

Dedication I: Setting Apart

“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.”
Deuteronomy 6: 5-7

Often times people are surprised when they here me say that baby dedication is not in the Bible. You cannot look up in the book of Romans and learn how to properly dedicate a child to God. So why do we do baby dedications? While baby dedications are not in scripture, there is this beautiful divine pattern of setting things apart. It goes all the way back to Genesis and runs all the way through to the book of Revelation.

God determined there would be seven days and one of those days would be set apart as the Sabbath. God had made all the people of the earth but He set apart a particular group, the decedents of Abraham Isaac and Jacob to be His own. These decedents were circumcised as a sign of their being set apart to God. Jacob had twelve sons and these sons represented the twelve tribes that made up the nation of Israel and one of those tribes, the tribe of Levi, was set apart as a priestly tribe to serve the people before God. In the early part of Israel’s history judges were set apart to deliver God’s people, prophets were set apart to speak God’s words to the people and kings were anointed with oil and set apart to lead. And all throughout the Biblical story you can see people, animals, pieces of land, mountains, and all sorts of articles of clothing, food and other items getting set apart for God. This act of setting apart is an act of dedication. Those things, these people, that gold, and this moment belongs to God.

Do you get the picture in your mind of God saying and people agreeing that this belongs to God, this thing is offered to God for His purposes? Certainly all things already belong to God but in dedication we stand with God in recognizing that this specific thing belongs to Him. We do not exercise ultimate authority over what is dedicated, God does, and the leadership that we offer is in response to His voice. What He says goes because this has been set apart/dedicated to God. So, in baby dedication we stand in the long tradition of setting things apart for God—making the bold declaration that this child belongs to God.

ON YOUR OWN

I would like you to read over these stories from scripture and think about them. They give us various glimpses into setting your child apart for God. What do you learn from the following stories about the role of a parent and the character of God?

Matthew 19:13-15
I Samuel 1 & 2
Deuteronomy 6:1-9

As you have read through scripture, and as you have been parenting your child ,what are some of the things that are on your heart as a parent ?

When you think of your child, what are some of the things that are most valuable to you that you would want to offer them as their mom or Dad ?

TALK TOGETHER

While we have been talking about dedication, I want you to know that what God has done is actually dedicate you. He has set you apart as the parent of this child. Of all the people in the world, you are this child’s parent. So in many ways, dedication is about you.

You are God’s primary shepherd for this child.

So talk together about:

What does baby dedication mean to you?

Why do you want to do this?

How does what is God teaching you about Himself, influence the way you parent?

Because of what is God like, why does that compel you to dedicate your child to God and dedicate yourself to helping them know God?

****Pray for each other about your fears as a parent.****