



Children and the Christian Faith CECH6335

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Discipleship and Ministry Leadership Division
Fall, 2018 (191)

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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.

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

The seminary has five core values. The focal core value for 2018-2019 is *Doctrinal Integrity*. This course supports the five core values of the seminary.

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 demonstrate:

1. An understanding of the biblical and theological support for the spiritual formation of children.
2. An understanding of strategies that facilitate the spiritual formation of children.
3. An understanding of the significance of family and cultural influences on children's spiritual formation.
4. Skill at developing recommendations for a particular local church to facilitate a child's spiritual formation from sound theological and developmental perspectives.

Required Readings

The following texts are to be read in their entirety:

- Harwood, Adam and Kevin Lawson. *Infants and Children in the Church: Five Views on Theology and Ministry*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2017. (ISBN: 9781462751105).
- 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: 9780801068294)
- 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)

The following documents may be found on Blackboard:

- Westerhoff, *Bringing Up Children in the Christian Faith, "A Journey Together in Faith"*
- Haywood, *Children and Worship*
- Kummer, *The Family Worship Handbook*
- *How to Become a Christian*

Course Teaching Methodology

Units of Study

Theology of Children
Theology of Christian Education for Children
Developmental Theory and Spiritual Formation
Perspectives on Children in the Church
Communicating the Plan of Salvation to Children
The Child and Christian Response/Ethical Action
Laying Spiritual Foundations in the Home
Leading Children in Spiritual Disciplines
Family Missions, Ministry, and Worship
Developing a Spiritual Formation Plan
Ordinances and Worship

Teaching Method. This class meets on the main campus and includes group discussions, field experiences, and individual assignments.

Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

1. Biblical and Theological Support for Children’s Spirituality (20%) Due: 9/2, 9/23

Write a 6 to 7-page paper supporting the basic assumption that children are spiritual beings, and able to have a relationship with God even before they make a personal commitment to be a disciple of Christ.

Before you write this paper and before you read any course materials, write a one-page summary of your ideas on why children might be considered spiritual beings. Possible directions of thought could be biblical passages, theological concepts in general (sin, guilt, imago dei), historical support, ideas about children’s place in the kingdom, educational psychology, philosophy, the role of baptism, etc. The purpose in this preliminary assignment is to “prime the pump” – to think about the subject and formulate your viewpoint before you begin to read the thoughts of others. The gradebook will show a check mark when it has been reviewed. The grade for the preliminary assignment will be included in the final grade. (9/1)

The following questions may offer some direction.

What is the status of children before God?

Are children in the kingdom?

What role does baptism play? (either infant or believer’s baptism)

What does the concept of original sin have to say about children’s spirituality?

What does the concept of *imago dei* have to say about children’s spirituality?

What biblical passages offer insight into these ideas?

What is “spirituality” in Scripture?

Does Scripture offer any guidelines regarding the age when children may be accountable for their sins?

Include the one-page summary in the front of the paper (this is the second submission of the summary). Organize the paper with subheadings. Include an introduction, body, and concluding paragraphs. (9/22)

A rubric for this assignment may be found on Blackboard in Assignments. This assignment is related to SLO #1.

2. Interview with a Child (20%) Due: 10/4

Interview a 7 – 12-year old child following the interview protocol included in this syllabus. Print out a copy of the interview protocol, and as you interview the child, write down what the child said after each question. If child says, “I don’t know,” or “I don’t think so,” put that down. (You may wish to audio or video record the interview to facilitate later transcription.)

Submit a copy of the interview protocol, with the child’s responses inserted in the correct places. (Copy the interview protocol into a new document—then simply type in the child’s

responses.) The whole interview will probably be 3-4 typed pages. At the beginning of the written assignment, give the child's first name (or a pseudonym), age, and gender as well as the date of the interview. THEN—at the bottom of the interview protocol, compose **one full paragraph** (½ page), describing your understanding of the child's relationship with God. How would you describe that relationship (e.g., distant, intimate, warm, formal, etc.)? **Support what you say with examples** from the interview responses.

