



baby dedication script

why use this baby dedication script:

The local church is uniquely positioned to play a significant role in the First Thousand Days of a child's life. With our influence and trusted voice, we can communicate and demonstrate key messages for families in this stage of life; and stir the community around them into care and support. We can normalize responsive nurturing care for all children in the First Thousand Days and see the local church being the place where these little lives are cherished and invested in for future flourishing.



One way to do this is to use existing events in your church to bring key messages and challenges to your community. One such example is baby dedications or celebrations. Below is a sample script that can be adapted to your context.

sample script

pastor to speak:

"I love being part of this faith community! We are one big family but are made up of little families. And now, we are celebrating new life that has been born into our community.

Jesus had a heart for children. In **Mark 10** we see Jesus interacting with children as part of his ministry on earth. They were not a nuisance to him, but really loved by him. The powerful reality is that Jesus was a child – he chose to come to earth to live the perfect lives on our behalf. And he started as an infant!

We read of how the children would come to him, he would pick them up and pray with them and for them, blessing them. They weren't his biological children, but he purposefully invested in them.

What we see is: in the Kingdom of King Jesus, children are important, and we want to follow his lead in valuing the children in our community."

“Can I please call to the front” mom, dad (insert names) and baby (insert name).

You will notice that all these children are in their First Thousand Days of life (which is the number of days from conception till 2years). What science tells us is that inside their brains, there are over 1million neural connections being made per second! So baby's (insert names) brain is developing faster now than at any other time in his/her/their life.

And that is why the First Thousand Days is a crucial window of time that requires special input and nurturing care for young children to lay the foundation for lifelong flourishing. And mom and dad (insert names) are at the centre of providing this care to baby (insert names). But they need our support.

We as a church see that we have an important role to be a supportive environment and community where together we can love and care for these parents to enable them to provide their children with nurturing care that they need in order to reach their God-given potential.”

pastor addresses the parents and says:

“Today is more about the parents than the children. Being born into a family that follows Christ does not make you a Christ follower. But you have a special role in raising your children in a way that is glorifying to God and makes the faith attractive to them. You have experienced that the best decision you could ever make in life is to place your trust and hope in Jesus Christ. And we know that you want that for your child.

Today you are making a public declaration that you, by the grace of God and the help of His people, will raise your children in a way that is glorifying to God and beneficial to them. This means encouraging, teaching, correcting, disciplining, and building them up into the faith.

There is a scripture in **Deuteronomy 6** about teaching your children about God's law and word. It does not happen by mistake. It is about purposefully investing in your children spiritually. It is an intentional part of your parenthood. You are to do all you can to support and lead them to make the very best decision they could ever make – and that is following Jesus and directing their lives around him.”

pastor addresses the congregation and says:

“Now another reason we do this in public is because it takes a village to raise a child. These parents are committing themselves to God, and publicly asking to be supported and to be held accountable by this community. Together, as this Christian family, we can all be a supportive big family to these families, so that these little ones have the best chance of flourishing into the future. This is one of many things that is so amazing about Christian community – you don't do it alone!”

if parents have prepared something to say, ask them to speak:

“Each of you has prepared something brief about your child. Over to you (allow each family to say a few words of blessing/prayers over their child)”

next ask the parents and wait for their answers:

- Do you commit yourselves to being nurturing and caring to your child?
- Do you commit yourselves to model your faith, share your faith and invest spiritually in your child?
- Commit yourselves to seeking help and support when it is needed?

next ask the congregation and wait for a response:

- Do you commit yourselves to creating a community of love and support around these families and children?

pray and dedicate the babies:

Call up the elders / leaders / deacons, family and close friends to the front to pray for the families.

Sikunye would like to hear any feedback with regards to this resource. If you have made use of this resource or have any suggestions of how to improve it or adapt it to different contexts, please email info@sikunye.org.za to share your feedback.

We are striving as an organisation to develop resources and tools to assist local churches to become First Thousand Days friendly spaces that support mothers, fathers, and caregivers of children in their First Thousand Days.
