



## **Children and the Christian Faith CECH6335**

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
Christian Education Division  
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*The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church.*

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### **Purpose of the Course**

Children and the Christian Faith is designed to equip students to help each child experience and respond to God at his/her own level of development.

### **Core Value Focus**

*Doctrinal Integrity* – Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. The doctrinal statements used in our evaluations are our Articles of Religious Belief and the Baptist Faith and Message Statement.

*Spiritual Vitality* – We are a worshiping community, with both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.

*Mission Focus* – We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

*Characteristic Excellence* – What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*Servant Leadership* – We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us.

Annually, the President will designate a core value that will become the focus of pedagogy for the year. For 2015-2016 academic year that Core Value is *Mission Focus*. The course will emphasize the seminary's current core value focus of *Mission Focus*.

## Curriculum Competencies Addressed

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary curriculum is guided by seven basic competencies: biblical exposition, Christian theological heritage, disciple making, interpersonal skills, servant leadership, spiritual and character formation, and worship leadership.

This course seeks to develop the following competency:

Disciple-making: Students will understand and facilitate the spiritual formation of children.

## Course Description

In this course the student is exposed to approaches for developing ministries for children which will better equip the child to experience and respond to God at his own level of understanding. Worship, conversion, church membership, baptism, the Lord's Supper, prayer, and the Bible are the primary content areas.

## Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the course you should be able to:

1. Identify and evaluate strategies that will facilitate the spiritual formation of children.
2. Appreciate the significance of family and cultural influences on children's spiritual formation.
3. Facilitate a child's spiritual formation from a sound theological and developmental perspective.

## Required Readings

The following texts are to be read in their entirety:

- Davis, Cos. *Children and the Christian Faith*. Franklin, TN: Family Resource Services, 2003. (ISBN 080546221X)
- Ingle, Clifford, ed. *Children and Conversion*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970. Available online or through the on-campus LifeWay store as a pdf.
- Keeley, Robert J. *Helping Our Children Grow in Faith: How the Church Can Nurture the Spiritual Development of Kids*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008. (ISBN: 978-0-8010-6829-4)
- Trent, John, Rick Osborne, and Kurt Bruner, eds. *Parent's Guide to the Spiritual Growth of Children: Helping Your Child Develop a Personal Faith*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2003. (ISBN: 9781589971431)

## **Course Teaching Methodology**

### **Units of Study**

Theology of Children  
Theology of Christian Education for Children  
Children and Faith Development  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Families/21<sup>st</sup> Century Children  
Laying Children's Spiritual Foundations in the Home  
Rearing Faithful Children in a Media Culture  
Welcoming Children to Worship  
Spiritual Disciplines  
Corporate Worship  
Salvation

**Teaching Method.** This class will include group discussions, field experiences, and student projects. The delivery method of this class is online.

### **Assignments and Evaluation Criteria**

- 1. Exegetical Paper on the Shema:** You will write a 4 to 5-page exegetical paper on the *Shema* (Deut. 6:1-9) following *Guidelines for an Exegetical Paper* posted on Blackboard under Paper Writing Resources. A minimum of three academic resources, at least two of are commentaries, are to be used. *This assignment is related to SLO #3.* **Due: Friday, Sept. 4**
- 2. Spiritual Disciplines Group Presentation:** You will be placed in a small group to present a spiritual discipline (i.e., service, prayer, family worship, Scripture memory, Bible study, silence and solitude, and evangelism) and how children and families may engage in the practice of the discipline. Your presentations should be creative and address various learning styles.

All group members must participate in the development of the presentation. Each group member will have the opportunity to rate the quality of each member's contribution to the project. Your rating of your group members should be emailed to the professor on the presentation due date. *Your participation score from your group will be taken into consideration when assessing your individual project grade.*

The presentations will be posted to the assigned Discussion Board on the due date. Group size will be determined by class size. *This assignment is related to SLO #1.* **Due: Monday, Sept. 14**

- 3. Media Evaluation and Reflection:**  
You will: (a) attend one movie (rated G or PG) currently in theatres and evaluate its worldview using the *Let's Go to the Movies* handout provided by the professor and located in this course on Blackboard.  
  
(b) visit a major bookstore (not online) and review current literature, music, and electronic games for children. Consider the physical environment (i.e., what children see as they

approach the children’s section and once they arrive there), and the worldview promoted through the materials.

