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THE PERCEIVED NEEDS OF HIGH SCHOOL MALE
ADOLESCENTS AND THE IMPLICATIONS
FOR MENTORING ADOLESCENTS
OF DIVORCED PARENTS

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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by

Tod Bishop Tanner

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THE PERCEIVED NEEDS OF HIGH SCHOOL MALE
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OF DIVORCED PARENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
PREFACE	x
Chapter	
1. RESEARCH CONCERN	1
Introduction to Research Concern	1
Research Purpose	4
Delimitations of the Study	4
Research Questions	6
Terminology	6
Procedural Overview	10
Research Assumptions	11
2. PRECEDENT LITERATURE	13
Christ’s Model of Mentoring	13
Mentoring as a Youth Ministry Model.....	24
Created for Relationships	27
The Importance of Connecting.....	39

Chapter	Page
Developmental Changes of Adolescents	47
The Perceived Needs of Today's Adolescents	53
Benefits of Mentoring	60
The Effects of Divorce	71
Profile of the Current Study	80
3. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN	82
Research Questions.	83
Design Overview.	83
Population.	84
Sample.	84
Delimitations.	85
Limitations of Generalization.	85
Instrumentation.	87
Procedure	88
4. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS	92
Compilation Protocol	92
Findings and Displays.	95
Self-Reported Perceived Needs of High School Male Adolescents	95
Comparing the Perceived Needs of High School Male Adolescents from Divorced and Intact	98
Desire for Mentoring Relationships	112

Chapter	Page
Relationship Between Age and Relational Needs.	115
Research Design	127
5. CONCLUSIONS	130
Research Questions.	130
Research Conclusions.	137
Research Implications.	139
Research Applications.	146
Further Research	149
Appendix.	152
REFERENCE LIST	159

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Mean Score of the Self-Reported Perceived Needs of High school Male Adolescents Attending Sunday School	96
2. Median and Mode Score of the Self-Reported Perceived Needs of High School Male Adolescents Attending Sunday School	98
3. Comparative Numbers between Divorced and Intact Homes on Anger-Related Issues	100
4. Comparative Numbers between Divorced and Intact Homes on School Performance	104
5. Comparative Numbers between Divorced and Intact Homes on Relational Needs	106
6. Comparative Numbers between Divorced and Intact Homes on Mentoring Perception	110
7. Involvement in Mentoring Relationships	113
8. Overall Perception of Mentoring	114
9. Nature of the Relationship between Age and Anger-Related Issues	116
10. Nature of the Relationship between Age and School Performance	119
11. Nature of the Relationship between Age and Relational Needs	122

12. Nature of the Relationship between Age and Mentoring Perception	124
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Anger for Divorced Homes	102
2. Anger for Intact Homes	102
3. School Performance for Intact Homes	104
4. School Performance for Divorced Homes	105
5. Relational Needs for Intact Homes	108
6. Relational Needs for Divorced Homes	109
7. Mentoring Perception for Intact Homes	111
8. Mentoring Perception for Divorced Homes	112
9. Overall Perception of Mentoring	115
10. Anger Curve for Fifteen Year Olds	117
11. School Performance Curve for Fourteen Year Olds	120
12. School Performance Curve for Eighteen Year Olds	121
13. Relational Needs Curve for Fourteen Year Olds	123
14. Relational Needs Curve for Fifteen Year Olds	123
15. Mentoring Perception Curve for Sixteen Year Olds	125

16. Mentoring Perception Curve for Fifteen
Year Olds 126

PREFACE

I need to thank more people than this short section will allow. I want first to thank my wife, Deborah. I could not have done this without her constant support and prayers. When I wanted to quit, and this was more than once, she was always there to encourage me in what God was calling us to do.

I would also like to thank my mentor, David Walley. I am grateful for his continued encouragement. He walked with me through this process, and I will forever be grateful. He has been a friend and a constant source of encouragement throughout this entire process.

Finally, I want to thank my Savior, Jesus Christ. This process has taught me to walk with Him by faith and not by sight. It is my prayer that He would use this for His glory because He is the only One who is truly worthy.

