

SURVEY ASSESSMENT OF SOCIOCULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUE
POSITIONS OF FRESHMEN AT TRINITY BAPTIST COLLEGE

A Dissertation

Presented to the
Faculty of Argosy University/Sarasota
In Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

by

Clayton Lindstam

Argosy University/Sarasota

Sarasota, Florida

April 2006

Dissertation Committee Approval:

William R. Clough, D.Min, Chair date

James W. Reynolds, Ed.D., Member date

Kenneth Rometo, Ed.D., Reader date

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Member: Dr. James W. Reynolds
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Department: School of Education

This study was designed to discover if there was a significant difference between the personal values of graduates of Christian high schools and secular high schools. The sociocultural climate impacting value development was reviewed in the literature touching on moral education, secondary school environments, religious motivation, religiosity, contemporary culture, and value transformation.

The data was collected with a survey instrument using Likert-type responses. It focused on three broad value arenas: personal values, positions of faith, and behaviors of religiosity. The survey results from the population of 102 freshmen were disaggregated into broad groups: Christian and secular high school graduates and then subgroups of males and females. Differences were evaluated for statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$ level.

Findings yielded a significant difference between the two groups of high school graduates. Regarding personal values, 77% of the Christian high school graduates

registered morally positive answer selections. Faith position questions addressed practical life issues linked to one's faith—the "alignment of the heart or will" (Fowler, 1995, p. 11). Positive evangelical responses were common for all, achieving 91%; however, the secular school males registered nearly 20% of their choices in the negative range. Religiosity addressed behaviors in the community. The majority of all students felt they were religious, yet few shared their faith with others. In spite of this, 61% of the positive answers were logged by Christian high school graduates.

It should be noted that parental influence addressing positive values and attitudes has an influence on morally positive behavior. Beyond personal effort, parents have an ally in the arena of teen influence in that there is a positive value to be placed on graduating from a Christian high school.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM AND ITS COMPONENTS

At Trinity Baptist College, every incoming student claims to be in agreement with the college doctrinal statement which includes Biblical faith positions (Appendix A), and the college Standard of Conduct (Appendix B). Students enrolling as freshmen profess to embrace Christian values (such as the issue of drinking alcohol), a commitment to several faith positions (Biblically supported positions such as rejection of abortion), and willingness to follow certain expected religious behaviors (such as faithful attendance in church and volunteerism in Christian ministry).

The Problem

Some of the freshmen enrolling in Trinity Baptist College graduate from private Christian schools, and some from public secular schools. It would be useful for the Administration and Faculty of Trinity Baptist College to know if there is a difference in the moral attitudes of these two broad groups in regard to their personal values, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity, because one's understanding and choices in moral matters may be influenced by values alien to Biblical positions. Therefore, Trinity Baptist College must assess the positions on personal moral values, personal faith, and behaviors of religiosity of incoming students and compare these two groups: Christian high school graduates and secular high school graduates.

Problem Background

The mission of the college since its inception in 1974 has been to shape young adults into Christian workers who will assume service and leadership positions in churches and communities. For Trinity Baptist College, this education and training task embodies a local, a national, and an international perspective, as young men and women

are trained to be missionaries, Christian school teachers, and church leaders. The college motto is: “Training Specialists for the Ministry” (Trinity Baptist College, 2005), and as such it seeks to anchor each student in Bible values and principles.

Theoretical research addressing issues of how adolescents develop moral judgment is often referred to as moral cognitive development. It has the intent of discovering the varied influences, such as social, educational, and religious factors, which impact the foundation of one’s values and the application of moral judgment. Relevant theories that have sponsored moral judgment research and are helpful to this study are Social Learning Theory, Moral Cognitive Development Theory, Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religious Motivation Theory, and Family Systems Theory. Researching moral judgment is relevant to the college because the incoming freshmen bring with them a wide variety of virtues and values from diverse contexts. Additionally, understanding the sweep of cultural value influence and behavior trends has potential value in order to design a strategy for achieving faith development and religious growth in students.

Background information from a number of moral judgment research authors indicates that sociocultural value environments surrounding adolescents are shifting in a secular direction. Limbaugh (2003), reflecting on changing social and educational environments documents the implementation of research-based value-neutral moral development programs adopted for public school curricular applications. Value-neutral programs, according to Limbaugh, seek character training and compatibility with separation of church and state legislation. Value-free programs replace traditional character training programs which have spiritual foundations and therefore attract complaint from the courts. The gradual program shift in the public sector schools is

relevant in that non-religious moral training potentially influences a number of the incoming freshmen enrolling in the college.

Literature Review

The atmosphere of a Bible college, in concert with its academic disciplines, is designed to prepare the student for ministry. Ministry training relies on (1) a body of theological truth, (2) training in the disciplines, (3) development of personal faith, and (4) growth in the desire for service (Clark, Johnson, & Sloat, 1991; Trinity Baptist College, 2005; Weimer & Neff, 1990). The review of the literature focused primarily on research involving development of personal faith and growth in a desire for service.

Moral Development Theory

Piaget (1965) in the book, *Moral Development of the Child*, reasoned that moral development could be sponsored through a cognitive learning avenue as well as through maturation. Moral development through maturation is described by Piaget as “effective moral thought, moral experience, which is built up gradually in action . . .” (p. 174). While cognitive moral development is described as “theoretical or verbal moral thought, bound to the former [maturation] by all kinds of links. . . . This verbal morality appears whenever the child is called upon to judge other people's actions . . .” (p. 174). Following Piaget's lead, Kohlberg suggested the cognitive learning tradition and its impact on moral development in youth. He argued in the literature that “moral education should take the form of stimulating reasoning based on universal moral values that can be rationally defended . . . above arbitrary or contingent value choices made by individuals or cultures” (Prencipe & Helwig, 2002, p. 842).

Moral Cognitive Developmental Theory is founded upon two concepts: cognition, which is defined as one's thinking processes, and moral development, which is viewed as being influenced by one's beliefs. Typically, but not exclusively, beliefs are part of one's religiosity. The theoretical work combining cognitive development and moral judgment suggests human reasoning rather than religious principle as the driving force in making moral decisions. Kohlberg's research into the cognitive development of moral thinking has been in the forefront of the literature on adolescents' moral judgments (Singer, 1999; White, 2000). This research work has been a programming panacea for American schools which, because of legislative and judicial demands, seek to eliminate religious influence in classrooms (Limbaugh, 2003).

Some researchers have studied Religious Motivation Theory to discover the foundations of some elements of moral development (Gorsuch, 1994; Mellor & Andre, 1980; Ortberg, Gorsuch, & Kim, 2001; Pedersen, Williams & Kristensen, 2000; Schaefer & Gorsuch, 1993). Using Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religious Motivation Theory, researchers have addressed adolescent moral code adoption and the resultant practical behavior choices and have shown them to be based on personal moral value and not resulting from personal rational choice. A value is intrinsic; it is an attitude adopted toward a particular behavior. A moral code is a principle which rises from a value and guides choice.

Bassett, Smith, Newell, and Richards (1999), using the example of sexual purity, demonstrate the connection from values to morals to behavior. They found that the stronger the intrinsic religious motivation for saying no to premarital sex, the more likely young adults were to adopt a Biblical moral code and choose abstinence. In this

example—the value is sexual purity—the moral principle is rejection of premarital sexual activity, and the resultant behavioral choice is abstinence.

Other researchers see the public school as an extrinsic educator, which seeks to establish moral attitudes based on secular processes and reasoning, and the Christian school as an intrinsic educator, which seeks to establish moral attitudes based on spiritual structures such as faith development (Batson, 1993; Gorsuch, 1994; Pedersen et al., 2000; Schaefer & Gorsuch, 1993).

Going beyond these two theories, some researchers have proposed theoretical models for understanding and influencing moral development with cognitive tools (Hanson, 1991; Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 2000; Rokeach, 1969). Social and educational psychology researchers have proposed the Family-Systems Theory to address moral development (Flor & Knapp, 2001; White, 2000). Still others have suggested Social Learning Theory to explain elements of moral development (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Langford & Lovegrove, 1994; Morris & Maisto, 1999; Norman, Richards, & Bear, 1998). This strong interest in the value foundations of human nature from varied perspectives is not only practical but is supported by contemporary and continuing research.

Contemporary Culture and Values

The contemporary American culture is worthy of consideration because of its potential impact on the values of adolescents. As suggested by Smith (2003), human values may be best approached as normative. For adolescents, normative values may mean negotiating away from a learned value set and accepting group or cultural values as personal dynamic attitudes. “American youth (as do all modern people) therefore

find themselves living within and between multiple moral orders among which they have to negotiate, balance, compromise, and choose” (p. 21).

Tamney, Johnson, and Burton (1992) argue that contemporary societies are shaped by cultural conflict. This shaping is societal strife in which “values are of primary importance” (p. 32). The abortion controversy is an example of value-driven, cultural conflict. Shaping through conflict is exemplified by the abortion faith position endorsed in the Bible college as pro-life and the personal moral value of decrying sexual activity prior to marriage. The evangelical Bible college will view these positions and attitudes as societal-shaping concerns requiring clarification (Trinity Baptist College, 2005).

Some social service agencies endorse public policy positions favoring pro-life and abstinence while others endorse positions favoring pro-choice and safe sex. Additionally, according to Watson, Milliron, Morris, and Hood (1995), there are voices in society reminding our youth that “a different tradition may deny that God exists” (p. 181), and within this reasoning pro-choice and sexual activity are simply issues of personal preference and have no religious overtones.

Paloutzian and Kirkpatrick (1995) state, “The importance of religious belief and religious institutions on individual and social life is self-evident. Religious motives help to define contemporary social/political movements such as the 'religious right' and the 'pro-life' movement” (p. 1). Gabrels (1998) cites Donaldson of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania as he addresses making determinations about right and wrong: “Without a moral center, there's a kind of profound lostness, a profound confusion that can derail both the individual and the organization” (p. 1). He relates that our society has traded a moral culture for a therapeutic culture which looks for meaning

and intention in an act rather than objectively analyzing the act for right or wrong. The result is that the moral center is swaying and “the country's sense of values is increasingly a matter of personal preferences” (p. 2).

Philosophical and Ethical Considerations

Behavior is rooted in our philosophy of life according to Fledderjohann (2000): “What a person thinks and believes determines the way that individual will act or behave” (p. 77). He makes this opening statement in a journal article addressing moral issue differences between Christian school and public school graduates. The influence of Christian education, without research, remains largely philosophical. This research begins to feed empirical data into the philosophical discussion. His conclusion yields the sobering statement, “The research accepts the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the moral views of Christian school graduates and public school graduates” (p. 82). What influences how students make moral decisions must be called into question when research can find very little difference between secular and sacred, based on school influence.

Moral behavior theory is replete with suggestions on the issue of why and how choices for courses of action are made. Rest et al. (2000) suggest that behavior has its genesis in development and reasoning. Ortberg et al. (2001) suggest that behavior issues from “belief about consequences” and “moral obligation” (p. 489). Others suggest that behavior rises out of religious coping mechanisms (Maynard, Gorsuch, & Bjorck, 2001; Schaefer & Gorsuch, 1993). John Dewey (1964), writing on moral choices in behavior, states: “Moral judgments are of such character that nothing can be systematically extracted from one of them (*for*) the formation of others” (p. 25). Therefore, every

decision is a stand-alone effort of thoughtful consideration and not dependent on prior commitments or choices. As a concluding point of review, according to prevailing fundamentalist thought, the Bible gives all moral judgment the foundation and platform of moral absolutes (Dollar, 1973).

Faith Development and Religiosity in Adolescence

Fowler (1995) suggests that it is one's personally held value positions and beliefs that are essential for faith development and maturity. Fowler cites Santayana's saying that "no person can be religious in general" (cited in Fowler, p. 292) and writes that "the way toward religious truth—and toward universalizing faith—leads through the particular memories, stories, images, ethical teachings, and rituals of determinate religious traditions" (p. 292). The college can lead its students inexorably toward faith development through the traditions of fundamentalism, a religious sub-group within American evangelicals (Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991). Fundamentalism is a faith position; it leads to value development and is defined through doctrine and social convictions (Kellstedt, 1991; Ryrie, 1999). What it cannot control is the values students bring with them as freshmen.

According to Ashton and Watson (1998), "There is increasing awareness today of the need for education in those values which undergird civilized society. . . . The twentieth century has seen, and is still seeing, devastating examples of an elemental failure to respect . . . values" (p. 183). These researchers also noted that religious commitment is weak in our culture of materialism.

Many of the incoming freshmen have graduated from public secular schools which attempt to transmit moral beliefs that are distinguished from religious beliefs due

to the tradition of separation of church and state (Norman et al., 1998). These authors quote McCart regarding the attempt to teach morals “in the face of rising statistics of disruptive, violent, and antisocial-student behavior” (cited in Norman et al., p. 90). Some public educators, through organizations such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), have urged the development of formal moral instruction but acknowledge that providing it has become even more difficult as the school population becomes increasingly diverse.

The private evangelical Christian school, operating beyond tax base funding, serves the community by providing education with a moral foundation as an antithesis to value neutral public education (Jeynes, 2003). With a mission and central goal of exercising religious influence and its adherence to a unified belief system, this educational movement finds little difficulty in focusing its energy on fully developing the moral and spiritual natures of its students (Norman et al., 1998). Educators who are interested in value education and its promotion realize the pull of secular society and our culture of materialism influences adolescents and their values in ways that interact with school programs, be they value-neutral or value-laden.

Gaining a religious self-concept or self-identity is vital to a person’s being spiritually-centered. “Previous research has found that spiritually-centered individuals report that they are more emotionally well-adjusted, have a more positive self-concept, and have better physical health” (Pedersen et al., 2000, p. 140). When considering religiosity in an adolescent population, the concept of self-identity has a demonstrated relationship to church attendance. “Reported levels of church attendance have been found

to be directly related to the centrality of spiritual self-identity” (p. 140). Jeynes (2003) discovered,

Religious commitment provides more than some temporary emotional lift. Rather, there are substantial behavioral benefits. Concurrently, many people in America's school system and society are trying to direct adolescents away from having religion as a major part of their lives. Given the results presented in this book, such practices will likely hurt adolescents and do harm to this nation in the long run. One does not have to be religious to acknowledge the benefits of religious commitment. (p. 194)

Smith (2003) tried to determine the factors that cause religion to be an important influence. He suggests that a “moral directive” which tends to come from an external source, a moral order, is one of the important influences. Moral directives address “self control and personal virtue . . . youth may internalize these moral orders and use them to guide their life choices and moral commitments” (p. 20). Religious directives can produce outcomes in a student’s life which cause them to favor behaviors that agree with the moral expectations.

Addressing other relationships between religiousness and adolescent well-being, Donahue and Benson (1995) note that “a constellation of adult lifestyle issues— pregnancy, substance abuse, violence, (and) lack of connection to traditional institutions . . . has manifested itself at ever earlier ages” (p. 145). This has “fueled a national debate concerning policies, programs, and strategies that can enhance well-being in this stage of life” (p. 145).

In reactive response to the fact that “America's school system and society are trying to direct adolescents away from having religion as a major part of their lives” (Jeynes, 2003, p. 194), the Christian school has developed a mission of vying for the hearts and minds of its students (Peshkin, 1986). It uses moral directives to influence students within its embrace.

In summary, adolescents are, as a whole, moderately interested in religion, loosely attached to youth groups, and fairly weak in church attendance. The students who demonstrate religious commitment will also demonstrate, in their personal practices, a lifestyle protected from some of the deleterious effects of the culture and society in which we live (Donahue & Benson, 1995; Jeynes, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2000; Smith, 2003).

Secondary School Environments

In the view of Ashton and Watson (1998), the American high school may have to answer for contributing to national moral decline due to a school landscape confused about value teaching. Their research presents the concept that traditional, authoritarian instilling of acceptable ideals and behavior has been increasingly replaced by a commitment to non-indoctrination, in order to respect the autonomy of the child and, as a result, education in values has suffered. They state that public secondary schools’ attempt to maintain “the moral values . . . essential for civilized life” (p. 184) in a climate of moral neutrality is unsuccessful because values are taught with no absolute moral authority but only cognitive understanding.

In American schools the values-education debate centers on how values are to be taught and not whether they should be. It attempts to substitute secular for religious value development. DiGiacomo (2000) says that adolescents’ “values and aspirations

are in the process of formation, and their capacity for commitment is just beginning to emerge” (p. 1). Heischman (1991) writes that “a substantial number of young people believe in God, yet morally stand on their own or see little connection between faith and character” (p. 110).

It is possible that students may have their faith disconnected from their character. Because of this, Catholic schools believe that:

Religious literacy must be a goal of high school theology programs. The obstacles to growth in faith for all young people . . . are not mainly intellectual . . . they come from a dominate culture that on many levels is hostile to genuine religious commitment, including Christian discipleship. The high school years are a good time to learn skills of conscience formation. These skills were easier for earlier generations to come by, before our society’s fragile moral consensus collapsed under the onslaught of relativism, pragmatism and an individualism that considers any moral criticism an intolerable assault on freedom. (DiGiacomo, 2000, p. 2)

Students feel that “the moral atmosphere in schools refers to the norms, values, and meaning systems which students of a school share” (Host, Burgman, Tavecchio, & Beem, 1998, p. 48). The consequence of this view is that when one wants to improve moral behavior, one has to improve the contextual moral atmosphere in which behavior occurs. However, controlling or even managing the hallway climate, or school atmosphere, is a struggle for public schools. They seek to design, around the students, a contextual moral atmosphere, but it seems to be an uphill battle. “The problems of crime

and disruption in our schools have their origin in a declining school culture . . . a low level of moral atmosphere” (p. 48).

The public school and the Christian school have both identified the problem: the contemporary culture engaging itself in the students' decision-making process and influencing societal outcomes and personal choices. “The use of nationwide data sets and meta-analysis . . . designed to give the reader as complete a picture as possible of the overall effects of religious schools and student religious commitment” (Jeynes, 2003, p. ix) yielded this opinion:

Between 1963 and 1980, the United States had its most substantial academic test score decline in history. Many social scientists have asserted that the timing of the decline was no accident. The Supreme Court removed prayer out of the schools in 1962 and 1963, divorce rates started to skyrocket in 1963 and topped out in 1980 and the use of illegal drugs showed essentially the same pattern as the divorce rate (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1992; U.S. Department of Justice, 1993). As a result of the academic and moral decline in the United States, issues like school choice, prayer in schools, and character education have become major topics of debate in educational forums. (p. 148)

Christian College Environments

The following is a summary of the Bible college environment: “In general, Bible colleges attempt to emphasize not only the development of the Christian person, but also heavily emphasize theology and biblical content, primarily to those who have aspirations for church-related ministry” (Good & Cartwright, cited in Nelson, 2000, p. 48). Trinity Baptist College fits this generalized description with its Biblical studies major and

concentrations in pastoral theology, missions, education, and office administration. The school is fundamental in its theology and doctrine. Theology can be a significant element in education and will impact behavior in particular directions. A set of values may translate into action rather than rhetoric when it has a theological impetus (Yancey, 2000). The fundamental persuasion can be summarized in this way:

Protestant fundamentalism is a religious ideology characterized by strict adherence to the tenets of Biblical authority. All Protestant fundamentalists can be categorized as evangelical Christians who are committed to the notion of spreading their gospel throughout the world. (Copeland, 1994, p. 6)

It would seem that the Bible college movement embraces a sense of purpose for discipling its students into value adherence, principled reasoning, moral fortitude, and doctrinal purity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to compare graduates from two different types of high schools (Christian and secular) within the population of incoming freshmen at Trinity Baptist College. The comparative information will focus on the students' positions of personal faith, moral values, and behaviors of religiosity.

Equipped with such data, the college can begin to formulate strategic goals for recruitment, mentorship programming, and provision of orientation/remediation seminars for students seeking spiritual growth in understanding of fundamental value positions.

Research Questions

This study will attempt to answer this question: Is there a difference between Christian high school and secular high school graduates regarding moral attitudes expressed as personal values, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity?

The null hypothesis for this research is: The freshman at Trinity Baptist College will evidence no statistical difference in their moral attitudes, expressed as personal values, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity, based on their school of graduation.

The alternative hypothesis for this research states: The students graduating from Christian high schools, when compared to graduates of secular high schools, will evidence a difference of moral attitudes in the direction of evangelical religiosity, expressed as personal values, faith positions, and religious behaviors.

Limitations

Two scales designed for specific populations are adapted for use with this college population. Revisions have been made with permission of the original authors. The scales are the Missionary Kids' Value Scales (MKVS) and the Christian Moral Values Scale (CMVS) published in *Measures of Religiosity* (Hill & Hood, 1999). Each has research limitations resulting from the selective intent of the instruments. Therefore, application to a population with a different composition must be approached with care. The researcher's selective reduction of the scales and revision of terminology to fit the evangelical, fundamental, college freshmen population sets narrow limits on the scope of the behaviors and values included in the assessment, thus limiting its application to a narrow Christian population.

Although the two instruments prior to revision demonstrated adequate reliability for research purposes, the adapted scale, Freshman Values Survey, must be regarded in a cautionary fashion until a research history is developed. The ratings of the two original instruments' validity and reliability may not be applicable to the new scale. The Freshman Values Survey results must therefore be regarded with caution and viewed as relevant to only the freshmen population included in the survey.

Additionally, as a survey, this research cannot identify any cause and effect relationships. As results are considered, it should be remembered that the data is self-reported and dependent on student accuracy.

Finally, this study uses a convenience sample from the narrow population of Trinity Baptist College which has sample bias; therefore, care must be used in generalizing the results to any less defined or broader population or to a freshman population of another Bible college.

Definitions

Culture. Culture in the context of this research refers to all human behavior and institutions, including popular entertainment, art, religion, education, scholarship, economic activity, science, technology, law, and morality (Bork, 1996, p. 2).

Faith development. Faith is different from belief as “faith involves an alignment of the heart or will, a commitment of loyalty and trust” (Fowler, 1981, p. 11). Faith development as used in this study is the parallel growth in understanding God, which involves one's “will, ” and loving God, which involves one's “heart.”

Faith position. A faith position relates to the location where one focuses one's heart. A faith position or spiritual focus point is not a personal choice, but rather an

understanding based on an absolute moral authority which, according to Trinity Baptist College, is “the Bible as God's unique . . . preserved revelation to man; the Christian's standard for faith and life” (Trinity Baptist College, 2005, p. 18). A faith position has theological implications and establishes a hermeneutical position on such topics as marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

Fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is “a Biblical, theological position” or “an organized movement” (Dollar, 1973, p. vii). In this study its predominant referent is to the movement. As a movement, it is one that “is armed and active in the defense of Scriptural Truth” (p. vii).

Moral cognitive development. Moral cognitive development is a theoretical psychological research model proposed by Piaget (1965) and later extended by Kohlberg and others. It states that one’s moral reasoning predicts one’s moral behavior. The emphasis is always on moral reasoning, although other models addressing moral development may emphasize “self-regulatory mechanisms” (Aquino & Reed, 2002, p. 1423).

Moral identity. “Moral identity can be a basis for social identification A person’s moral identity may be associated with certain beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors” (Aquino & Reed, 2002, p. 1423). For this study, its predominant arena of reference is in addressing and adopting basic Biblical positions which give a value presence based on making decisions with principles or codes.

