

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

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BABY-DEDICATIONS AND THE LOCAL CHURCH

Let's begin by defining some terms. By “baby-dedications” I am referring to the practice of having a special ceremony, when the local church is assembled together, wherein parents either: (1) promise to raise their child according to the will of God, or (2) set their child apart for future service to God. Denominationalists have been doing this for years. For example, check out the following link: <http://www.revivalist.org/baby.html>.

What's really sad is that some so-called churches of Christ (in reality they are spiritual whores) have also begun to engage in baby-dedication services. For example: <http://www.universitycofc.org/cgi-bin/ucocevents/calendar.pl?year=2010&month=1>. For a video of a baby/child-dedication service held by a local “church of Christ” in Kentucky see: <http://vimeo.com/8031611>.

Now listen, no real Christian is anti-baby. Moreover, no Christian out there is anti-godly parenting. It is equally true, however, that every real Christian – i.e. those who really care about finding authority for all that they do and say (**Col. 3:17**) – does stand wholly opposed to local churches having baby-dedication services since said events are clearly seen to be unscriptural when the Word of God is accurately handled (**2 Tim. 2:15**).

The remainder of this article will demonstrate the two best reasons why baby-dedication services have no business, no business at all, being connected to local churches.

THE EXAMPLES THE ERRORISTS POINT TO DO NOT AUTHORIZE BABY DEDICATIONS SERVICES

There are typically two passages that innovators point to in order to “authorize” their baby-dedication services. They are as follows: “*For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD...*” (**1 Sam. 1:27-28**) and, “*And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord*” (**Lk. 2:22**). These two passages, however, do NOT authorize local churches to hold baby-dedication services any more than they authorize local churches to engage in animal sacrifice (cf. **1 Sam. 1:24-25; Lk. 2:24**). Will those local churches that insist baby-dedication services are today authorized of God argue as adamantly for animal sacrifice services? I hardly think so.

Those who point to **1 Sam. 1:27-28** and **Lk. 2:22** fail to consider that such passages fall under the context of the Old Testament. Said Testament is not in force today (**Rom. 7:1-4; Gal. 4:21-31; 2 Cor. 3:6-11; Heb 7:12-19; et al**). If baby-dedication services really are something that local churches can engage in, then New Testament authority must be produced. This leads us directly into the next point.

THERE IS NO AUTHORITY FOR BABY DEDICATION SERVICES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Every capable Bible student knows that the New Testament may authorize something in any one of three ways; i.e. divine commands, approved examples (kept in context), and necessary inferences (logical deductions). Let's see this formula in action. How do we know that proper baptism is not something that falls under the “take it or leave it” heading? Simple! Proper baptism is a divine command to be obeyed. Easy, **Ax. 10:47-48**. How do we know that local churches come together on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper? Again, easy. There is an approved example of such in the New Testament (**Ax. 20:7**). How do we know that local churches may meet in a location other than in the homes of individuals? Does not **1 Cor. 11:34** demonstrate via logical deduction that the local church in Corinth was meeting in a location other than a home? Yes.

Now, when one thinks about baby-dedication services, they need to ask the following questions. #1 – Under the terms of the New Testament, has God commanded local churches to engage in baby-dedication services? #2 – Is there an approved example in scripture of a local church engaging in a baby-dedication service? #3 – Is there any possible necessary inference that must be drawn from scripture demonstrating that local churches in antiquity engaged in baby-dedication services? The answers to these questions are: #1, No! #2, No! #3, No! Such being true, especially in light of passages like **1 Cor. 4:6** and **Col. 3:17**, is it not obvious that baby-dedication services are NOT part of the work of a local church? Surely the honest person will say yes.

Baby/child dedications are an innovation (**2 Jn. 9**). Parents, to do right by your children, you DO NOT need a special ceremony.