



# RENEW BABY DEDICATIONS

## 1. Why Baby Dedications vs Baby Baptisms?

Scripture provides 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. Renew Church LA 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.

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, Renew 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 or her in accordance with Scripture.

## 2. What is a Baby Dedication?

The scriptural root of a 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."*

In Luke chapter 2 of the New Testament, 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."*

One key step in marking your desire to nurture your child in the ways of God is to dedicate him or her to God publically, through a child dedication ceremony.



### 3. What should I expect during the Baby Dedication?

Here are a few details to keep in mind:

- Please provide the child's full name to our Church Administrator so that we can have the right name on the Dedication Certificate.
- Parents will need to sit at front of the auditorium. (We will reserve seating for you)
- The dedication will take place before the sermon. We know babies can be fidgety so we're doing it earlier in the service.
- There is no dress code, but families do tend to dress up for the photo ops (we will try to have a church photographer on hand).

During the dedication service, parents will be asked to come forward with their child and stand before the congregation. They will be asked to express vows before God, their family and the church, declaring their desire to raise their child in a God-honoring way

You will be asked to affirm the following commitments (or something similar):

- 1) *Understanding we won't always be perfect in this--but do you commit to loving the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might?"*
- 2) *Do you commit to raising your child in the love of God, where your relationship to Him is the utmost priority in all your decisions and conduct as a family?*
- 3) *Do you commit to doing all that you can to grow in the love God has for your family so that your child can see God's love in the way you love each other?*