Personal value(s). “Values are expressed as attitudes and beliefs” (Mellor & Andre, 1980, p. 129). This study reviews values that are expressed as student attitudes and beliefs.

Religiosity. Religiosity reflects “the relationship between religion and concepts that are closely related such as ‘Spirituality’” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 5). It is a reference to “religious phenomena” (p. 5), “religious belief and practice” (p. 9), and, as used in this study, has a “Christian religious bias” (p. 4).

Spiritual self-identity. This term indicates that there is a spiritual centrality to the concept of self-identity. This model “posits that there are multiple variables constituting one's self conception” (Pedersen et al., 2000, p. 139), some of which are more central to one's spiritual identity than others.

Importance of the Study

The importance of this research centers on the possibility that it will initiate a consistent program of freshman value and faith position assessment. The conclusions from the data will equip the institution to apply strategically the results to student management and planning. Secondary importance may be in the Christian secondary school community as they seek to influence spiritual values. The private Christian school may review the data to determine if there are potential strengths or weaknesses in their programs. Additionally, the college may be able to encourage other schools of like practice to initiate diagnostic screening for religiosity.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Moral Environments

Sociocultural influences within the prevailing culture impact the personal values as well as the behaviors and thinking of students during their mid- to late teens. Mid-adolescents begin thinking about and exploring value issues and “abstract social virtues, such as being a good citizen and respecting authority” (Morris & Maisto, 1999, p. 401). Converting abstract social virtues into behavior becomes a function, for many youth, of the powerful influence of peer group affiliation. This influence begins to press the adolescent to mix his social values with the social order of the larger society. In this context, a youth may develop moral values that reflect the culture rather than adhering to a moral authority constant.

Research studies have been sought which evaluate the impact on the behavior and thinking of the adolescent in the environment, as loosely defined as cultural and social influences, and as well-defined as educational, religious, and family structures. Works have been drawn from the psychology of religion, social psychology, cognitive psychology, counseling literature, contemporary history, and educational research. These varied frameworks of influence and their impact on the mid- to late adolescent student, who may move into religious ministry training, is the broad focus of the review of literature.

Moral Environments and Ministry Training

Bible college education and training of youth for professional Christian ministry is founded on a purpose which rests on a moral constant—the Bible (Clark et al., 1991). However, many of the adolescent candidates enrolling in such an education have been

grounded in idiocentric, self-serving values which are present in the prevailing society and culture (Morris & Maisto, 1999).

Contextually and foundationally, students involved in ministry training must confront a sociocultural schism. This secular-sacred divide (al-Hibri, Elshtain, & Haynes, 2001) separates service-oriented Christian values from the self-serving values and narcissistic attitudes which tend to be defined by behavioral norms (Morris & Maisto, 1999; Norman et al., 1998). Philosophically, narcissism challenges the underpinning of moral authority through a shift away from extrinsic authoritative sources of values to personally defined values.

This cultural divide may exercise some influence on students who are training for Christian ministry as they live and work with both sets of values. Meeting the challenge of effective training of collegians for Christian ministry, in spite of currents of social influence, requires the institutional convergence of at least four diverse elements: (1) a body of theological truth and dogma (Clark et al., 1991), (2) cognitive and affective components of learning in the academic disciplines (Weimer & Neff, 1990), (3) the opportunity to develop personal faith (Fowler, 1995), and (4) an inclination for religious commitment and service in the student (Jeynes, 2003).

Ministry training is able to orchestrate control over the first three elements, (theology, academics, and faith development through practicum activity), and yet it needs the ability to interact successfully with the fourth—the student's commitment for service. This personal commitment can be a reflection of moral choices and decisions developed in the broader community.

Of the four elements, the development of commitment to service stands as the most visible behavioral evidence of success in the training of Bible college students. The element of service, energized by faith development in the individual, may be generalized as a vision of serving the community through church or para-church activities. A broad application of faith-energized service allows the interaction of secular and sacred, sociocultural and religious in candidate training. Fowler (1995) observes that specific commitments are necessary in the development of faith in the individual. Fowler endorses Santayana's saying that "no person can be religious in general" (cited in Fowler, p. 292) and writes that "the way toward religious truth—and toward universalizing faith— leads through the particular memories, stories, images, ethical teachings, and rituals of determinate religious traditions" (p. 292).

The Bible college has an essential niche in the higher education of future religious leaders in a society of encroaching secularization. It must enlist them as adherents to the supernatural and then inculcate its unique Biblical value set into their hearts and minds. This value building and reinforcing is seen as vital to the perpetuation of western Christian culture (Lawrence, 1989).

According to Ashton and Watson (1998),

There is increasing awareness today of the need for education in those values which undergird civilized society. The twentieth century has seen, and is still seeing, devastating examples of an elemental failure to respect such values. ... Even those who regard education chiefly in utilitarian or pragmatic ways nevertheless may concede, therefore, that schools should bear some responsibility for developing moral sensitivity and commitment in the young. (p. 183)

In the Bible college environment, the freshman class is the fallow ground for value education, moral and ethical training, and theological training. However, prior to embarking on Bible college training, American teens are typically not being reared in environments which cultivate lives of service and religious faith, identified by al-Hibri et al. (2001) as a value which guides moral and ethical choices. Without training in Christian standards and commitments, there may be reason for concern about the strength of the moral values of students seeking ministry training. A Bible college Dean of Students lamented that incoming freshmen, despite their understanding of and agreement with the college's published values and doctrines, still display behavior that evidences a schism between expectation and practice (M. Grover, personal communication, March 8, 2004).

Moral Environments and Secular Schools

A discussion of moral environments must also include consideration of the role of secondary schools. The moral environment in American high schools indicates increasing adolescent narcissism and gives a glimpse of a landscape fraught with value struggles. Ashton and Watson (1998) report on the trend toward replacement of school-based authority with student-based self-determination and autonomy:

As traditional authoritarian instilling of acceptable ideals and behavior has been increasingly replaced by a commitment to non-indoctrination in order to respect the autonomy of the child, education in values has suffered. It has been presumed that values are basically of an arbitrary nature, such that their attempted imposition on immature minds and hearts constitutes an inadmissible practice—a violation of the democratic rights of the child. (p. 183)

Six years earlier, Kilpatrick (1992) voiced concern about the loss in an adolescent of traditional moral understanding. While Ashton and Watson (1998) studied the shift away from moral authority teaching, Kilpatrick researched the behaviors resulting from a school environment of non-indoctrination. He detailed the behaviors of rising teen suicide rates, an aggressive increase in numbers of public school assaults, and increasing teen pregnancy rates. He stated, “These behaviors are troubling enough, but just as worrisome are the attitudes that accompany them. Many youngsters have a difficult time seeing any moral dimension to their actions: getting drunk and having sex are just things to do” (p. 14).

A Bible college defines moral and ethical behavior in both simple and controversial issues and will use voluntary agreement to gain student compliance. Ashton and Watson (1998) remind us that public secondary schools often operate very differently. By policy, many public schools attempt to maintain positions of limited authority and moral neutrality which is based on reason and rationality. They note it is not the mundane moral positions and behaviors which are rationalized away to achieve a posture of institutional neutrality. “The moral values we are talking about, as essential for civilized life, are not mundane but are highly controversial” (Ashton & Watson, 1998, p. 184).

Based on separation of church and state, secondary schools in America for many years have sought to lift highly controversial value issues, which could be construed as religious in foundation, from the educational setting. The debate addresses the methods for teaching values with a secular moral model. Reframing the methods of teaching values substitutes processes that are palatable to a secular court for religious value

development. Judicially approved methods of character education and moral cognitive development have experienced wide application in public schools.

Character education, while not without controversy, “has become what is perhaps the fastest growing educational movement on the country today. It reminds us that we shouldn't wait for kids to do something wrong before teaching them what's right” (Murphy, 1998, p. xiv). “Moral educators and psychologists have called for an emphasis on character in programs of value education [through] a more extensive role for schools in the teaching of societal values” (Prencipe & Helwig, 2002, p. 840). A contrasting view labels character education as an ineffective “bag of virtues approach' to morality” (Prencipe & Helwig, 2002, p. 841).

Moral cognitive development with wide application in public schools has proponents which have “argued that moral education should take the form of simulation reasoning based on universal moral values” (Prencipe & Helwig, 2002, p. 841). Norman et al. (1998) suggest that Kohlberg's developmental stages may be used in schools to support a values delivery system without religious overtones. They address the issue of religious belief and its influence on moral cognitive reasoning. They further observe that public school value education has an international comparison. The study relates that the judicially mandated insulation from Judeo-Christian values in curricular and pedagogical methods is an American educational innovation. “In many countries, public, government-supported schools play an active part in moral and often religious instruction” (Norman et al., 1998, p. 90).

In summary, these studies indicate that the public sector understands the need for moral instruction and acknowledges that by the nature of social environmental influences

moral beliefs are transmitted to youth. The adolescents graduating from secular schools have been influenced by cognitive instruction, socially transmitted moral beliefs, character education, and family value patterns. With this wide range of influences, it is suggested that educational re-framers have not attained court mandated value neutrality.

Moral Environments and Evangelical Schools

The private sector, however, capitalizes on value teaching. The evangelical Christian school stresses moral development through its unified belief system. Norman et al. (1998) said,

Christian educators would argue . . . that, unlike their public school counterparts, children at these [evangelical] schools are surrounded by a relatively consistent moral atmosphere from which to gather support. . . . [T]he private evangelical Christian school, has arisen for the expressed purpose of providing moral education. . . . This educational movement finds little difficulty in focusing its energy on fully developing the moral and spiritual natures of its students. (p. 91)

The necessity of the evangelical Christian school, which focuses on developing morality and spirituality in its students, may be supported by a study by Donahue and Benson (1995) who reviewed research on the general well-being of adolescents. They discovered a minimal correlation in the range of .15 to .25 between the importance of religion and caring behaviors. They also discovered a weak correlation in the range of .25 to .33 between pro-social (community service and volunteering) behaviors and religiousness. However, there is very little linkage in the teen population between caring behavior and the importance of religion. It can be noted that there seems to be very little pressure from religious sources influencing adolescents to demonstrate social caring. The

counterpoint to this dearth of religious influence of teen values may well be the value-rich environment in the evangelical Christian school where religion is very important. In the Christian school movement, there is purposeful intent to build a wide range of morally pro-social values leading to the demonstration of caring behaviors (Peshkin, 1986).

Some incoming freshmen have been educated in value-rich evangelical school environments and others in value-neutral public school environments. A common denominator between the groups, however, is that nearly all students raised in America have been exposed to, and ostensibly influenced by, the broader culture. Cultural influence is pervasive and inescapable; “culture, as used here, refers to all human behavior and institutions, including popular entertainment, art, religion, education, scholarship, economic activity, science, technology, law, and morality” (Bork, 1996, p. 2). Considering the cultural impact of secularism on teens, a final thought from Norman et al. (1998) has significance: “With few exceptions, public school students could easily find their counterparts roaming the hallways of a Christian school” (p. 91). This is because the broad sweep of American culture influences the adolescent, and it seems to have a secular influence in their moral foundations.

Theories of Moral Education

Mark Tappan (1998) in a paper on moral education provides a sketch of contemporary life which serves to give context to his study. For the purpose of introducing moral education theory, his picture of the prevailing moral climate reinforces the practical intersection between theory and daily events.

Moral problems and dilemmas, questions about ethics and character and concerns about conflicting values and their effect on individual action are central aspects of contemporary life. Moral and ethical issues have always been at the core of human experience, but escalating problems ranging from dishonesty and greed to violent crime and the pervasiveness of physical and sexual abuse, to concerns about international relations and protecting the natural environment have made such issues even more pressing and prevalent in recent years. Hand-in-hand with these concerns, moreover, has come a growing sense that we are living in a time of profound moral crisis, chaos and confusion (Tappan, 1998, p. 141).

Public school graduates in this contemporary setting have been influenced for years in schools striving for moral neutrality. These schools are of special importance because “the problems of crime and disruption in our schools have their origin in a declining school culture or more specifically, in a low level of moral atmosphere” (Host et al., 1998, p. 48). Additionally, Kilpatrick (1992), states that “more attention and research have been devoted to moral education in recent years than at any time in our history. Unfortunately, these attempts at moral education have been a resounding failure” (p. 15). However, some research studies see limited success in public school moral education, so it may be wise to sketch an overview of the literature which addresses the attempt to build moral foundations in adolescents.

Piaget (1965) addressed the analysis of moral judgment, “not moral behavior or sentiment” (p. 9). Thus began, according to Kohlberg and Hersh (2001), the refinement of Piaget's definition of moral judgment into the cognitive learning tradition. Kohlberg's work has intended “the term moral to be in the restricted sense of referring to situations

which call for judgments involving deontological concepts such as right and wrong, duty and obligation, having a right, fairness, etc.” (p. 58). This has concentrated moral attention on the “aspects of morality that is brought to the fore by problematic situations” (p. 58). This thinking gave rise to the concept of clarifying values in the schools through analysis of straightforward artificial problematic situations (Kilpatrick, 1992). Rest et al. (2000) suggest moral development with softer borders and more flexibility than the Kohlberg model. These authors and others have proposed theoretical models for understanding and influencing moral development with cognitive tools.

Character education theoretical models have been proposed by Murphy (1998), Prencipe and Helwig (2002), and Kilpatrick (1992) who states unequivocally that “there is an approach to developing character that does work. . . . [It] is called character education. [Character education theory] is based on the idea that there are traits of character children ought to know; that they learn these by example” (p. 15). Others have suggested multidimensional and socio-cognitive theoretical models (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Langford & Lovegrove, 1994; and Pedersen et al., 2000).

Rokeach (1969), regarding the why and how of one's moral behavior, notes in his preface that “beliefs, attitudes and values are all organized together to form a functionally integrated cognitive system, so that a change in any part of the system will affect other parts, and will culminate in behavioral change” (p. ix). He sought to define three elements through careful research because as he states, “We are still a long way from understanding the theoretical relationship between attitudes and behavior, between attitude change and behavioral change, and we have not yet learned how to predict accurately one from the other” (p. x). Beyond his suppositions that cognition was a

foundational element of belief, attitude, and value development, he also acknowledged that social factors impacted behaviors in ways that were beyond determining (Rokeach, 1969). This strong interest in the value foundations of human nature from varied perspectives is not only historical but supported by contemporary and continuing research.

Cognitive-Developmental Theory

Cognition is reflective of one's thinking processes. Moral development is often reflective of one's religiosity. The theoretical work on moral cognitive development seeks to parse out cognition's role from religion's role in developing moral behaviors.

In their research on cognition, self-identity, and religiosity among adolescents, Pedersen et al. (2000) evaluate thinking and reasoning as valid concepts. They suggest that cognition supports religious activity to a point and then declines in importance as one deepens in spiritual self-identity.

Cognitive development reflects the person's involvement in thinking about religious issues. And the cognitive component refers to doing or intending to do something about one's religious feelings and beliefs. . . . The relative importance of cognitive involvement in religious matters or issues declines with greater spiritual self-identity . . . spiritual self-identity has its roots in the deeper soil of religious feeling and integrated behavior. (p. 140, 147)

However, much of the research on cognition and moral behavior has been conducted outside the realm of religious interest. According to Singer (1999), "The literature on adolescents' moral judgments has been dominated by research with a cognitive developmental perspective" (p. 155), and White (2000) notes that the

domination from Lawrence Kohlberg's traditional cognitive-structuralist approach “has contributed much to an understanding of the development of moral judgment” (p. 75).

Several studies reveal that the theme of cognitive development and moral reasoning in adolescence as drawn from Kohlberg's dominant ideas has influenced and helped to implement the value-neutral, morally-free public school concept (Gump, Baker, & Roll, 2000; Langford & Lovegrove, 1994; Rest et al., 2000; Singer, 1999; and Tappan, 1998). Moral education historian William Kilpatrick (1992) calls moral cognition pedagogy the “decision making model” (p. 15). Rest et al. remind us that Lawrence Kohlberg was a model of openness to new ideas and possibilities. He formulated his theory of cognitive-moral development, incorporating Piaget’s moral judgment and Rawls' moral philosophy, and addressing a perspective on the moral themes of the 1960’s and 1970’s as represented by the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, and the Watergate Scandal.

Rising from Kohlberg’s foundational work, Singer (1999) identifies two core beliefs of the cognitive developmental approach: “moral judgments are primarily functions of intellect and cognition” and “the ultimate principle of morality is justice” (p. 155). These two foundational beliefs find opportunity for exercise in school environments. If moral judgment is a function of intellect and cognition, then the school is an ideal setting for moral development because it expands and refines the intellect, while its strength is in the learning process. A proper implementation of this educational theory should be rational, moral decision-making from students, with the principle of justice as an end result of the development and exercise of the skills of moral reasoning.

The actual development of moral reasoning through cognitive means, as summarized by Nelson (2000), follows a pattern.

The pattern views the growth of effective reasoning about moral issues as proceeding through three levels, each with two stages. The first two stages (Level I) are considered Pre-conventional, where persons interpret right and wrong in terms of the egocentric consequences of the action. Stages 3 and 4 (Level II) are labeled Conventional, where the person focuses on maintaining the expectations of significant individuals and upholding conformity to the social order. Level III or Post-conventional reasoning includes stages 5 and 6, where morality is defined apart from authority, is more internally-based, and revolves around moral principles. (p. 26)

It is the intent of moral cognition that students should learn to exercise value-laden decision making evidencing sound moral judgment. This is the developmental period when a student should subscribe to shared norms and values (*i.e.*, seeing the opinions of others as crucial and exercising societal obedience) (Gump et al., 2000; Nelson, 2000). “This adolescent respects social order for its own sake and will behave well out of a sense of duty” (Parr & Ostrovsky, 1991, p. 15).

Adolescents may achieve the maturity of post-conventional reasoning. Parr and Ostrovsky (1991) do not assign an age range to this level but regard it as stage 5 adult function, which demonstrates understanding of and agreement with the societal process and positions. At stage 6 the student typically would be guided by universal considerations of justice and equality and obey societal norms. Stage 6 is the time when moral decisions turn away from individualism and focus on societal needs. It is here that

the Kohlbergian view of morality finds intrinsic motivation (Gump et al., 2000; Nelson, 2000).

Kilpatrick (1992) identifies the Kohlbergian cognitive approach as “decision making or moral reasoning or the dilemma method or Values Clarification” (p. 15). He reviews its theoretical intent and practical weaknesses and states, “The shift from character education to the decision-making model was begun with the best of intention. Proponents claimed that a young person would be more committed to self-discovered values than to ones that were simply handed down by adults” (p. 16). The thought has merit, but the application according to Kilpatrick, struggles to achieve practical utility.

The adolescent may be able to mirror intrinsically motivated (post-conventional) behaviors for authoritative (conventional) reasons; however, the successful and morally mature adolescent must make operational value decisions at the post-conventional level “where morality is defined apart from authority, is more internally-based, and revolves around moral principles” (Nelson, 2000, p. 26).

Family-Systems Theory

The family-systems approach to moral education and formation has been researched by White (2000). He feels that:

Kohlberg's traditional cognitive-structuralist approach has contributed much to an understanding of the development of moral judgment. However, his conceptual emphasis on the form of moral judgment and the role of cognitive maturity . . . has led researchers to neglect the relationship between family socialization processes and the content of moral thought. (p. 75)

White's research takes the approach that the content of adolescent moral thought is associated with family processes. This is in contrast to the Kohlbergian theory that moral thought is dependent on age and maturation. "The argument in the present study is that moral development is not simply age dependent; rather, moral development is family-system dependent" (White, 2000, p. 77). The family system approach will find agreement in the evangelical secondary school where administrators find many students, according to the research of Alan Peshkin (1986), that are raised in families that are connected, cohesive, and demonstrate socialization processes conducive to the content of moral thought. Reinforcing Peshkin's findings about student family environments is the research of White (1996) whose first hypothesis is: "Adolescents who perceive their family systems as very connected attribute greater influence to family sources of moral authority than do adolescents who perceive their family systems as less connected" (p. 78).

White (1996) drew the sample population primarily from Australian adolescents (14 to 19 years old) and their parents. The data was collected using the Revised Moral Authority Scale. In the discussion it is noted:

Adolescents who perceive their family systems as very connected attribute greater influence to the family as the source of moral authority. Additionally family cohesion and its associated processes (e.g., emotional warmth) have long been believed to play pivotal roles in the development of moral judgment. (p. 87)

Following White's reasoning, adolescents that have been raised in connected families could be expected to have a base for making moral decisions based more on affect and transmission of family values than Kohlbergian rationality.

Social Learning Theory

Social psychology contributes to moral and value development. The link between the contributions of social theory and the process of cognitive theory is approached by Norman et al. (1998), taking a broad and relevant view of moral formation.

Unlike moral stages, moral beliefs are acquired through social transmission.

When confronted with problems requiring moral thought, children and adults call upon learned beliefs to frame solutions. Sources of moral beliefs include parents, peers, and social institutions. One institution in particular where children gain moral knowledge is the school, the focus of our study. (p. 90)

This study assesses public school and evangelical private school students in regard to their moral development. It addresses Kohlberg's distinction between moral structure “distinct ways of thinking about right and wrong” and moral content “manifestations of underlying core beliefs” through which people may learn successful behaviors through reasoning as they reorganize their “distinct ways of thinking about right and wrong” (Norman et al, 1998, p. 90). Norman et al. suggest that although one may understand how to resolve a moral dilemma, this is very different from embracing and using and being taught a belief system learned through social transmission.

In summary, Norman et al. (1998) provided the following cogent statement:

We assert that it is not enough to develop the ability to reason morally. A person may be high in moral reasoning but low in personal conviction based on moral knowledge. Content, fundamental moral material, must be provided so that a person will know that the decision she is making is a moral one, that she is, at that moment, acting as a moral agent. Thus, a moral curriculum that combines content

and process may lead to the formation of personal conviction, a sense of moral responsibility. (p. 96)

This research also suggests that Kohlberg's moral reasoning about right and wrong is self-serving and will at times be in conflict with the evangelical core beliefs which are other-serving. This difference will influence how students relate to situations involving moral dilemmas. "Thus content, in this case one's religious beliefs, would influence structure, one's stage of moral reasoning" (Norman et al., 1998, p. 91).

Norman et al. (1998) interviewed two sample groups, comprising two grade levels—fourth and eighth—from a public school and a private evangelical school. Overall they discovered that 82% of the private school students used religious references in their interviews, while only 8% of the public school students did so. If only the eighth grade was considered, the distinction was 88% vs. 3% (p. 95). Regarding making decisions about moral dilemmas by using belief systems (content) over reasoning (structure), the fourth graders showed a statistically significant difference in each of three dilemmas, while the eighth graders showed a difference in two of three dilemmas (p. 94). Content, one's core belief system, emerged as a factor of influence in a school setting. The differences are noticeable from these sample groups at the elementary and middle school level and may suggest less core value (content) decision influence with older students.

