

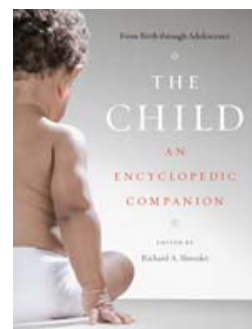
Resources in the areas of Childhood Studies and Religion

For more information, see www.aarweb.org and www.sbl-site.org.

Richard A. Shweder, editor in Chief, *The Child: An Encyclopedic Companion*, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

The Child: An Encyclopedic Companion offers both parents and professionals access to the best scholarship from all areas of child studies in a remarkable one-volume reference.

Bringing together contemporary research on children and childhood from pediatrics, child psychology, childhood studies, education, sociology, history, law, anthropology, and other related areas, The Child contains more than 500 articles—all written by experts in their fields from around the world and overseen by a panel of distinguished editors led by anthropologist Richard A. Shweder. Each entry provides a concise and accessible synopsis of the topic at hand. For example, the entry “Adoption” begins with a general definition, followed by a detailed look at adoption in different cultures and at different times, a summary of the associated mental and developmental issues that can arise, and an overview of applicable legal and public policy.



While presenting certain universal facts about children’s development from birth through adolescence, the entries also address the many worlds of childhood both within the United States and around the globe. They consider the ways that in which race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and cultural traditions of child rearing can affect children’s experiences of physical and mental health, education, and family. Alongside the topical entries, The Child includes more than forty “Imagining Each Other” essays, which focus on the particular experiences of children in different cultures. In “Work before Play for Yucatec Maya Children,” for example, readers learn of the work responsibilities of some modern-day Mexican children, while in “A Hindu Brahman Boy Is Born Again,” they witness a coming-of-age ritual in contemporary India.

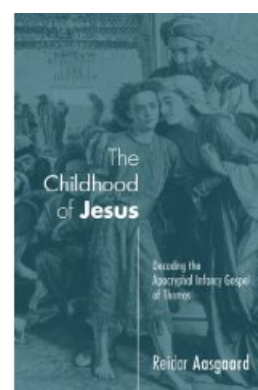
Compiled by some of the most distinguished child development researchers in the world, The Child will broaden the current scope of knowledge on children and childhood. It is an unparalleled resource for parents, social workers, researchers, educators, and others who work with children.

Reidar Aasgaard, *The Childhood of Jesus: Decoding the Apocryphal Infancy Gospel of Thomas* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2009).

The mid-second-century apocryphal infancy gospel, the Gospel of Thomas, which deals with the childhood of Jesus from age five to age twelve, has attained only limited interest from scholars. Much research into the story has also been seriously misguided—especially study of the story’s origin, character, and setting.

This book gives a fresh interpretation of the infancy gospel, not least by applying a variety of new approaches, including orality studies, narrative studies, gender studies, and social-scientific approaches.

The book comes to a number of radically new conclusions: The Gospel of Thomas is dependent on oral storytelling and has far more



narrative qualities than has been previously assumed. The narrative world depicted in the gospel is that of middle-class Christianity, with the social and cultural ideas and values characteristic of such a milieu.

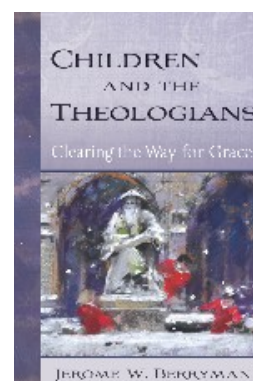
The gospel's theology is not heretical—as has often been claimed—but mirrors mainstream thinking rooted in biblical tradition, particularly in the Johannine and Lukan traditions. Jesus is portrayed as a divine figure but also as a true-to-life child of late antiquity.

The audience for the Gospel of Thomas is likely to have come from the rural population of early Christianity, a milieu that has received little attention. A main audience for the story was children among early Christians, making this—at least within Christianity—the oldest-known children's tale.

The book provides a Greek text and a translation, and several appendixes on the story, along with other early Christian infancy material.

Jerome Berryman, *Children and the Theologians: Clearing the Way for Grace* (Morehouse Publishing, 2009).

