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CD 615 Discipleship Development in the Home

Chris Kiesling

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Department of Christian Education
Course Prospectus

CD 615/CO615 -Discipleship Development in the Home (3 hours) Spring 2007

This class presents a practical theology for understanding the partnership of the church and the family in the joint enterprise of encouraging lifelong Christian discipleship. A Trinitarian perspective is offered to the origins of the family, family roles, personhood, sin, the disintegration of family life, and salvation. Special attention is given to broad sociological trends and contemporary threats that are changing the structure and function of families, and to practices that nurture discipleship and relational connection in the family.

This is a required course for the MACE and MAYM degrees; it serves as a core elective in human development in the MAC and MAPC degrees; and it is one of two courses with a CD designation that allows students to complete the core elective requirement in Servant Ministry with a second course in Christian Discipleship in the Mdiv. degree.

Instructor:

Chris Kiesling B.G.St., M.Div., Ph. D.
Meeting Room: M302 - 9:30-10:45 T & Th
Office: FM108 (the "womb" of the bookstore)
Phone: 858-2382 (If I am unavailable you may access my voice mail)
E-Mail: chris_kiesling@asburyseminary.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30-3:30p.m. or by appointment

Course Objectives

This class is designed so that persons who participate in the communal experiences of the class and who engage fully in critical study and reflection will be able to:

1. Articulate a Trinitarian perspective in understanding the family, family roles, personhood, sin, salvation and the consequent impact on the family.
2. Recognize the effects of the fall and the disintegration of family life both in the Biblical story and in one's own personal narrative, while yet embracing the unshakable confidence of God to utilize family experiences, one's current community of faith, and the identity wounds we suffer to return us as healers to the very places that wounded us.
3. Compare and contrast the broad sociological and developmental trends that are changing the definition, structure, and outcomes of contemporary family life in various cultures and subcultures. From these comparisons to further one's understanding, sensitivity, and capacity to discern issues of the family within the churches, cultures and communities they serve.
4. Identify the critical developmental tasks associated with each stage of life and formulate strategic discipleship applications aimed at these life transitions:
 - Parent-child attachment and deprivation
 - Image of God and how familial interactions shape understandings of justice and mercy
 - Identity and sexuality
 - Intimacy/marriage and relational development
 - Parenting/Generativity and mid-life transformations
 - Retirement and the years of wisdom

5. Appreciate differences in gender and ethnic identity, faith development and self-functioning with a view toward understanding why people are the way they are.
6. Experience aspects of the classroom as a demonstration of Trinitarian community.

Textbooks:

Jack O. Balswick and Judith K. Balswick, *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999.

Larry Crabb, *Connecting: A Radical New Vision*. Nashville: Word, 1997.

Donald Joy, *Empower Your Kids to be Adults*. Nappanee: Indiana, 2000. **OR**

Marjorie Thompson, *Family: The Forming Center*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1996.

Donald Joy, *Two Become One*. Nappanee: Indiana, 2000. **OR**

Gary Thomas, *Sacred Marriage*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000. **OR**

Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Marriage*. Multnomah Press. 1985.

Dennis Kinlaw, *Sacred Pedagogy*. (booklet from Francis Asbury Press). **Note: this booklet was out of print. However, the Francis Asbury Society graciously provided us an electronic version of the document that I will make available to the class. You can learn more about their publications and become a member of the society by visiting their website at www.FrancisAsburySociety.org**

Dick Haredell and Merton Strommen, *Youth and Family Ministry: Four Imperatives: A Conceptual Model*. Youth and Family Institute – www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org.

The following required articles and book chapters are contained in a reading packet:

Clifford Stevens *The Trinitarian Roots of the Nuptial Community*. St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, 35 (4), 351-358.

John H. Westerhoff, III (2000). *Will Our Children Have Faith?* Harrisburg, PA: Moorehouse Publishing, pp.1-23.