Unfortunately there is a dearth of research information on the social and cognate transmission of moral values at the secondary level; one cannot make definitive statements or inferences at the secondary level, yet the foregoing research with fourth and eighth graders may even have some relevance to college freshmen if the social and

cultural factors that are impacting early adolescent students have a similar impact on the late adolescent (Ashton & Watson, 1998; Kilpatrick, 1992). Additionally, this research is worthy of consideration as one addresses moral formation from an institutional perspective.

Horell (1999) referred to moral formation and critical thinking from a ministry and educational perspective.

From a religious educator's perspective, moral formation is fostered when people are provided with opportunities to further develop their abilities to reflect critically on moral issues . . . to determine what ought, ideally, to be done in morally troublesome situations. Yet, this is never sufficient. Moral education must also provide people with opportunities to develop moral decision making abilities that can carry them from reflection to discernment of what is feasible or can be achieved within the concrete conditions of a specific situation. (p. 59)

Horell (1999) notes that one must develop discernment of what is feasible in specific situations thereby addressing how structure guides decisions, how content guides one's belief system, and how an individual reasons from belief to practice.

Religious Motivation Theory

Intrinsic/extrinsic religious motivation theory has been researched by Gorsuch (1994) and others with enough variety and volume to provide a body of material that is relevant to student values and behaviors. "An 'intrinsic' religious behavior is one that is internalized and so done for its own sake (Batson, 1976); 'extrinsic' religiousness is to achieve some other goal" (p. 315). Gorsuch addresses the intrinsicness of religious motivation as a theory. He writes, "Conceptualizing intrinsicness as motivation provides

a set of theories for examining both how intrinsic religiousness affect and value develop and how they affect religious and nonreligious behavior” (p. 315).

Allport also foundationally influenced the study of religious motivation. “Allport conceptualized the underlying motivation for religiousness in terms of a differentiation between intrinsic (I) and extrinsic (E) religiousness” (Schaefer & Gorsuch, 1991, p. 448). His concept of intrinsic and extrinsic religion is measured in a questionnaire called the Religious Orientation Scale which has found wide acceptance.

Batson (1993) studied Allport and based his work of developing empirical measures of personal religion on the “understanding of Allport's extrinsic-intrinsic distinction” (p. 168). Batson developed empirical scales to measure three more dimensions. The means dimension extended extrinsicness as a research element, the end dimension extended intrinsicness as a research element, and the quest dimension was a new element in religion studies (p. 169). The quest dimension is “the degree to which an individual's religion involves an open-ended responsive dialog with existential questions raised by the contradictions and tragedies of life” (p. 169).

This research is relevant in view of the need to identify value differences within and between adolescent groups. Pedersen et al. (2000), in their work on self-identity, define these two concepts very succinctly. “Intrinsic religiosity was characterized as living one’s religion. Extrinsic religiosity was identified as using one’s religion for other purposes. The difference between the two orientations involved the degree to which religion had been internalized by a person” (p. 140). It is conceivable that the value-laden environment of the Christian school identified by Peshkin (1986) is able to reinforce the dimensions and distinctions of religious motivation.

The values that one holds deeply are considered core values. These values motivate one to behave in ways that are consistent with beliefs and display moral clarity. School culture seems to have the potential to be a factor in expanding or limiting motivation in moral education. Public and private schools may truncate their opportunity for developing intrinsic motivation if they do not encourage a positive school atmosphere because they do not promote identified core values through the curricular and extra-curricular elements of the school. A lack of attention to teaching methods, and value elements in curriculum may weaken opportunities for effective moral education through what Kohlberg and Hersh (2001) referred to as “a moral education curriculum which has lurked beneath the surface in schools, hidden as it were from both educators and the public” (p. 54).

Contemporary Culture and Values

Research literature addressing the contemporary American culture is worthy of review because of its potential impact on personal value development. Usable values are drawn from selected sources of moral authority and have influence on the choices of our lives, such as the decisions we make and the behavior we exhibit (Cairns, Gardner, & Lawton, 2000; McDowell & Hostetler, 1998; Tappan, 1998). Decision making, experimentation, and analysis are formative during adolescent years and youth are sensitive to changes in their social environment (Piaget, 1965). According to White's (1996) research on family processes, “the different sources of moral authority to which an adolescent ascribes may be characterized by the adjustment and change of the adolescent's values in relation to society” (p. 134).

Value Sources and Moral Authority

Sources of moral guidance in a teen's life may be characterized by occasional or incremental change due to multiple sources of moral authority. Cairns et al. (2000), writing about research on educational frameworks, share a concern about the changing nature of cultural influence and its impact on belief systems.

The closing decades of the twentieth century brought to bear on the adolescent significant changes in thinking about the nature of the societies in which we live, and a radical movement away from the certainties of life which provided stability and reassurance for earlier generations of both adults and young people. It is suggested that confidence in belief systems is disappearing due to the spread of social uncertainty (Cairns et al., 2000). Belief systems provide moral authority to develop and undergird values; therefore, the impact on moral development in adolescents may be strong when life is uncertain (Ashton & Watson, 1998; Kilpatrick, 1992; White, 1996). As Christian belief systems weaken their hold on social change, it has been suggested that many adolescents are influenced by a humanistic system of values and morals that are alien to religious beliefs. The incremental adoption of alien belief systems may be an indicator of a secular, non-religious, belief system that builds confidence in youth to replace uncertainty.

According to Smith (2003), belief systems are the result of religious training which promotes values in society. Training in value sources, founded on religious tenets, is characterized as positive or pro-social in its influence on adolescents. Pro-social behaviors may be labeled as traditional and puritanical if they are religiously fundamental in nature. The same logic may be applied to thinking about the broad-based public school

system that is required to exercise a secular belief system of training in value-neutral cognitive morality. Training in value sources, founded on reasoning, cognitive morals and value-neutrality which is an educational and social imperative has been characterized as individualism (Tamney et al., 1992), relativism, and narcissistic self-gratification (Smith, 2003). The difference in belief systems may best be seen in the values embraced and the behaviors exhibited by the recipients.

Christian belief is a source of moral authority which draws core values from the Bible. It has been, in American culture, one of the “all pervasive belief systems” (Cairns et al., 2000, p. 3) that has historically exercised an interdicting role in tempering the secular trends in society by promoting an informal value management through its members. Fundamental institutions tend to evaluate their members’ religiosity in relation to the ideology and standards they embrace (Ammerman, 1987; Lawrence, 1989). When students enroll in a Bible college, after completing their education in a secular high school, they may be slow to adjust to the value based behavioral standards so common to the institution but uncommon to society.

If belief systems are weakening and moral authority sources are undergoing a challenge, there will be researchers evaluating the impact. Smith (2003) suggests that cultural values and moral decisions have adopted a normative response in decision making. What is characterized as appropriate is dependent on “larger moral frameworks defining what constitutes the good, the right, and the true in human life more generally” (p. 18). When “larger moral frameworks” are able to define what constitutes appropriateness in life for youth, one’s adolescent values become a picture of culturally normed morals. These youth, according to Smith, learn to accept and negotiate varied

values as dynamic working attitudes that are changeable. He further suggests that “American youth (as do all modern people) therefore, find themselves living within and between multiple moral orders among which they have to negotiate, balance, compromise, and choose” (Smith, 2003, p. 21).

Tamney et al. (1992) argue that contemporary societies are shaped by cultural conflict, shaping in which “values are of primary importance” (p. 32). This cultural conflict manifests itself in many issues; one such high profile example is the debate between pro-life and pro-choice. One value pole in this debate is secularism, defined as individualism. This value position defends the pro-choice position based on Justice Harry Blackmun's statement in a Supreme Court decision: “The constitution embodies a promise that a certain private sphere of individual liberty will be kept largely beyond the reach of government” (Tamney et al., 1992, p. 33). The other value position is Christian dogma, defined as the “Judeo-Christian culture . . . [which places] limits on individual freedom . . . and has therefore tended to oppose human tampering with the natural processes. From this Christian tradition has emerged the idea of the sacredness of human life” (p. 33).

Placing these conflicting values systems in the context of training and influencing adolescents allows insight on the vulnerability of youth. When values are defined normatively through cultural acceptance (Smith, 2003), the rational argument promoting abortion in cases of incest or birth defect may lead an adolescent to give agreement to pro-choice. This is a rationally structured value choice that is influenced toward individualism. If the youth, however, are aware of the theological argument for all life beginning at conception (Ryrie, 1999), then the traditionalist conservative position may

prevail. Tamney et al. (1992) report that it is suggested that values structured through theological training are able to achieve a conservative impact on value decisions.

Paloutzian and Kirkpatrick (1995) also address the conflict of belief systems and the vulnerability of adolescents as they write about religious influence on personal and societal well-being. They state:

The importance of religious belief and religious institutions on individual and social life is self-evident. . . . Religion is directly or indirectly related, in multiple ways, to a variety of important contemporary social issues. Many of these issues are timeless [such as] prejudice and discrimination. . . . [O]ther issues are particularly timely at this moment in U.S. and world history, [such as] AIDS. (p. 1, 3)

This social and cultural value debate has three arguments of force that send conflicting signals to the adolescent population. At the far right end of the value line is premarital sexual abstinence as a moral absolute (Manatt, 1995). At the center of the value line is the non-religious normative moral standards suggesting “ethical reasoning to guide students toward right decisions about sex” (Murphy, 1998, p. 76) which is a reasoned-management approach to sexual behaviors. At the far left, secular end of the value line is the secular individualist position researched by Watson et al. (1995), who identify relationships outside of marriage as “reasonable opportunities for personal growth” (p. 181). The adolescent today is faced with options rather than absolutes, and it seems evident that value positions and sources of moral authority are seldom neutral.

The adolescent population is being trained under some social educational model, and regardless of where along the line of values an issue is decided—right, center, or

left—the methods of training for making a decision through a belief system are important. The cultural mandate to train in values with a moral authority is confronted by Ashton and Watson (1998). Their research suggests that when inculcating values, “authoritarian methods of teaching may appear to achieve immediate objectives, but they face serious objections, especially regarding education in fundamental moral values” (p. 184). They provide four problems encountered with using authoritarian methods to transfer values to future generations: (a) They are inappropriate for a democracy; (b) Morals cannot be taught like rules because they are too profound; (c) Requiring moral behaviors compromises the use of thinking processes; and (d) “authoritarian regimes cannot be morally trusted as the source of values” (p. 184). Ashton and Watson suggest a training position that is compatible with the center of the value line embracing and endorsing normative values and reasoned behavior management practices. They make it clear, however, that “reason by itself is inadequate—it cannot adjudicate its starting points. Thus more is needed in the education of the emotions than simply applying reason. (p. 184)

Philosophical and Ethical Considerations

Behavior is rooted in philosophy. According to Fledderjohann (2000), “What a person thinks and believes determines the way that individual will act or behave” (p. 77). This opening statement is made in a journal article addressing moral issue differences between Christian school and public school graduates. He suggests a line of thought addressing intrinsic and extrinsic influences on moral choices and “the effect of a person’s values on his/her behavior or the relationship of a situation to a person’s behavior” (p. 78). It is research on such behavioral and value linkages that moves the

discussion from speculation to information and aids the administration of Christian education.

Philosophy and Behavioral Choice

Fledderjohann's (2000) research feeds empirical data into the philosophical discussion. His research addresses eleven wide-ranging moral issues that impact adolescent thinking—premarital sex, cheating, watching X-rated movies, pornography, stealing, homosexuality, abortion, illegal drugs, heavy petting, rock music, and alcohol. He also addressed four Christian living topics—Bible reading, prayer, evangelism, and church attendance.

Fledderjohann's (2000) research uses a Likert scale where 1 equals strongly disagree, and 4 equals strongly agree. Regarding premarital sex:

Christian school graduates had a mean of 1.066 and a standard deviation (SD) of .285, whereas the public school graduates had a mean of 1.147 and a SD of .428. Since the t-test value of 2.32 was greater than the critical value of 1.645 at the significance level of .05, the difference between the means was significant, indicating a statistical difference in how students value this issue. (p. 79)

Regarding abortion:

Christian school graduates had a mean of 1.088 and a SD of .316, whereas the public school graduates had a mean of 1.127 and a SD of .362. Since the t-test value of .78 was less than the critical value of 1.645 at the significance level of .05, the difference between the means was not significant, indicating that both groups strongly disagree with abortion. (p. 80)

Reviewing only two issues is not reflective of Fledderjohann's (2000) research; however, it calls attention to how the two school groups react to these two profiled issues. Of the eleven issues surveyed, premarital sex, stealing, homosexuality, and alcohol evidenced a statistical difference between the groups. Of the eight with no statistical difference, six of the issues seemed to find common ground in the value range of disagree. Two—movie watching and rock music—found their common ground in the neutral to positive range of value acceptance. In aggregate, “The research accepts the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the moral views of Christian school graduates and public school graduates” (Fledderjohann, 2000, p. 87-88). The morally undifferentiated graduates from these two types of schools may be seeking ministry training which will expect value differentiation.

Smith’s (2003), research on various moral orders that impact adolescents explains:

The moral order of mass consumer market capitalism and the advertising industry it deploys with great influence on American youth does little to promote self-control, moderation, the common good, sacrifice, honor for others, and other traditional religious virtues among youth. Rather, contemporary American capitalism and advertising tend to promote among youth a moral order whose “virtues” include self-gratification, self-assertion, competition, insecurity, conformity, perpetual experimentation, contempt for traditional authorities, the commodification of all value, and incessant material acquisition. (p. 21)

This is the expression of a “moral order antithetical to their religious moral order” (Smith, 2003, p. 21) where there is very little public square influence promoting

traditional religious values among youth, and there is secular social influence which supports a contempt for traditional authorities. Contempt for traditional authority is not system-specific but impacts public and private school systems, building adolescents in both systems with similar values. It is seen with clarity in declining respect for teachers, administrators, and peers. It may be suggested that contempt for traditional authority has brought the era of metal detectors and armed guards to the secondary school. Because some of these morally undifferentiated adolescents find their interests turning to religious service, the Bible college, which requires adherence to traditional authority, may find freshmen requiring longer adjustment periods with less success.

Smith (2003) suggests on a more positive plane that “American religions provide organizational contexts . . . in youth spiritual experiences that may help solidify their moral commitments and constructive life practices” (p. 21). He explains:

Moral directives are not simply imposed from the outside by traditions and organizations. Individuals do not simply conform their consciousness and actions . . . like chameleons changing color to match their environment. Rather, humans internalize moral directives and orders in their subjective mental worlds of identity, belief, loyalties, convictions, perceptions, interests, emotions, and desires. They also help to frame the issues and inform the motivations that shape outcomes in the lives of youth. (p. 21)

Considering this, an experientially supported religious moral order (*i.e.*, Christianity) impacting the attitudes and moral reasoning of adolescents should lead to support of traditional values.

Research seems to indicate that one's behavior is affected by environmental and ideological forces for good or for ill (Fledderjohann, 2000; Smith, 2003). These forces may also influence ethical understanding and reasoning, as well as subsequent decision making.

Ethics and Behavioral Choice

Decision making is a daily, consistent process which at times faces the young adult with an obstacle that requires an ethical choice, either through intrinsic moral principles or obedience to an external standard. Student behavior at the college level is probably somewhere between these two poles of internal self-control and external obedience. Dinger and Coupland (1999), writing about ethical decision making, suggest that decisions are often complicated by the intersection of extrinsic codes of ethics and intrinsic decision-making models. Their review does not accept the assumption that knowing rules will necessarily enlist ethical behavior. This is because of the nature of ethical dilemmas, defined by Kitchner as “a situation in which there are good reasons to different courses of action” (cited in Dinger & Coupland, p. 270). Ethical dilemmas presenting multiple courses of action may face a student with a perceived need to embrace behavior that is outside of both the institutional (school) policy and his personal moral codes. The institutional view of a good decision always sees it aligning with policy. Violation can bring institutional discipline. The personal view of a good decision can be much more challenging but ultimately should align with one’s institutional environment.

The Bible college movement relies on religiosity (religious behaviors) and traditional values in its students to enlist and reinforce appropriate behavior. Achieving

acceptable student behavior is the work and practice of the school, regardless of the grade level, and determining why particular methods work and students behave is the work of research.

Moral behavior research is replete with suggestions on why and how choices for courses of action are made. Rest et al. (2000) suggest that moral behavior has its origin in development and reasoning. Ortberg et al. (2001) suggest that moral behaviors issue from “belief about consequences” and “moral obligation” (p. 489). Others suggest that moral behavior choices are religious in nature and strongly influenced by religious coping mechanisms (Schaefer & Gorsuch, 1993; Maynard et al., 2001). Ashton and Watson (1998) note that moral behavior required by authority is inadequate and not a moral choice but an obedience choice. They suggest, however, displayed morality is the interweaving of wisdom with reason.

Wisdom may sound [like] an old-fashioned term but it is one which is impossible to replace. It signifies not just knowledge or skills, but the capacity to discern what is important and what is not. (Ashton & Watson, 1998, p. 184)

Yancey (2000), writing about moral societies and their behaviors, suggests that societies can only maintain a moral life with the aid of religion. Not all share that evaluation but certainly traditional religious institutions such as Christian schools and Bible colleges would concur. Willimon (2002) challenges that thought and speaks to the adolescent’s role in contemporary society by suggesting that people often find their moral authority in cultural norms. By this he suggests that “people don’t live by values. They live by examples, models, and mentors” (p. 30). Additionally, the view of moral choices and ethical behavior proffered by Dewey (1964) rejects values based on absolutes and

leans toward moral choices based on independent, stand-alone reasoning about behavior choices. Dewey states: “moral judgments are of such character that nothing can be systematically extracted from one of them [for] the formation of others” (p. 25). In practice Dewey's pragmatic philosophy theorized that every moral decision is a stand-alone effort of thoughtful consideration.

In this section on the sources and methods of ethical and behavioral choices, a concluding thought is offered regarding the source of moral dogma from a fundamental viewpoint. This thought is drawn from church historian George Dollar (1973). He states, “The Bible gives all moral judgment the foundation and platform of moral absolutes” (p. 283). Christian schools and Bible colleges typically establish their position regarding ethical decision making and behavioral choices on the side of Biblical absolutes. It is at this level of intention that they seek to influence and train the moral obligations and attitudes of students. As stated in the Ortberg et al. (2001) study, “Moral obligations are the degree to which the outcomes are perceived by the respondent to be fulfilling their “religious values” . . . hence religious values underlie moral obligations and are distinct from attitudes” (p. 489).

As observed in these summary paragraphs, moral development and the rationale for making ethical choices has wide berth intellectually and philosophically and is documented as such in the literature

Moral Development and Religiosity

Faith Development

Faith development, as noted in Fowler (1995), is a growth process that extends outside the borders of the home and family. It is experienced and identified in part as

moral codes that come to be understood in a social context. Referencing Fowler's book, *Stages of Faith*, early faith development seems to be referred to as stage 3.

In Stage 3, Synthetic-Conventional faith, a person's experience of the world now extends beyond the family. A number of spheres demand attention: family, school or work, peers, street society and media, and perhaps religion. Faith must provide a coherent orientation in the midst of that more complex and diverse range of involvement's. Faith must synthesize values and information: it must provide a basis for identity and outlook. Stage 3 typically has its rise and ascendancy in adolescence, but for many adults it becomes a permanent place of equilibrium. (p. 172)

The late adolescent/young adult training for Christian ministry must be challenged to move beyond this level. Synthetic-Conventional faith would seem to be an inadequate working platform for ministry to others. Transition is necessary, and Fowler (1995) relates transitional change factors as:

Experiences or perspectives that lead to critical reflection on how one's beliefs and values have formed and changed . . . Frequently the experience of "leaving home"—emotionally or physically, or both—precipitates the kind of examination of self, background, and life guiding values that gives rise to stage transition at this point. (p. 173)

To be successful in ministry, one must grow spiritually to a level where understood, acquired moral codes are internalized and personally practiced. This is the maturity level of one's Christian faith when commitment and self-sacrifice become a normative behavior rather than concepts to grapple with intellectually and emotionally.

Fowler's (1995) stages suggest this concept is embodied in stages 4 and 5. Stage 4 is when “the late adolescent or adult must begin to take seriously the burden of responsibility for his or her own commitments, lifestyle, beliefs, and attitudes” (p. 182). This is a maturity level, a faith development platform from which one can reach out to others and give. A further step of growth and spiritual nurture will be evidenced when one attains the next plateau, which Fowler sees as Stage 5. “Stage 5 knows the sacrament of defeat and the reality of irrevocable commitments and acts” (p. 198). The Stage 5 definition uses powerful wording which matches well the deep commitments that undergird a consistent walk in Christian principles, yielding the opportunity to minister broadly to others in diverse settings.

Training for professional ministry in diverse communities requires, in addition to developing one's faith, learning theology and having practicum professional training experiences. This is the interplay of sociocultural needs with one's personal faith. Fowler (1995) suggests that specific commitments are always a necessity for faith development and maturity.

Influence of Fundamentalism

Evangelical institutions in the Bible college movement carry a historical and current mission to lead students toward faith development through the tradition of fundamentalism (Dollar, 1973). Fundamentalism is a sub-group within American evangelicals (Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991) which shares a commitment to the authority of the Bible, traditional values, involvement in social issues, a distinctive world view, equity of opportunity for evangelism, and an abiding interest in missionary activity (al-Hibri et al., 2001; Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991). These traditions of evangelicalism seem to fit Fowler's

(1995) view of “rituals of determinate religious traditions” (p. 292). Beyond the common ground which identifies them in the evangelical sub-group, Kellstedt and Smidt (1991) aptly note that “all fundamentalists are evangelicals but not all evangelicals are fundamentalists” (p. 260). This becomes very clear when defining the fundamentalist Bible college which cultivates in its students, 1) an ecclesiology of non-denominationalism, 2) an eschatology of dispensationalism and premillennialism, 3) a political inclination toward conservatism, 4) a Biblical worldview as a creationist, 5) a sociocultural rhetoric of dissatisfaction with contemporary values, and 6) a cultural ideology benchmarked as anti-abortion (Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991; Manatt, 1995; Ryrie, 1999; Tamney et al., 1992).

These aforementioned positions are not theologically obtuse considerations to be relegated to homilies or history, but rather they are acute operational definitions, describing the points of religiously motivated activity in a fundamental lifestyle. These positions are antithetical to the prevailing secular culture as they have been to all secular societies; they are adopted and promoted within fundamental writings as the only cure for a society perceived as morally ill (Lawrence, 1989). These stakeholder attitudes are theological positions, and they demand separation from narcissistic thinking and behavior because “secularizing tendencies are always threats to the vitality, if not the survival, of religious organizations” (Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991, p. 261).

Bible colleges were spawned by religious groups seeking to develop the deep faith Fowler has identified. The Bible college building group, labeled as fundamentalists, is a sub-group within American evangelicals (Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991). This group is defined through doctrinal detail and social convictions (al-Hibri et

al., 2001; Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991; Manatt, 1995; Ryrice, 1999; Tamney et al., 1992).

The evidence that traditions contribute to the framework of religion underscores Fowler's (1995) view of one's growth into personal faith and rituals is by way of religious tradition. Religious groups or institutions may see their mission as guiding its membership, which may include growing a student body to mature faith development in specific traditions. Often, however, an institution typically is not able to control the multiplicity of social influences which impact the values of its members.