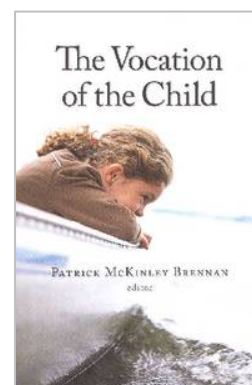
The long story of children in theology is told via analysis of some twenty-five theologians, grouped according to six historical periods. Each account examines what a particular theologian thought about children and the experience it was based upon. Four themes that have shaped our attitudes about children in the church emerge from this history: ambivalence, ambiguity, indifference, and grace. The result of this study is to promote a healthier church, which will respect and utilize the distinctive gifts of children. In so doing, theologians will be better able to help clear the way for grace in the postmodern church.



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Patrick McKinley Brennan, ed., *The Vocation of the Child* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008).

The calling of the child has been a perennial puzzle for the Christian community. What is childhood for? Is its main purpose play, work, growth, or some combination of the three? Most discussions of childhood tend to center on a child's rights or duties, marginalizing the child as an incomplete adult, insignificant until grown into independence. But if we believe that God has a vocation for every person, must we not also apply this to children?

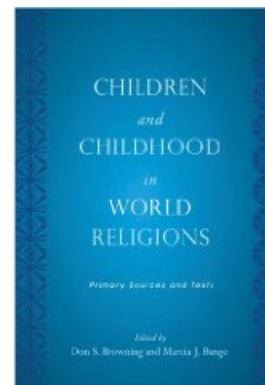


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Don S. Browning and Marcia J. Bunge, eds., *Children and Childhood in World Religions: Primary Sources and Texts* (Rutgers University Press, 2009). Includes primary sources from six major religions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

While children figure prominently in religious traditions, few books have directly explored the complex relationships between children and religion. This is the first book to examine the theme of children in major religions of the world.

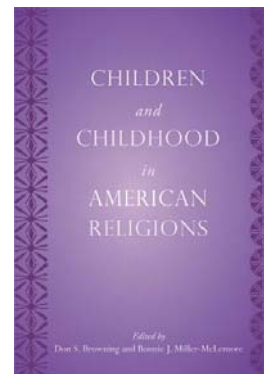
Each of six chapters, edited by world-class scholars, focuses on one religious tradition and includes an introduction and a selection of primary texts ranging from legal to liturgical and from the ancient to the contemporary. Through both the scholarly introductions and the primary sources, this comprehensive volume addresses a range of topics, from the sanctity of birth to a child's relationship to evil, showing that issues regarding children are central to understanding world religions and raising significant questions about our own conceptions of children today.



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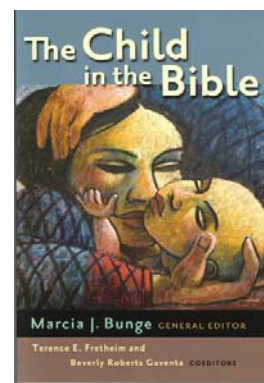
Don S. Browning and Bonnie Miller-McLemore, eds., *Children and Childhood in American Religions* (Rutgers University Press, 2009).

Whether First Communion or bar mitzvah, religious traditions play a central role in the lives of many American children. In this collection of essays, leading scholars reveal for the first time how various religions interpret, reconstruct, and mediate their traditions to help guide children and their parents in navigating the opportunities and challenges of American life. The book examines ten religions, among other topics: How the Catholic Church confronts the tension between its teachings about children and actual practice The Oglala Lakotas struggle to preserve their spiritual traditions The impact of modernity on Hinduism Only by discussing the unique challenges faced by all religions, and their followers, can we take the first step toward a greater understanding for all of us.



Marcia J. Bunge, Terence Fretheim, and Beverly Roberts Gaventa, eds., *The Child in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008).

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John Collier, editor, *Toddling to the Kingdom* (London, UK: The child Theology Movement Limited, 2009).

This book is not about children. It's true that children feature prominently in its pages but it's not about them. The focus of all true Christian theology is God in Christ. This is what Child Theology and this book attempts to develop. So if you want to think about God and 'the way God does things' (aka 'The Kingdom of God'), this book is for you.



Cornelia B. Horn and John W. Martens, *Let the Little Children Come to Me: Childhood and Children in Early Christianity* (Catholic University of America Press, 2009).

Although Jesus called on his first followers to welcome children in his name and to become like children, the lives of the first Christian children have remained in the shadows. This book explores the hidden lives of children at the origins of Christianity. It draws on insights gained from comparisons of children's experiences in ancient Judaism and the Graeco-Roman world. The authors also engage a vast body of early Christian literature, extending from the New Testament to sermons, letters, theological treatises, poetry, pedagogical manuals, and historiography in Greek, Latin, Syriac, and other languages current in the early Christian world.



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