Tod B. Tanner

Hendersonville, Tennessee

May 2003

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Divorce is something that affects not only those who are getting the divorce but also those who are involved in the family of the ones getting the divorce. One group of people affected by a divorce are adolescents whose parents choose to divorce. When this happens, the child can be affected in a number of different ways. There is, however, hope for adolescents whose parents divorce. One form of hope might be found in a mentor who chooses to connect with an adolescent at a specific point of need for the purpose of influencing that adolescent.

Research Concern

One expert in the sphere of mentoring defines mentoring as “a lifelong relationship, in which a mentor helps a protege reach her or his God-given potential” (Biehl 1996, 19). Mentoring can be used for several reasons. Some enter into mentoring relationships for the purpose of fulfilling a task at work or accomplishing a portion of a job description (Zachary 2000, 6). Others engage in mentoring relationships for the purpose of influencing someone else in his own personal journey of faith. Still others might use a mentoring relationship to develop either current or future leaders. No matter how a person chooses to view mentoring, a mentoring relationship provides the mentor an

outstanding opportunity to influence another. This influence has the potential of changing the manner in which a person thinks and behaves.

A number of studies have investigated the need for mentoring in an array of areas. Studies have been conducted to discover the benefits of mentoring relationships in the medical field and the educational field. The researcher did not find any current studies related to mentoring high school male adolescents whose parents have divorced. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to investigate possible implications for mentoring adolescents of divorced parents.

Perceived Needs

Recent surveys have revealed that teenagers have high stress levels. Issues such as the divorce of parents or the death of a parent cause the greatest amount of stress (Barna 1995, 19). The stress adolescents experience has influenced the way they develop their belief systems. Recent studies have revealed that fifty-six percent of male teenagers and sixty-six percent of female teenagers consider themselves to be committed Christians (Barna 2001, 49). Given this information, it is shocking to discover that fifty-three percent of all born-again Christian teenagers surveyed said that Jesus committed sin while He was here on Earth (Barna 2001, 124). The survey went on to reveal that fifty percent of the males surveyed and sixty-four percent of the females surveyed are still searching for meaning in life (Barna 2001, 48). This apparent lack of consistency in the beliefs of today's adolescents begins to reveal the importance of mentoring relationships between adults and teenagers.

When a divorce occurs in a home, all parties are affected. Regardless of when it occurs, adolescents will be impacted by a divorce during their teenage years. As adolescents begin to deal with the divorce of their parents, there are a few common questions or feelings some experience as they relate to the divorce:

I wonder if my parents will ever get back together again. I wonder if I did something to cause my parents' divorce. Does my dad really love me, and if he does why doesn't he visit very often? Is he really too busy? Why couldn't Mom stick with Dad just for my sake? I wonder what kind of parent and husband I will be, considering the fact that I've never really lived in a normal family. (Whiteman 2001, 47)

For those who are experiencing such questions resulting from a divorce, a mentoring relationship can be established to help them through this process, although mentors do not have to be involved in the programs and weekly activities that typically make up a youth ministry. Mentors can be adults in the church who get to know individual students on a one-on-one basis and seek to minister to them at their specific point of need (Rice 1998, 48). The needs of those who have experienced a parental divorce might be different from those needs of adolescents who are a part of intact homes; therefore, the mentors should be aware of these types of responses. As the mentor and protege begin to establish a relationship, the mentor will have the opportunity to influence his protege through this difficult time in his life which will have the potential of impacting the adolescent not only through the teenage years but also for the rest of his life.

Adolescent boys in today's society need help in becoming mature. Today's adolescents have fewer role models because of an increase in divorce and materialistic philosophies embraced by parents, resulting in feelings of loneliness, lack of effective

discipline, and a perceived lack of love from the perspective of the teenager. If mentoring relationships are introduced, adolescents can experience and benefit from more positive role models.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived needs of high school male adolescents and study possible implications for mentoring those of divorced parents.

Delimitations of the Study

This research was delimited in several ways. This section will communicate the specific delimitations of this study.