Secularism, evidenced as personally embraced values, may distance the Christian school and Bible college student from doctrinal and faith positions which will facilitate ministry through mature faith. Smith (2003) suggests that when a student does not evidence much difference between sacred and secular, his actions will tend to be secular. Secularism becomes a red flag of low commitment which is of concern to faculty and administration in the religious institution.

Value Education

Moral engagement is often a result of value development through educational opportunities. Christian schools promote opportunities for moral engagement through religious value training based on Biblical absolutes. Public schools seek to achieve value neutrality by promoting non-religious value training based on cognitive moral reasoning. Because of judicial mandates to maintain a constitutional separation of church and state, value training issues become controversial and this limits the willingness of public schools to function as a primary source for teaching moral authority and engaging students in dialog on value issues. Adolescents, however, are not educated or socialized into value neutrality. They adopt values that are related to

their circle of society and these values are changeable and dependent on various sources of moral authority to which they ascribe, according to White (1996).

Only schools attempt to be institutionally value neutral. Families, as socializing units, are not value neutral. “The family unit is endemic to society's functioning. The adolescent . . . is a product of the familial environment . . . [and] some family systems can foster the development of new attitudes concerning social and moral issues” (White, 1996, p. 133). Values positions themselves are not neutral, but rather they tend to be controversial and rise from sources of moral teaching about authority in such diverse institutions as the family, school, and church.

With the understanding that value positions are not neutral and family processes seem to play a role in value education and development, it would seem to be in the best interest of the Bible college to attempt to discover the family dynamics of incoming freshmen. Family dynamic has significance according to White (1996) because “adolescents encounter both their parents' perceptions and society's evaluation of moral issues which may feedback into their family system” (p. 134). White additionally notes that families as sources of moral authority in child rearing have had little research.

Most young children are dependent upon the moral standards of parents and other adults who provide guidance, direction, and control of their moral responses. Parents directly and indirectly influence the moral judgments of their children; through the process of family adaptability, cohesion, and communication, parents reveal to the adolescent the source of morality that they see as legitimate. (White, 1996, p. 140)

The process and importance of transmitting values and moral authority to youth has relevancy. “Many adults remember moral discussions and dialogue taking place at the dinner table. This type of context for dialogue is clearly missing from many young people’s lives today” (Heischman, 1991, p. 110). Heischman makes that interesting statement in the context of a broad study of five thousand children and adolescents in grades four through twelve (p. 109). Summary notes on value foundations in this same Girl Scout study indicate a theistic or religious belief can be a guiding influence for this group. Although the survey did not assess whether the family was the primary source of this moral authority for adolescents, it was implied.

Perhaps the most significant and distinctive feature of the Heischman Girl Scout survey is its notion of a moral compass—the moral assumptions that prompt people to choose and behave in certain ways. The survey shows that young people rely on these compasses and make constant use of them. Those who use a “theistic” compass, for instance, base moral decisions and perspectives on religious belief, scripture, the teaching of a religious group, or the prevailing norms of a believing community. Sixteen percent of those surveyed appeared to utilize a theistic compass. (Heischman, 1991, p. 109)

Heischman (1991) draws a conclusion from the survey indicating that the role of ministry to youth may need revisiting in light of how youth fail to connect the dots between their faith positions and their character. He notes that a substantial number of young people believe in God, yet morally stand on their own or see little connection between faith and character. Rather than accept this as part of an individualistic society

where secularism and the primacy of personal experience abound, we need to rethink our ministry to young people.

King, Furrow, and Roth (2002), in their research on family influence on religiousness, review the positive effects of religious influence.

Existing research suggests that religion has an important impact on adolescent development. The findings to date suggest that among adolescents, religion likely serves the dual role of promoting positive development as well as offering protection against risk behaviors. (p. 109)

Beyond socialization and protection, King et al. (2002) also suggest that religious socialization is primarily a family task. The family environment is not only a socializing center (King et al.), it also seems to be a source of moral authority (White, 1996; Ashton & Watson, 1998). In the context of the adolescent's developing values, family religious commitment and activity also seem to be a factor of influence (King et al., 2002; Heischman, 1991).

Holding hands with families and developing value-impacted children is the evangelistic mission of most private evangelical Christian schools (Peshkin, 1986). With a mission of providing moral education, academic quality, and role-model lifestyles, they may make an impact in some communities. Most evangelical schools have a unified belief system and are focused on fully developing the moral and spiritual natures of its students (Norman et al., 1998).

Religiosity in Adolescents

That adolescents are able to gain a sense of their own religiousness is vital to the mission of the Bible college. Gaining a religious self-concept or self-identity, according

to Pedersen et al. (2000), is vital to a person being spiritually centered. Quoting earlier research by Pedersen et al., they write: “Previous research has found that spiritually-centered individuals report that they are more emotionally well-adjusted, have a more positive self-concept, and have better physical health” (p. 140). Beyond these results of being spiritually centered, church attendance has been found to be directly related to the centrality of spiritual self-identity and inversely related to the centrality of the personal/social and identification scores.

When religious post-secondary schools consider religiosity in the population of incoming freshmen, the student’s spiritual self-identity, according to Pedersen et al. (2000), may be linked to spiritual well-being, demonstrated by one’s church attendance. They used a test of “means” which evaluated how an individual used his religiousness to achieve a personal outcome or purpose. Current research results show that students who ranked high on spiritual self-identity ranked low on the test of means, suggesting that the individual does not tend to use religion as a means to an end. In other words, there is little interest in getting something as a result of having religion. Students who ranked low on spiritual self-identity indicated they do tend to use their religion for their own purposes.

In regard to these research discoveries, the religious post-secondary schools may consider a student’s self-reported history of church attendance as one measure of spiritual self-identity. The low spiritual self-identity student may see church attendance as a means to satisfy a campus requirement while the high spiritual self-identity group may see church attendance as an element of voluntary vibrant worship.

Donahue and Benson (1995) reviewed literature on “the relation between religiousness and adolescent well-being” (p. 145). Adolescents in the literature are

framed as youth between the ages of 12 and 18. At the upper end of the adolescent age group will be the entrants to the Bible college. These adolescent years frame an influential period for value formation which is germane to the development of moral judgment (Morris & Maisto, 1999) and therefore has “fueled a national debate concerning policies, programs, and strategies that can enhance well-being in this stage of life” (Donahue & Benson, 1995, p. 145). They summarize the relationship between values, behavior and religion.

Religiousness is positively associated with prosocial values and behavior and negatively related to suicide ideation and attempts, substance abuse, premature sexual involvement, and delinquency. . . . The relevance of considering the influence of religion on adolescence well-being is clear. (Donahue & Benson, 1995, p. 145-146)

Not only did Pedersen et al. (2000) discover a link between spiritual self-concept and church attendance, but Donahue and Benson (1995) did as well, as noted by the questions used in their research.

Three questions concerning religiousness are included in the survey: hours in an average week spent attending “services, groups or programs at a church or synagogue”; frequency of attending “religious services at a church or synagogue”; and “How important is religion in your life?” (p. 146)

The implication that church attendance may be linked to spiritual health seems to be suggested by these authors. Donahue and Benson (1995) report that in sixth grade, 51% of students say they are church attendees once or more a week, but by twelfth grade,

the percentage of weekly attendance drops to 34. This suggests that church attendance declines as students become closer to college age.

There is much more to religiosity in adolescence than church attendance. Yet, a recent study by Smith, Denton, Faris, and Regnerus (2002) reports, “We know relatively little about the religious lives of American adolescents” (p. 597) because most research is focused on adults eighteen and older. Opinion polls and journalistic reports abound but “very little [is] solidly dependable, nationally representative empirical knowledge about adolescent religiosity” (p. 598). Participation in a religious youth group is one way to make discoveries about youth religious activity. It is interesting that “about half of American adolescents participate in religious youth groups” (p. 602). This “about half” from Smith et al. seems comparable to the 48 to 50% reported to attend church in various other research (Pedersen et al., 2000; Donahue & Benson, 1995). When considering the population of youth that has some evangelical tradition, a finding by Smith et al. is that among twelfth graders “one-quarter have been involved in a religious youth group for their entire four years of high school” (p. 602).

Among all Protestants, youth with an evangelical (especially) or fundamentalist parent were most likely to be involved in a religious youth group (74% and 52%, respectively), followed by mainline Protestants (44%) and liberal Protestants (28%). (Smith et al., 2002, p. 602)

Smith (2003), in a study of adolescents, reviews the issue of moral order, influence, and moral directives. He is seeking to discover why religion has an influence on adolescents and not just what the influence is. As he observes what religion does, he writes that religious influence “across a number of areas of concern, [and] various

measures of religiosity are typically associated with a variety of healthy desirable outcomes” (p. 17). Smith identifies some of the healthy outcomes issuing from religious influence, as he states:

A large majority of studies, for example, that have included religion measures (especially church attendance and importance of religious faith) have found them to be inversely related to Juvenile drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, and to delinquency. Multiple studies also confirm that religiosity is inversely related to thoughts of suicide, attempted suicide, and actual suicide. Religiosity also appears to act as a protective influence against suicide among youth most at risk for it. (p. 17)

Researching why religion makes its impact, Smith (2003) studies the impact of moral directives on making moral choices. Regarding American religion impacting the adolescent he states:

American religions promote specific cultural moral directives of self-control and personal virtue grounded in the authority of long historical traditions and narratives . . . youth may internalize these moral orders and use them to guide their life choices and moral commitments. (p. 20)

Further consideration is given by Smith (2003) to particular “moral orders” and their influences. He does not specify what an order is but notes in context that “when various speakers say that they struggle against 'the culture,' they mean that they are up against other moral orders antithetical to their religion's moral order” (p. 21). Considering that a Christian secondary school has a mission of vying for the hearts and minds of its

students, according to Peshkin (1986), then a school may be able to foster a moral order or be part of a moral order.

In summary, it seems that adolescents, approaching graduation and reaching college entrance age, indicate in polls that they are moderately interested in religion, loosely attached to religious youth groups, and fairly weak in church attendance. The numbers, however, who are religious and faithful in their practices benefit in their life style and are protected from some of the deleterious effects of the culture and society in which we live (Bernt, 1999; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Pedersen et al., 2000; Smith et al., 2002).

Secondary School Environments

Social Demand and School Response

Evangelical and secular schools must educate their students under the influence of various social environments. A secular school environment seeks to teach without reference to religious values by relying on processes which exercise reasoning with cognitive development. This sounds like an appropriate learning process for a school, and in many instances it is. However, Ashton and Watson (1998) acquaint readers with the thought that effective education includes value positions and, framing such in non-religious neutrality, may not deliver what adolescents need to guide their lives. This is because value formation encompasses more than understanding and articulating cognitive constructs. They suggest that moral education advocates, who champion reasoning through discussion, eliminating religious bias, may find very limited success. In part this is because not all people are reasonable. Furthermore, synthesizing personal values through discussion requires available contemplative time and discussion partnerships.

Considering the vigorous attempt in twentieth century societies and American schools to enforce the elimination of religion and its values from the curriculum and teaching methods, it is worthy to note that a number of authors, in research reviews, have recorded a noticeable decline in morals and values in contemporary culture (Ashton & Watson, 1998; Gabrels, 1998; Kellstedt & Smidt, 1991; Murphy, 1998; Paloutzian & Kirkpatrick, 1995; Smith, 2003; Tamney et al., 1992; Watson et al., 1995). A number of these reports relate to moral decision-making and behavior in adolescent settings. Educational intent in recent years has been to move away from an authority-based control of classrooms toward a reasoned cognitive control of schools. Murphy (1998) identifying this trend shares the following insight:

John Dewey, America's chief philosopher of education at the turn of the century, could be considered singly responsible for the dramatic change in the character-promoting mission of American Education. Dewey based his educational ideas on his pragmatic, philosophic ideas, that is, an instrumentalist's view of truth: something was true "if it worked" as a solution to a practical problem. Dewey, therefore, was a moral relativist who believed that values arose as outcomes of human responses to varying environmental situations. Moral education was not a matter of teaching students what to do or not to do, but it was a method helping them decide what to do. His writings focused on moral education for the next fifty years on a process-oriented approach. His philosophy framed the discussion for values clarification and Kohlberg's developmental approach to moral education. (p. 17-18)

Public school students have been educated in school systems attempting to employ John Dewey's relativist philosophy and a reasoned approach to education. These youth, living in and influenced by a contemporary culture which suggests they adopt morals based on norms, have been taught a moral code and value system that is relative rather than fixed. Donaldson states, "Without a moral center, there's a kind of profound lostness, a profound confusion that can derail both the individual and the organization" (cited in Gabrels, 1998, p. 1). He relates that our society has traded a moral culture for a therapeutic culture, which looks for meaning and intention in an act rather than objectively analyzing the act for right or wrong. The result is that the moral center is swaying and "the country's sense of values is increasingly a matter of personal preferences" (p. 2).

Zern (1997) focuses on the sociocultural pressure being applied to school environments as he writes "In today's world, the school often seems to be used as the panacea to solve problems ranging from AIDS to integration" (p. 80). Zern suggests that the school is construed as the common institutional solution to pervasive societal moral problems. AIDS causes one to consider the issues of human sexuality, while integration causes one to consider relationships and prejudicial attitudes. Zern expands his treatise beyond the school yard as he considers that other institutions also contribute to the influence of youth and each seems to have its own market share of moral education.

The exploration of the whole issue of guidance in moral development focuses, by definition, on the functioning of young people. . . . After all, they are the captive audience for values-education curricula in one form or another, whether the education comes from the school, the family, or the clergy. (p. 81)

Reviews have chronicled the influence of both families and clergy in the role of transmitting values to the next generation (Huff, 2001; King et al., 2002; Prencipe & Helwig, 2002; Smith et al., 2002; and White, 2000). The methods in use to influence moral values through schools are institutionalized and systemic. They are a reflection of the philosophy of school leadership in contrast to the more personal methods of family and clergy.

Schools have been fertile ground for research in moral education for many years. Those that have achieved a moral atmosphere among students do so with the application of strategic educational programming. Kohlberg and Hersh (2001) observe and advise,

We are concerned with the traditional prohibition of schools from teaching values or “morality” normally felt to be the province of the home and church. In keeping family, church, and school separate, however, educators have assumed naively that schools have been harbors of value neutrality. The result has been a moral education curriculum which has lurked beneath the surface in schools, hidden as it were from both educators and the public. (p. 54)

Kohlberg's response to the hidden moral curricula is supported by addressing moral training in schools systemically through a program that is curricular, pedagogical, and administrative in its application. Parr and Ostrovsky (1991) cite a study by Kohlberg and Wasserman (1980) which reported “an innovative, and apparently successful, model of moral education, which attempted to foster a school-wide atmosphere favorable to moral development” (p. 14). Kohlberg envisioned that the successful schools would become “Just Communities” which move students toward behavior change by seeking to improve the contextual moral atmosphere with incremental growth. In his model,

High schools are restructured so that a relatively small group of students and teachers form a democratic community in which, with respect to establishing and enforcing the rules that govern all aspects of the life of the community except curriculum decisions, each member has one vote. (Tappan, 1998, p. 142)

Orchestrating moral development through systemic administrative structures, classroom pedagogy and curriculum, which the Just Community schools seek to do, is, in practice, school-sanctioned environmental control and management. This manner of orchestrated effort may be evidenced in both public and private schools. However, “The amount of time, energy, and fiscal resources necessary to keep the . . . model in operation are limited . . . consequently, all but a very few of the Just Community schools . . . have been shut down” (Tappan, 1998, p. 142). The effectiveness of this model is suggested by research conducted in the Netherlands by Host et al. (1998). It was compared and contrasted with a study “of the moral atmosphere in a large normal public high school in the USA” (p. 48). The United States school reached the stage where the school was “a collection of individuals who exchanged favors and rely on each other for protection” (p. 48). The schools in the Netherlands advanced further and were able to eliminate stealing, fighting, cheating, truancy, and drug and alcohol abuse during school hours.

This moral development model demonstrates that moral education is acknowledged as an active element in the fabric of schools. The Kohlberg model seeks to formalize the element of moral education through a carefully structured, controlled program which builds a moral order within an existing institution. Schools are charged with preparing successful youth and this involves value training which moves the school mission beyond academic training.

Gaining control of the moral climate influencing adolescents in a school is very challenging and the effort to do so, as with the Just Community school program, is commendable. Moral formation is consistent with the “fundamental purpose of public education [which] is to prepare children to live in a pluralistic society” (Peshkin, 1986, p. 186). The Just Community program illustrates a secular model. Peshkin, a researcher from the University of Illinois, studied a Christian school and illustrates his findings. Managing the school as a moral order and indoctrinating values into each student is the paramount mission of the Christian school. “All teaching efforts must be directed to shape students' minds to Christ” (p. 59). The Christian school affirms that the solution to the dilemma of morally undifferentiated and undirected adolescents is not found in the application of curricular programs but rather is found in a coordinated integration of religious principles into the curriculum and reinforced by a change of mind and attitude. Both the public and private school see the management of classroom methods and the revising of administrative structure as essential to implement and effect moral formation in children. The moral-cognitive approach and the Christian schools’ spiritual-shaping approach make it clear that moral education takes place in the schools and can be managed to achieve desired outcomes.

Moral Dilemmas and Schoolhouse Theory

Educational leaders, who are helping to train youth for their place in contemporary life, have raised a voice in the debate on the priorities and methods of addressing moral order, moral identity, and guidance in society. Research reviews find that “moral problems and dilemmas...are central aspects of contemporary life” (Tappan, 1998, p. 141), and that adolescents “are intensely interested in moral questions, [and they

are] fascinated by the notions of right and wrong and how people arrive at them” (DiGiacomo, 2000, p. 12). Schools are in the right place at the right time to assist youth in finding the foundations of moral authority and their place of identity. The process of moral identity formation, according to Damon and Gregory (1997), is a developmental process within the adolescent years when deeply held beliefs are integrated into the self identity. They note that “behavior can be predicted by the manner in which adolescents integrate moral concerns into their theories and descriptions of self” (p. 117).

In the review of moral dilemmas that are impacting the schools, Damon and Gregory (1997) report, “During the past decade there has been a worldwide surge of interest in moral education [because] practically all indicators of antisocial behavior among young people have shown alarming trends” (p. 118). Tappan (1998) refers to such trends as “a growing sense that we are living in a time of profound moral crisis, chaos and confusion” (p. 141). The value struggles of the times in which we live will often be manifested in and worked on through the school systems (Zern, 1997). Providing a consistent and coherent message and method to the adolescent may be the greatest challenge, considering that moral guidance carries religious overtones.

al-Hibri et al. (2001) express a concern over the decades-long retreat from religious and moral value messages in schools.

Over the past four decades . . . educators prohibiting student religious expression have helped to create, fairly or unfairly, the widespread perception among religious conservatives that most public schools are hostile to religion. Confusion coupled with fear of controversy also explains why religion has been absent from most textbooks and curricular frameworks until very recently. (p. 101)

Damon (1997) reminds:

If a school fails to draw meaningful connections among the moral messages that it attempts to convey, it risks failing to convey anything at all that students can take seriously. What comes across instead is a cacophony of discord and confusion. (p. 121)

It seems that because of the troubled landscape and the apparent need for a clear non-discordant message to adolescents that “moral development curricula have made their way into literally thousands of schools and teacher-training programs throughout North America, Europe, and Israel” (Damon, 1997, p. 118). This is encouraging because it is “during adolescence the development of self-understanding is often marked by small gradual increases in the use of moral concepts” (p. 119). Thousands of schools with programs to assist in that incremental increase may yield pro-social moral education outcomes.

Hallways and classrooms have become the social intersections where the moral training and belief systems of the student meet the understanding and consciousness of school rules. Students bring an array of attitudes and actions to the school which will influence others and allow them to be influenced. Schools are not able to totally control the moral integration of the child into the school environment. Immersing students into the moral climate is neither aseptic nor isolated. Norman et al. (1998) note that “moral beliefs are acquired through social transmission” (p. 90). They further explain that beyond the hallways are other value influencers—”sources of moral beliefs include parents, peers and social institutions. One institution in particular where children gain moral knowledge is the school” (p. 90). They present evidence that schools may develop

moral reasoning in stages, yet because it is a social institution, it provides moral beliefs in ways beyond cognition.

Addressing where this responsibility for moral order comes from and its acceptance in the schools is significant considering that hallways and classrooms are the junction points of hundreds of individuals with opinions, values, and attitudes. The school is the public square for youth. Dr. George Cary, the Archbishop of Canterbury, explained that clear dialog on morality is essential. He addressed the problem of active, open verbal exchange on morality and value issues in the public square (Cairns et al., 2000). Dr. Cary's rationale on this problem is applicable to the practices in public schools due to the restraint on moral dialogue and impact from the courts (al-Hibri et al., 2001). Morality is a public school chimera because its source is religion. In the words of Archbishop Cary:

Every person needs a moral language, and society needs a moral language, if it is to be a civilized, just and peaceful society at all. We cannot base our work together for the common good on reticence, embarrassment and incoherent mumbling, yet that is the state into which the discussion of morals and values has descended in many parts of Western society today. The main culprit is the popular cultural assumption that to try to define something as good and right in an absolute sense is an unwarranted and potentially oppressive incursion into a domain which should be purely private. Morality is privatized; relativistic suspicion becomes the standard response to any talk about moral standards and it is found uncomfortable, even embarrassing, to discuss morality in public. (al-Hibri et al., 2001, p. 17)

In review, separation of faith-based values from educational activity in public schools and making moral dialogue a private discussion seems to be unrealistic. Kohlberg and Hersh (2001) note that “educators have assumed naively that schools have been harbors of value neutrality” (p. 54). The attempt to program value neutrality into schools drives the informal teaching of values “beneath the surface in schools” (p. 54), out of operational reach of educational administrators. When “few public schools venture to provide explicit moral teaching . . . moral beliefs are acquired through social transmission [using] learned beliefs to frame solutions” (Norman et al., 1998, p. 90). As the informal moral curriculum is operationalized through the students, educators will face a school culture in decline with a low expectation for moral behavior and a rising statistic of antisocial behavior (Host et al., 1998; Norman et al., 1998). Host et al. remind readers that “the moral atmosphere in schools refers to the norms, values and meaning systems which students of a school share” (p. 47). It seems plausible that, when the informal moral authority of the students establishes the institutional atmosphere the school, the school administration is left with a marginalized code of behavior which requests compliance but has limited impact beyond the reach of school authority.

In contrast to public schools that exercise curricular caution in regard to expressing value positions with religious overtones (Damon, 1997), religious institutions work systemically to build a coherent, consistent atmosphere of moral instruction in student and academic life (Peshkin, 1986).

Christian College Environments

The Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) is an association of 95 regionally accredited member schools. They represent primarily a liberal arts

curriculum more than a ministry training curriculum; however, their evangelical positions are similar to the Bible college, and they describe their members as “committed to the integration of biblical faith, scholarship and service” (Rust, 1999, p. 14). Survey data reveals that “enrollment went up 24% at CCCU member schools between 1990 and 1996” (p. 14), while non-religious school enrollment increased by only 5%.

