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## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BABY DEDICATION AND BAPTISM?

This is a question many parents have regarding their newborn infant or young child. Since families of Living Hope come from various religious and cultural backgrounds this explanation has been prepared.

### Part I:

#### Child Dedication/ Dedication of Children

This service is actually a Parent Commitment Service. "A promise of parents to offer their child (usually in infancy) to the Lord and to dedicate themselves to the rearing of the child for the glory of God."

#### *Parent Commitment/Child Dedication*

1. Meant to give parents of young children an opportunity to recognize God's gift of a child to them. (*Psalms 127:3*)
2. Parents' declaration of their intent to raise their child in a Christian environment. (*Deuteronomy 6:5-7*)
3. A challenge to parents to religiously guide and educate their child. (*Ephesians 6:4*)
4. A challenge for the parents to lay a foundation of learning about God.

As parents we cannot 'decide' our child's salvation for them. Each person must make their own decision about their relationship with Christ. When a child becomes old enough to understand the concept of sin and their responsibility for that sin before God, they are then ready to make a decision about salvation.

Parents can, however, lay a foundation by their teaching and example that will help a child be ready to make that most important decision. (An illustration of this is marriage. We do not decide when or if our child will marry and we can't guarantee them a happy marriage. However, our positive example can lay a foundation for them making a good decision when the day comes.)

This dedication is not a Baptism. It is not a sacrament. It does not impart salvation to the child.

Baby Dedication is viewed as a confirmation between the parents and the church to raise the child in a Godly way until the child is old enough to make his/her decision in accepting Christ as his/her personal Savior.

The dedication of children is taught in the Bible. As a baby, Jesus was dedicated by his parents (*Luke 2:22-25*). Jesus also bestowed 'blessings of the children.' (*Mark 10:16*)

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### Part II:

#### Baptism

##### A. *WHO is to be Baptized?*

All believers are to be Baptized.  
(*Acts 2:41, Acts 8:12, Acts 8:13*)

Only faith in Christ makes you a believer. The only requirement for baptism is belief in Jesus Christ. We do not baptize children until they are old enough to understand and believe.

##### B. *WHAT is Baptism?*

It is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection. (*1 Corinthians 15:3, Colossians 2:12*)

It is a symbol of your new life as a Christian, (*2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 6:4*) – an outer symbol that you are a believer.

##### C. *Baptism does not make you a believer.*

It shows that you already are one.

##### D. *Baptism does not save you.*

Only your faith in Christ saves you. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith...it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast." (*Ephesians 2:9*)

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*Quotations are from the Broadman Ministries handbook, the Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists and the most reliable source - The Holy Bible.*



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We will not hide these truths from our children but will tell the next generation the glorious deeds of the Lord ~ Psalms 78:4

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Answering Your Questions



The Difference  
Between  
Baby Dedication  
and Baptism

[www.livinghopewired.com/baby](http://www.livinghopewired.com/baby)

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