127 also says that children are a gift from God. Literally, they are a reward. As with all things in life, by dedicating your child to Jesus you are acknowledging his goodness expressed in giving you children.
4. In Psalm 139:13-18, we learn that each child is uniquely designed by God for his purposes and pleasure. In dedicating your child to the Lord, you are devoting yourself to help your child discover their God given uniqueness and destiny.
5. Two examples of parents dedicating children in the Bible are found in 1 Samuel 1 and Luke 2:22. Before dedicating your child to Jesus, read these accounts and ask the Lord to clarify why you should participate in this ceremony.
6. Ephesians 6:4 commands parents, specifically dads, to be sensitive to a child's emotional state, and "bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord". In dedicating your child to Jesus, you are making a vow to do just this.
7. Jesus loves to bless children and urges parents to bring them to him for blessings (Matthew 19:13-14). In dedicating your child to the Lord, you are asking for God's blessing on them.
8. Dedicating your child to Jesus does not make them a Christian. Every individual relies completely upon the grace and forgiveness of Jesus to have their sins removed and become a child of God. Acts 15:11 says "We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are." While it is a serious and sacred act to publicly dedicate your child to Jesus, your long term prayer is that they come to repent of their sins and believe in Jesus as their Savior. Your role as a parent is to raise your child in the teaching and community of Jesus. Their responsibility is to respond to Jesus' grace.
9. Some Christian churches baptize babies. Because the Bible is clear that baptism is for believers, and is not clear that it is for infants, River of Grace does not practice, teach or encourage infant baptism.

**What Will Happen at the Infant/Child Dedication?**

Parents will be asked to stand with their child/children in front of the congregation. We will explain to everyone what is happening. We will make much of Jesus as the one who gives children, blesses children, saves children and helps parents raise children. We'll ask parents to repeat a simple vow of commitment to raise your child in the ways of Jesus and to dedicate their children back into the hands of God. We'll also ask the congregation to vow to assist parents in raising their children. Then we'll have a prayer of dedication

**Do I Need to Sign up for the Child Dedication Service?**

Yes, it would be helpful to know you are participating. Let us know if you have any questions.