

**APPLICATION AND POSITIONAL PAPER ON  
PARENT DEDICATION - CHILD PRESENTATION  
The First Baptist Church of Doylestown**

In many Bible believing churches a service of baby dedication is conducted in which Christian parents publicly present themselves and their children to the Lord. We frequently refer to this service as parent dedication and child presentation.

**I. What Parent Dedication - Child Presentation Is Not**

There are three things that we believe concerning this service:

1. There is no biblical command that such a service should be conducted. Having said that however, there is a biblical precedent for presenting our children to God. This is seen in the case of Hannah presenting Samuel in the temple (1 Samuel 1:24-28) and also in the case of Mary and Joseph presenting Jesus. (Luke 2:22-24) In both cases, this was done in obedience to the Mosaic Law, but no such command is enjoined upon the New Testament Christian. On the other hand, many Christians feel that Hannah as well as Mary and Joseph have established a good pattern and they want to follow their example. We agree that this is a fitting thing for parents to do and we believe that there is great testimony value in such a service.
2. There is no saving value in this service. This presentation of the child is no guarantee that the child will become a Christian. Parents cannot transfer their salvation experience to their children. We believe that our children will have to make a personal decision for themselves when they can comprehend the Gospel. There is no such thing as proxy salvation in the Bible.
3. There is no magical effect upon our children as a result of public presentation. However, parents should dedicate themselves to God in the holy task of training their children for Him. Presenting the child is easy, but dedicating ourselves to the task of being a Christian parent is plain hard work.

**II. What Parent Dedication - Child Presentation Is**

What does it mean to dedicate ourselves and to present our children to God?

1. It means that you publicly acknowledge your child as a gift from God and present him/her to the Lord so that His will might be realized in the life of the child. Psalm 127:3 declares, "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him" (NIV). That being the case, our first responsibility is to recognize that our children have been entrusted to us by God. It becomes our parental responsibility to bring up our children in the ways of the Lord and His Word.
2. Proverbs 22:6 states, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (NIV). One who trains others must be trained himself.

If you are to train your children in the fear of the Lord, you must be familiar with the heavenly manual for training children that is God's Word. In the Word we learn the principles of teaching, rebuking, correcting and training. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) These are essential elements in child training. Timothy had a rich heritage from his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois in that they taught him the Scriptures as a child. (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14;15) The Apostle Paul addressed an important word to fathers in Ephesians 6:4; when he said, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." (NIV)

3. We encourage the congregation to pray for and with the parents as they seek to live for Christ and to train their child for Him. Every parent sooner or later realizes that parenting is no easy task. We need to encourage each other and support one another in those stress periods when our children go through difficult times. There is no easy formula; every child is different. How great it is to know that we have praying supportive Christian friends who are upholding us before God. Parent dedication is not saying, "I have all the answers," or "I will be a perfect parent." It is saying, "I cannot do it alone and need the help of my Christian brothers and sisters."

### **III. Conclusion**

Undoubtedly, you can see from our church beliefs that, if you as a Christian parent do not take your responsibility seriously, there will be very little value in such a public service. However, if you dedicate yourself to God and to the task of raising your children for Him, we believe you will have a rich and rewarding experience.

## PARENT DEDICATION - CHILD PRESENTATION APPLICATION FORM

### The First Baptist Church of Doylestown

Please fill out the form below and return it to the church office. One of the pastors will be in touch with you soon.

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Father of Child: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Mother of Child: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of birth of Child: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location of birth of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the Father of the child know Jesus Christ as Savior?

Does the Mother of the child know Jesus Christ as Savior?

Which service is your preference 9:00 AM or 10:30 AM?

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Office use only

Date application was received by the church office	
Officiating pastor met with the couple <i>(date and initials of the officiating pastor)</i>	
Approval of the pastor of the church <i>(date and initials of the pastor of the church)</i>	
Date of Dedication	