

Baby Dedication

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[0 : 0 0] Thank you so much for making your journeys to be here today such a special day for my family.

And that is we're going to be dedicating Miles Morales today to the Lord. Amen. Amen. This is my first baby dedication. And it's awesome that it gets to be for my grandson.

So I'm blessed today. And raising children is both a privilege and a purposeful act. You have to be intentional. And when you do that the right way, it becomes you align yourself with divine favor.

Amen. And when, of course, I'm going to go to the story of Hannah because that's what every preacher does for the baby dedication. The story of Hannah dedicating her son to the Lord is the most well-known baby dedication in the Bible.

Hannah couldn't have children. She couldn't have children, but she prayed fervently to God to the point Eli, the priest there at the temple, thought she was drunk.

[1 : 1 3] Sometimes I think we have to get desperate with God over something. And we can't lose our desperation because our, I don't know, our fervency and our desperation has to match our dilemma.

And she had a dilemma. She couldn't have children. And so we need to learn from that. We need to be desperate for some things. And I believe Hannah was, you know, less concerned about the fact that she couldn't have children than she was that she couldn't have a child that she could raise and offer to the service of the Lord.

When you read that story, I think that's really what moved her. That's what she was desperate about. Not necessarily that she couldn't have children in and of itself, but that she couldn't have a child that she could dedicate into the service of the Lord.

She was faithful to her God. Amen. Her primary concern wasn't, I am never going to be able to have a child for myself. That wasn't her primary concern that she wouldn't have a child that she could raise and offer service to the Lord.

That's what moved her. That's what moved her. That was her primary concern. Her prayer was a promise to God that if God would bless her with a baby boy, she would dedicate him to the service of the Lord.

[2 : 3 4] Not only do we get to and need to get desperate for something, but the thing that we get desperate for has to be aligned with the kingdom of God and God's will and God's purposes.

And we do need to get desperate for some things, but the thing we need to get desperate about is the kingdom of God. Amen. And so are you desperate for something? God is concerned about? Are you desperate for something God is concerned about?

See, God answered her prayer. Our all-knowing God, he's all-knowing. He knew she was serious about her vow that she was making. God knows how serious we are.

God knows our heart. He searches our hearts. Our hearts are fully revealed to him. Our hearts are exposed to God. He can see through.

And he can see our hearts. And it's in our hearts where our thoughts and intents are conceived, the Bible says. And it's our thoughts and intents that become our actions.

[3 : 34] And so God knows this. That's why God looks into the hearts. Not what's on the outside, but what's in the heart. And God answered her prayer.

She had a baby boy, and she named him Samuel. And she kept that vow by following it up with action. Once Samuel was weaned, she took her son to the temple to leave him with the priests.

Imagine the love that she must have had for Samuel. The love a mother has for their children is something that can hardly be rivaled. It's got me and my wife crosswazed a few times, and that's not a comfortable place to be.

All the men said amen. You know what I'm talking about? There's few things that can rival the love a mother has for her children. And it's the will of God that it's that way.

That's how God intended it. And I believe that it represents God's love for his children. I believe that the manifested love that a mother has for her children is a type of love that God has for us.

[4 : 42] In fact, one of the signs of the end times, the Bible says, is that mothers will no longer have a natural affection for their children. And we see a lot of that in the world today. But that will not be the case for a God-loving and God-fearing mother.

For a God-loving and a God-fearing mother, they're going to have that natural affection. And it's so divine. It's something that God intended for. Amen. And so imagine the love Hannah must have had for Samuel.

Not having the ability to have children. And finally, God granting her a miracle child. And having that miracle child in her arms for several months as she nurtured him as only a mother can.

But then the day came that Samuel was no more dependent on milk and he was weaned. And after that, all that bonding, all that miracle that took place that she got to experience and hold that baby in her arms, as God knew she would, she kept her promise.

She kept her vow and she delivered her son to the temple and gave her precious son back to the Lord. See, God doesn't want just our lip service. He wants our hearts pure and our commitments to him.

[5 : 58] And he wants our commitments followed up by actions. Like the vast majority of what the Old Testament was. Think of circumcision.

It was literal. It was physical. Physical examples all through the Old Testament. And this is a story found in the Old Testament.

She literally had to take and give her son to the service of the Lord. And I'm sure that all the mothers here today in this New Testament era, in this New Testament church, I bet you guys are thankful that we're in a spiritual dispensation.

We're thankful that we're in a spiritual dispensation. And so it is a spiritual matter, not a literal giving away of your child. All the mothers said amen. But I want to reinforce a point.