James Dobson (2001) *The Essential Father* in Bringing Up Boys: Practical Advice and Encouragement for those Shaping the Next Generation of Men. Tyndale House, pp. 53-66.

Henry Cloud and John Townsend, chapter five from *Raising Great Kids: Parenting with Grace and Truth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

Archibald Hart (1994) *How Men think About Sex* in The Sexual Man: Masculinity without Guilt. Word Publishing, pp 51-68.

Ruthellen Josselson (1987) *Becoming Herself: Identity, Individuation, and Intimacy in Finding Herself: Pathways to Identity Development in Women*. Jossey Bass, pp. 10-41.

Chris Kiesling et. al. (2006) *Identity and Spirituality: A Psychosocial Exploration of the Sense of Spiritual Self* in *Developmental Psychology*. Vol 42, 6, 1269-1278.

David Schnarch (1997) *Differentiation: Developing a Self in Relation* in Passionate Marriage. Henry Holt and Co., pp. 53-69.

Rodney Clapp (1993) *Families at the Crossroads: Beyond Traditional and Modern Options*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, pp. 48-66.

Ernst Boyer (1984) *Separate Spiritualities* in A Way in the World. San Francisco: Harper & Row, pp. 27-36.

In addition I may have you read summary reports from the following website(s). If you would like to purchase the booklets that accompany the full report the addresses are provided below:

Why Marriage Matters: Twenty-Six Conclusions from the Social Sciences. The executive summary of the report and ordering information for the full report (\$5) is available from www.americanvalues.org or by searching for the title of the report.

Class projects and papers

Attendance /Participation/Festival of Sharing (10 points)

Loan-granting institutions are now requiring attendance records on students for accounting purposes. Therefore, the faculty has an obligation to take daily attendance records in every class and report any repetitive absences. A small percentage of your grade for this class depends on attendance and includes what you bring to the “festival of sharing” on the final class days. Especially in the case of borderline grades, being remembered by the professor for your comments in class and creativity in the final project can be determinative

The Festival of Sharing is your opportunity to practice “family”/community as we share personal truth generated by reflection on concrete life experiences evoked from class. Draw deeply from your creative side in what you choose to present and really add value to this closure experience for your colleagues. If you work in a form of art, create something that displays discipling influences from your family and bring it to show; if you are from another culture introduce us to customs, stories or other cultural uniqueness that can broaden our understanding of family and relational valuing (e.g. wedding videos, rites of passage, national myths that reveal the values of your culture); if your family has a particularly profound way of teaching faith at home, if you as a couple or you with friends have a great way to bless each other, demonstrate for us how it is done (no ethos violations please); if you realized something about how family formed you that have never seen before, bring your best journal entry in which you wrote about it; if your grade is suffering, bring food ☺. Unfortunately in a class this size the presentation must be kept short, no longer than three minutes. (If there is ample reason to need a bit longer see me ahead of time.)

The “Exercise in Essential Living” (10 points)

This phrase comes from Henry David Thoreau’s experiential accounting of *Walden* in which he attempted to determine the bare bones of the necessity of life. Although we would not want to give the humanistic bent in Thoreau too much authority, his endeavor toward the simplicity of what’s essential seems especially pertinent for families today. Thus, on a smaller scale this assignment asks you to take at least four hours of one full day (even better if you could commit a full sabbath to it) and conduct your own “exercise in essential living.” It asks you to consider what really are the essentials of living fully? What really replenishes your soul?, What gladdens your heart?, What puts the fizz back in your Ale 8?

Or, to be even more Christlike, aim these questions not at yourself, but at how you could bless your family, spouse, and/or significant other? What kind of a day could you create for them that at the end of it they would say “Ahhhh, today was the most “essential” experience I’ve had in years!! Today I was really loved!! Today we really connected.” Or spend some time creating a family ritual that teaches discipleship that you will practice in the course of the next year.