Bring a printed out copy of this assignment to class on October 4 - both questions and answers. We will use the interviews in class, analyzing responses, noting themes that emerge from the data. *This assignment is related to SLO #3. A rubric for this assignment may be found on Blackboard in Assignment Upload.*

3. Spiritual Disciplines Group Presentation (10%)

Due: 10/23

Develop and deliver a 30-minute presentation on an assigned spiritual discipline (i.e., service, prayer, family worship, Scripture memory, Bible study, silence and solitude, and evangelism) regarding how children and families may engage in the practice of that discipline. Assignments will be made during week 1. Your presentation should be created using a presentation software (i.e. Prezi, PowerPoint). The presentations will be posted to the assigned Discussion Board on the day of the presentation. *This assignment is related to SLO #2. A rubric for this assignment may be found on Blackboard in Assignment Upload.*

4. Spiritual Formation Recommendations (30%)

Due: 11/18

Through readings and class discussions we explore a variety of ways to cultivate and nurture children's spiritual development. Identify a congregation with which you are familiar - your home church, current church, or another that you know well. Assume that the educational leadership of the selected church are exploring contemporary approaches towards spiritual formation in children's ministry. They have requested that you:

- help them understand children's spirituality;
- help them understand how this new focus on spiritual formation differs from the traditional understanding of Christian education /children's ministry;
- recommend and describe at least three ways to foster the spiritual formation of the children of their church, providing a rationale for each of the recommendations – biblical/theological support from current literature (your course materials, etc.) that validates each.

Develop spiritual formation recommendations (10-13 pages with a minimum of 10 sources), in the following manner:

- General introduction (½ - 1 page)
- Explanation of children's spirituality/formation (1 page)
- Compare/contrast contemporary Christian/spiritual formation with traditional idea of Christian education/children's ministry (1 page)
- Description of selected church - size, number of preschoolers and school-age children, current approaches to ministry (Sunday school, children's church, choir, etc.) (½ - 1 page)
- Recommendations (at least 3) for fostering spiritual growth and development of selected church. (2.5-3 pages each)

- Identify/define/describe what this recommendation might look like in this particular church setting
- Support this recommendation from course materials
- Provide biblical/theological support
- Conclusion (½ - 1 page)

A rubric for this assignment may be found on Blackboard. This assignment is related to SLO #1 and #4.

5. Childhood Reflection Journal (10%)

Due: 11/29

Over the course of the semester, take time to reflect and write ten dated entries in an electronic journal regarding your childhood experiences and how they impacted your spiritual development. Each entry should be one page. The following questions (from author Catherine Stonehouse) may prompt your reflection. You may address ideas and issues not reflected in these questions as well.

General:

- What during childhood gave me the most satisfaction – the greatest sense of “specialness” or joy?
- What made me uncomfortable or caused pain?
- What do I remember from school experiences with pleasure? With pain?
- How did my relationships with other children impact who I am?
- How did my early relationship with my parents impact my self-image and the kind of person I am?
- Who were the persons outside my immediate family who most impacted me during childhood?

Spiritual/Religious:

- How did my relationship with my parents during childhood shape my image of God?
- In my experience in the church, what was most meaningful and formative? What was most painful and destructive?
- What memories do I have of prayer?
- Were there times when I felt God’s presence?

Submit to Blackboard. *This assignment is related to SLO #3. A grading rubric for this assignment may be found on Blackboard in Assignments.*

6. Reflection Question Response Papers (5@2%=10%)

Write a 500 to 600-word response to the reflection questions listed in the syllabus for the assigned topic of that week. (Weeks 2, 4, 7, 12, 15) Post your paper to the designated discussion board by *midnight* of the *Sunday* prior to the class meeting. Read other students’ post before the Tuesday class meeting. *This assignment is related to SLO #2 and #3.*

Evaluation

Biblical and Theological Support Paper	20%
Interview with Child	20%
Spiritual Disciplines Presentation	10%
Spiritual Formation Plan	30%
Childhood Reflection Paper	10%
Reflection Questions	10%