And that is that it may not seem as hard as it would be to take your child and leave them here at church and go back and just come see them every once in a while.

[7 : 08] Okay? It may not seem as hard. But do not, don't be deceived. Because the type of dedication of your child to God that the Bible teaches and expects is no less difficult.

No less sacrificing. And no less challenging if it's done right. And Hannah followed up on that action with more reinforcing actions. So there was then the vow and the promise and then the initial action of taking and leaving Samuel there with the priest.

But there was a following up with reinforcing actions. She continued to be committed and faithful to her God and her son by supporting her son in his service to God. The only time she would get to see her son was when she visited the temple to worship.

And, and, and, but she would bring him a new coat every year, the Bible says, and among other things, I'm sure. And she did this to show her continued commitment to her vow. Samuel became a judge and a prophet of the Lord and ultimately anointed the first two kings of Israel in his service to the Lord.

But it was all beginning and starting with the mother that made a promise and a vow to God. And followed it up with action and commitment day after day, year after year.

[8 : 25] The promising and, and, and the vowing shouldn't be taken lightly. But really, that is the easy part. You can make all kinds of promises to God. You can make all kinds of promises and, and, and vows to God with different things.

But it's the initial action followed by more and more reinforcing actions over and over again. That the tangible commitment of the mother day after day, that's the real work.

That's the sacrifice. And it's, and it's the formula for ensuring that your child is raised right and pointed in the right direction. Taylor, we're here for you and Miles today.

You're not alone in this. If you're, if you're behind Taylor as the body of Christ and as family, would you stand and just raise your hand towards Taylor?

Taylor, look around. You're not alone in this, girl. You're not alone in this today. You got an army behind you. Amen.

[9 : 32] Thank you. You may be seated. Taylor, I'm talking to you mostly now. Hannah's act of dedicating her son, Samuel. It wasn't a formal baby dedication like is our custom or tradition that we're doing here today.

Instead, it was a personal commitment that she made to God to give her son to God's service. It was, it was, it was a personal commitment she had.

It wasn't a baby. We use it as a baby dedication, but there wasn't a ceremony. They didn't, I don't think they had a ceremony. Maybe I think they had some sacrificing and things going on. But it was a personal commitment that she made.

And instead, it was, it was a personal commitment that she made to God to give her son to God's service. And Hannah kept the promise. Hannah kept the promise and followed up day after day.

And it was her worship unto the Lord in doing so. And when you dedicate Miles to the Lord today, it is an act of worship to God. An act of thanksgiving to God.

[10 : 38] An act of trust and dependence of God. But very importantly, it is a vow and commitment to God on how you, as Miles' mother, will raise Miles.

That's what it's about today. And so, Taylor, please understand that today, Miles' baby dedication isn't just you telling God, Miles is yours, God.

I'm giving Miles back to you. You take care of him, Lord. Protect him, God. Provide for him, God. Keep him. It's less about that, and it's more about you as Miles' mother.

Telling God, I'm going to raise him to love you. I'm going to lead him through my example. You're here to tell God today, as Miles' mother, I'm committing that I am going to be intentional about serving you more fervently than I ever have.

And I'm going to be intentional about teaching Miles about you. Dedicating our children to the Lord is very biblical. We find it in Deuteronomy chapter 6, verse 4 through 7.

[11 : 46] Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy soul, with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart.

In verse 7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

It is the first and greatest commandment to love the Lord thy God with all of your heart, soul, and might. And your commitment and vow today is important.

But without daily actions, it will just be lip service. Teach Miles about the goodness of God diligently. Talk to the Lord every day with Miles.

Quote him scriptures even at his age now. Quote him scriptures every day. When you're sitting at home with Miles, teach him to love and to serve God.

[12 : 48] When you're out walking with Miles, teach him to love and to serve God. When you go to bed and when you wake up, teach him to love and to serve God. And not just with lip service. Not just speaking.

Don't just speak it, but in your demonstration. Be the example. Through your actions, followed up by more actions. Demonstrate to Miles how to live for God.

Demonstrate to Miles how to speak godly. Demonstrate to Miles how to act godly. Demonstrate to Miles how to live holy. And how to live a sacrificial life to our Lord and God.

Amen. Proverbs 22 and 6 says, Train up a child in the way he should go. And when he is old, he will not depart from it. While Miles is young, you're training him up.

And what you're doing is you're pointing him. And my cousin, Brother Rick Till, is here today. And he gave me this idea. So I can't take the full credit for it.

[13 : 53] But you're pointing him in a direction that one day he's going to go. And so at this time, I want us to present Miles before the Lord. So Taylor, if you could come stand with Miles.