Rust (1999) relates why the CCCU schools attracted students: “Some were attracted by the academic curriculum; others seek the heightened personal attention available at smaller schools. Most seem to want what they describe as a combination of values, spiritual growth and faith that is lacking at more secular institutions” (p. 14).

Rust (1999), while addressing this phenomenon of enrollment gain, presents insights on the historical, doctrinal, and social environments surrounding the Christian college movement which is characterized by two broad value positions. These two religious value positions—fundamental doctrine and evangelistic fervor—find their origins in the late nineteenth century. At that time a deep and widening division influenced the mission and purpose of the Christian evangelical community, stemming from Biblical interpretation. The prophetic hermeneutic of one group, referred to as modernists, saw the world becoming a progressively better human environment with less evident sin prior to Christ's return. This group, believing post-millennial theology, founded Christian liberal-arts colleges. The prophetic hermeneutic of the second group, referred to as fundamentalists, saw the world becoming progressively more corrupted by sin and needing evangelization prior to Christ's return. This group, believing pre-millennial theology, founded Bible colleges (Dollar, 1973; Rust, 1999).

The specificity of fundamental doctrine becomes a factor in the admission of new students. A narrow hermeneutic is seen as one litmus test for the acceptability of the students. Some Bible colleges will evaluate potential students and gauge their opportunity for ministry development against the markers of fundamentalist tradition.

The landmarks of theological principles, in the foundations of the Christian institution, lead not only to a specific enrollment constituency but additionally to specific philosophical training and nurture. Hoge, Petrillo, and Smith (1982), when researching cultural continuity and the transmission of values between generations revealed that “topics on which parent-child agreement has been found to be strongest are those which are visible, concrete, and of lasting concern to the parents” (p. 570). Maintaining an effective righteous influence on the enduring values which impact a lifetime, may be why certain parents enroll their high school graduates in a private Christian college. “Many Christian colleges differ markedly from their secular counterparts. Most Christian colleges enforce general codes of conduct, with almost universal bans on alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs. Some even forbid jeans, sneakers, and shorts in academic buildings” (Rust, 1999, p. 15). This litany of restricted activities are codified into the handbooks of the religious institutions and are important to its enrollees and constituency as the embodiment of a value set and system which must be very visible and universally applied.

Nelson (2000) presents a cogent summary of the Bible college academic environment and the type of student this environment attracts.

Typically, Bible colleges primarily focus on the provision of academic majors in church-related ministries (pastoral studies, missions, Christian education, and

so forth), but many also provide academic majors in non-church-related areas (psychology, elementary education, business, and so on). Students with aspirations for church-related vocations will likely find the Bible college an appropriate educational setting with its emphases on theology, the value it places on scripture, and professors who have practical ministry experience. Those students with strong ties to their religious affiliations, those with certain values, or those especially interested in integration issues (for example, the integration of psychology and theology) may feel at home in the Bible college setting. (p. 28)

Religious colleges which train for ministry will seek to disciple their students to a high level of commitment described by Fowler (1995) as stage 6 faith: “a disciplined activist incarnation [demonstrating] the imperatives of absolute love and justice . . . heedless to self-preservation and [feeling] transcendent moral and religious actuality” (p. 200). The ministry student’s personal experience with God may be, in the description of Bassett et al. (1999), people with internalized or intrinsic faith; “people with intrinsic faith are people who are highly committed and who attempt to be religious because of the benefits received through a life of faith” (p. 205). It is into this managed atmosphere of commitment, purpose-driven service, and inspiration that the Bible college introduces freshmen.

Faith and Value Positions

Copeland (1994) summarizes the fundamentalist approach to life with the following description:

Protestant fundamentalism is a religious ideology characterized by strict adherence to the tenets of Biblical authority, literalism and inerrancy, atonement for sins, the virgin birth of Christ, resurrection and millennial eschatology. All Protestant fundamentalists can be categorized as evangelical Christians who are committed to the notion of spreading their gospel throughout the world. (p. 6)

Coupled with Lawrence's (1989) definition of the fundamentalist as one who "believe[s] they provide the only panacea for a corrupt age" (p. xvii), one may begin to see the threads of reasoning behind the Bible college's second broad value position, evangelistic fervor expressed as zeal for discipling the student.

Establishing coherent value systems that support particular dogmas is important to the Bible college in order to guide the students into understanding and accepting the positions of tradition and conviction as the *sine qua non* of preparation. Mellor and Andre (1980), researching value patterns of religious groups, reveal,

Rokeach (1969a) has demonstrated that a) attitudes and values within particular social institutions . . . tend to be associated and b) attitudes toward religion . . . are likely to be related in coherent value systems. Thus, religious groups are themselves socializing forces which allow embodied group values to underlie specific individual attitudes. (p. 129)

Value Transformation

Mellor and Andre (1980) researched the complex motivational work of religious groups in inculcating value patterns into their members. "Assuming, first, that human nature is basically social, and second, that motives underlie values which are expressed as attitudes and beliefs, it was suggested that value patterns could be characterized by major

motivational dimensions” (p. 129). The study identifies three value dimensions used within religious groups to transform moral behavior. They are: “a) altruism . . . as opposed to self-interest, b) liberty . . . and freedom as opposed to . . . security and c) intellect . . . and rationality . . . as opposed to emotionality” (p. 129). Religious institutions such as Bible colleges which train students for ministry may employ these motivational dimensions. Developing and maintaining a transformation atmosphere for students would seem to require management of the elements of campus life, academic activities, and Christian service.

According to Yancey (2000), theology will impact behavior in significant ways. He underscores the truth that the values a religious group establishes may translate into action when the moral base has a theological impetus. Yancey provides the historical reminder that “it was no accident that Christians pioneered in the antislavery movement, for their beliefs had a theological impetus” (p. 2).

That theology and faith activities will translate to principled behavior is a reasonable expectation of the Bible college. The Bible college may expect that the graduates of Christian high schools will have a theological base for conservative values, as suggested in Peshkin's 1986 study of an Illinois Christian school. However, as Yancey (2000) aptly notes “America’s secularism has reduced the concept of morality to a question of personal choice” (p. 1).

Students matriculating in a wide array of Christian colleges in the CCCU approach their choice of educational institution with fairly conservative values undergirding the reasons for their college choice. This is to the advantage of the college which seeks to forge a coherent values set. Foster and LaForce (1999) reviewed

literature on adolescents' self-identity in Christian liberal arts institutions. One study sampled freshmen entering a Christian liberal arts institution. The freshmen brought to the college a set of instrumental values defined as "modes of conduct" (Foster & LaForce, 1999, p. 53).

The top four instrumental values of their freshman sample were, "honest", "loving", "forgiving", and "responsible." . . . These values were quite different than those held by students at secular institutions. The values highly ranked by students at Christian institutions are generally other-oriented (including relationship to God), whereas those at secular institutions are generally self-oriented. (Foster & LaForce, 1999, p. 53)

Considering this, the Christian college may have some encouragement that their students have a Biblically oriented moral set to start with. Whereas Foster and LaForce discovered a distinction between the secular and Christian value sets at the level of the college freshman, it is conceivable that the high school graduates as a group would demonstrate a similar distinction.

In summary, value transformation requires broad effort. It requires the coordination of socializing influences, theological training, and understanding of self-identity (Foster & LaForce, 1999; Mellor & Andre, 1980; Yancey, 2000). Regardless of students' personal values and moral codes, be they harmonious with institutional standards or be they alien, Christian colleges and more specifically Bible colleges should assist students in value assessment and transformation. This type of education embraces the task of training young people to manage spiritual activities and relationships. These young adults need tested paths to personal transformation, absolute

moral authority for value development and researched answers to relational and ethical problems rather than normative opinions (Charles Shoemaker, personal communication, March 8, 2004).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Trinity Baptist College will provide, for this research, a population of freshmen who demonstrate by their enrollment a commitment to religiously-oriented academic and vocational training. Through the use of a survey instrument, this research will collect and review data on student demographics, positions of personal faith, personal moral values, and behaviors of religiosity. The information will be used to compare two groups within this population, the graduates of Christian schools and the graduates of secular schools.

Research Design

The design of this research study is descriptive in that it will “classify, organize, and summarize numerical data” (Ravid, 1994, p. 18), and it will “describe systematically the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest, factually and accurately” (Isaac & Michael, 1997, p. 50); it is qualitative in that the data are “presented in a narrative form” (p. 4) and are “context-based, recognizing the uniqueness of each individual and each setting” (p. 3); and it is quantitative in that it will present data in numerical form (Ravid, 1994).

Data will be gathered through a self-administered questionnaire seeking the self-reported opinions of test subjects. According to Fink (1995) this is “questions that an individual completes by oneself . . . say, on a computer or by hand in a classroom, waiting room, or office” (p. 42). The instruments have been developed and tested by other researchers with revision made to accommodate the defined population and setting. The adaptations have been reviewed by the original authors and reviewed for face validity by a panel of experts.

Selection of Participants

The research was conducted with an “incidental (convenience) sample,” of volunteers from the freshmen at Trinity Baptist College. A convenience sample is one which allows the researcher to conduct “a study using an accessible sample, such as the researcher's own . . . school” (Ravid, 1994, p. 23).

“A population is an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common” (Ravid, 1994, p. 17). The population for this study was freshmen at Trinity Baptist College. From this population, students were asked to participate as volunteers in the research. The study sample was a homogeneous group based on a limitation defining freshman academic status.

Participants were 102 freshmen students (57 female, 45 male) enrolled at Trinity Baptist College having earned fewer than 32 credit hours (Trinity Baptist College, 2005). The Trinity Baptist College Registrar certified each individual in the group of students seated for the survey as meeting this criterion.

The participants classified themselves as graduating from one of three categories of high school: a Christian school, a secular school, or a non-traditional school listed as “other.” Students were given two criteria, related to curriculum and program, to use in determining to which category their school belonged. To be classified as a Christian school, the school first must have a regularly scheduled class required for all students, which taught or used the Bible as its topical focus, and also must have a regularly scheduled chapel program required for all students. This includes schools operated in the United States or in foreign countries for children of missionaries. The category of secular school includes any public school, Department of Defense school, or private school not

meeting both previously cited criteria. Students were given the opportunity to select a third category if they graduated from a home school or a non-traditional school such as a GED school program. The “other” category will not be analyzed as part of the study.

The students were asked to complete a survey form asking closed-end questions related to individual values, religious behaviors, and basic beliefs (also referred to as faith positions). The survey was distributed and instructions given by the researcher in a classroom setting. After receiving instructions, the time required to complete the survey was approximately 15 minutes.

To achieve objectivity and candor on the self-reported survey, no names or identifying information was written on the form, ensuring anonymity for respondents. Because the researcher was part of the administrative structure of the college, the sample group was notified as part of the instructions that research aids would monitor, collect, and shuffle the instruments to ensure no linkage from a test to an individual. The research assistants used a set of written instructions (Appendix C).

Instrumentation

Missionary Kids' Value Scales (MKVS). This instrument (L. W. Sharp, 1990, as reported in *Measures of Religiosity* by Hill & Hood, 1999) “was created specifically for use with children of missionaries in Brazil” (p. 244), “was normed on 533 adult children of Brazil missionaries” (p. 245), and “contains eighteen measures of the value constructs of religiosity, world mindedness, and commitment to justice . . .” (p. 244). Since the focus of the original instrument was the evaluation of adjustment to cross-cultural living, only four scales, evidencing a design for assessing the moral values and religious behaviors of adolescence, were selected as being wholly or partly useful for the current

research. The titles of the four selected scales are Religiosity, Religious Orthodoxy, Religious Interaction–Youth, and Crosscultural Involvement as Youth.

The instrument evaluation by Hall and Brokaw, who reviewed the MKVS for inclusion in *Measures of Religiosity* states that “use of the entire measure is not necessary. Researchers in this area can make use of individual scales as well as the complete measure” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 245). They further indicate that the MKVS is heterogeneous; therefore, it is not designed to measure a related group of constructs, and the subscales may be scored separately (p. 245).

This original instrument asked the participants to glance back into their years of adolescence to get a response. The revised instrument asks the freshmen participants to do the same because the responses relate exclusively to their high school years.

Due to the researcher’s truncation of the MKVS by use of only four scales out of eighteen, all references to the abbreviated MKVS will be termed: Revised-MKVS (R-MKVS).

The R-MKVS uses four sub-scales, three in total and one in part. According to the review in *Measures of Religiosity* (Hill & Hood, 1999), the four selected scales have estimated reliability ratings of internal consistency using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. The first, Religiosity, “is operationalized in this measure as commitment to the specific beliefs, values, and behaviors of evangelical Christianity” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 244). As used in the complete MKVS battery, it contains 16 questions and has an estimated reliability rating of .93. It is used in the R-MKVS after dropping one question relating to child rearing. The second, Religious Orthodoxy, “is a measure of the degree to which a person agrees with the beliefs of orthodox Protestant Christianity” (p. 244). As used in

the total MKVS battery, it contains six questions and has an estimated reliability rating of .83. It is used in its entirety in the R-MKVS. The third, Religious Interaction–Youth, is rated as having “good lower-bound estimates of scale reliability for research purposes” (p. 240). As used in the total MKVS, it contains three questions and is used in its entirety as part of the R-MKVS. The reliability of the fourth, Crosscultural Involvement as Youth, is rated as having “marginal internal consistency” (p. 240). As used in the total MKVS battery, it contains two questions, one of which is used in the R-MKVS.

The four scales as revised for the R-MKVS are not used in the order originally presented, do not include identifying titles, and direct references to the Brazilian community have been omitted. They are formatted into a single survey instrument. A disadvantage of the MKVS identified in the review by Hall and Brokaw (cited in Hill & Hood, 1999) is that the scales use a variety of answer formats, making data evaluation more complicated. This has been rectified in the R-MKVS with a common 1- 4 Likert-type response. The author, L. W. Sharp, has given permission to revise and use the MKVS scale. The publisher, Religious Education Press, has given written permission to use the MKVS. Author and publisher permission is retained on file.

Regarding the total MKVS, “The face validity of the measure is high, as each scale clearly relates to the construct it attempts to measure” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 245). It was normed by sending the questionnaire to 533 adults; a 60.8% response rate was achieved with the response population being 49.9% male and 50.1% female. The relevancy of the MKVS to the fundamental Bible college sample is demonstrated by the fact that 99% of the research population self-reported being evangelical and 97.3% reported that they were “born again.”

The MKVS revisions were submitted to a panel of experts for a face validity evaluation on the abbreviated, revised questionnaire. The face validity panel included five Trinity Baptist College faculty with earned doctorates. The face validity assessment used a five-point scale to evaluate the quality of content specificity of each item. The first review yielded eight items receiving a rating of 4.0 or less. The researcher judged this rating as unacceptable. After making minor revisions to these eight items, the questionnaire was resubmitted to the panel of experts. The second review brought each item to an average of at least 4.2 out of 5.0 and raised the overall face validity from 4.26 to 4.53. The researcher judged this as acceptable, demonstrating that each of the 24 items relates directly to the construct it measures. The results of the two face validity reviews by the panel of experts are included in a table of central tendency (Appendix D).

Christian Moral Values Scale (CMVS). This is a ten-item scale “measures individual differences in the evaluation of traditional values supported by the Judeo-Christian tradition. The approach is a common-sense based selection of behaviors having high face/content validity to the investigators” (Francis & Greer, 1992 as reported in Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 243). These ten behaviors are rated on a 5-point scale with “always wrong” carrying a score of 5 and “never wrong” carrying a score of 1, “so that a higher score is a higher moral judgment. Since there are no positive ethical values on the questionnaire, those with a negativistic bias will score higher” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 242). According to Gorsuch (cited in Hill & Hood) who reviewed this scale, the use of ratings which range from “always wrong” to “never wrong” stresses moral and ethical evaluation. He notes, “This response scale is more consistent with the expressed goal than the ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ response scale used in Francis and Greer

(1990) for rating the same behaviors” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 242). The internal consistency reliabilities of the CMVS, are adequate for research purposes. “They range from .70 (N = 571; Francis & Greer, 1990) to .76 (N = 1, 177; Greer & Francis, 1990)” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 243).

The CMVS was designed for determining the value distinctions between two doctrinally disparate Christian groups, the Catholic and Protestant populations in Northern Ireland. Due to the nature of the research by Francis and Greer with non-fundamentalist Christian populations, some of the value items require revision in terminology for clarity of value concept and specificity of doctrine when used with a fundamental, evangelical population. Revisions to this scale were reviewed by the original author, Leslie Francis, who has given permission to use the scale. The publisher, Religious Education Press, has given written permission to use the CMVS. Author and publisher permissions are retained on file by the researcher.

The CMVS revisions were also submitted to a panel of experts for a face validity evaluation using the same criteria as for the MKVS revisions. That panel regards face validity for the revised Christian Moral Values Scale (R-CMVS) as high (4.62 out of 5.0), as each of the ten items relates directly to the construct it measures. The first review yielded four items receiving a rating of 4 or less. After making minor revisions to these four items, the questionnaire was resubmitted to the panel of experts. The second review brought each item to an average of at least 4.2 out of 5.0 and raised the overall face validity from 4.28 to 4.62. The researcher judged this as acceptable, demonstrating that each of the 10 items relates directly to the construct it measures. The results of the two

face validity reviews by the panel of experts are included in a table of central tendency (Appendix D).

Freshman Values Survey. This instrument is the combined R-CMVS and the R-MKVS. These two scales are separate blocks of questions but are not identified as such in the student version. They are numbered consecutively for the benefit of the participants and the data analysis. The combined scales have a face validity measure of 4.55 out of 5.0. The researcher judged this as acceptable. This combination of two scales is titled for clarity as the Freshman Values Survey (Appendix E).

Data Design and Analysis

The primary research question addresses the differences between groups of incoming college freshmen. The question, as stated in Chapter One, is: Is there a difference between Christian school and secular school graduates regarding moral attitudes expressed as personal values, positions of faith, and behaviors of religiosity?

Hypothesis. The null hypothesis predicts no relationship or no difference between variables. The alternative hypothesis is used to give direction to the design of the study and guide the investigation (Ravid, 1994). The null hypothesis for this research is: The freshman at Trinity Baptist College will evidence no statistical difference in their moral attitudes, expressed as personal values, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity, based on their school of graduation. The alternative hypothesis for this research states: The students graduating from Christian high schools, when compared to graduates of secular high schools, will evidence a difference of moral attitudes in the direction of evangelical religiosity, expressed as personal values, faith positions, and religious behaviors. The results of the data analysis will determine if the null hypothesis will be retained or

rejected. Following the null hypothesis decision, it can be determined if the data permits the probability of confirming the alternative hypothesis (Ravid, 1994).

Statistical tests. Whereas this is qualitative research which relies on survey instruments to collect data, both nonparametric and parametric statistics will be used to evaluate the data which is produced by the instruments.

The respondents will answer six demographic classification questions which provide vital and insightful information on the type of high school graduated from, years of attendance, and gender. This will produce discrete nominal data, some of which will be analyzed using an average as a measure of central tendency and a percentile rank.

Respondents will answer content evaluation questions using 1-4 Likert scales or varied response sets of four choices, thereby producing observations as discrete ordinal data. This study design embraces two independent variables each with subgroups: the type of school a student graduates from with two subgroups (Christian school and Secular school) and the student's moral attitudes with three subgroups (personal values, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity).

Chi square. The chi square test, a nonparametric statistical method, will be applied to the survey data where all responses are assigned a numerical code. Chi square “is used to test whether two independent variables are related to, or are independent of, each other” (Ravid, 1994, p. 229). The data will be disaggregated for significance testing into three sets: an individual item set whereby each value response question is analyzed, a grouping by student moral attitudes subgroups (personal values, faith positions, or behaviors of religiosity), and an all response set. This diversity of analysis will aid the preparation of a clear understandable narrative.

Freshman Values Survey Categories

Moral Attitude Expressions	Survey Question Numbers
Demographics	1-6
Personal Values	7-13; 32
Faith Positions	14-16; 33-41
Behaviors of Religiosity	17-31
Open Ended	42-43

The analysis will require implementation of a chi square computation for two variables, referred to as a test of independence. The frequencies in chi square tables will be drawn from observed frequencies which are responses to the survey questions. The expected frequencies are not known *a priori* and will be computed in the manner dictated for a two-variable test of independence.

Following the computation of the chi square statistic, the degrees of freedom will be assigned and the results, by individual item and by group, will be evaluated for statistical significance using the table of critical values. The level of significance will be checked at two levels, $p \leq .05$, and $p \leq .01$, with $p \leq .05$ being the level which establishes hypothesis retention/rejection.

The chi square statistical method will establish conclusively if there is a difference between the independent variables (school groups and value groups). This is a critical distinction for the research. However, the chi square method will not establish a direction of the difference should it be established based on exceeding critical values.

The alternative hypothesis is directional; it seeks to determine a difference between the variables in the direction of evangelical religiosity. For the purpose of determining direction, central tendencies will be calculated and evaluated for the sub-groups within the two variables. The school of graduation variable contains two sub-groups, Christian school and secular school; the value decision variable contains three

sub-groups—personal values, faith positions, and religiosity. Additionally, “when two means are being compared with each other, the statistic used is a *t*-test (Ravid, 1994, p. 175).

t-test. The *t*-test, a statistical measure, will be applied to the calculated means of the value decision groups for the purpose of establishing statistical significance. This will permit not only a determination of difference at the .05 level, but if the difference between the means is significant, it will indicate a direction in how students make moral assessments on issues.

Assumptions or Limitations

Instrument limitations. The R-MKVS has typical research limitations resulting from the selective intent of the various sub-scales which initially sought “to survey many areas relevant to the life experience of individuals who live in other cultures during their formative years” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 245). Therefore, application to a population which is not cross-cultural must be approached with care. The researcher's selection of four sub-scales sets narrow limits on the scope of the behaviors and values included in the assessment. The terminology revision of certain questions to gain clarity and specificity for the sample group of evangelical, fundamental students limits the application, while the convenience sample of evangelical, fundamental Bible college freshman limits the ability to generalize the results to other college freshman populations.

The CMVS was normed with student populations in Northern Ireland; therefore, its generalization to populations outside that group must be approached with caution. The instrument has undergone modification to achieve relevancy of application to the specific sample group of evangelical, fundamental students. The R-CMVS design specificity

alters the results in the direction of a very narrow student population. It brings an inherent limiter to the use of the results with any high school graduates other than those enrolled in an evangelical, fundamental Bible college.

Reliability is the ability of the instrument to deliver consistency over repeated use. The CMVS is considered to be “adequate for research purposes” (Hill & Hood, 1999, p. 243); however, the R-CMVS must be regarded in a cautionary fashion until it builds a research history. The selected scales of the R-MKVS, likewise, need cautious interpretation as certain elements of the scales were omitted to focus the interpretation toward a very specific population.

The published ratings of both instruments regarding their validity and reliability may not be applicable. Combining the revised scales into one instrument, the Freshman Values Survey, requires that its results be viewed as relevant to only the freshmen population used in this research.

Generalization. Because this study uses a convenience sample from a narrow population and evident sample bias in that the group is limited to freshmen only, care must be used in applying the results to any less defined or broader population or to a freshman population of another Bible college.

Sample qualification. The control on the freshman qualification for this survey required the definition of a student having earned fewer than 32 credit hours based on the official transcript credits accepted by the registrar's office at Trinity Baptist College.