Then take at least three pages to communicate what you have learned and come to discover about how to live a soulful, essential life and/or how you give it to others. Don’t be afraid to report as well on any frustration you may have had in the experience, these too may be rich sources of enlightenment for you, revealing why so many of us “live lives of quiet desperation,” disconnected from those we purport to love most.

Journals (6 entries required for a total of 30 points)

I fully anticipate that in almost every class session and/or reading assignment you will find rich material for personal reflection and meaning making. Though some of these probes may be irritating, I believe them to be the “stuff” the Holy Spirit would desire for us to rub and polish into the pearls of our soul. I find journaling to be a rich way to be intentionally involved in this refinishing work. If you have another method of processing information I am open to alternative means of how you might address these personal issues - e.g., assembling life’s experiences through a collection of music, painting, writing poetry, or taped conversations as long as you are faithful in responding to the objectives of the assignment. (I am also open to having you process your journals in groups in an on-line setting. This would take away your story from being confidential with the professor, but quite often there is great benefit from hearing from each others stories. If you choose this option I would give only your group access to your team folder and I would grade your work based on your contribution and responses to the members of your group).

Journals are not simply for the sake of chronicling your past – recording for me what your first years of life were like. Rather, they are intended for you to read your own life narrative through a theological lens asking what concrete experiences confirm or challenge classroom notions about the family and family ministry. Though you may begin by recording the remembered experience of faith as you read a chapter or think about a class dialogue, you will want to move from this to reflecting on what that experience has to teach you about ministering to families. What new questions emerge that you feel compelled to follow? What implications might your reflections hold for ministry? What might these thoughts become as ministry applications?

For example, instead of simply telling me that you had such and such a family life, try to discern what dynamics made your family function the way they did. Ask questions about why discipline was practiced the way it was?, what aspects of family history formed your parents way of shaping their children?, what ways did your family encourage or discourage you from taking on the responsibility to become an adult?, how did church work with or against your family in

encouraging faith development?, and what impressions did families outside of your own make upon you in the impressionable years and how might involvement of a Christian community have aided these families? Recount identity wounds, but also relate what you are learning that might be valuable to others who have suffered in similar ways to find healing.

There are three particular units in which you are asked to make one entry for each week of class, and a final entry may constitute your closure reflection for the festival of sharing. Typed journal entries are easiest to read, but if script is more personal and at least legible, feel free to compose it how you would like. You can use whatever container you desire, but be aware that in order to facilitate my remarks there may be occasion where I have the journals for a week or two. Please indicate if you do not want me to write in your journal and I will attach a separate page.

Journal entries are held strictly confidential and will be returned directly to you in class, so feel free to be raw, honest and vulnerable. Nothing is counted against you for the language you choose to use in your journals. Indeed, I find that I tend to meet students in my feedback at whatever level they choose to expose me to (I think that is often the way the Holy Spirit works with us and between us). However, I also think it is best that I not enter into a formal therapeutic relationship with you while also serving as professor. If you uncover issues in which I think there might be benefit to seek further counseling, I will suggest it to you and with your permission we can work through student services to get an appointment with one of my respected colleagues or refer you to someone specializing in a particular area.

Although the assignments for the class require you to make a total of six journal entries, I am certainly open to you pursuing additional journaling, especially if there are moments of illumination that occur for you that you know the Spirit is prompting you to dig deeper and “suck the marrow” out of the experience (to use another rich phrase from Thoreau). Following are some additional questions I have found to be provocative in my own journey.

- Being made in the “image of God” implies that I have the ability to create. I feel most creatively alive when I _____?
- What might my family/spouse be learning by observing me as a woman or man of God? What in my life is teaching them to experience life as gift or to gain a heart of gratitude?
- Is the church I belong to empowering families for ministry or replacing them and creating spiritual orphans?
- How might the church develop a wholistic approach to healthy sexuality?
- What would it be like to be married to someone like me?
- What would I experience and feel at church if I were a single person, thirty to forty years old, attending a Sunday school class and a worship service?
- What vision can the church carry that will curb the baby boomers tendency to spend retirement narcissistically?
- What question do I most hope that nobody will ever ask me while I am in seminary?