And if we could all stand. If your family, close family and ministers come. And we're going to pray a prayer of blessing over him.

And over his mother, Taylor. And as we do, my wife, Nana. Nana. She's going to sing her prayer as we pray.

Pray together. Children are a child.

The treasure given by the Lord. The seeds of precious flowers. How quickly flowers grow.

[15 : 14] Life's an empty canvas. As the artist just begins. The story yet in return.

As the author lifts his pen. Help us strain up his tire. In the way he should go.

While he's young and tender. Let your spirit fill the soul. Oh, we have no greater joy.

When our children walk in true. This child that you have given. We give him back to you.

Children are a blessing. God alone bestows.

[16 : 16] The miracle or wonder. The precious thing. It's closing grace and wisdom.

And days turn into you. Oh, we have no greater joy.

He should go While He's working together Let your spirit Fill His soul For we have No greater joy Than when our children Walk in truth This child that you Have given We give him Back to you May His voice Sing your ways May He see you walk in Your ways May His hands always Do your broken May He learn to seek your Face May He ever grow with Grace Through each trial Give Him back Faith will not Fall

The will not Fall You must train up This child In the way He should go While He's young And tender Let your spirit Fill His soul For we have No greater joy Than when our children Walk in truth This child That you have given We give him Back to you Amen Taylor Your own personal Commitment to the Lord Is supremely important Not only had your mother And I gone through A similar dedication service And publicly Announced Our intent

To raise you In the service Of the Lord But you personally For yourself At some point Have dedicated Your life to God You have repented Of your sins You were baptized In the name of Jesus Christ For the remission Of those sins And you've received The gift of the Holy Spirit And the Holy Ghost In you And we all have To work on our own Salvation With fear and trembling The Bible says And your salvation Is individual Yes But your own salvation Now affects your child It affects Miles And if you fail As an individual To serve the Lord As you have committed To do Before God Before he filled you With his spirit If you falter In that It now has Potentially devastating Effects On Miles' salvation As true as it is That Miles will have To work out His own salvation At some point It's also true That what you Demonstrate to him Will have a profound Effect on his

[19 : 47] Eternal direction It's vitally important Taylor For Miles' salvation That you create And maintain A godly home That you Are sanctified For God's purpose Alone Living a holy life And pointing Miles In the right direction Through your Leading and direction Take it from Your mom and I We are experiencing This even now When your child Makes it to that day When it reaches That age Of accountability You may still Have some influence You You still Are definitely Going to have to Be an example But there Is coming that day Where That your teaching Has reached Its pinnacle And that the Strongest years Of influence That you have Over Miles Has passed And to the point That the direction You have pointed Miles in During his Childhood years Very likely Becomes his Direction For his Adult life

And his Eternal destination So I want to I want to conclude With this very Important understanding In Psalms Chapter 127 And you may be Seated In Psalms Chapter 127 Verse 3 and 4 It says Low children Are in heritage Maybe if you could Take this From Jose And hold it Up here Low children Are a heritage Of the Lord And the fruit Of the womb Is his reward And verse 4 says As arrows In the hand Of a mighty man So are children Of the youth The Bible says That our children Are as arrows In our hand And when the archer Draws back That arrow On that string On that bow A lot of things Have to go right A lot of things Have to be in place Before letting That arrow fly There has to be Stable ground That the archer's Feet is planted upon

There has to be Some intentional things That are done There has to be A desired target That you're going To project that Arrow towards And there has to Be a steady hand And aim In order for that Arrow to be Shot In the most Accurate way To hit that target That you're aiming at Miles is your arrow In your hands Today Let your feet Firmly Be planted Upon the rock Of our salvation In Christ Jesus Let your hands Be steady As you daily Lead miles In the teaching Of God's word Often have a Bible In your hands Aim for the appropriate Target The only target We should be aiming for And that's the Kingdom of God And that's the Work in his Kingdom To the Lord And there's going To come a day When that arrow Is going to fly If the Lord Terry's There's coming a day When Miles Is going to fly On his own In the direction That he's pointed

In Is going to matter For eternity Aim him In the right direction Through your daily Actions And commitments To the Lord And so This wall art Be a daily Reminder To aim Miles Steady In the right Direction Towards God Amen Lord bless you Amen Sorry I'm a little Emotional today Isn't God good?

Miles is such a Treasure God's I didn't know You could love Your children More than Somebody else But then there Was Grandchildren And God just Makes more room For all that love If you're a Grandparent You know what I'm talking about Amen Let's all stand How many is Excited to hear The word of God Today You know what