

## **Child Protection in the Mission of African initiated Churches (AICs) in the Shai-Osudoku District, Ghana**

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### **Abstract**

Child abuse is not uncommon in Africa, and Ghana is not an exception. Where child abuse exists, the appropriate response is child protection. Child protection involves policies, structures and practical steps to ensure children are safeguarded. This research paper presents an account of a theological discourse and small-scale empirical research that presents a biblically faithful theory and practice regarding child protection in the mission of AICs in Shai-Osudoku, Ghana. Using an integrated approach to doing theology, insights from biblical, historical, systematic and practical perspectives were gleaned. The systematic perspective correlates the findings of the biblical and historical perspectives with extra-biblical materials, mainly from the human sciences, to formulate the theological perspective. It was observed that children are precious in the sight of God, but are also vulnerable; and God, the chief shepherd, sets the standard for caring for children, and expects his people to protect children and raise them in a loving, caring and nurturing environment. The practical research examines the child protection in the mission of AICs in Shai-Osudoku. Significant gaps were observed in their theology of children, and child protection when correlated with the conclusions of the systematic perspective. Consequently, certain recommendations are made to enable it achieve an operative theology regarding child protection that is faithful to God's will and purposes. `