Unit papers (50 points total - consists of three unit papers weighted differentially)

In three of the units a specific writing assignment is detailed. The first one is given twice as much weight as the latter ones. Because these assignments vary widely, see the remainder of the syllabus for particularities. **Note, although the due dates are spaced periodically throughout the semester I would encourage you to become familiar with the syllabus and be thinking ahead of time regarding what you may need to tend to in order to fulfill a particular assignment.**

Grading Scale

1. Attendance/Participation/FOS	10 points
2. Exercise in Essential Living	10 points
3. Journal Entries	30 points
4. Unit papers	50 points total (20 points for unit 1, 15 points for units 3 and 6)
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TOTAL	100points

The following descriptions written in italics have been determined by the faculty at Asbury Seminary and provide the guidelines for grading. I have attempted to provide additional rubrics following each description to clarify what I tend to look for in determining the marks for a particular assignment.

A = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

Exceptional work is constituted by such things as: substantive theological reflection that reveals engagement of the “big ideas” of Scripture or the “big ideas” represented in the existing body of knowledge from the social sciences in a particular area of study and represented via assigned texts and presentations; thorough and penetrating personal insight gained from a sustained consideration of one’s concrete experience through the lifespan; creativity in translating assignments into useful pedagogical presentations; and excellence in grammatical, stylistic and communicative aspects of writing.

B = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

Good work is constituted by solid theological reflection on the assigned readings and presentations in response to the given questions for a particular unit; the capacity to utilize classroom discussions and readings to understand and critically engage one’s own story; accurate ability to name specific ministry implications from one’s processing of information; and carefulness in grammatical, stylistic and communicative aspects of writing.

C = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

Acceptable work is constituted by: obvious acquaintance with the assigned readings and classroom discussions at a level that allows for theological thought in response to the questions posed for a particular unit; references to one’s own story at a level that makes application of truth and would interest a congregational member in the insights being expounded; capacity to communicate grammatically and stylistically without detracting from the presentation.

D = Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives

Cursory reading of the texts that fail to represent the author’s intent; a flat restatement of the author’s work void of any personal appropriation of the material; grammatical or stylistic errors that frustrate the reader and detract from the thought of the paper; or other failures to fulfill reasonable expectations flowing from a seminary course of this nature.

F = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Unacceptable work is usually willful, unexplained, or inexcusable lack of fulfillment of class assignments.

Planned Spring Agenda

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>Assignments/Class Focus</u>	<u>Readings</u>
UNIT 1 – Trinitarian Foundations, Creation Design and Intent	Feb 6 and 8	Intro, Df family The classroom as community	Crabb 1-4 Sacred Pedagogy
	Feb 13 and 15	Creation – God’s intent The Fall	Crabb 5-8 Balswick, Chapter 1 and 10 Crabb 9-12 Balswick, Chapter 17
	Feb 20 and 22	Family in the Biblical Story/ Stevens article/Discuss Crabb	Stevens article Crabb 13-17

The assignment for this unit is to write a four to six page, double-spaced paper that provides a theological foundation for your understanding of the family. The paper should reflect a thoughtful interaction with both the readings for this unit and discussions from class. However, I am not so much interested in you outlining or repeating what the text says, nor for you to necessarily agree with the position I have taken in class. Rather, the paper intends to have you wrestle with your own understanding of how Scripture and class readings establish parameters for the importance of discipleship development in the home. Specifically, attempt to address each of the following questions in one page of paper:

1. What are the implications of being created in the image of a Trinitarian God for understanding the importance of family?? What may have been God’s intent for placing us in families even before we had Scripture or the revelation of Jesus?
2. What do you believe the story of creation and covenant tell us about gender roles and the intended relationship between families and society/nation-building?? How has the Fall affected those relationships? Are there places in society, families, or even church where we seem to be sanctioning more of the consequences of the fall than the creation intent??
3. Reflecting on your reading from Crabb (especially the chart on page 39 that gets at the core of his book) offer a theological appraisal of how the ministry one offers tends to reflect one’s view of personhood and one’s diagnosis of the human condition.
4. Considering all that has been covered in this unit, how would you describe a family that represented Trinitarian community and mature covenantal relationship? What do you think is God’s intent for the family in disciple-making and what ministry vision is growing in you for helping families in this task? **DUE Feb 27 (20 points)**

