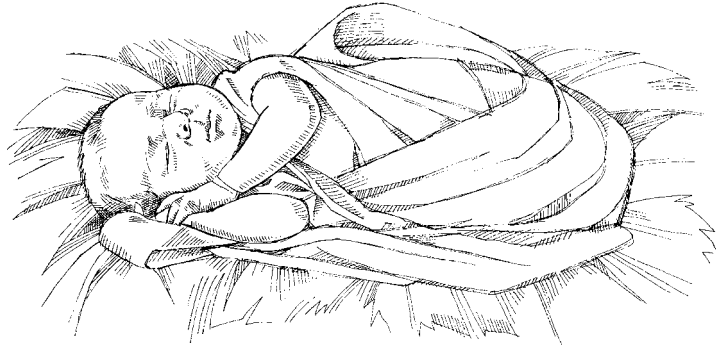


One Small Child



(Matthew 18:3-6 NASB) "and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. {4} "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. {5} "And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; {6} but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it is better for him that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea."

Introduction To The Dedication

If a change is to be made in America, we must start with our families, with our children. These children are the America of tomorrow. The parents that will come forward to dedicate their children today will be making a stand for Jesus Christ.

Where a great gap exists, a ditch in the road, the Blood of Christ can bridge that ditch. And here is a rich starting place. As we come to dedicate these children to the Lord, we set our hearts on Christ our Savior, and willingly enter into Covenant with Jesus that these children will be raised in Christ honoring homes.

Our Lord *loved* children. When others told the children to go away, Jesus said:

Rock Hill Baptist Church
Baby Dedication

November 9, 2003
Lexington, Tennessee

(Matthew 19:14 NASB) "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Jesus used children in His illustrations. He *lovingly* spoke of children in our focal text today. Let's look at what our Lord said before we dedicate these children.

Children Must Be Allowed Access To Christ

(Matthew 18:3 NASB) "and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

All must be “**converted and become like children**”, or we cannot “enter the Kingdom of Heaven”. Think of what Jesus meant by this. These children that He received *wanted* to come to Jesus. They saw in Him Someone who loved them - and they flocked to the Master's lap.

How wonderful to be in the Lap of God! We dedicate these children to the Lord today because, one day, we want them to seek the Lord's Lap. We want them to accept Christ as Savior.

There are many religions in the world today that teach you can be saved by some *outward* ritual, like water baptism, or anointing. But Lord Jesus taught that salvation comes *only* by *conversion* and *becoming like*

children. As our Lord told Nicodemus,

(John 3:3 NASB) "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

These children will not be **born again** or **saved by faith in Christ** today - they are not old enough to make a decision for Jesus. But today we plant a seed of salvation. Just as Hannah brought Samuel and dedicated him to the Lord - one day these children will hear the call of Jesus. By dedicating them to Jesus we are giving them *access to Jesus* - we will give them every opportunity to sit in the Savior's lap.

This ceremony is meaningless unless everyone involved commit themselves to Christ our Savior. We must point these children to Jesus by our actions as well as our words.

This Dedication Will Change Tomorrow

(Matthew 18:5 KJV) "And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

(Matthew 18:6 KJV) "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

We have all seen the effects of *following the world's*

ways in America. Too many parents have allowed television and the print media to raise their children. Prayer has been removed from our schools, as if it were an evil thing, and the god of evolution has replaced the God of Mount Sinai in our halls of learning.

We are truly reaping what we have sown.

Today the parents and you as a congregation are making a stand for Jesus. Jesus said that if we receive a little child in His name, then it is like receiving Him. Today we will plant a seed that will one day grow into a plant that rains precious blessing on the earth.

So few parents understand that children are like soil. If you plant the world in the child, the child will grow up worldly, and its fruit will be worldly. If you plant Jesus in the child, the child will grow up and be like Jesus, a wonderful blessing for all to enjoy.

These parents want their children to be blessed. They want their precious little ones to come to know Jesus at an early age. They want their children to get used to sitting in Jesus' lap, knowing full well that one day these children will grow up and contribute - in a positive way - to our society.

Introduction Of The Parents And The Children

Would the parents and children to be dedicated come forward?