(c) Write a 2-3 page summary of your findings and their possible implications for the spiritual formation of children. Submit the summary to Blackboard. *This assignment is related to SLO #2.* **Due: Monday, Sept. 14**

**4. Reading Log:** You will submit a log of completed weekly readings as outlined in the course schedule. Reading logs should also contain one to two reflective paragraphs regarding the weekly reading assignments. Reflections can be written in first person. Reading logs will be submitted to Blackboard on Weeks 4 and 7. A *Reading Log Template* is provided in the Assignment Upload for this assignment on Blackboard. *This assignment is related to SLO #2 and #3.* **Due: Friday, Sept. 18 and Friday, Oct. 10**

**5. Book Assessment:** You will (a) select a text from the *Book List* section of the course’s Blackboard and submit the title to the professor via email. (This is to avoid duplication). Titles will be assigned on a first come first served basis. Upon approval, you will complete a 2 to 3-page assessment of the text which addresses:

- its theological and doctrinal integrity;
- usefulness in ministry with children and families;
- application within your ministry context and personal life.

This may be written in first person.

(b) create a 1-page handout including an annotated bibliography which highlights the strengths of the text and its applicability to ministry. This handout is to be posted on the assigned Discussion Board for classmates to review. *This assignment is related to SLO #3.* **Due: Monday, Sept. 21**

**6. Spiritual Formation Plan:** You will develop a one-year plan to shepherd (a) children birth – twelve, (b) families, and (c) children’s ministry leaders in spiritual formation. Consider why you are including each component of the plan and submit a rationale for each. This plan should focus on spiritual formation and include more than the basic program ministries of the church (Sunday School, Missions organizations, etc.).

This should not be a report of your church calendar, although it may include elements of such. This is to be a plan that you design. The year may be a calendar year (Jan. – Dec.) or the school year which many children’s ministries follow – August through July. Submit the plan to Blackboard. Use the following template. *This assignment is related to SLO #3.* **Due: Monday, Sept. 28**

Date(s)	Time	Event	Audience	Rational	Purpose

7. **Discussion Boards:** You will participate in weekly threaded discussions. These discussions are an essential component of the participation grade for the course. The week begins on MONDAY and ends on FRIDAY. Your initial post must be made by Wednesday at 12 noon CST USA of each week. Responses to other students' posts must be made by Friday at 5:00 p.m. CST USA. Any threaded discussion posted after that time will not be viewed by the professor or grader and will not count towards class participation for that week.
8. **Participation:** You are expected to participate fully through class discussion, presentations, and class activities. This portion of the course grade will be evaluated by the professor with regard to meaningful participation, assignment completion, the timely submission of assignments, and evidence of engagement with course materials. You begin with 100.

**Evaluation**

Exegetical Paper on the <i>Shema</i>	15%
Spiritual Disciplines Presentations	10%
Media Evaluations	15%
Reading Log	25%
Book Assessment	10%
Spiritual Formation Plan	15%
Participation	10%

A 93-100 B 85-92 C 77-84 D 70-76 F 69 and below

**Course Schedule**

Unit	Week	Week of:	Topic	Assignment
Unit 1	1	Aug. 24	Introduction Theology of Children	
Unit 2 Unit 3	2	Aug. 31	Theology of Christian Education for Children Children and Faith Development	• Exegetical Paper on the <i>Shema</i>
Unit 4 Unit 5	3	Sept. 7	The 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Family The 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Child	
Unit 6	4	Sept. 14	Laying Children's Spiritual Foundations in the Home	• Reading Log • Spiritual Disciplines Presentations
Unit 7	5	Sept. 21	Rearing Faithful Children in a Media Culture	• Media Evaluation and Reflection
Unit 8 Unit 9	6	Sept. 28	Welcoming Children to Worship Developing a Spiritual Formation Plan	• Spiritual Formation Plan

Unit 10	7	Oct. 5	Family Worship	• <b>Reading Log</b>
Unit 11 Unit 12	8	Oct. 12	Family Missions and Ministry Communicating the Plan of Salvation to Children	

### Course Policies

**Academic Honesty Policy:** All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

**Assignment Formatting:** Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are to be created in Turabian format. All written assignments must be Word documents, written in third person unless otherwise instructed, and created in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. PDFs will not be accepted.

**Assignment Submission:** All assignments are to be submitted to Blackboard by 11:59 p.m. of the due date unless otherwise indicated. Do not send files as attachments via email to the professor. For technical reasons, this mode of file transmission is extremely inefficient.

**Electronic Devices:** Electronic devices may be used in class only for taking notes and other activities assigned by the professor. Other activities are strictly prohibited. Laptops may not be open during presentations unless requested by the presenter. Phones must be silenced during class time. Any student found violating this policy may be asked to leave class and will be counted absent.

**Grading Scale:** Your final grade will be based on your total accumulation of points as indicated under the *Assignments and Evaluation Criteria* section of this syllabus according to the grading scale in the NOBTS 2013-2014 catalog.

A 93-100 B 85-92 C 77-84 D 70-76 F 69 and below

**Late Assignments:** Only under extreme circumstances, and with prior approval, will a late assignment be accepted. Late assignments will be assessed an initial 10 percent penalty and 1 percent for each day after the due date (i.e. 10/1 points for a 100 point assignment, 3/.3 points for a 30 point assignment). No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks after the original due date.