High School Male Adolescents

The first delimitation was the needs of male adolescents. During the adolescent years the needs of males are different from the needs of females. While females are primarily concerned with things that associate with relationships such as friends, appearance, and social acceptance, males are more concerned about task accomplishments, such as sports affiliations and grades (Black 1991, 92). Given this difference in needs, the researcher chose to focus on the needs of the male adolescent.

A second delimitation was the age group of the cluster of adolescents being studied. The researcher intentionally studied only *high school* male adolescents because of the developmental skill difference between high school and middle school adolescents. As young men mature from early adolescents to late adolescents, they experience significant changes. Late adolescents have the ability to think in abstract

concepts as opposed to simple concrete terms and have a better grasp in the area of social skills, resulting in better interaction with the opposite sex. Late adolescents also have a better understanding of their own personal faith and value system (Eldridge 1995, 242-45). The result of this increase in developmental skills is a greater understanding of one's perceived needs.

This study also specifically focused on the perceived needs of high school male adolescents of divorced parents. The Likert response scale survey measured the perceived needs of male students from both traditional homes and divorced homes. In doing this, the researcher investigated the needs of both groups in order to discover if there is any difference. While the conclusions from the research can be used to develop mentoring programs for both groups, the traditional family unit is beyond the scope of this study.

Mentoring Program

The final delimitation was the use of a mentoring program to meet the needs of high school male adolescents whose parents have divorced.

What exactly is a mentoring program? Simply put, it is an attempt to intentionally connect as many kids as possible with as many adult friends as possible who will encourage and guide them into adulthood. In a sense, it is to undo what the world has done and continues to do. (Rice 1998, 195)

Those who attempt to minister to adolescents can do so through a number of different programs. This project, however, focused on the use of mentoring as the primary method of meeting the perceived needs of high school male adolescents of divorced parents.

Those who do not believe mentoring to be an effective method of ministry will not find this study useful.

This mentoring program was also type specific and focused on a mentoring program from a Christian perspective. One author believes that “learning is the fundamental process and the primary purpose of mentoring” (Zachary 2000, 1). This study focused on learning the principles and concepts taught in the Bible. The result of this delimitation of a focus on Christian principles was that the mentor will have an opportunity to influence his protege in his personal walk with Christ. Those who do not believe in the principles and concepts taught in the Bible will not discover the findings of this research to be beneficial.

Research Questions

This study had four lines of inquiry.

1. What are the perceived needs self-reported by high school male adolescents attending Sunday school?
2. What are the similarities and differences between the perceived needs of high school male adolescents of divorced parents and those from nondivorced homes?
3. What are the perceptions of high school male adolescents concerning mentoring relationships?
4. What is the nature of the relationship between the age of high school male adolescents and their reported relational needs?

Terminology

Several terms warranted definitions as they related to this work and helped in providing a better understanding of the material presented.

Adolescents. For this dissertation the term adolescent represented young people ranging in age from 13 through 18. This dissertation used adolescent, youth, student, teenager, and young person interchangeably.

A young person enters into adolescence once he begins to experience the changes associated with puberty. Puberty is a complex set of biological and chemical changes in a person's body that mark the end of childhood and the beginning of the transition from childhood toward adulthood. Girls typically begin this process between the ages of 11 and 12, while boys typically begin between the ages of 13 and 14 (Black 1991, 88).

Discipleship. Discipleship, for the purpose of this study, was defined as a process that occurs as an individual is equipped through completing a specific study (Welch 1997, 66). Examples of this might be the completion of a church training class such as FAITH, *Experiencing God*, or other similar studies. Discipleship, therefore, is determined by the time spent in a class learning a specific material. Once the material is handed down from the instructor to the student, the discipleship process is taking place.

The author of this research acknowledges that this is a limited definition for discipleship. For the purpose of this study, however, the term discipleship referred to a classroom setting in which a pre-appointed leader imparts knowledge to those who are attending a class or training session. Any type of discipleship which might take place outside of the classroom is considered mentoring.

Intact Home. The author of this study used a biblical model of a family to define intact home. Genesis two teaches that a man should leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh (Gen 2:24). A man is not called to leave his father and stepmother or his mother and stepfather. While stepparents can be beneficial for a teenager, it is still not the way God intended it to be.