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

Course Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings & Assignments</i>
1	8/21	Introduction	
	8/23	Children's Ideas of God and Jesus	
2	8/28	Section 1: Biblical Foundations Unit 1: Theology of Children	Westerhoff – <i>"A Journey Together in Faith"</i> Ingle - chapters 1 - 4, 9 Keeley - chapters 1 and 3 One-page Biblical and Theological Support for Children's Spirituality Due 9/02 <i>Reflection question:</i> What are the conceptual and practical roles that children play (or should play) in contemporary Christianity? (8/26)
	8/30		
3	9/4	Unit 2: Theology of Christian Education for Children	Ingle - chapter 5 Keeley - chapters 2 and 8 Trent - Part I
	9/6		
	9/8	Field Trip: Sat. Vigil Mass 4:00 or M-F 5:30 St. Dominic Parish Church	Review the website: https://www.stdominicparish.com/mass-and-confession-schedule/
4	9/11	Section 2: The Child and Spiritual Formation Unit 3: Developmental Theory and Spiritual Formation Erikson, Piaget, Fowler	Ingle - chapters 7 and 9 Keeley - chapter 6 Trent - chapters 11 – 14 <i>Reflection question:</i> In what ways are the ages/stages of childhood and adolescence spiritually emphasized in Christianity? (9/09)
	9/13		
5	9/18	Unit 4: Perspectives on Children in the Church Speaker: Adam Harwood, PhD	Harwood – <i>Infants and Children in the Church</i> Biblical and Theological Support for Children's Spirituality Due 9/23
	9/20	Field Trip: Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church	Review the website: http://www.holytrinitycathedral.org/schedule.html
6	9/25	Unit 5: Communicating the Plan of Salvation to Children	<i>How to Become a Christian</i> (on Blackboard)
	9/27		
7	10/2	Unit 6: The Child and Christian	Child Interview Due 10/4

		Response/Ethical Action	<i>Reflection question:</i> What spiritual responsibility do children have to engage in service or social action?(10/30)
	10/4	Child Interviews	
8	10/9	Section 3: Spiritual Formation through the Family Unit 7: Laying Children’s Spiritual Foundations in the Home	Ingle - chapters 1-4, 6, 8 Trent - chapters 16 - 27
	10/11	Guest Speaker: Faye Scott, Children’s Minister, FBNO	
9	10/16	Fall Break	
	10/18		
10	10/23	Unit 8: Spiritual Disciplines	Spiritual Disciplines Presentation Due 10/23
	10/25		
11	10/30	Unit 9: Family Missions, Ministry, and Worship	See Blackboard for Missions Links Kummer, <i>The Family Worship Handbook</i>
	11/1		
12	11/6	Section 4: Spiritual Formation Through the Local Church Unit 10: Developing a Spiritual Formation Plan	Trent - chapters 29 - 32. http://www.legacymilestones.com/ <i>Reflection question:</i> What is the role of the faith community in nurturing children’s spirituality? (11/04)
	11/8		
13	11/13	Unit 11: Lord’s Supper, Baptism & Worship	Haywood, <i>Children and Worship</i> Spiritual Formation Plan Due 11/18
	11/15	Unit 12: Godly Play Presenter: Kathy Frady, PhD	View the videos: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aw_mrzZJx00; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkjXX2xjTkg https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4I9GiHqIshU
14	11/20	Thanksgiving Break	
	11/22		
15	11/27	Section 5: Spiritual Formation and Culture Unit 13: Media/Technology Community Culture	Childhood Reflection Due 11/29 <i>Reflection question:</i> How do sociocultural factors nurture and undermine young people’s spirituality? (11/25)
	11/29		
16	12/4	Unit 14: Selecting Resources – Virtual Field Trip to LifeWay, WMU	<u>LifeWay Kids</u> <u>WMU Preschool</u> <u>WMU Children</u>
	12/6	Celebration	

Interview Protocol*

Child's Name: _____ Your Name: _____

Obtain written parental permission to interview, audio or video record the conversation.

Get Acquainted, chit-chat

Demographic information: (e.g.,)

- Who lives at your house or apartment? (*parents, names and ages of siblings, pets*)

People who know God

- Of all the people you know, who do you think knows God the best?
- Why do you think that person knows God?
- Are there other reasons why you think _____ knows God?
- Is there someone else you know who knows God really well? Why do you think so?
- Anyone else?
- Do you have any questions you want to ask me?

Feelings about God

- When you think about God, how do you feel?
- Can you tell me about a time when felt surprised or amazed about God?
- Sorry or guilty toward God?
- Happy about God?
- Sad about God?
- Scared about God?
- Angry at God?
- Ever feel love for God?

Knowing God

- What is the difference between someone who knows *about* God and someone who *knows* God?
- How do you think someone gets to know God?
- Do you think you know God?
- How do you know God? (*or* What are some things that you do that help you know that you know God?)
- Do you talk to God (prayer)? In your mind, in your imagination, out loud?
- What sort of things do you talk to God about?
- Can you think of other ways you can get to know God? (*allow time*)
- In what ways do you listen to God?
- In what ways does God talk to us? Have you ever thought God talked to you?
Would you tell me about that?
- Have you ever felt God close to you? Would you tell me about that?