It is our wonderful privilege today to participate in the

public dedication of these children. We have before us:

Carson Ray Hamm,
the son of **Joey and Kristy Hamm**

Miles Braeden and Emma Grace Garner,
the son and daughter of **Tommy and Jensey Garner**

Ashlynn Marie Scott,
the daughter of **Russ and Sandy Scott**

These parents have expressed their desire to present their children to the Lord. This dedication may not require the supreme sacrifice like that of Abraham who was called upon to offer his son on the altar, or that of Hannah who left her son Samuel to serve in the Temple with Eli. However, it is a **sober commitment** to responsibly care for that which God has given, and to be prepared to release him to His work when that time comes.

Jesus demonstrated His acceptance and love for the little children when He said:

(Mark 10:14-16 KJV) "But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. {15} Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. {16} And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

Our Lord Jesus Himself was dedicated in the Temple by Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:22). These children are being brought forward in like manner as a testimony to and praise for our Lord Jesus.

Charge To The Parents

The primary responsibility for the care of these precious children, of course, rests on their parents. The Bible says:

(Proverbs 22:6 KJV) "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

(Ephesians 6:4 KJV) "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

(John 13:34 KJV) "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

Seek the Lord daily for His wisdom in raising this child, both in prayer and in His Word. This child is precious to God our Savior - treat the child as more valuable than gold. This child may be the next great evangelist or missionary. This child might be the next President of the United States, Senator, or leader of our country. Show that child, by your actions, what it means to love God

and love one another as Jesus loved us.

Daily give thanks to God for your child and for the joy and love that child brings to your home. Always spend time with your child, and show him or her how precious you believe they are. Show this child the way to Jesus, and in so doing you will develop in him - in her - a strong moral foundation for life and an awareness of the Lordship of Christ and His abiding presence.

Charge To The Extended Family

Would the extended family (grandparents, great-grandparents, uncles, aunts) these children please stand?

You are important to these precious children, and to their dedication to the Lord. This family needs your support. Please be faithful in prayer for them, and for this child. Demonstrate a real interest in and concern for these children as he and as she grows physically, spiritually, mentally, and socially.

Charge To The Church

Would the members of this local Church please stand, if you are able?

I charge you to do all that you can to provide and support a place of worship in this community where these children may hear the full counsel of God's Word. I urge you to be faithful in providing programs for instruction in discipleship, and to demonstrate affectionate kindness towards all of

these little ones. And I charge you to covenant before God to set an example by your lives and to maintain an atmosphere in your church which shall inspire these children to desire the Christian way of life.

Dedication Of The Children

Pastor to the PARENTS of Carson Ray Hamm:

In presenting your son CARSON RAY HAMM to the Lord, do you promise in dependence upon God's grace and upon the partnership of the church, to teach him the truths of the Christian faith, to set a Christian example before him, to bring him up in the instruction and discipline of the Lord, and to encourage him to accept Christ as his Savior under the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

PARENTS: We do.

Pastor to the PARENTS of Miles Braeden and Emma Grace Garner:

In presenting your children MILES BRAEDEN and EMMA GRACE GARNER to the Lord, do you promise in dependence upon God's grace and upon the partnership of the church, to teach him the truths of the Christian faith, to set a Christian example before him, to bring him up in the instruction and discipline of the Lord, and to encourage him to accept Christ as his Savior under the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

PARENTS: We do.

Pastor to the PARENTS of Ashlynn Marie Scott:

In presenting your daughter ASHLYNN MARIE SCOTT to the Lord, do you promise in dependence upon God's grace and upon the partnership of the church, to teach him the truths of the Christian faith, to set a Christian example before him, to bring him up in the instruction and discipline of the Lord, and to encourage him to accept Christ as his Savior under the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

PARENTS: We do.

Closing Prayer

In that you have dedicated your children to the Lord, we now lend these precious children:

**Carson Ray Hamm
Miles Braeden Garner
Emma Grace Garner
Ashlynn Marie Scott**

Back to you, their parents. We pray that by the grace of God and the guiding presence of the Holy Spirit, you will bring him up in the ways of the Lord.

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