

## SCRIPTURE VERSES FOR STUDY AND PRAYER:

- Deuteronomy 6:1-9
- Proverbs 22:6
- Proverbs 23:13
- Proverbs 29:17
- Matthew 18:1-7
- Matthew 19:13-15
- Ephesians 5:21-33
- Ephesians 6:4
- 1 Peter 3:7

## QUESTIONS FOR THE DEDICATION CEREMONY

1. Do you commit yourself/yourselves to the biblical training of your child?
2. Because one of the greatest gifts you can give your child is a healthy marriage, will you seek to make your relationship with each other the priority God intends?
3. Recognizing that God established both the family and the church, and designed them to work as partners in training and service, will you seek to involve your child in the opportunities and ministries of the church?
4. Do you commit to praying for your child regularly, and faithfully doing all in your power to lead him or her into a vital relationship with Jesus Christ?
5. Question to the church family: "...and do you, LifePoint Church, commit yourselves to ministering to this family, holding them accountable, and to do your part to raise this child in the teachings and service of the Lord, for as long as this family makes LifePoint its local church home?"



# DEDICATING YOUR CHILD TO THE LORD

As parents, we come from many different backgrounds. As a result, it can be very confusing as to what we should do when a child is born. *Should we have them baptized? Should we have them dedicated? What is right?* Although the final decision is ultimately the parent's, here's a brief statement about what we believe at LifePoint that may help clarify the issue.

1

## WE BELIEVE YOUR CHILD IS A UNIQUE AND WONDERFUL GIFT FROM GOD.

As parents, most of us realize the awesome gift that a child truly is. At LifePoint, we believe we should acknowledge God's gift. Your son or daughter is a miraculous merging of two persons. He or she is a part of both of you, as well as your families' for many generations. If your son or daughter has been adopted into your family, he or she is no less amazing. In some ways, your child is a greater blessing simply because God has provided you with the opportunity to give them a home, a family, and a shared faith that they may never have experienced without your intervention. In short, all children are a blessing from God and should be seen in that light (Matt. 19:14).

2

## WE DO NOT BELIEVE BAPTISM, WHETHER IT BE FOR A CHILD OR AN ADULT, SAVES A PERSON.

We are saved by the grace of God through faith, not by any action on our part (Eph. 2:8). No one is able to make this decision for their child; it must be his or her personal desire and decision. When a child or adult is able to make that decision on their own, with an understanding of all that a decision to follow Christ brings with it, they are ready to consider being baptized. Only after they have placed their hope in Christ for salvation, and counted the cost of what it means for them to serve as Christ-followers for the rest of their life, are they ready for baptism (Luke 14:25-34). We recognize and appreciate other denominations' well-intended desire to baptize infants, and acknowledge that some understand infant baptism to be a biblical expression of the parents' desire to bring their child into a covenant relationship with God. On this issue we respectfully disagree. We find the only expressed form of baptism in the New Testament to be baptism of professed believers by immersion. Therefore, rather than baptize infants/young children into the faith, we dedicate them to the Lord, expressing the parents' and the church's desire to raise the child up in the training of the Lord to the point when they can, and hopefully will, make a decision to follow Christ that is born out of their own conviction (Rom. 10:9-10).

3

## WE BELIEVE THAT PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO GOD FOR HOW THEY RAISE AND NURTURE THEIR CHILD.

As parents, God has entrusted this life into your hands, and has called you to love and raise your child according to His plan. We raise our children properly when we teach them, not just biblical truths and lessons, but healthy life lessons as well. More often than not, this is accomplished best by example. We also believe that regular family devotions are essential to train up our children in the Lord. In addition, we must take time to discipline our children. God holds us accountable for the manner in which we discipline, or fail to discipline, our children. 1 Samuel 3:13 says: "For I (the LORD) told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons made themselves contemptible, and he failed to restrain them." Discipline is not for our sake, but for our children's sake. Some Scriptures you may want to look at to help you in your understanding of this principle are Proverbs 13:24, Proverbs 22:15, Hebrews 12:4-11, Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:20-21. Finally, God has called us to love our children. We do this by caring for them, talking with them, sharing with them, and showing them that mom and dad love each other too. The Bible assumes we will love our children (Matthew 7:9-11). We believe that these three need to be kept in proper balance. Too much love and not enough discipline, or too much discipline and not enough teaching, or too much discipline and not enough love, throws everything out of balance. The child will either be spoiled or embittered.

We believe that the church has a vital role to play in assisting every parent to fulfill this role. However, this can only be accomplished as the parents seek out the help which the church can give. We believe that regularly attending worship is important for the child, but even more important is your regular attendance as parents. As parents, you'll need support, guidance, wisdom and love to carry out the huge responsibility you have accepted. By being in the church, the child will also find love, friendship and instruction, but it must be a partnership. The church cannot "fix" your child, or make him or her a believer. It is a joint venture, with the parents leading the way. Therefore, when we have a Parent/Child Dedication, we ask you as parents to acknowledge God's gift and His rightful ownership, to dedicate yourselves to Him, and to dedicate your child into His care. We, as the church, will commit to coming along side you and assisting you in the process.

As you prepare for the day of dedication, it is important to know that this is intended to be a significant time both for you and your child. In preparation for this day of dedication, please set aside time to prayerfully read the verses and passages listed for you on the back of this pamphlet. You are blessed to be "heirs together of the grace of life." (1 Peter 3:7) Our prayer is that this exercise will not only prepare you for the day of dedication, but also for the years ahead as you seek to be faithful in this high calling of parenthood.