

**Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary Syllabus**  
**RE 525 (CE 611) - AGING, ETHICS, and SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**  
**Spring 2010**

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**Textbooks:**

Sell, Charles M. *Transitions Through Adult Life*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1991.

Whitney, Donald. *Spiritual Disciplines for The Christian Life/Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. 2002.

Rae, Scott B. *Moral Choices* Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

**Course Description:**

This course surveys human growth and development during adulthood. Special emphasis will be placed upon how practicing the spiritual disciplines effect counseling needs, transitions, and ethical decisions of adults at various stages of development. The course is specifically designed for “teaching faith as a life-integrating & life-transforming reality.”

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course the student should be able:

1. to demonstrate basic knowledge of transitions and stresses faced by adults at different stages of development.
2. to better understand how practice of spiritual disciplines can meet needs (spiritual, psychological, and material) of adults at various stages of life.
3. to find creative ways to apply the practice of spiritual disciplines for helping adults anticipate transitions, maintain spiritual resources in crisis, and integrate their faith in all areas of their physical, mental, and social development.
4. to incorporate spiritual disciplines in all pastoral counseling, teaching, preaching, and other forms of pastoral ministry in order to assist an aging population make ethical decisions as it meets its physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs.

<b>Assignments:</b>	<i>% of grade</i>
<b>Christian Ethics Exam</b>	<b>15</b>
Read <i>Moral Choices</i> , chapters 1-5, before the first class.	
<b>Description of a Young Adult:</b>	<b>10</b>
Interview 3 or 4 young adults (age 18-30). Briefly describe physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of this age group. How have these people dealt with transitions experienced so far during life? (2 to 4 pages)	
<b>Description of a Middle Adult:</b>	<b>10</b>
This assignment is identical to the one above except interview people between 30 and 60 years old. Briefly describe physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of this age group. How have these people dealt with transitions experienced so far during life? (2 to 4 pages)	
<b>Description of an Older Adult:</b>	<b>10</b>
Interview people over age 60 for this report. Briefly describe physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of this age group. How have these people dealt with transitions experienced so far during life? (2 to 4 pages)	
<b>Evaluation of guest speakers:</b>	<b>15</b>
An integral part of the course will revolve around guest speakers who are involved in day-to-day ministry to individuals who are facing various transitions of life. Each one will share ethical and practical insights. Prepare a one or two-page review of valuable insights you received from each presentation.	
<b>Transition Paper:</b>	<b>20</b>
Choose a transition faced by adults at any stage of life and prepare a paper about adults facing this transition. Present likely ethical decisions this transition may require. Suggest creative ways the spiritual disciplines can be used in ministry to adults facing this transition. (8 - 10 pages) Prepare a presentation for class highlighting ethical concerns and creative ministry.	
<b>Final Exam:</b>	<b>20</b>

All assignments will be discussed in detail. The content of this syllabus is subject to revision as announced in regular class sessions.  
A schedule of activities will be distributed with due dates indicated.

### **Recommended Reading:**

Arn, Win & Arn, Charles. *Catch the Age Wave: A Handbook for Effective Ministry With Senior Adults*. Grand Rapids: Baker. 1993.

Corr, C.A., Nabe, C.M., & Corr, D.M. *Death and Dying, Life and Living*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing. 2000.

DeHennezel, Marie. *Intimate Death: How the Dying Teach us How to Live*. Random House. 1997.

Eckman, James P. *Biblical Ethics: Choosing Right in a World Gone Wrong*. Crossway Books. 2004.

Fowler, James W. *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

Fowler, James W. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981.

Johnson, Tanya Fusco (Editor), *Handbook on Ethical Issues in Aging*. Greenwood Press. 1999.

Koenig, Kenneth. *Aging and God: Spiritual Pathways to Mental Health in Midlife And Later years*. Haworth Press. 1994.

Strauss, William, and Neil Howe. *Generations*. New York: Quill. 1991.

Wright, H. Norman. *Recovering From the Losses of Life*. Revell. 2001.

Writ, Sherwood. *I Don't Know What Old is, but Old is Older than Me*. Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1992.