It is also important to point out that God calls a husband and wife to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:28). A traditional home is one in which the husband and wife seek to have children through conception or adoption. While the act of having children is not a mandate, it is considered a part of the traditional home.

The author of this paper recognized the term traditional home to be a synonym of intact home. The term broken home represents the opposite of traditional. For the purpose of this study, broken home represented a family that has experienced divorce.

Mentoring. Mentoring is a term that is being used a great deal in today's world. One author defines mentoring as primarily a learning process. One expert in the field of mentoring believes that "learning is the fundamental process and the primary purpose of mentoring" (Zachary 2000, 1). Another author states that mentoring is a "lifelong relationship, in which a mentor helps a protege reach her or his God-given potential" (Biehl 1996, 19). Stu Webber states that a mentoring relationship is a relationship in which a mentor makes himself available to his protege at a specific point of need (Weber 1997, 187).

This research study used a combination of the definitions above in order to formulate a common definition. Mentoring is a relationship in which a mentor connects with his protege at a specific point of need for the purpose of influencing the protege. This definition encompasses distinct parts of each of the definitions provided by experts in the field of mentoring.

Needs-Based Ministry. In a needs-based ministry strategy, the emphasis is on the needs of the group receiving ministry. "Needs based ministry is simply taking time to discover or define a person's specific needs, and then trying, if possible, to find effective

ways to meet those needs” (Rice 1998, 52). Needs-based ministry, therefore, is the consideration of the needs of the people involved in the ministry activities when developing ministry strategies.

Some consider teenagers to be extremely needy because of all the changes they experience. The changes associated with puberty have an impact on social, spiritual, psychological, and physical. Given the variety of changes, a young person would benefit by having someone to encourage him in his relationship with Jesus Christ, his parents, and others he might encounter.

The New Testament demonstrates that Jesus used a needs-based ministry approach. “Jesus taught people the meaning of Scripture by focusing it at their point of personal need. Zacchaeus was lonely. Jesus asked to have dinner with him (Luke 19:10). Jairus grieved at the death of his daughter. Jesus raised her to life (Mark 5:21)” (Yount 1996, 7). A ministry that is developed around the needs of the learner is a ministry that is developed in a similar fashion to the ministry of Christ.

A mentoring relationship places an emphasis on the needs of those involved. The essential message of a mentoring relationship is for the mentor to assist his protege in achieving the goals in his life (Biehl 1996, 30). In doing this, the protege sets the goals and determines the needs, thereby leaving the mentor to assist the protege in accomplishing the goals. The ministry is determined by the needs of the protege, as opposed to the desires of the mentor. This type of ministry emphasizes the needs of the people and not the programs.

Procedural Overview

The researcher surveyed high school male adolescents who attended three predetermined Southern Baptist churches in Northern Middle Tennessee. The purpose in conducting this survey was to investigate the needs of these adolescents in four areas. The areas surveyed related to their perception of mentoring relationships, their school performance, issues related to anger, and their relational needs.

The researcher surveyed adolescents who came from both intact homes and broken homes. In doing this, the researcher compared and contrasted these two distinct groups in the areas being researched. The researcher sought to determine whether there was a statistical difference between these two groups in the areas being surveyed.

The purpose of this research was not to determine if high school male adolescents who came from divorced homes need mentors but to determine if those who came from divorced homes would benefit from a mentoring type of relationship. Mentoring relationships have certain distinct benefits, and this research discussed these benefits and then sought to determine if those who came from divorced homes would benefit from the relationship.

Research Assumptions

Several assumptions found in valid educational research were foundational to this study. These assumptions form the structure within which the study was conducted. Foundational assumptions were determined to be valid based on precedent literature and research.

Mentoring Is Not Discipleship

“The greatest misconception about mentoring is that mentoring is just another word for discipleship. Mentoring is not discipleship” (Biehl 1996, 29). In a discipleship relationship the leader of the group determines the material to be studied. In a mentoring relationship the protege determines the subject matter to be discussed. One person can have the opportunity to disciple a large number of people at any given point in time. One person would be fortunate to mentor a small group of people at any given point in time (Biehl 1996, 29-30). While both mentoring and discipleship have people and learning as core components to their foundations, the two are not to be considered synonymous.