Administration

Two months prior to administration of the survey, the researcher met with the Executive Vice President, Academic Dean, and Dean of Students of Trinity Baptist

College. The researcher explained the concept of this research project, reviewed draft documents of the survey, explained the process for custody of documents and maintenance of anonymity for students, and then received the signatures granting institutional permission (Appendix G). The original signed permission form is retained on file by the researcher.

One week prior to administering the survey, the Registrar's office was asked to check the transcripts of all incoming freshmen and prepare an accurate list of students qualified to participate in the study. The academic office prepared this document which was used to seat the students; the document was not retained after administration for anonymity purposes. The researcher also met with the Dean of Students to discuss the procedure for introducing the incoming freshmen to the concept of participation in anonymous educational research and the need to schedule a time to seat the students for the survey.

The survey was administered in a classroom setting to volunteer freshmen who had been listed as qualified by the Registrar's office. The researcher arranged for an assistant to administer the survey because the researcher, as part of the college administrative structure, could present an authoritative and intimidating presence to some participants. After seating the volunteer students for the survey, the researcher introduced himself and the assistant, explained the concept of informed consent and anonymity, and left the room. A secretary then distributed the informed-consent forms, and the assistant read through the form with the students and answered any questions (Appendix G). The secretary collected an informed-consent form from each participant, counted the number of forms and the number of students, placed the forms in a document envelope, wrote the

count on the envelope, sealed it in the presence of the group, explained it would be kept off-campus through the conclusion of the project, and left the room.

The assistant distributed the survey face down on each student's desk, asking the student not to turn the form over until instructed and not to discuss the survey during the session. Once all students had the survey, they were instructed to turn the form over. The assistant read aloud the instructions on the survey instrument and led the students through completion of the six demographic questions point by point for accuracy. Extra time was taken to explain the selection of the correct category for their school of graduation. After concluding the demographic section, the assistant reminded them not to put their names on the form or to write on the form beyond circling their responses.

The group was told that upon completion of the survey, they were to bring the document to the assistant who would review it for completeness and return it to them. Then they would place their surveys into a closed, ballot-type box. It was explained that a secretary would open the box in the presence of another staff member, shuffle all forms, count the forms, and deliver them to the researcher.

The students were reminded to read the instructions carefully, take their time, and answer the questions with total candor. The assistant was available for any questions. As students finished, procedures were followed, and the participants exited the room. The approximate lapsed time for completing the survey was 15 minutes.

All protocols established by the Argosy University Institutional Review Board were followed carefully with the interest of protecting the sample population and the integrity of Argosy University.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Background Information

Restatement of the Purpose

It would be useful for academic planners at Trinity Baptist College to have diagnostic information on the moral attitudes of incoming freshmen. Relevant information on personal values, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity would enable effective decision making in academic and student services planning. Some freshmen may enter the college embracing values popularized in the secular contemporary culture, while other freshmen will have moral attitudes which are closely aligned with college expectations. Considering this potential difference in students, the purpose of the research and the review of findings allow careful assessment to focus on the student's personal values, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity.

Research Question

This study attempted to answer this question: Is there a difference between Christian school and secular school graduates enrolling in Trinity Baptist College, regarding moral attitudes expressed as personal values, positions of faith, and behaviors of religiosity?

Null hypothesis. The null hypothesis for this research is: The freshmen at Trinity Baptist College will evidence no statistical difference in their moral attitudes, expressed as personal values, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity, based on their school of graduation.

Alternative hypothesis. The alternative hypothesis for this research states: The students graduating from Christian high schools, when compared to graduates of secular

high schools, will evidence a statistical difference in moral attitudes in the direction of evangelical religiosity, expressed as personal values, faith positions, and religious behaviors.

Statistical Methods

Two statistical evaluation methods were employed.

t-Test

“When two means are being compared with each other, the statistic used is a *t*-test” (Ravid, 1994, p. 175). A *t*-test permits predicting “whether the differences between groups are statistically significant, or whether they could have occurred simply by chance” (p. 175). The means are drawn from the same measure and represent two independent variables which are the two school groups.

This research required a determination of the direction of moral decision making toward or away from positive moral choices. To this end the researcher assigned, with permission of the committee, interval value to the survey responses and employed a two sample *t*-test. The respondents made selections based on negative or positive attitudes or behavior, allowing them to be evaluated based on the direction of these responses.

The *t*-test enabled the researcher to make statistical decisions regarding rejection of the null hypothesis, acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, and the statistical position of a response or group of responses toward or away from positive moral choices. The *t*-test has been used as the deciding test for statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$ level.

Chi Square

“The chi square is used extensively in analyzing questionnaire data where groups or responses are assigned a numerical code” (Ravid, 1994, p. 221). It will be used to reveal

statistical values indicating difference between groups. The chi square calculation, as a test of independence, may establish rejection of the null hypothesis at the $p \leq .05$ level. Because the chi square does not indicate nor permit establishing a direction of the moral position of a response or group of responses, it is not the primary test for statistical significance in this research. Rather, it is used as comparison measure for null hypothesis evaluation.

Demographics

The demographic responses presented a freshmen class breakdown of 45 men and 57 women (see Table 1). Forty-seven students were Christian school graduates, and 40 were secular school graduates. The 15 “other” graduates have earned their high school diplomas through programs such as home schooling and GED testing. The focus of the research addresses the freshmen who are graduates of Christian or secular schools, and, therefore, the “other” graduates will not be referenced.

Size of Graduating Class

Sixty-four percent of the Christian school graduates were from very small schools with 25 or fewer in the graduating classes; 7% of the secular school graduates were from very small schools; 43% of all freshmen taking the survey graduated from very small schools. Conversely, 78% of the secular school graduates were from large schools with 151 or more graduates; 4% of the Christian school graduates were from large schools.

Duration of Attendance at School of Graduation

Seventy-six percent of the freshmen were recent high school graduates. The group of graduates that were 21 years of age or older all graduated from secular schools. Both Christian school and secular school graduates spent an average of 3.4 years in the school they graduated from, evidencing very little migration between types of school during their credit-earning years.

Table 1

Demographics

	Christian School		Secular School		Other School		All Graduates	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender								
Male	17	36	22	55	6	40	45	44
Female	30	64	18	45	9	60	57	56
Total	47	46	40	39	15	15	102	100
Age								
18	29	62	15	38	10	66	54	53
19	14	30	7	17	3	20	24	23
20	4	08	7	17	1	07	12	12
21+	0	0	11	28	1	07	12	12
Number in Graduating Class								
1-25	30	64	3	07	11	73	44	43
26-75	1	02	1	02	3	20	5	05
76-150	14	30	5	13	0	0	19	18
151-250	2	04	6	15	1	07	9	09
251-300	0	0	6	15	0	0	6	06
301-400	0	0	4	10	0	0	4	04
401-500	0	0	6	15	0	0	6	06
500+	0	0	9	23	0	0	9	09
Number of Years in School Graduated From								
	Christian School		Secular School		Other School		All Graduates	
1 year	4		4		4		12	
2 years	6		3		1		10	
3 years	5		4		1		10	
4 years	32		26		9		67	
Average	3.4		3.4		3.1		3.3	

Results

Personal Value Questions

Questions 7-13 addressed the respondents' attitudes about moral value issues and question 32 about making value decisions in the high school setting. The respondents' choices for questions 7-13 are as follows: never wrong (1), usually excusable (2), usually wrong (3), and always wrong (4). The value statements in these questions have a negative bias, so a higher number indicates a stronger positive moral response. A selection of 1 or 2 would be a negatively-oriented moral choice; a selection of 3 or 4 would be positively-oriented with a stronger alignment in the direction of evangelical religiosity.

Summary results. Considering the moral value questions (see Table 2), the *t*-test of significance allowed rejection of the null hypothesis at the $p \leq .05$ level for the overall group, as well as for the male subgroup. However, the female graduates evidence findings between school groups that were similar enough to retain the null hypothesis. The research found a small (.09) difference between the means of the two groups.

The direction of the responses was illustrated by the Christian school and secular school means of 3.31 and 3.01 respectively. The overall combined responses (see Table 2), reveal that 74% of all respondents selected choices 3 and 4. The statistically significant difference between the groups allowed for acceptance of the alternative hypothesis.

Table 2

Value Questions: Summary Statistics

Group	Mean	SD	Reject*	
			t-test	chi square
Overall	Values		Y	Y
Christian	3.31	0.951		
Secular	3.01	1.10		
Male Overall Values			Y	Y
Christian	3.26	1.045		
Secular	2.82	1.18		
Female Overall Values			N	N
Christian	3.33	0.897		
Secular	3.24	0.959		

Value Questions: Summary Response Frequencies

	Response 1 & 2		Response 3 & 4		Sum of Responses
	n	%	n	%	
Overall	Values				
Christian	79	21	307	79	386
Secular	103	33	209	67	312
Combined Responses	182	26	516	74	698
Male Overall Values					
Christian	33	24	104	76	137
Secular	68	40	104	60	172
Combined Responses	101	33	208	67	309
Female Overall Values					
Christian	46	18	203	82	249
Secular	35	25	105	75	140
Combined Responses	81	21	308	79	389

*reject Ho
 $p \leq .05$

Individual questions. Data from individual value questions is presented in Table 3. Three questions (9, 10, and 13) accepted the null hypothesis. The value issue with the highest response in a positive direction was question 9 (viewing internet pornography). Both student groups selected positive responses in the 3 or 4 range with similar frequency strength (100% and 92% for the Christian and secular groups respectively). Both groups established strong positive means (3.93 and 3.73), and standard deviations indicated group homogeneity.

Conversely the value question with the highest frequency response in a negative direction was question 10 (burning copyrighted music). A majority in both school groups selected negative responses in the 1 and 2 range (55% and 78% respectively). However, there was a fairly wide range of responses, particularly among the Christian school graduates, as evidenced by the standard deviations. Question 13 (lying to protect a friend), also presented responses in a negative direction; however, there was no statistically significant difference between the groups.

Four value questions accepted the alternative hypothesis. Questions 8 and 12 had group differences large enough that the chances of random occurrence were in the .001 - .003 range (see Table 3). Question 11 (illegal drug use), also permitted rejection of the null hypothesis.

Applying values to behavior. Question 32 disclosed the difficulty of applying Christian values in decision making in the high school setting. Selecting “agree” or “strongly agree” demonstrates how “hard” it is to carry value choices into daily living. This question indicated a statistically significant difference between the groups. A majority of both groups (secular school graduates, 68%; Christian school graduates, 62%) indicated it was “very hard” to act upon their values in their school setting.

Table 3

Value Questions: Item Statistics

Group	n	Response %		Mean	SD	Reject*	
		1 & 2	3 & 4			t-test	chi square
7. Gambling in Lottery						Y	N
Christian	47	21	79	3.36	0.965		
Secular	40	30	70	2.95	1.037		
8. Drinking Alcohol						Y	Y
Christian	47	13	87	3.66	0.700		
Secular	40	30	70	3.03	1.121		
9. Viewing Internet Pornography						N	N
Christian	45	0	100	3.93	0.252		
Secular	40	8	92	3.73	0.816		
10. Burn Copyrighted Music						N	N
Christian	47	55	45	2.38	1.074		
Secular	40	78	22	2.10	0.982		
11. Using Illegal Drugs						Y	Y
Christian	47	0	100	3.94	0.247		
Secular	40	20	80	3.43	1.083		
12. Pre-Marital Sex						Y	Y
Christian	47	4	96	3.83	0.481		
Secular	40	15	85	3.33	1.023		
13. Lying for a Friend						N	N
Christian	47	36	64	2.81	0.970		
Secular	39	51	49	2.54	0.996		
32. Hard to Carry Values						Y	Y
Christian	47	38	62	2.62	0.922		
Secular	38	32	68	3.03	0.944		

*reject Ho
 $p \leq .05$

Faith Position Questions

Questions 14-16 and 33-41 addressed the respondents' views of faith positions—"an alignment of the heart or will, a commitment of loyalty and trust" (Fowler, 1981, p. 11). A faith position is a religious conviction which often has theological and hermeneutical implications.

Summary results. Considering faith position questions (see Table 4), the overall faith position data evidences a statistically significant difference and allows rejection of the null hypothesis for the overall group, as well as for the male subgroup. However, the female graduates evidenced findings between school groups that were similar enough to retain the null hypothesis.

For the overall faith position group, the *t*-test indicated a statistically significant difference and the null hypothesis was rejected. On the summary of faith position responses (see Table 4), 96% of the Christian school graduates rated their high school faith position alignments in the positive range (11% agree and 85% strongly agree). Comparatively, 86% of the secular school graduates rated their high school faith positions in the positive range (19% agree and 67% strongly agree).

For the male graduates there was a statistically significant difference in overall faith positions between school groups. Only 3% of the Christian school graduates responded in the negative range, selecting 1 and 2 ("strongly disagree" and "disagree"), compared to 19% of the secular school graduates. The breadth of the secular school standard deviation (1.012) indicated a fairly diverse set of responses within this group.

Table 4

Faith Position Questions: Summary Statistics

Group	Mean	SD	Reject*	
			t-test	chi square
Overall Faith Position			Y	Y
Christian	3.79	0.553		
Secular	3.48	0.871		
Male Overall Faith Position			Y	Y
Christian	3.81	0.492		
Secular	3.31	1.012		
Female Overall Faith Position			N	Y
Christian	3.78	0.585		
Secular	3.70	0.581		

Faith Position Questions: Summary Response Frequencies

	Response 1 & 2		Response 3 & 4		Sum of Responses
	n	%	n	%	
Overall	Faith Position				
Christian	25	4	538	96	563
Secular	64	14	409	86	473
Combined Responses	89	9	947	91	1036
Male Overall Faith Position					
Christian	7	3	196	97	203
Secular	51	19	214	81	265
Combined Responses	58	12	410	88	468
Female Overall Faith Position					
Christian	18	5	342	95	360
Secular	13	6	195	94	208
Combined Responses	31	5	537	95	568

*reject Ho
 $p \leq .05$

As previously mentioned, the findings were similar enough for the female graduates that there was no statistically significant difference between school groups. The Christian school graduates made positive faith position alignments 95% of the time, and the secular school females 94%. The mean and standard deviations for the females indicated comparative group consistency.

Individual questions. Data from individual value questions is presented in Table 5. Two faith position questions (15 and 33) accepted the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference between school groups. Question 15 (assisting in suicide of the terminally ill) in aggregate demonstrated that 96% of all respondents, regardless of their school of graduation, reject such a choice. Question 33 (life has little meaning without Christ) evidenced that 87% of the Christian school graduates embraced this faith position, while 80% of the secular school graduates selected the same positive alignment yielding 84% overall accepting such a faith position.

Two questions in this subgroup accepting the alternative hypothesis showed the greatest difference between respondent choices (34 and 39). On question 34 (seeking God's will), the majority of Christian school students responded positively (74%) that they had been seeking God's will while in high school (see Table 5). The majority of the secular school graduates responded negatively (55%), that they had not been seeking God's will in high school.

Among the Christian school graduates represented in question 39 (being "born again") 4%, or 2 individuals, indicated they did not embrace this faith position in high school. Comparatively, among the secular school graduates 18%, or 7 individuals, indicated that they did not embrace the position in their high school years. The number of responses in the disagreement range of choices 1 and 2 established the Christian school mean as 3.91 and a secular school mean of 3.44.

Table 5

Faith Position Questions: Item Statistics

Group	n	Response %		Mean	SD	Reject*	
		1 & 2	3 & 4			t-test	chi square
14. Abortion on Demand						Y	N
Christian	47	0	100	3.98	0.146		
Secular	40	5	95	3.83	0.501		
15. Assisted Suicide						N	N
Christian	47	4	96	3.81	0.495		
Secular	40	5	95	3.68	0.656		
16. Divorce						Y	N
Christian	47	4	96	3.51	0.585		
Secular	39	21	79	3.13	0.732		
33. No Meaning without Christ						N	Y
Christian	47	13	87	3.45	1.017		
Secular	40	20	80	3.20	0.883		
34. Sought Will of God						Y	Y
Christian	46	26	74	2.87	0.687		
Secular	40	55	45	2.40	0.928		
35. Bible is Inspired Word of God						Y	Y
Christian	47	0	100	3.96	0.204		
Secular	39	5	95	3.64	0.743		
36. There is Eternal Life						Y	N
Christian	47	0	100	4.00	0.000		
Secular	39	5	95	3.74	0.715		

37. Jesus is Son of God						Y	N
Christian	47	0	100	4.00	0.000		
Secular	39	8	92	3.72	0.759		
38. Salvation is Faith in Jesus						Y	Y
Christian	47	0	100	4.00	0.000		
Secular	39	10	90	3.62	0.877		
39. You were "Born Again"						Y	Y
Christian	47	4	96	3.91	0.408		
Secular	39	18	82	3.44	1.071		
40. Biblical Miracles Happened						Y	Y
Christian	47	2	98	3.96	0.292		
Secular	39	5	95	3.67	0.737		
41. Jesus Died and Rose Again						Y	Y
Christian	47	0	100	4.00	0.000		
Secular	39	5	95	3.72	0.724		

*reject Ho
 $p \leq .05$

Behaviors of Religiosity Questions

Questions 17-31 address the respondents' views of their religious behaviors. A religious behavior is an external application of religious beliefs. In this research setting it is how one exercises specific behaviors deemed to be consistent with Christian teaching.

Summary results. On the overall summary of the questions on behaviors of religiosity (see Table 6), the *t*-test of statistical significance allowed rejection of the null hypothesis at the $p \leq .05$ level. This null hypothesis rejection holds statistically true for the male subgroup as well. However, the female graduates evidence findings between school groups that were similar enough to retain the null hypothesis. The standard deviations indicated a broad range of responses for this group.

Overall, indications are that the freshman population rated their religious behaviors during high school generally in the positive range (3 and 4); 61% of the Christian school graduates and 47% of the secular school graduates responded this way (see Table 6).

Individual questions. Data from individual value questions is presented in Table 7. Five religious behavior questions (17, 23, 27, 28, and 29) do not evidence a statistically significant difference and therefore accept the null hypothesis. In these questions, the differences in means are minor, ranging from .04 to .24. Question 27 (reading literature about one's faith) had the closest alignment of means. A strong majority in each school group (68% and 65%) demonstrated limited interest in reading religious literature about their faith. The standard deviations indicated a fairly diverse set of responses within both groups.

Table 6

Religiosity Questions: Summary Statistics

Group	Mean	SD	Reject*	
			t-test	chi square
Overall Religiosity			Y	Y
Christian	2.86	1.002		
Secular	2.47	1.167		
Male Overall Faith Position			Y	Y
Christian	2.86	1.006		
Secular	2.20	1.143		
Female Overall Faith Position			N	Y
Christian	2.86	1.000		
Secular	2.80	1.113		

Religiosity Questions: Summary Response Frequencies

	Response 1 & 2		Response 3 & 4		Sum of Responses
	n	%	n	%	
Overall Religiosity					
Christian	291	39	458	61	749
Secular	316	53	285	47	601
Combined Responses	607	45	743	55	1350
Male Overall Religiosity					
Christian	93	36	162	64	255
Secular	207	62	126	38	333
Combined Responses	300	51	288	49	588
Female Overall Religiosity					
Christian	198	40	296	60	494
Secular	109	41	159	59	268
Combined Responses	307	40	455	60	762

*reject Ho
 $p \leq .05$

Table 7

Religiosity Questions: Item Statistics

Group	n	Response %		Mean	SD	Reject*	
		1 & 2	3 & 4			t-test	chi square
17. Religious-Minded						N	N
Christian	47	34	66	2.87	0.850		
Secular	40	35	65	2.68	1.047		
18. Percentage of Money Given						Y	Y
Christian	47	23	77	3.04	0.721		
Secular	40	55	45	2.45	1.085		
19. Attend Religious Services						Y	Y
Christian	45	0	100	4.00	0.000		
Secular	40	23	77	3.30	1.181		
20. Pray Before Meals						Y	Y
Christian	47	11	89	3.62	0.677		
Secular	40	50	50	2.55	1.218		
21. Pray Other than Church						Y	Y
Christian	47	13	87	3.34	0.700		
Secular	40	53	47	2.63	1.079		
22. Read the Bible						Y	Y
Christian	47	34	66	2.87	0.797		
Secular	40	55	45	2.40	1.081		
23. Witness and Share Faith						N	N
Christian	47	83	17	1.89	0.729		
Secular	39	87	13	1.74	0.880		
24. Share of Christian Life						Y	Y
Christian	47	56	44	2.51	0.856		
Secular	40	70	30	2.05	1.037		

25. Ask Forgiveness for Sins						Y	N
Christian	47	26	74	3.13	0.850		
Secular	40	42	58	2.70	1.043		
26. Felt God Answered Prayers						Y	Y
Christian	47	28	72	3.06	0.791		
Secular	40	45	55	2.58	1.059		
27. Read about Faith						N	N
Christian	47	68	32	2.04	1.021		
Secular	40	65	35	2.00	1.062		
28. Attend Bible Study						N	N
Christian	47	53	47	2.49	1.159		
Secular	40	65	35	2.20	1.224		
29. Lead Church Activity						N	N
Christian	47	60	40	2.23	1.146		
Secular	40	57	43	2.40	1.236		
30. Participate in Church Activities						Y	N
Christian	47	11	89	3.55	0.802		
Secular	40	32	68	2.98	1.209		
31. Parents Talk about Values and Faith						Y	Y
Christian	47	26	74	3.02	0.847		
Secular	39	51	49	2.44	1.314		

*reject Ho
 $p \leq .05$

Eight religious behavior questions evidenced a statistically significant difference and, therefore, accepted the alternative hypothesis, although three (19-21) evidenced the greatest difference between respondents. The greatest difference was found on question 20 (praying before meals). The majority of Christian school students (89%) responded positively that they prayed before meals while in high school, while 50% of the secular school graduates responded positively in the 3 and 4 range.

The second greatest difference was question 21 (praying in places other than church). A small majority of the secular school graduates (53%) reported that they did not pray outside of church, while a large majority (87%) of the Christian school graduates reported that they did.

The third question which evidenced a strong difference in responses from the school groups was question number 19 (attendance at religious services). All of the Christian school graduates indicated that they had faithfully attended church while in high school. The secular school graduates also reported faithfulness, but not to as great a degree (77%).

Another question of interest (31) asked: “How often did your parents talk with you about Christian values and faith?” A large majority of Christian school graduates (74%) had parents that spoke to them “quite often” or “very often”; slightly less than half (49%) of the secular school graduates reported similar responses, but the standard deviation indicated great diversity among the respondents.

Overall Analysis

All structured Likert-type questions were considered as a unit for the purpose of this analysis and the data presented in Table 8. Non-statistical review of the open-ended narrative questions follows this analysis.

