



Calvary Chapel Lebanon

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHILD DEDICATION

It is a great honor for us to be part of your child dedication. We love kids. And our love for them comes from God's love for kids. He delights in children and takes great pleasure in them! They are one of the greatest gifts God gives to us. **Psalm 127:3** proclaims "Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord. The "fruit" of the womb is a reward." Because children are a gift from God, it is natural that you present and dedicate your child to God. In the Gospels we read that little children were brought to Jesus so that he might place his hands on them. Calvary Chapel does not practice child baptism. We believe baptism is for believers who have made a decision on their own to follow Christ. Rather, we practice child dedication. Samuel in the bible was dedicated to the Lord by his parents, as was Jesus. In the same way, you as a parent will bring your son or daughter, presenting first yourselves and then your child before the Lord our God.

**Deuteronomy 6:4-7** tells us "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

### **Parent Qualifications for having a child dedicated.**

- The parent(s) participating in the dedication must be followers of Jesus Christ, Acts 4:12 and committed to raising their child according to God's principals in His Word.

**Because the primary focus of child dedication is on the parents teaching their children by word and by example to follow Jesus, we ask that you not participate in dedicating your child to the Lord if:**

- You are not a follower of Jesus Christ.
- You are living with someone as husband and wife, and not married to that person. I. Cor. 6:13b
- You are in a sexual relationship and not married to that person. I Thessalonians 4:3
- You are dependent upon alcohol and/or illicit drug use. Proverbs 20:1; I Corinthians 6:19-20
- You are participating in anything that would hinder the cause of Christ.

The pastors are happy to talk with you about any of the above-mentioned items upon request.

### **Instructions:**

- The child dedication will be held at the beginning of service and will only take a few minutes.
- Please take a seat with your children at the **front right side** of the sanctuary, so you are ready when the pastor calls you to stand with him. You will be asked to face the congregation up front. You may bring other children with you at that time, if you wish.
- The pastor may ask to hold your baby if the baby doesn't object. If there are several children to be dedicated to the Lord at the same time, then the Pastor may not be able to hold all the children.
- The pastor will ask you about your commitment to the Lord and if you promise to follow Him. You will answer by saying, "I will."
- You will then be asked if you promise to raise your child or children in the knowledge of the Lord, and parent them according to biblical principals. You will answer, "I will."
- The pastor will then place his hand on the child to pray if he isn't already holding her/him.
- At the conclusion of the dedication you may take your child to the check in station and their appropriate Sunday school class.

**May God bless you richly as you raise your child in the ways of the Lord!**

**Contact Pat Starr-Wheeldon 610-413-9869 with any questions.**

## **Calvary Chapel Lebanon Child Dedication** **"Parents partnering with God as they raise their children"**

Calvary Chapel Lebanon believes children are a gift from God, and we are very excited that you are inquiring about child dedication.

Child dedication is a public commitment you make before God, your church, and your family. The dedication service provides you, the parent(s) opportunity to express publicly your desire to lead and spiritually nurture your child in cooperation with the Holy Spirit according to God's principles for parenting, so your child will develop a desire to love God and love others at a young age.

The scriptural root of a child dedication is found in 1 Samuel 1:27–28, 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:

*"I asked the LORD to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. Now I am giving him to the LORD, and he will belong to the LORD his whole life." And they worshiped the LORD there.*

In Luke 2, following the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus to the temple and dedicated Him.

In both these 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:

*"And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."*

Child dedication is also about you as the parents/guardians dedicating yourselves to the Lord for the ability to raise your child in the fear and admonition of the Lord as it is dedicating your child. One key step in making your desire to nurture your child in the ways of God is to dedicate him/her to God publicly, through a child dedication ceremony.

### **Why Calvary Chapel does Child Dedication and not Child Baptism:**

The Bible gives ample evidence that Baptism follows an individual's decision to trust Christ alone for salvation (Acts 2:41, 8:12, and 10:47–48). And the New Testament records the baptisms of adult believers only.

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. Calvary Chapel Lebanon believes Baptism is for those who have made a personal decision to trust Christ alone for their salvation, once they have the maturity and ability to understand what that means. As a general rule, Calvary Chapel Lebanon's Elders have determined that if a child has an interest in being baptized, it is to the parents/guardians discretion to know that they truly understand the meaning of salvation and baptism. Completion of baptism classes are strongly encouraged.

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 Christ and His work on the cross. Rather than baptizing infants or children, Calvary Chapel Lebanon encourages Christian parents to dedicate their children. This is a ceremony in which parents formally call upon God's blessing for their child and publicly commit to raise him/her in accordance with Scripture.