Relationships Are Vital in Mentoring

A connection between the mentor and the protege is essential in developing a mentoring relationship that has the opportunity to influence the protege for the rest of his life. While the mentor and protege may not stay in contact with each other for the duration of their lives, the mentor’s influence does have the potential to create lifelong transformation.

Larry Crabb deals with this concept in his book *The Safest Place on Earth*. The purpose of this book is to encourage those who are involved in a community of faith to be content no longer with sitting next to one another in the pews of their local church. Those involved in this community should seek to sit across from each other and avail themselves of relationships on a more personal level (Crabb 1999, 38). In doing this, however, those involved need to develop relationships with those they wish to influence.

Mentoring Is a Form of Leadership Training

Given the fact that those who are called to serve in the local church are called to equip the saints for the works of ministry, leaders must determine appropriate ways to do this. One way church leaders can equip students for the leadership roles in the church is through mentoring relationships. A mentor can take on the role of a spiritual leader who serves as a healthy role model for growing Christians (Anderson 1997, 51).

Divorce Does Affect Adolescents

“Divorce directly impacts more than a million children a year in the United States. About forty percent of white children and seventy-five percent of black children born to married parents will experience their parents’ divorce prior to the age of sixteen” (Parrott 2002, 28). This impact is not just the fact of the parents’ living in two different locations. The impact on an adolescent is both physical and emotional. The researcher will deal with some of the emotional impact a divorce can have on the life of an adolescent.

CHAPTER 2

PRECEDENT LITERATURE

In order to place this study in its proper perspective, the researcher reviewed several issues from a theological, educational, and leadership standpoint. This chapter provides support for the research questions from these three perspectives. The author interacted with Scripture and leading experts in the field of mentoring and related topics.

Christ's Model of Mentoring

When one consults Scripture, the life and ministry of Jesus provides an excellent example of mentoring relationships. The life that Jesus lived for three years with His twelve disciples encompasses a number of healthy examples related to mentoring.

The Twelve Disciples

In the model Christ provides for mentoring, the first characteristic of study is the size of the group. In Mark 3:13-19, Christ chose His disciples. Verse fourteen discloses that there were twelve disciples with whom He spent time and whom He sent out to preach the kingdom of God. Jesus did spend time with large groups as is evident in the Sermon on the Mount. His mentoring relationships, however, took place in small groups.

This small-group setting helped to provide the opportunity for the disciples to interact with Jesus in ways the large groups were unable to experience.

The choosing of these twelve men was “the first step in the establishment of a new people of God, the church” (Brooks 1991, 71). After the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the eleven apostles who remained were instrumental in the foundation of the church. This was in large part because of the relationship Jesus had with these men while here on Earth. Through this special relationship Jesus was able to minister to the needs of the disciples, and the influence of His ministry was able to last beyond His lifetime. When a mentor invests in the life of a small group of people, he too will have the opportunity to influence others beyond his lifetime.

A leading expert in the field of mentoring also stresses the importance of mentoring relationships taking place in small groups. He goes so far as to say that mentoring is a relationship between two people (Biehl 1996, 21). When the group is small in size, the mentor and protege are able to devote a large amount of personal time to one another. The mentor also has the opportunity to have a greater influence on the life of the protege(s) when the group is small in size.

Jesus revealed this truth through the life He led with His disciples. The disciples played a vital role in the first days of the church and were willing to die for their faith. The impact that Jesus had with the large crowds He addressed was most likely substantial. The impact Jesus had with the twelve was world changing, and the New Testament is a revelation of this truth.

Group within the Group

In studying the Scripture, one will also find a subgroup within the twelve disciples. In all four biblical accounts of the disciples, Peter, James, and John are listed among the first four disciples. These three men in the first grouping of the disciples constituted His inner circle (Blomberg 1992, 91). Jesus was closest to these three men, and He invested a greater amount of time and attention in them.