Table 8

All Questions: Summary Statistics

Group	n	Response %		Mean	SD	Reject*	
		1 & 2	3 & 4			t-test	chi square
Overall Questions						Y	Y
Christian	1698	23	77	3.27	0.955		
Secular	1386	35	65	2.94	1.149		
Overall Male Questions						Y	Y
Christian	595	22	78	3.28	0.969		
Secular	770	42	58	2.72	1.210		
Overall Female Questions						N	N
Christian	1103	24	76	3.27	0.948		
Secular	616	25	75	3.20	1.006		

*reject Ho
 $p \leq .05$

Summary results. On the total survey (see Table 8), the *t*-test of statistical significance allowed rejection of the null hypothesis at the $p \leq .05$ level for the overall group, as well as for the male subgroup. The responses demonstrated a tendency toward the positive moral end of the scale with 77% and 65% positive responses by Christian school and secular school graduates respectively. Faith position questions had the greatest number of positive responses, and religious behavior questions had the least.

Subgroup results. While Christian school graduates reported 77% of their responses in the positive range, there was a considerable difference between the two. The male secular school graduates' positive responses were slightly above half (58%) producing a standard deviation of 1.149.

The female freshmen, on the other hand, were aligned so closely in their responses that there was no statistical difference, and the null hypothesis was retained. The two groups were only 1% apart in their total positive responses with 76% for the Christian high school females and 75% for the secular high school females.

Descriptive Questions

To permit open disclosure of influences leading to moral understandings and value decisions, the respondents were asked to respond to two open-ended concluding questions. Most students answered the two questions. Question 42 sought information on what factors in the students' environments had an influence on their values. Question 43 sought information on what factors contributed to their enrollment in Bible college. The most often repeated concepts or factors which exercised influence were extracted from the student narratives and summarized in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9

*Frequency Count of Influence Factors**Question 42: During your high school years, what was the strongest influence on your values?*

	All Graduates		Male Graduates		Female Graduates	
	n*	%	n*	%	n*	%
Christian School Graduates						
Family	22	29	5	22	17	33
Pastor	19	25	9	39	10	19
Peers	14	19	5	22	9	17
Teacher	10	13	1	4	9	17
Personal Faith	8	11	3	13	5	10
Environment	2	3	0	0	2	4
Totals	75	100	23	100	52	0.0
Secular School Graduates						
Pastor	16	28	7	24	9	32
Family	15	26	5	17	10	36
Peers	13	22	9	30	4	14
Environment	6	10	4	13	2	7
Personal Faith	5	9	4	13	1	4
Teacher	3	5	1	3	2	7
Totals	58	100	30	100	28	100

*Response totals vary widely among categories and between questions due to open ended voluntary responses.

Table 10

Frequency Count of Influence Factors

Question 43: Recalling your high school years, describe briefly what was the strongest influence causing you to enroll in Bible college.

	All Graduates		Male Graduates		Female Graduates	
	n*	%	n*	%	n*	%
Christian School Graduates						
Personal Faith	28	44	11	55	17	38
Family	13	20	3	15	10	23
Environment	12	19	2	10	10	23
Pastor	7	11	3	15	4	9
Peers	3	4	0	0	3	7
Teacher	1	2	1	5	0	0
Totals	54	100	30	100	44	0.0
Secular School Graduates						
Personal Faith	23	44	13	50	10	38
Environment	12	23	5	19	7	27
Family	7	13.5	4	15	3	12
Pastor	7	13.5	3	12	4	15
Peers	2	4	1	4	1	4
Teacher	1	2	0	0	1	4
Totals	50	100	26	100	28	100

*Response totals vary widely among categories and between questions due to open ended voluntary responses.

Summary Results. Six factors referenced most often as influential on values are family, peers, pastor, teacher, personal faith, and environment (see Table 9). The top three factors, regardless of the school of graduation, are family, peers, and pastors although the order varies slightly from school to school. From the other factors, 13% of Christian school graduates, but only 5% of the secular school graduates, said their teachers were influential. Additionally, 10% of the secular graduates, but only 3% of the Christian school graduates, referenced the environment as influential.

The same six factors were mentioned as influential in the decision to enroll in a Bible college (see Table 10). Again, the top three factors were the same for both sets of graduates. In this question, they are personal faith, environment, and family. The secular school graduates had pastors and family tied for the third greatest influence. Peers and teachers rated a combined influence of 6% of the total in each school group.

Subgroup results. When reviewing the responses by gender on influences on values in the students' lives (Table 9), the influence of peers, personal faith, and environment were similar for the two groups of Christian school graduates. However, more males (39%) reported that their values had been influenced by a pastor than did females (19%). On the other hand, more females (17%) were influenced by a teacher than males (4%). Among secular school graduates, 36% of the females claim family influence as compared to 17% of the males. Also, 30% of the males claim peer influence as compared to 14% of the females.

The influences leading the enrollment in Bible college had considerable disparity between genders. For example, 23% of the Christian school females were influenced by

their environment, compared to 10% of the males. The most frequently mentioned factor for males (55% of the Christian school males and 50% of the secular school males) was their personal journey of faith.

One additional method employed in evaluating the open-ended questions was a count of the number times a word or concept which indicated influence was used in the narratives. This data is reported in frequency order in Table 11. Many of the frequency counts are roughly comparable for both school groups with a few exceptions. The words *parents*, *mom*, and *dad* were mentioned 28 times by Christian school graduates and only 15 times by secular school graduates. The word *teacher* was mentioned 10 times by Christian school graduates and only 2 times by secular school graduates. The overwhelming majority of the words (98.5%) related to positive influences. However, the negative influence factors of drugs and alcohol were mentioned by secular school graduates in 3% of their responses.

Conclusion

The findings point to a statistically significant difference between the Christian and secular school groups overall as demonstrated by overall means (3.27-Christian; 2.94-secular). The general orientation of student decision making toward or away from positive moral choices proved to be toward the positive choices. The freshman student choices established overall means for each of the three groups of questions. The group means in numerical order are: faith positions (3.79-Christian; 3.48-secular), moral values (3.31-Christian; 3.01-secular), and religious behaviors (2.86-Christian; 2.47-secular).

Table 11

Word Count for Influence Factors: Questions 42 and 43 Combined

	All Graduates	%	Christian	%	Secular	%
Parents, Mom, Dad	43	19.5	28	23	15	15
Friends	33	15	15	12.5	18	18
God, Bible	32	14.5	18	15	14	14
God's Will, Leadership, Prayer	29	13	15	12.5	14	14
Church	24	11	12	10	12	12
Youth Pastor	14	6	9	7.5	5	5
Family (various titles)	12	5.5	6	5	6	6
Ministry	12	5.5	5	4	7	7
Teacher	12	5.5	10	8	2	2
Pastor	7	3	3	2.5	4	4
Drugs, Alcohol	3	1.5	0	0	3	3
Totals	221	100	121	100	100	100

The strength of the statistical difference was carried by the males who registered greater diversity of responses. The females in each question group were very similar in response between school groups. The broad view of data rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

At Trinity Baptist College, every incoming student claims to be in agreement with the college doctrinal statement which includes faith positions (Appendix A). They also claim agreement with the college Standard of Conduct (Appendix B). Along with their signed agreement, it would be helpful to survey the incoming freshman regarding the type of high school they graduated from and their personal positions on moral values and attitudes.

To this end this study was conducted to find an effective instrument and method for evaluating incoming freshmen. The researcher sought out two survey instruments, with a history of research application, touching on values, faith positions, and religious behaviors which could be adapted to this research effort. Two survey instruments, the Missionary Kids Values Scales (Sharp, 1990, as reported in *Measures Of Religiosity* by Hill & Hood, 1999) and the Christian Moral Values Scale (Francis & Greer, 1992, as reported in Hill & Hood, 1999), were selected, and the original authors gave permission to use the surveys as is or with adaptation. The two instruments were modified to produce one instrument titled the Freshman Values Survey (Appendix E), and this was evaluated for face validity by a panel of experts (Appendix D).

Review of the Literature

Literature addressing the context of value influence on high school youth was reviewed in relation to social and religious theories that touch on moral development (Gorsuch, 1994; Maynard et al., 2001; Mellor & Andre, 1980; Ortberg et al., 2001; Pedersen et al., 2000; Schaefer & Gorsuch, 1993). Additionally, the researcher reviewed

moral cognition theory (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Hanson, 1991; Langford & Lovegrove, 1994; Morris & Maisto, 1999; Norman et al., 1998; Ortberg et al., 2001; Rest et al., 2000; Rokeach, 1969) because of its contemporary application in school settings, which seek to achieve agreement with court directives for becoming value neutral schools upholding the separation of church and state (Fledderjohann, 2000; Host et al., 1998).

The literature addressing the application of values in contemporary cultural and educational practice was reviewed due to its impact on youth (Ashton & Watson, 1998; DiGiacomo, 2000; Heischman, 1991). Finally, evangelical attitudes among adolescents in the high school years (Donahue & Benson, 1995; Jeynes, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2000; Peshkin, 1986; Smith, 2003), as well as in the private college setting (Nelson, 2000; Yancey, 2000), were reviewed since the research population chose to matriculate at a Bible college and this choice alone indicates evangelical influences on personal decision making.

Research Methods

The researcher used a convenience sample of incoming freshmen at Trinity Baptist College and administered the Freshman Values Survey. Two independent variables were established—graduates of Christian high schools and graduates of secular high schools. The survey data were evaluated for statistical significance.

The *t*-test was applied as the primary measure of statistical significance between the two independent variables. In addition to the *t*-test, the researcher calculated means and standard deviations for each survey question, sub-groups of questions, and the overall aggregate of questions. The chi square test of independence was also calculated as comparison to the primary statistical measure.

Conclusions

Demographics

Nearly half of the freshman participating in the survey (46%) report that they graduated from a Christian high school and of that number a very strong 64% is female, while just under half of the secular graduates (45%) are female. The strength of female numbers (56% overall) is important in that they share very similar moral attitudes and behaviors regardless of the type of school from which they graduated. The similarity of the female responses leans strongly toward evangelical value positions.

Another factor disclosed by the demographics which may impact evangelical values and attitudes is that most of the Christian school graduates (64%) are from very small schools, while most of the secular school freshmen (78%) are from large schools with 151 or more in the graduating class. Secular school graduates are from school environments with large populations and non-selective enrollments; therefore, they had been exposed to greater diversity in value influences than the graduates from small Christian schools with fairly homogeneous evangelical influences present due to selective enrollment.

An additional factor reveals that 76% of the freshman are 18 or 19 years old, suggesting that they have recently been under parental influence. Family influence ranks 1 and 2 as the strongest factors of influence on evangelical values noted in the open-ended questions for both Christian and secular school graduates. A survey comment from a young lady about her reason for coming to a Bible college is typical of several, "My parents wanted me to pray about going at least for one year, and I felt it was God's will."

Survey Questions

The 35 Likert-type questions were divided into three subgroups for analysis—value questions, faith positions questions, and religious behavior questions. The question responses 3 and 4 indicated a positive response in the direction of evangelical religiosity, while responses 1 and 2 indicated a negative response direction. When a set of comparative numbers are used in this summary, the first number refers to Christian school graduates and the second to secular school graduates. The gross findings reveal that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups of high school graduates in most subgroups of questions and in most individual questions.

Value Questions

The value questions (questions 7-13) addressed issues that are relevant to the lifestyle choices of adolescents; overall, the alternative hypothesis was accepted for the value questions. Christian school graduates evidenced significantly more positive choices relating to values than secular school graduates. In spite of overall significance, there was little difference between the females in the two groups. However, there was a larger spread among the males, with Christian and secular school males making decisions on both ends of the moral continuum. The males evidenced greater influence from both secular and evangelical moral values than did the females.

Some individual questions found no significant difference between the groups, such as the nearly unanimous agreement of all respondents (100% and 92%) that viewing Internet pornography is morally wrong. Another question (burning copyrighted music) found both groups of graduates selecting the negative moral responses.

Other individual questions found a significant difference between the two groups. Although many students in both groups would lie for a friend and did not question its moral negativity, there was a significant difference between the groups (36% and 51%). Although the majority of both groups felt that using illegal drugs is wrong, (100% and 80%), there was again a significant difference. It is suggested by the response to these two questions that there are influence factors in the life of the Christian school graduate that aid understanding and move the graduate closer to making positive moral decisions.

Faith Position Questions

The faith position questions (questions 14-16 and 34-41) addressed issues in the practical life of the adolescent that tend to be linked to one's faith. Overall, the alternative hypothesis was also accepted for these questions. This is evidenced by the fact that 10 of the 12 questions revealed a statistically significant difference between groups.

Many of the individual questions had strong positive responses. On 10 of the 12 questions, 96% of the Christian school group made choices in the strongly evangelical range, while only 5 showed similar choices by the secular school graduates. The difference in the strength of these responses indicates that the faith—the “alignment of the heart or will” (Fowler, 1995, p. 11)—of the secular school graduates, possibly due to value neutrality in schools (Ashton & Watson, 1998), did not develop the strength of convictions realized by the Christian school graduates.

One individual question (34) did not receive strong positive responses from either group as evidenced by means below 3.00. In spite of this, there was still a significant difference between the groups. Of the Christian school graduates, nearly 30% more were

active in seeking God's will. I would suggest that this contributes to the greater enrollment of freshman graduates from Christian schools.

An open-ended question (43) asked about factors influencing Bible college enrollment. The comments of secular school graduates reflected a lack of school house influence. A female wrote, "My personal life, I needed a change, something different—life changing." Another female student wrote that she was "wanting to experience Christian friendships." A male shares, "High school did not influence my decision." In contrast a male Christian school graduate notes he came to Bible college because of "a desire to seek and know the will of God."

Religiosity Questions

The religiosity questions (questions 17-31) addressed issues of one's behaviors in the community that tend to give evidence of one's faith. These questions had a significant difference in the direction of evangelical behaviors, 61% to 47% for Christian school graduates. Overall, the alternative hypothesis was accepted for these questions although one-third did not evidence a statistical difference between the groups.

As a whole, the majority of the freshman (66% and 65%) felt they were religiously-minded in high school. However, in spite of this, very few (approximately 15%) attempted to share their faith with others, had an interest in reading about their faith, attended Bible studies, or exercised leadership in church activities, even though they gave evidence of very strong participation in church activities. Surprisingly, the secular school graduates exercised slightly more leadership in church and read more about their faith than their Christian school counterparts.

Many individual questions demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Some of these differences are highly instructive of how the Christian school student puts faith into action. For example, the question about the outward action of giving a tithe of their income showed a 77% to 45% difference. Additionally, the question on Bible reading indicated a 66% to 45% difference.

Furthermore, questions about prayer showed other significant differences. Approximately 88% of Christian school graduates reported that they pray, and 72% felt that God answered their prayers. However, of the secular school graduates, only about 48% said they prayed, and 55% felt their prayers were answered. Prayer was also included as a factor in the decision to attend a Bible college, especially among the Christian school graduates. More than one-half of the males and one-third of the females made comments (question 43) such as, "It was God's leading," and "I felt that God wanted me in this particular college." On the other hand, only one-fourth of the secular school graduates (both males and females) made similar comments, "God gave me a strong desire," and "I felt called to serve."

It is of interest that the Christian school males wrote about sensitivity to God at a rate of nearly twice that of their female counterparts. Even though the males did not seem to be exercising leadership in their churches, they seemed to be quite sensitive to God's leadership in their life.

Finally, a statistically significant difference was found in the area of parental influence (question 31). Nearly three-fourths of Christian school graduates said their parents talked to them about values and faith, while slightly less than one-half of the secular school graduates noted positive parental communication. The indicator is clear,

parental involvement in value-laden communication is remembered by children, and, when morally positive, it will influence them toward morally positive behavior.

Summary

It is strongly indicated by the overall response to all questions that for this sample population of young adults, there is a totality of positive evangelical influence with statistical significance that is linked to graduating from a Christian high school. There is also evidence of an inoculation against making negative moral choices from this environment.

Recommendations

Recommendations for further research may be considered in four broad veins: research addressing the instrument's application to data collection, research with extant data, expanded use of the instrument with the current sample and other populations, and research on closely related topics.

The Instrument

This research has been conducted with a survey instrument, the Freshman Values Survey, which has been assembled from two other scales. The instrument has only been evaluated for face validity. The survey has produced first generation results, but these results cannot be verified as reliable based on any other research activity; therefore, the results carry the possibility of being inconclusive. It is recommended that the survey instrument undergo content and construct validity assessment. "Content validity refers to the adequacy with which an instrument measures a representative sample of behaviors and content domain about which inferences are to be made" (Ravid, 1994, p. 256). "Construct validity refers to the extent to which a test measures and provides accurate

information about a theoretical trait or characteristic. Construct validity is of interest mostly to psychologists and educators” (Ravid, p. 259).

Beyond validity evaluation, the survey instrument should be subjected to reliability assessment. “Reliability refers to the consistency of the measurement obtained for the same persons upon repeated testing. This consistency may be determined by using the same measure twice” (Ravid, 1994, p. 243). Reliability is a numerical assessment and is often evaluated by the developer of the instrument.

The single use of this survey may be inconclusive and of marginal use as a decision-making tool. Further work with the survey should be conducted in a test-retest assessment at Trinity Baptist College. Completion of validity and reliability evaluation would produce an instrument that would be useful with similar populations in other Bible colleges.

Use of Data Collected

Further research is needed and should be conducted by working with the data collected on “other” graduates. Information was collected and statistical analyses were completed with this group, but the review of this material was beyond the scope of the research question. It would be highly instructive to understand the dynamics of moral values, faith positions, and religious behaviors for the group of graduates from non-traditional and home school programs, as compared to the Christian school and secular school graduates.

Expanded Uses

A database has been produced that documents the moral attitudes and behaviors of a specific sample population prior to its entry into the Bible college environment. With

this information available, the survey could be modified in its wording to provide a measure of current moral attitudes, faith positions, and behaviors of religiosity, thereby providing a spiritual achievement test for evaluation of successive cohorts.

The survey instrument could be modified slightly and administered to graduating seniors from Christian schools as a test of gained values, faith positions, and behaviors. It would be a tool for Christian school teachers, guidance personnel, and administrators to use as an exit assessment by which to gauge the overall effectiveness of the influence of the Christian school.

Related Topics

Family religiosity. Research would be useful which evaluated the family histories of the evangelical college population for the purpose of determining the private expressions of religiosity within the family which exercise influence on strategic personal decision making, in relation to knowing God's will during adolescence. Additional research would be helpful to determine the extent to which family spiritual values and religious behaviors interact with institutional spiritual values and priorities in making decisions about Christian education at the secondary and post-secondary level.

Christian education. Within the Christian school movement a research project contributing new information to the design of moral training programs would be useful. Administrators need clear identification of the curricular and extra-curricular factors which influence students to make positive moral decisions on culturally-relevant issues. By way of example, students will reject illegal drugs and abortion while making negative moral decisions on personally relevant moral choices such as lying and burning copyrighted music.

Additionally, in view of the fact that Christian schools are enrollment selective, a research project would be helpful in determining if school size and the attendant school atmosphere has a positive, negative, or neutral influence on evangelical value adoption.

Gender differences. One of the most persistent features on the data landscape is that the males in each of the three major research categories demonstrated a statistically significant difference based on their school of graduation. As companion data, the females in each category did not demonstrate a statistically significant difference. The gender difference in value adoption is a rich area for further research in Christian education.

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Appendix A
Doctrinal Statement

Appendix A

Doctrinal Statement

The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men and supernaturally inspired; that it is truth without any admixture of error for its matter; and therefore is and shall remain to the end of the age the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried. By “The Holy Bible” we mean that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not only contain and convey the Word of God but is the very Word of God. By “inspiration” we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21). We also believe that the King James Version of the Bible is the divinely preserved Word of God for the English-speaking people (Psalm 12:6-7) and that it has enjoyed a miraculous manifestation of God's approval all during its history and use.

The True God

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God and infinite, intelligent Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 90); that He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love; that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption and in the accomplishment of His eternal plan and purpose (I John 5:6-12).

The Son

We believe that Jesus Christ, eternal with the Father, was begotten of the Holy Ghost and in miraculous manner; that He was born of Mary, a virgin, as no other person was ever born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son (I John 1:1, 2). He is both true man, one person with two natures, tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (Isaiah 7:14; Hebrews 4:14-17).

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; eternal and equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same essence (I John 5:7); that He was active in the creation (Genesis 1:2); that in the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness; that He bears witness of the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the new birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, bears witnesses with, sanctifies, and helps the believer (John 16:7; Romans 8:14-27). Using Acts 1:8 as our criteria for evaluation, we believe that the evidence of the fullness the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is boldness to witness for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Satan or the Devil

We believe that Satan was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, he fell and drew after him a host of angels and is now the malignant prince of the power of the air and the unholy god of this world (Ezekiel 28:12-17; Isaiah 14:12-25). We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and Jesus Christ, the accuser of the brethren, the author of all false religions, the chief source of the present apostasy, the lord of the anti-christ, and the author of all of the powers of

darkness (I Peter 5:8, 9); destined, however, to final defeat at the hands of God's Son and the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire, a place prepared for him and for his angels as well as all of the unbelievers of the ages (Revelation 20:10).

The Creation

We believe that the Genesis account of creation is to be accepted literally and not allegorically or figuratively (Genesis 1); that the creation was accomplished in six (6), twenty-four (24) hour days (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:2; Exodus 20:11); that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness (Genesis 1:26, 27); that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms; that all animal and vegetable life were made directly by God, and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind." We deny any form of atheistic or theistic evolution (Romans 1:19, 20).

The Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in innocency under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression, he fell from his sinless and happy state of perfection (Genesis 3), in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse and are guilty before God (Romans 5:12; Psalm 51:5; Romans 3).

The Atonement for Sin

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God who by the appointment of the Father freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin and honored the divine law by His personal obedience and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement was not merely

an example but was the voluntary substitution enthroned in Heaven and is uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Saviour (Hebrews 2:9; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 10:4-14).

The New Birth

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is the new creation in Jesus Christ (John 3:3, 5); that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God (Ephesians 2:8, 9); that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel (John 1:13; Titus 3:5); that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith in newness of life (Galatians 5:22-25).

Justification

We believe that the great Gospel which Christ secures to such as believe in Him provides justification; that justification declares the sinner righteous through the merits of Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21-26) and this divine pardon is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, and that His righteousness is imputed unto us; that through justification we have peace with God (Romans 5:1, 9).

Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations and also inseparable graces wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and being convinced of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time, we heartily receive the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confess Him as our only and all-sufficient Saviour (Jeremiah 8:6; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:9-11).

The Church

We believe that a New Testament church is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers of ordination are pastors or elders and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures (I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9); we believe the true mission of the church is found in the “Great Commission” which instructs us first, to make individual disciples (Matthew 28:19, 20); second, to baptize the converts; and third, to teach and instruct as He commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order.

We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that Christ is the Head of the church and superintends over the work of the local church through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:19-23); that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel (Jude 3); that every church is

sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, and that the will of the local Church is final (Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 5:29; I Corinthians 6:1-8). We are opposed to the ecumenical movement, neo-orthodoxy, new evangelicalism, liberalism, and modernism that emphasizes an unequal yoke with unbelievers, experience over Biblical truth, higher criticism that weakens inerrancy of the scriptures, social application of the gospel, and any other beliefs which abandon the historic fundamentals of the Christian faith in an attempt to accommodate Biblical Christianity and make it more acceptable to the modern mind.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that New Testament baptism is the immersion in water of a born-again believer in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the authority and approval of the local church to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, as it pictures our death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Matthew 28:19, 20); that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of church membership and to the observing of the Lord's Supper.