**Netiquette: Appropriate Online Behavior:** Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times in the online environment.

**Plagiarism:** A high standard of personal integrity is expected of all students. Copying another person's work, submitting downloaded material without proper references, submitting material without properly citing the source, submitting the same material for credit in more than one course, and other such forms of dishonesty are strictly forbidden. *Although anything cited in three sources is considered public domain, we require that all sources be cited.* Any infraction will result in failing the course. Any infraction will be reported to the Dean of Students for further action.

**Professor's Absence or Tardiness:** If the professor is late in arriving to class, you must wait a full 20 minutes after the start of class before you may leave without being counted absent, or you must follow any written instructions that may be given to you.

**Recording Policy:** Recordings of class, including any audio and/or video recordings, regardless of the media or format, and regardless of the intended or actual use, are not permitted without prior written permission of the professor. The class will be notified in advance should any such recording be approved. This policy is intended to protect the privacy of the students.

**Revision of the Syllabus:** The course syllabus is not a legal contract. Any syllabus revision will be preceded by a reasonable notice to students. The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the professor. Notice of such changes will be by announcement in class or by email notice.

**Withdrawal from the Course:** The administration has set deadlines for withdrawal. These dates and times are published in the academic calendar. Administration procedures must be followed. You are responsible to handle withdrawal requirements. A professor can't issue a withdrawal. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in the course if you choose not to attend once you are enrolled.

### **Additional Information**

**Blackboard and SelfServe:** You are responsible for maintaining current information regarding contact information on Blackboard and SelfServe. The professor will utilize both to communicate with the class. Blackboard and SelfServe do not share information so you must update each. Assignment grades will be posted to Blackboard. You will be need to enroll in the course on Blackboard.

**Correspondence with the Grader:** You should contact the grader via email at [peaveygrader@gmail.com](mailto:peaveygrader@gmail.com). The grader responds to email during normal business hours, 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays only. The grader may not respond to late night or weekend e-mails until regular "business" hours. Please respect the grader's personal time. Remember, graders are students as well and have their own coursework and research to complete. Please be respectful in the language you use in your emails to the grader.

**Correspondence with the Professor:** Every effort is made to respond to emails and phone calls within 24-48 hours, excluding weekends. Please feel free to contact the professor(s) with any question you may have regarding this course.

**Hurricane/Severe Weather Evacuation:** For up-to-date weather information stay tuned to:

- WBSN FM-89.1
- WWL Channel 4
- WWL AM-870
- [www.nobts.edu](http://www.nobts.edu)

**Mandatory Evacuation:** Hurricane season lasts from June 1 to November 30. If the Mayor or the President of NOBTS recommends that you leave the city, then do so. If a mandatory evacuation is called everyone except emergency personnel must leave. Staying on campus is not an option. See the *Student Handbook* for further information regarding hurricane preparedness, evacuation, and shelter.

**NOBTS Emergency Text Messaging Service:** Once you have established a SelfServe account you may sign up for the NOBTS emergency text messaging service by going to <http://nobts.edu/NOBTSEmergencyTextMessage.html>.

**Special Needs:** If you need an accommodation for any type of disability, please set up a time to meet with the professor(s) to discuss any modifications you may need that are able to be provided.

**Technical Support:** If you experience any problems with your Blackboard account you may email [BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu) or call the ITC at 504-282-4455, ext. 8180.

### **Selected Bibliography**

Adams, Jessie. *A Guide to the Spiritual Development of Children: Seventeen Subjects Every Christian Parent Needs to Focus Upon*. Bloomington, IN: Crossbooks, 2010.

Allen, Holly Catterton, ed. *Nurturing Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives and Best Practices*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008.

Beacham, Billy. *Back to the Basics: Basic Christian Discipleship*. Fort Worth, TX: Student Discipleship Ministries, 1988.

Baucham, Voddie. *Family Driven Faith: Doing What it Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God*. Wheaton, IL: Good News & Crossway, 2007.

Bunge, Marcia, ed. *The Child in Christian Thought*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001.

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- Chapman, Kathleen. *Teaching Kids Authentic Worship: How to Keep Them Close to God for Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003
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- Davis, Cos H. *Children and the Christian Faith*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990.
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- Hyde, Kenneth E. *Religion in Childhood and Adolescence*. Birmingham, Al: Religious Education Press, 1990.
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- McIntosh, Kenneth R. *Following Aslan: A Book of Devotions for Children Based Upon The Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis*. Vestal, NY: Harding House Publishing Service, 2006.
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- Stonehouse, Catherine. *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998.
- Water, Mark. *What the Bible Has to Say About Children*. Nashville: Dimensions for Living, 2003.
- Willard, Dallas. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1988.