Questions that may get at the same idea, to dig a little deeper:

- Were you ever afraid or alone, and you think God helped you? Would you tell me about that?

Or:

- Has your family ever needed special help and you think God helped? Would you tell me about that?

Or:

- Have you ever been at the mountains, or in a park, or at the ocean, and thought God was nearby? Would you tell me about that?

Your questions (You must ask at least two questions that you have created)

- Do you have any questions you want to ask me?

Thank the child and mention that you will be writing a report, though you will not be using names. In your report, use a pseudonym for the child.

**This interview protocol is adapted from Dr. Holly Allen's doctoral dissertation and was the instrument used for the field research in the dissertation.*

Course Policies

Absences: You are permitted a maximum of 9 hours of absence from this course. However, participation in this course is partially based on attendance. You can't participate if you are absent.

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

Academic Policies: Academic policies relating to absences, grading scale, final examination schedules, and other topics can be found in the current online catalog: *[New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Graduate Catalog](#)*.

Blackboard and ITC Technical Support: Blackboard is the instructional platform used in this class. Please make sure that your contact information is accurate and up-to-date. If you need assistance, please contact the Information Technology Center (Hardin Student Center 290 or call **504.816.8180**). Here are other helpful links to ITC assistance. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support request for help with the site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.) BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard System. For Student Assistance in using Blackboard, visit: [Student Bb Help](#). ITCSupport@nobts.edu - for general technical questions/support requests. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Blackboard and SelfServe Information: 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.

Correspondence with the Grader: You should contact the grader via email at 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.

Graduating Seniors: Graduating seniors are responsible for alerting the professor of their intention to graduate. All of your assignments must be completed by noon (12:00 p.m.) on the Wednesday prior to commencement exercises.

Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”: This is the official NOBTS Writing Center online help site for writing academic papers and essays. <http://www.nobts.edu/writing/default.html> You will discover writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help you become a better writer. Go here for Turabian and APA style helps and guidelines. You will also find language fonts for Greek and Hebrew.

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

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> .

Office Hours: Monday 8:00-3:00, Tuesday 2:00 – 3:00, Wednesday 8:00 – 12:00, Friday 8:00 – 12:00

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.

This is a partial list of NOBTS student services available to all students, no matter your delivery system or location. If you have questions or do not see what you need here, please refer to www.nobts.edu/student-services, email us at studentservices@nobts.edu, or call the Dean of Students office at 800-662-8701, ext. 3283. We are glad to assist you!

Need	Email	Phone	Web Page
Advising – Graduate Program	studentservices@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x3312	www.nobts.edu/registrar/default.html#advising
Advising – Undergraduate Program	lcadminasst@nobts.edu	504.816.8590	www.nobts.edu/LeavellCollege
Church Minister Relations (for ministry jobs)	cmr@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x3291	www.nobts.edu/CMR
Financial Aid	financialaid@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x3348	www.nobts.edu/financialaid
PREP (help to avoid student debt)	Prepassistant1@nobts.edu	504.816.8091	www.nobts.edu/prep
Gatekeeper NOBTS news	pr@nobts.edu	504.816.8003	nobtsgatekeeper.wordpress.com
Information Technology Center	itcsupport@nobts.edu	504.816.8180	selfserve.nobts.edu
Help with Blackboard	blackboardhelpdesk@nobts.edu	504.816.8180	nobts.blackboard.com
Library	library@nobts.edu	504.816.8018	www.nobts.edu/Library
Online library resources	library@nobts.edu	504.816.8018	http://www.nobts.edu/research-links/default.html
Writing and Turabian style help	library@nobts.edu	504.816.8018	http://www.nobts.edu/writing/default.html
Guest Housing (Providence Guest House)	ph@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x4455	www.provhouse.com
Student Counseling	lmccc@nobts.edu	504.816.8004	www.nobts.edu/student-services/counseling-services.html
Women’s Programs	womensacademic@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x3334	www.nobts.edu/women

For additional library resources in your state, check <http://www.nobts.edu/library/interlibrary-loan.html>

- GALILEO for Georgia students
- LALINC for Louisiana students
- Florida Virtual Library (<http://www.flelibrary.org/>) for Florida students
- Interact with us online at –



TWITTER.COM/NOBTS INSTAGRAM.COM/NOBTS

Selected Bibliography

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- Juengst, Sara Covin. *Sharing Faith with Children*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994.
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Willard, Dallas. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1988.