

Presentation of Children by Parents

Parent & Child Dedication

The Challenge, continued

Responsive Reading

Pastor: “People were bringing little children to Jesus...but the disciples rebuked them.”

People: “When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.’”

Pastor: Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

People: “And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.”

Pastor: “He called a little child and had him stand among them.” He said, “Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.”

People: Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Pastor: Parents and congregation, I charge you to see these little ones with the loving eyes of Jesus. Do you promise to nurture them, love them, and set their feet on a path of following Jesus Christ as the Lord of their lives?

People: In the strength of Christ, we will.

The Challenge

We as a church family rejoice today with these parents because these little ones have come into their hearts and homes. There are no gifts more precious, more exciting, nor more enriching to the home than the coming of a little child. But, with this experience there comes also to these parents great responsibility: for into their care has been entrusted an immortal soul, whose destiny is to a large extent determined by the character and influence of the home.

Jesus considered children very precious, and he said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” (Mark 10:14) In the presence of the Holy Spirit and remembering how the Lord Jesus Christ took little children and blessed them, we acknowledge these parents who present their children before God and this church.

The Covenant

Minister: Parents, do you come today recognizing your children as gifts from God, and with thankful hearts do you dedicate your children to the Lord?

Parents: We do.

Minister: Do you pledge as parents to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Parents: We do.

Minister: Believing that it is in the home that the child should come to love the Bible, worship, and discover the Lordship of Christ, do you dedicate yourselves to Christian parenthood?

Parents: We do.

Minister: Do you recognize that not one of us is sufficient for the full responsibilities of parenthood without the aid of God’s grace in partnership with the church?

Parents: We do.

Presentation of Our Children

Minister: Do you as members of Austin Grove Baptist Church realize these are your children also? Are you willing to provide the kind of church which will contribute to their spiritual maturity? Are you willing to pray, to witness, to encourage, and to teach these children and their parents how to continue to grow in the Lord?

People: We do.

The Prayer of Dedication

Lord, these tiny hands are so trusting. They are so innocent.

And yet they will grow in a world

that has been tainted by hatred, sin, and darkness.

Lord, protect these children. We give them to You.

Lord, the future seems so uncertain and yet we look at these children
and mysteriously we have hope. Guide their way, Lord.

Make their paths straight and give them strength.

As parents, spiritual leaders, teachers, mentors, and friends, anoint us
to give them an overwhelming sense of security

that can only come from You.

Anoint us as ministers, Lord.

We want them to see You in every aspect of our lives.

When they are hurting,

May we minister to them through Your power.

When they fail,

May we offer them the same grace that You offered to us.

When they are lonely,

May we reach out to them and commune with them....and remind
them that You will never leave us, nor will You forsake us.

Lord, this is our prayer for them:

We pray that You will be their shepherd

that they will not be left in need.

Make them to lie down in green pastures.

May You lead them beside the still waters.

Restore their souls.

May You lead them into paths of righteousness for Your Names' sake.

Yes, even though they will walk through

the valley of the shadow of death,

they will fear no evil for You are with them.

May Your rod and Your staff comfort them.

May You prepare a table before them

in the presence of their enemies.

May You anoint their heads with oil.

May their cups run over.

May goodness and mercy follow them all the days of their lives; and
we pray that they will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. *Amen*

Children
are a *Gift* from the *Lord*...
Psalm 127:3

Austin Grove

Baptist Church



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Sunday, September 12, 2021