TOPIC	DATE	ASSIGNMENTS/FOCUS	READINGS
UNIT 2 Sociological/Developmental Foci on the family Family systems	Feb 27 Mar 6 Mar 8 Mar 13	Is the family changing or declining? What do healthy and unhealthy families look like?	Balswick, Chapter 2, 12-14 Joy, Intro, 1-4 OR Thompson Clapp

This unit allows you to get started on your journal. Make one 2-3 page entry for each week following the guidelines established for journaling. Focus this week on the family system in which you were formed, utilizing insights from the literature and class presentations. Following are recommended topics for your journal entries: (A) Name any explicit or implicit mottos your family lived or that you have witnessed in families around you – e.g “anger could not be expressed in our home,” “the unwritten rule in this house was ‘don’t cross dad/mom,’” “sexuality was taboo in our house probably because...,” “the family secret that ruled our family was...,” etc. (B) Name what was healthy in your family of origin and what may have been missing or misguided in their way of “blessing” you? (C) What kind of ministry would you presume would help each of the different types of families we have described in this module? (D) How can the body of Christ repair the wounds caused by families where no blessing was given, where the blessing was conditional, or where only part of the blessing was given? **DUE Mar 13 (2 entries – 10 points)**

UNIT 3 Discipleship and Faith Formation in Children	Mar 15 Mar 20 Mar 22	Erikson, funded trust Attachment style research Children’s faith formation	Balswick, Chapters 6 and 7 Dobson, Westerhoff Cloud and Townsend YFMI BOOKLET
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In the middle of this unit a schematic from Bob Biehl’s book WHY YOU DO WHAT YOU DO links one’s dominant childhood feeling with an adult phobia and a style of relating. Similarly, attachment style research suggests that the kind of attachment one had with a primary caregiver tends to develop into an internal working model that is carried into subsequent relationships in the lifespan. For this unit, write a three page personal reflection paper focused on your childhood that responds to each of the following probes. First, name what you believe was your dominant childhood feeling and/or the attachment style(s) in which you were nurtured. Describe how these might be affecting the assumptions you bring to relationships today and the way you typically relate to others in positions of authority and in intimate relationships. As you become more self-aware of what may be hidden from others but nonetheless influencing the way you function in relationships, why might this kind of “social/emotional intelligence” be important to you in understanding people and in ministry? **DUE Mar 22 (15 points)**

UNIT 4 Discipleship and Faith Formation in Adolescence (Spring Reading Week is April 2nd through April 6th; Read ahead for next unit!!)	Mar 27 Mar 29	Adolescent faith development Identity Sexuality and the Media Discipline/Rites of passage	Joy - 5-9, Josselson, Kiesling Hart Balswick, Ch 8, 11 and 15
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For this unit return to journaling again, making at least one entry for each week of class. Consider some of the following issues as you write: Whose approval did I most seek as an adolescent and what drove me in seeking it here? Were do most teens seek to find validation and why? Whose attention did I recruit and how did it impact what I came to believe about myself? How might this awareness affect what a community of faith needs to be offering?

What story is being told about sexuality in the media? How has this story affected/distorted my desires, imagination, and perception about myself and about the way I view members of the opposite sex? Whose “dreamworld” is it and how do I feel about the way it tries to define male-female relationships? What movie do I find myself in and why? How were boundaries negotiated and discipline administered? What would I keep and what would I change in the way I establish boundaries with my own children and/or those I will serve in ministry?

DUE with the journal for the next unit.

