

Recommended Reading:

Laying the Foundation
Audio Series with workbook
by Jay Grimwood

Shepherding A Child's Heart
by Tedd Tripp

What The Bible Says About Child Training
by Richard Fugate

All of these are available at the
Reality Resource Center



Baptist Temple

The Church for All Peoples

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Answering your questions...

The Difference Between Child Dedication and Baptism



The Kansas City Baptist Temple is comprised of people from many different cultural and religious backgrounds. As a parent, you may have questions about the difference between baby dedication and baptism. We want to make sure your questions are addressed.

DEDICATION

This baby dedication has more to do with you as a parent than it does with your child. It is a "parent commitment service." This is your chance to promise to offer your child to the Lord and dedicate yourself to raising your children for the glory of God. Our goal in baby dedication is :

- To help you recognize that children are a gift from God
- To facilitate your verbal commitment to raising your children according to biblical principles
- To challenge you to be an example for your children both in service and in worship
- To assist you in laying a biblical foundation of truth in the lives of your child

Parents cannot make a salvation decision for their child. This dedication service does not make your child a Christian, it does not make them a member of the church, nor does baptism. Each individual must make their own decision to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When children are old enough to understand the concept of sin and the consequences of that sin, then they are able to make the decision to trust in Jesus Christ's death on the cross as the payment for their sin.

Parents are responsible for laying a foundation through teaching and example that will help their children make that decision at the right time. This same process is true of marriage. We cannot decide if or when our children will marry, nor can we guarantee them a happy marriage. But through our positive example, we can lay a foundation for making good decisions and the right decision when the time comes.

Dedication is not baptism. Neither dedication or baptism is a sacrament of any kind. Neither one imparts saving grace to the child. Rather, dedication is the parent's commitment to God that they will raise their children in God's ways.

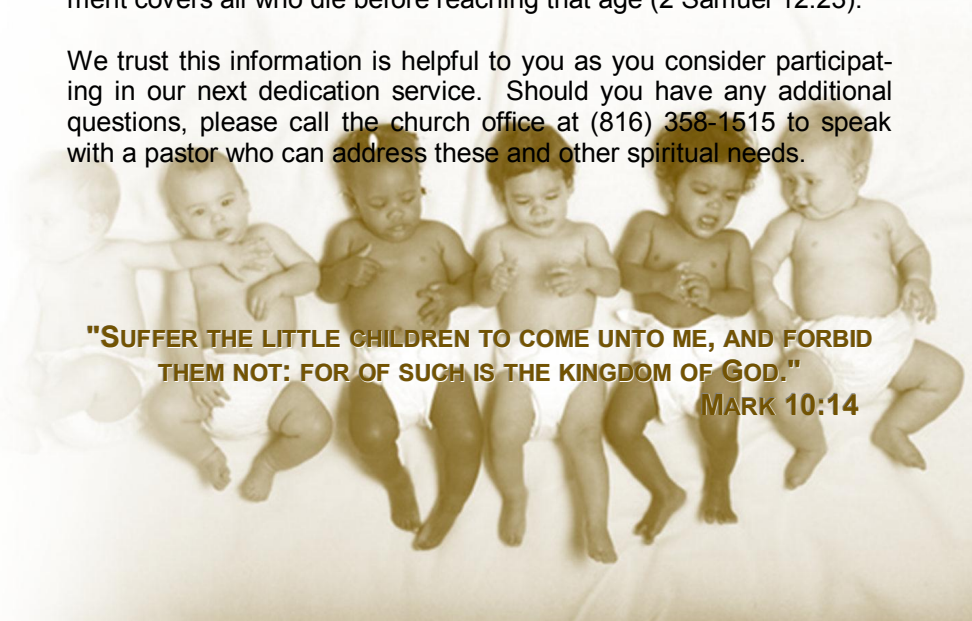
BAPTISM

The Bible teaches that all believers are to be baptized as a testimony of their personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Baptism does NOT get you into heaven. Only by asking Jesus Christ to be our Savior and Lord do we receive eternal life (John 3:15; Romans 3:23; 1 John 5:11-13). Jesus then asks us to be baptized as a means of identifying with him (Colossians 2:12). He himself modeled this to us by being baptized as an adult. The Kansas City Baptist Temple does not baptize children until they are old enough to explain their understanding and belief in the gospel as revealed in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

The Bible reveals that baptism is a symbol of Christ's death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:4). It is a symbol of new life in Christ, a symbol that tells others that you are a believer. Much like a wedding ring, it is an outward sign of an inward commitment. Baptism does not **MAKE** you a believer—it shows that you **ARE** a believer.

People often ask what happens if a baby or young child dies? A baby does not need to be baptized (or anything else) to go to heaven. A child is totally under God's spiritual care until he or she is old enough to know right from wrong, comprehend Christ's claims in the gospel and make his or her own decision for Christ. Salvation is guaranteed to children who die before the point of accountability. This is based on Romans 4:15 and 5:13 and the nature of God as revealed through Jesus Christ. The baby or young child has not yet come to the age when he or she can accept or reject Christ. Therefore, Christ's atonement covers all who die before reaching that age (2 Samuel 12:23).

We trust this information is helpful to you as you consider participating in our next dedication service. Should you have any additional questions, please call the church office at (816) 358-1515 to speak with a pastor who can address these and other spiritual needs.



"SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME, AND FORBID THEM NOT: FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD."
MARK 10:14