Jesus had a special relationship with Peter, James, and John. Jesus did things with this subgroup that He did not do with the others. For example, in Matthew 17 Jesus was transfigured before the three disciples: “And His face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light” (Matt 17:2). The other disciples were not present during this time. Jesus often took these three disciples with Him and performed miracles when the other nine disciples were not present.

After Jesus returned to the Father in Heaven, these three disciples were important people in the foundation of the first church. Peter and John both wrote books in the New Testament, and James was willing to die for his faith. These men were leaders in the first church because of the influence Christ imparted to them through this mentoring relationship.

Jesus also had a unique relationship with one particular disciple: John. Throughout the Gospel of John, he is referred to as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23; 19:26). An example of this close relationship can be found in John’s account of Jesus’ announcement of His betrayal in John thirteen. When Jesus announced His betrayal, the Scriptures say that the disciples began to look at one another at a loss for words. Then the disciple whom Jesus loved leaned back on Jesus’ chest and asked Him

who it was (John 13:23). “The implication is obvious that just as the son was in the bosom of the Father (1:18), so the beloved disciple was in the bosom of Jesus” (Borchert 2002, 91). Even in one of the most difficult times in the life of Christ, John had a close enough relationship with Jesus to ask Him a question related to the subject. If John and Jesus did not have this close relationship, John may not have felt comfortable to ask such a question at this pivotal time.

This type of closeness between a mentor and his protege allows for a greater opportunity to influence both the protege and those he encounters throughout his life. Jesus had such a relationship with His disciples. While one has the potential of mentoring as many as possible, one would be well advised to use a model similar to the one Jesus set. His model was one of recruiting twelve, graduating eleven, and focusing on three (Anderson 1997, 88).

Thought-Provoking Questions

Another characteristic that Jesus modeled with His disciples was that He was willing to ask thought-provoking questions. Jesus knew the answers to the questions He was asking, yet He wanted the disciples to think for themselves (Pazmino 1997, 38). An example of this can be found in Matthew 16, where Jesus asked His disciples who they thought He was.

It was not that Jesus was unaware of what the people were saying about Him but that He wanted the Twelve to think carefully about those popular perceptions. He was not concerned about the opinions of the unbelieving and hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, some of whom had even accused Him of being in league with Satan (Matt. 10:25; 12:24). He was rather asking about the thoughts of those who looked on Him positively, although uncertainly, and who recognized Him to be more than an ordinary religious leader. After hearing His teaching and witnessing His

miracles, what was their final verdict about Jesus, the Son of Man? (MacArthur 1988, 19)

The disciples told Him what the multitudes were saying. Then in verse 16 Peter acknowledges Jesus saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus' question challenged the disciples to come to a conclusion different from that of others. The result was that the question helped the disciples discover truths others did not know.

One author defines this type of learning of new information as being subject centered as opposed to student or teacher centered. The subject is also the primary material and not what knowledge the teacher wishes to reveal or what knowledge the student needs for the test. In this type of learning environment, the subject is not confined to what the teacher has to say about it. The students instead are encouraged to interact with the material in pursuit of new knowledge on their own. The subject-centered approach to learning allows the material to speak for itself while the students learn from it (Palmer 1998, 118).

Christ modeled this type of teaching with His disciples. Jesus was not satisfied with who the people thought He was. He was interested in who the disciples thought He was. Jesus was allowing the disciples to focus on the subject being studied not what others opinions were related to the matter. This type of thought-provoking questions should be present in a mentoring relationship. The mentor should seek to point the protege in a new direction of learning and strive to challenge him to come up with new answers to difficult questions. In doing this the protege has the opportunity to form his own belief system concerning His relationship with Christ (White 2001, 57).

Patience

Jesus also modeled a great deal of patience with His disciples. “A man not only bears adversities, injuries, reproaches, and such like, but also with patience waits for the amendment of those who have done him wrong” (Luther 1988, 379). While the disciples had not completed any wrong against Jesus, He still had to have a great deal of patience with them. He had to wait patiently for them to understand what He was talking about, and He had to wait patiently for them to walk in obedience.