UNIT 5 Discipleship and Faith Formation in Adulthood	April 10 April 12 April 17 April 19	Journey to Adulthood Marriage and Singleness Gender differences	Joy, Thomas OR Mason – entire book Schnarch Balswick, chapter 3, 4 and 5
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A common theme that weaves its way through all the material in this unit is the interrelationship between our longing for companionship, community, to belong, to be cherished and our need for distinctiveness, independence, solitude, to “stand apart.”

Schnarch regards the interaction of these two seemingly opposing forces as creating a crucible in relationships whereby opportunity is created for growth into new levels of relational maturity. Describing emotional differentiation as the capacity to “hold onto yourself while staying in relationship and moving closer to the one(s) you love the most,” Schnarch makes the provocative observation that we are likely only as emotionally differentiated as the family that we emerged from and that we almost invariably marry someone who is at the same level of emotional differentiation as ourselves. In this unit I want you to journal about where you see yourself in light of these issues, being especially cognizant of the side of the continuum valued by your culture and your family. At this point in the semester I want you to begin to generate your own questions for processing this material and transferring applications to your own life. However, let me offer a few examples to guide your thinking:

When and how did your family allow you to “become your own person? And make choices for yourself?” Were “I” statements encouraged in your family? What or whose “voice” was usually heard in the family? Could your family disagree without it threatening your sense of connection or were you emotionally fused and expected to yield whatever you wanted? How much emotional distance do you usually keep from friends, dating partners, family, or a spouse? What might this tell you about your capacity to feel like you can be yourself and yet be connected to other people? **DUE W/ PREVIOUS UNIT ON April 24, (4 entries – 20pts)**

UNIT 6	April 24 April 26	Mid life Step and Blended families (Abuse and Violence?)	Balswick, Ch 9 and 16 Boyer
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In your ministry you are likely to come across several issues related to discipleship and the family that there simply was not time to research in depth while at seminary, nor will there be a lot of time to write research papers while serving a congregation. In this final unit study a family, ministry, or personal issue in which you feel like you or the church needs more insight. Examples might include: your theology of divorce, characteristics of families from other ethnic backgrounds, outlining a series of youth talks on sexuality, direction to families for devotionals/family altar, ministering to infertile couples, plans to start a twelve-step ministry for people struggling with addictions, etc. Although I hope you will aim for excellence, I regard this as a pastoral assignment rather than an academic one. Approach it as you might if you had a week to research a burning issue that someone in your church needed you to address. Then provide me with 5-6 pages of your most important findings expressed in a form that is useful in the local congregation.

A second option is for you to develop a strategic plan for ministry with families in a current or anticipated ministry setting. This could be a sermon outline, teaching series, retreat curriculum, structured programming for several age categories, booklet to give to young parents at their child’s baptism, etc. Consider drawing from Erikson’s stage theory to offer theological commentary on the linkages you believe exist between early relational development in the family and issues of faith formation such as one’s concept of God, trust, obedience, and images of the “ultimate environment.” From your reading of authors like Cloud and Townsend, the Balswicks, Joy and Hardell and Strommen articulate ways the church could teach and aid parents during these early formative experiences. Either assignment is **DUE May 10 (15 points)**.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY COMPLETED IT YOUR EXERCISE IN ESSENTIAL LIVING IS ALSO DUE BY May 10.

UNIT 7 Discipleship in later adulthood	May 1 May 3 May 8 May 10	Grandparenting Later life /Death and dying Festival of Sharing	Balswick, Chapter 18
CLOSURE	Final exam meeting time	Festival of sharing Evaluations	

A Few Other Noteworthy Items:

1. By faculty policy, church related work, minor illnesses or family situations generally do not constitute cause for late work. (Please do contact me however when such situations arrive.) I will accept late papers, but because they fail to meet the criteria of “surpassing class expectations” it is unlikely that they will receive any grade higher than a “B+” and they will typically be returned without comment.
2. A bibliography for the course will be distributed in a subsequent early class sessions.