We believe the Lord's Supper should always be preceded by solemn self-examination and that the sacred use of unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ until He returns (Matthew 26:26-29; I Corinthians 11:30). The prerequisites to participation in the Lord's Supper are those laid down by Christ and his apostles as a church ordinance that include (1) Salvation (I Corinthians 11:27-29), (2) Baptism (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41, 46), (3) Church membership (Acts 2:46-47; I Corinthians 11:18, 22), and (4) an orderly walk (I Corinthians 11:27-29). A disorderly walk designates a course of life in a church member which is

contrary to the precepts of the gospel including immoral conduct, disobedience to the commands of Christ, heresy (teaching false doctrine), and schism or promotion of division and dissension in the church. The New Testament accounts indicate that the Lord's Supper was observed only at regular appointed meetings of local churches and thus we believe that the scrutiny of qualifications for participation in the Lord's Supper rests with the same body.

The Security of the Believer

We believe that the preserving attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes true believers from superficial professors; that it is a work of God the Father (John 10:28, 29; Romans 8:30), God the Son (Romans 8:34; I John 2:1), and God the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30); and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation (I Peter 1:5). We believe that God's eternal election and predestination guarantee their ultimate conformity to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29).

The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem (Romans 8:1-10); all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse (Romans 3:19-23), and this distinction holds among men both in life and after death in the everlasting conscious blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost (Revelation 20:11-15).

Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for (I Timothy 2:1-3), conscientiously

honored and obeyed except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Lord of conscience, the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth (Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1-5).

The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is coming again in the air at any moment to catch up all born again believers and to reward their service (I Thessalonians 4:15-17; I Corinthians 3:11-14); the unbelievers left behind will go through a seven year period called the Tribulation, after which Christ shall return visibly to the earth to set up His kingdom of 1, 000 years of righteous rule; after this, the unbelievers of all ages will stand at the Great White Throne to be judged and cast into the lake of fire, separated from God forever, while the believers spend eternity in the fullness of joy and in the presence of our Lord forever (Revelation 20:11-15).

Missions and Missionaries

We believe that all men everywhere are lost and condemned and that the command to go and preach the Gospel to the world is clear and unmistakable and that this commission was given to the churches. Following New Testament precedent and example, we believe that all missionary endeavors should be under the ultimate sponsorship of the local congregation and that no mission board should ever misconstrue its purpose to attempt to hold or to assign authority to itself (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 13).

The Grace of Giving

We believe that God's method of financing His earthly work of spreading the Gospel to all nations, the care of the churches and the support of the ministry, is by the tithes and offerings of God's people. We believe that they are to be given to the Lord through His church or storehouse and are to be distributed as directed by the leadership of the Holy Spirit

as the need arises. We believe that the time to tithe is upon the first day of the week. We also believe that everyone is accountable to the Lord for a minimum standard of giving of one tenth of his income and that offerings are to be given above the tithe as God has prospered the individual (Malachi 3:8-10; I Corinthians 16:2).

Human Sexuality

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, tran-sexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9, Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9, I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that marriage was instituted by God to be a permanent union between a man and a woman and therefore we are opposed to same sex marriages. We further believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the Church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon (Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; I Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

Abortion and Euthanasia

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life.

Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5, &15; Luke 1:44).

We believe that life is sacred and any act of putting to death a person suffering from a distressing disease, illness or health problem from injury (euthanasia or mercy killing) for his own good is virtually an instance of self-deification usurping a right that belongs to God (Psalm 68:20; II Kings 5:7; Job 1:21; 2:6; Hebrews 9:27).

Lawsuits Between Believers

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members (Article IV, Arbitration of Disputes). We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (I Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32).

Appendix B
Standard of Conduct

Appendix B

Standard of Conduct

All students are required to sign the following Standard of Conduct: In this day of disappearing moral absolutes, it is imperative that all Christians be reminded that the Bible, as the revelation of God's truth, must determine not only doctrinal beliefs, but also lifestyle. In a changing world, the Christian has an unchanging standard—the Word of God. Trinity's STANDARD OF CONDUCT is based on the teachings and principles of Scripture, seeking to develop personal holiness and discipline exemplified in a lifestyle glorifying to God.

I understand that my involvement in, or my preparation for, Christian work requires my personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and separation from sin. I further realize that as a Trinity student, I represent the Lord Jesus Christ as well as the college. I am aware that Scripture denounces specific sins and attitudes which are to be avoided. In addition, I understand that certain types of activities are questionable and will avoid these activities as determined by the College for testimony's sake. As a member of the Trinity Baptist College family, I purpose, by God's grace, to follow Scriptural principles which will help protect myself, others, and this institution from destructive influences, false philosophies, and Satanic temptations. In that regard...

1. I believe that the ultimate priority in life is to know and love the Sovereign God! I purpose to glorify Him in all that I do, and seek to build my goals around His priorities as they are taught and revealed in His Word (Psalm 31:23, 119:2; Matthew 6:24-33; 22:34-40; John 4:23; Philippians 3:7- 10).

2. I consider my body to be the living temple of God and acknowledge His demand that my body be kept clean from sin and that it be daily set apart for His use (Romans 12:1, 2; II Corinthians 6:14-18; I Peter 1:14-16).
3. I regard marriage to be a Biblical and holy institution, and I will endeavor to conduct myself in such a manner so as to continually strengthen my home and marriage (if applicable) and the marriages of those around me (Genesis 2:21-25; Proverbs 6:32; Matthew 5:27, 28; Hebrews 13:4).
4. I purpose to guard my tongue and keep my words in harmony with the Word of God. I further intend to avoid gossip and unkind speech which is neither helpful nor necessary (Psalm 19:14; Proverbs 14:28; Luke 6:45; Ephesians 5:29-32; Philippians 4:8; James 1:19).
5. I endeavor to be faithful to Trinity Baptist Church (or other administration-approved churches) in the areas of prayer, attendance, service, and scriptural giving (Luke 18:1; Hebrews 10:25; Psalm 100:2; II Corinthians 9:6, 7).
6. I aspire to use my life as a positive, Godly testimony to those who know not Christ as Savior (Psalm 126:5, 6; Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 5:13-16; John 15:8).
7. I respect God-ordained authority in the church and college, and pledge myself to submit and pray for those in authority that they might function according to the principles, standards, and doctrines of God's Word (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13; I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7, 17).
8. I purpose that my activities and conduct will be used as a means of encouragement and growth to other believers, and in no way be used to weaken their biblical

convictions and/or hinder their spiritual progress (Proverbs 28:10; Matthew 18:6; Romans 14:13; I Corinthians 8:9-13).

9. I believe the Bible is God's inspired, infallible and preserved (KJV) Word and that it is to be taught and preached as such. I further acknowledge that God's Word is the final authority for my life (Psalm 19:7-9, 119:11, 44, 128, 167; II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20, 21).
10. I acknowledge that differences of opinion and/or misunderstandings easily surface under even the best of conditions. Because of this, I purpose to communicate openly, honestly, and lovingly with those I have offended or those who have offended me. I plan to follow the principles as given in the Word of God regarding such situations (Matthew 18:15-17; Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 4:6).
11. I understand the importance of maintaining a Godly testimony for Jesus Christ regarding appearance. I will abide by the dress code, as described in the student handbook (Colossians 3:17; I Timothy 2:9, 10; I Peter 3:1- 7).
12. I refuse to defile my mind with rock music and sinful and/or questionable literature, movies and television programs. I further promise to refrain from the use, possession, or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, and non-medicinal narcotic or hallucinogenic drugs. I acknowledge that gambling, dancing, hazing, mixed swimming, and all forms of sexual immorality will not be permitted (Psalm 101:3; Proverbs 19:27; 20:1; Habakkuk 2:15; Romans 12:21, 14:8; I Corinthians 10:31; II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:22; James 4:4).

I understand that the STANDARD OF CONDUCT is the guide to my behavior on and off campus for the time I am enrolled at Trinity Baptist College. While it is

recognized that personal preferences differ and that every member of the college community might not agree with every detail of these standards, I must honorably adhere to them. Such an attitude on my part is a way I can develop Christian discipline, exhibit Christian maturity, and demonstrate the love of Christ in concern both for the integrity of the college itself, as well as the personal welfare of other believers. Further, I understand that failure to cooperate in maintaining the Standard will lead to appropriate disciplinary action and/or possible dismissal.

Appendix C
Administration Instructions

Appendix C

Administration Instructions for Freshman Values Survey

My name is Clayton Lindstam, and I am the researcher for this survey. I want to introduce my assistant who will be administering the survey today. (Researcher explains concept of informed consent and leaves)

A research assistant distributes informed consent forms, and an assistant reads through the form with participants and answers any questions:

After all of you have completed the form, a research assistant will collect them from you. The assistant will count the forms and students in the room, place the forms in a document folder, write the number of forms on the envelope, and seal it. It will be kept off campus. (Assistant leaves the room with the envelope)

I (assistant) will be walking you through the steps on this survey to ensure complete understanding. It is very important that each of you follow these directions carefully. Each survey must remain anonymous; therefore, we ask that you not write any identifying information on the survey when you answer the final two descriptive questions. Please only circle answers on the survey.

If you have any questions at any time, please do not hesitate to seek my assistance by a raised hand. Please allow me to remind you that your participation is voluntary and as such you may suspend participation at any time, turn in your survey to a research assistant, and leave the room. Should the nature of a questions disturb you, you may speak to a student services dean should you so choose.

We are going to provide each of you with a survey face down. Do not turn the survey over until I instruct you to do so, and please do not discuss the survey during this session. (Provide each student with a survey.)

This survey should take about fifteen minutes to complete. I want to remind you that all of the answers on the survey will remain anonymous. Our researcher's aide will monitor, collect, and shuffle the surveys to ensure no linkage from a test to an individual. Now that each of you has his own survey, you may turn it over. Please do not write on the survey yet, and please do not write your name on the survey at any time.

This survey begins with a demographics section and then moves to content questions. Please follow along as I read the instructions.

“All responses must be anonymous. Do not write your name on the survey form. All responses will remain anonymous. Below are questions regarding yourself and your high school. Please circle the most appropriate answer.”

I am now going to walk you through the demographics section. Once I finish explaining a question, you may circle the appropriate answer, but please wait until I have finished before you circle an answer.

Question one asks for your gender. Please circle the appropriate answer.

On question number two, you are asked what type of school you graduated from. There are three options: Secular, Christian, and Other. In order to answer appropriately you will need a definition of each.

You should select “Christian” if your school of graduation meets two criteria. First, it must have a regularly scheduled class that is required for all students which teaches or uses the Bible as its topical focus. Second, it must have a regularly scheduled

chapel program required for all students. This includes Christian schools in the United States or on a mission field.

You should select “Secular” if your school of graduation was a public school, a Department of Defense school for military families, or any school which does not meet the two criteria for a Christian school. You should select “Other” if you graduated from a home school or any non-traditional school, such as a GED school program.

Question three asks you how many years you attended the school from which you graduated. Please circle the appropriate number range.

Question four asks you to circle the approximate number in your graduating class. Please circle that number now.

Question five asks how many years it has been since your graduation. Please mark that question now.

Question six asks your age range at the time of taking this test. Please circle the appropriate age now.

I want to remind you again not to write your name on the survey. It is very important that the answers remain anonymous. When you complete the form, please bring it up to me. I will review it for completion and return it to you. You will then place it in a closed, ballot-type box. When all participants have placed their surveys in the box, a research assistant will open the box in the presence of another staff person, shuffle the forms, count them, and give them to the researcher.

Please read all of the instructions carefully, take your time, and answer all of the remaining questions with total candor. I will be available for any questions. You may now begin.

Appendix D

Scale Revision and Face Validity

Appendix D

Scale Revision and Face Validity Review

Five faculty members were asked to serve in a voluntary capacity as a panel of experts to determine face validity for the revisions to the *Christian Moral Values Scale* (CMVS) and the *Missionary Kid's Value Scale* (MKVS). The faculty members were Valerie Riley, Ph.D., John Vadnal, Ph.D., Robert Kendall, Th.D., David Thompson, D.Min., and Michael Belk, Ed.D. The panel was asked to determine if the survey questions appeared to measure what they were intended to measure.

Each panel member was given a draft copy of the questions and asked to rate each item on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being low application to the item construct. The results of the first and second face validity reviews are reported in the table of Face Validity Central Tendency.

The researcher, being familiar with the original instruments (CMVS and MKVS), made the first revision to the original instruments prior to submitting the questions to the panel of experts. After the panel's first review, any questions rating lower than 4 were revised and resubmitted to the panel. After the second face validity review, all items achieved face validity ratings of 4.2 or greater. The revised MKVS scale's overall face validity improved from 4.26 in the first review to 4.53 and the revised CMVS scale's overall face validity improved from 4.28 in the first review to 4.62. The researcher judged this as acceptable, demonstrating that each of the items related to the construct measured.

Revised Scales - Face Validity Table of Central Tendency											Test Validity	
	Experts	1	2	3	4	5		1st rev		2nd rev	1st	2nd
	R-CMVS						totals	av	< 4.1	av	4.28	4.62
1	Gambling in a lottery.	3	5	4	5	5	22	4.4		4.4		
2	Drinking any alcoholic beverage.	4	2	5	3	5	19	3.8	X			
	Drinking any alcoholic beverage. (2nd)	5	5	5	5	5	25			5		
3	Viewing pornography on the Internet.	3	5	5	5	5	23	4.6		4.6		
4	Burning copyrighted music.	3	1	5	5	5	19	3.8	X			
	Burning copyrighted music. (2nd)	3	5	3	5	5	21			4.2		
5	Using Illegal drugs.	3	5	5	4	5	22	4.4		4.4		
6	Sexual activity before marriage.	3	4	4	4	5	20	4	X			
	Sexual activity before marriage. (2nd)	4	5	4	5	5	23			4.6		
7	Abortion on demand.	4	5	5	5	5	24	4.8		4.8		
8	Lying to protect a friend.	4	5	5	4	5	23	4.6		4.6		
9	Assisted suicide for terminally ill.	4	5	5	5	5	24	4.8		4.8		
10	Divorce	3	5	4	3	3	18	3.6	X			
	Divorce (2nd)	5	5	4	5	5	24			4.8		
	R-MKVS										4.26	4.53
11	Are you religious minded?	5	5	4	4	3	21	4.2		4.2		
12	What is your percentage of giving?	2	5	5	5	5	22	4.4		4.4		
13	Your attendance at religious services?	3	5	5	5	5	23	4.6		4.6		
14	Do you pray before meals?	5	5	5	5	5	25	5		5		
15	Do you pray other than in church?	4	2	5	4	5	20	4	X			
	Pray other than in church (2nd)	3	5	5	5	5	23			4.6		
16	Do you read the Bible?	5	5	5	5	5	25	5		5		
17	Do you Share faith with unbelievers?	4	5	5	5	5	24	4.8		4.8		
18	Share problems of joy and faith?	3	2	3	5	4	17	3.4	X			
	Share problems of joy and faith? (2nd)	4	5	5	5	3	22			4.4		
19	Do you ask forgiveness daily?	3	2	5	5	5	20	4	X			
	Do you ask forgiveness daily? (2nd)	5	4	5	4	5	23			4.6		
20	Do you have answered prayers?	4	5	5	3	5	22	4.4		4.4		
21	Read literature on faith or church ?	4	4	5	5	5	23	4.6		4.6		
22	Do you attend a Bible study?	3	4	5	5	5	22	4.4		4.4		
23	Do you Lead in church activity?	3	5	5	3	5	21	4.2		4.2		
24	Do you go to youth activities?	3	2	5	5	5	20	4	X			
	Do you go to youth activities? (2nd)	5	4	3	4	5	21			4.2		
25	Did parents talk about values?	3	3	5	5	5	21	4.2		4.2		
26	Does your faith gives meaning?	2	3	4	5	5	19	3.8	X			
	Does your faith gives meaning? (2nd)	5	5	5	5	4	24			4.8		
27	Christian values into life decisions?	2	2	3	5	5	17	3.4	X			
	values into life decisions? (2nd)	4	5	5	4	3	21			4.2		
28	Do you seek God's will?	2	5	4	5	5	21	4.2		4.2		
29	Is the Bible inspired?	4	3	5	4	5	21	4.2		4.2		
30	There is no eternal life?	4	5	5	5	3	22	4.4		4.4		
31	Jesus is son of God.	3	1	5	5	5	19	3.8	X			
	Jesus is son of God. (2nd)	5	5	5	4	5	24			4.8		
32	Salvation is through faith.	4	3	5	5	5	22	4.4		4.4		
33	Bible miracles are just stories.	4	2	5	5	3	19	3.8	X			
	Bible miracles are just stories. (2nd)	5	5	5	5	5	25			5		
34	You accept the basic gospel truth.	5	5	5	5	5	25	5		5		
Freshman Values Survey (combined R-CMVS & R-MKVS) face validity averages											4.26	4.55

Appendix E
Freshman Values Survey

Appendix E

FRESHMAN VALUES SURVEY

Adapted with permission from
 Christian Moral Values Scale by L. J. Francis & J. E. Greer 1990, 1992 and
 Missionary Kids Value Scale by L. W. Sharp 1998, 1990.

Directions for Students:

All responses must be anonymous. Do not write your name on the survey form. All responses will remain anonymous.

Below are questions regarding yourself and your high school. Please circle the most appropriate answer. All responses must be anonymous; please circle your answer.

1. Gender	Male	Female		
2. Type of high school	Secular	Christian	Other	
3. Years in that high school	One	Two	Three	Four
4. Approximate number in graduating class	1-25	26-75	76-150	151+
5. Years since graduation	This year	Last year	2-4 years	5+ years
6. Your age range	18	19	20	21+

Below are sets of behaviors, attitudes, and values. Please circle a number from 1 to 4 behind each item to tell us about your views. The “right” response is what you thought or believed about that behavior during your years in high school, not how you think or feel or act today. All responses must be anonymous; please circle your answers.

	Never wrong		Usually excusable		Usually wrong		Always wrong
	↓		↓		↓		↓
7. Gambling in a lottery	1		2		3		4
8. Drinking any alcoholic beverage	1		2		3		4
9. Viewing Internet pornography	1		2		3		4
10. Burning copyrighted music	1		2		3		4
11. Using illegal drugs	1		2		3		4
12. Sexual activity before marriage	1		2		3		4
13. Lying to protect a friend	1		2		3		4
14. Abortion on demand	1		2		3		4
15. Assisted suicide for terminally ill	1		2		3		4
16. Divorce	1		2		3		4

Religious activity and interests while in high school (circle your choice):

17. In general, how religious-minded would you say you were?
1. Less than average
 2. Average of my peers
 3. More than average
 4. Very religious-minded
18. During your senior year, approximately what percentage of your money was given to a church or to religious endeavor?
1. None
 2. Less than 10%
 3. 10% (tithing)
 4. More than 10%
19. Normally, during high school, how often did you attend religious services?
1. Rarely or almost never
 2. A few times per month
 3. One time per week
 4. Two times per week or more

<u>While in high school how often did you...</u>	Rarely/Never			
	↓	Occasionally ↓	Quite often ↓	Very often ↓
20. pray before meals?	1	2	3	4
21. pray in places other than at church?	1	2	3	4
22. read the Bible	1	2	3	4
23. personally try to witness and share your faith in God with unbelievers?	1	2	3	4
24. during your senior year, share with other believers				
25. the problems and joys of trying to live the Christian life?	1	2	3	4
25. ask forgiveness for daily sins (not salvation)?	1	2	3	4
26. feel God has answered your prayers?	1	2	3	4
27. read books or magazines about your faith, church or missions?	1	2	3	4
28. attend a Bible study other than an academic class?	1	2	3	4
29. lead a church activity (like teaching Sunday school)?	1	2	3	4
30. participate in church youth activities?	1	2	3	4

	Rarely/never	Occasionally	Quite often	Consistently
<u>While in high school how often did your parents...</u>	↓	↓	↓	↓
31. talk with you about Christian values and your faith?	1	2	3	4

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
<u>While in high school would you have agreed or disagreed...</u>	↓	↓	↓	↓
32. that it was very hard to carry your Christian values into all the decisions in life.	1	2	3	4
33. that without knowing the Lord as Savior the rest of your life would not have much meaning to it.	1	2	3	4
34. that you consistently sought the “will of God” for your life.	1	2	3	4

While in high school you believed...

35. the Bible is the literal inspired word of God	1	2	3	4
36. there is eternal life.	1	2	3	4
37. Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God.	1	2	3	4
38. salvation is attained through personal faith in Jesus.	1	2	3	4
39. that you had received Jesus and were “born again”	1	2	3	4
40. Biblical miracles are stories that actually happened.	1	2	3	4
41. Jesus was crucified, died, was buried, and on the third day rose from the dead.	1	2	3	4
42. During your high school years, what was the strongest influence on your developing your values?				
43. Recalling your high school years, describe briefly what was the strongest influence causing you to enroll in Bible college?				

Appendix F
Institutional Permission

Appendix F

June, 2005

Institutional Review Board,
Dr. William R. Clough, Committee Chair
Dr. Jim W. Reynolds, Committee Member
Argosy University—Sarasota Campus
5250 17th Street
Sarasota, FL 34235

RE: SURVEY ASSESSMENT OF SOCIOCULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUE
POSITIONS OF FRESHMEN AT TRINITY BAPTIST COLLEGE

To Whom It May Concern:

Trinity Baptist College carries a supportive interest in educational research. Trinity Baptist College gives permission for Clayton Lindstam to conduct research activities related to information collection with the incoming freshmen class in the fall semester of 2005.

The College understands the following parameters: 1. Freshman students will be a convenience sample for the research; 2. Student participation will be strictly voluntary; 3. Each student will be asked to sign a statement of informed consent; 4. Each student will know that Trinity Baptist College is not sponsoring the research but rather cooperating with it.

The College understands that the information collection process will be done so as to ensure anonymity of students and confidentiality of records.

Should there be any questions, please contact one of the undersigned Trinity Baptist College Administrators.

Dr. Charles T. Shoemaker
Executive Vice President
(904) 596 2414

Dr. John Vadnal
Academic Dean
(904) 596-2449

Mr. Michael Grover
Dean of Students
(904) 596 2300

Appendix G
Informed Consent Form

Appendix G

Informed Consent for Voluntary Participation in Educational Research at
Trinity Baptist College – Fall Semester 2005

I _____ do hereby attest that I am at least 18 years of age and
(printed student name)
voluntarily participating in an educational research survey as a student at Trinity Baptist
College.

I understand the following terms and conditions of this research:

1. All information collected on a survey form will remain anonymous.
2. The research is not sponsored by Trinity Baptist College.
3. Trinity Baptist College has made it clear that participation is not an official activity of student orientation. I am participating in a strictly voluntary capacity.
4. The research intent is collection of information about personal values, personal positions on social issues, and religious activities during one's high school years.
5. The college will receive a copy of the final results of the survey, and no results are linked to any individual student.
6. I am not being paid, provided with a gratuity, or have been promised an incentive for my participation.

Student Signature

Date

This consent form is not linked by name or number with any survey instrument, nor is it filed with any survey instruments.