Throughout the Gospels Christ would call the disciples men of little faith. For example, in Matthew 16:1-12 Jesus criticized the Pharisees and Sadducees for their teachings. Preceding His conversation with the teachers of the law, Jesus warned His disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. The disciples interpreted this in the context of desiring food and missed the point Jesus was trying to communicate. Christ showed great patience in explaining to the disciples that He was talking about the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees, not food.

Being a mentor can lead to disappointment (Weber 1997, 209). One way to tell if a mentor has been able to connect with his protege is if the mentor feels a sense of disappointment when his protege makes an unwise decision (Trent 2000, 159). A mentor will not always agree with the choices or decisions the protege makes. During these times the mentor needs to offer the patience that Jesus modeled in His relationship with the disciples.

Jesus was willing to challenge the disciples when they did not come up with the correct response. He did not, however, ridicule them for their incorrect responses. In doing this, He was assured that the disciples would return to Him for continued learning.

When patience is offered to those who are being mentored, they are more likely to return for continued learning. When patience, however, is not offered, the protege has a greater potential of becoming discouraged and in turn will choose to seek learning from a new venue.

A Safe Place to Struggle in Their Faith

Jesus also provided the disciples with a safe place to struggle in the development of their faith. As the disciples struggled in this developmental process, Jesus was always there to encourage and to teach them. In John 13 after washing the feet of the disciples, Jesus acknowledged the fact that He was the great Teacher. Part of His role as teacher was to encourage His students as they learned more about His ways (Borchert 2002, 85).

Feeding the four thousand

One example of allowing the disciples to struggle in their faith was the feeding of the four thousand in Mark 8. In this chapter Jesus fed four thousand with seven loaves of bread and a few small fish. When Jesus announced that He was going to feed the crowd, the disciples asked Him where He would get enough food. Jesus instructed the crowd to sit while He asked the disciples to distribute the food. After the disciples distributed the food, they collected seven large baskets full of left-over broken pieces.

What makes this story an opportunity for learning was that the disciples witnessed Jesus feed five thousand in a similar manner in Mark 6. When the disciples began to question how Jesus was going to feed the four thousand, Jesus could have reminded them of what took place before. Jesus, instead, showed a great deal of patience

and allowed the disciples to struggle in their lack of faith. He used this opportunity once again to reveal His power to do amazing things.

Jesus could have simply told them what was going to take place, but instead He was willing to be patient with them and allow them to struggle through the solution themselves. One author deals with this concept by contrasting pacing with an adolescent as opposed to telling an adolescent. When a mentor chooses to pace with an adolescent, the mentor allows the adolescent to ask questions or even make simple mistakes. The opposite of this is simply informing an adolescent what needs to take place. When an adult does this, the relationship is one in which the adolescent is not allowed either to have or to express his opinion (Dunn 2001, 18).

Jesus allowed the disciples to struggle in their understanding of what was occurring. He could have reminded them of what took place before and ridiculed them for their lack of belief. Jesus, instead, allowed them to ask questions and used this time to teach them more about His compassion for people (Mark 6:34).

Peter's Walking on Water

Another example of one of the disciples struggling in his faith was when Peter walked on the water. In Matthew 14:22-36 the disciples were in a boat fighting the wind and waves when Jesus came walking on the water out to the boat and told them not to be afraid. Peter responded to Jesus' statement by saying, "Lord if it is You, command me to come to You on the water" (Matt 14:28). Jesus told him to come out on the water.

As Peter walked on the water, he lost his focus and found himself caught midway between faith and doubt because his focus shifted from Jesus to the wind and

waves (Hare 1993, 169). In doing this, Peter sank into the water and cried out to Jesus for help. Jesus immediately reached out and provided assistance for Peter during his time of need. Jesus responded to Peter by saying, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Matt 14:31).

A mentoring relationship in which a mentor seeks to connect with his protege at a specific point of need for the purpose of influencing the protege is one in which the mentor will have the opportunity to influence the protege in his faith journey. As the mentor influences his protege, the mentor should allow the protege an opportunity to struggle in his faith. This is accomplished as the mentor models his faith to the protege and encourages the protege to live out a similar faith (Anderson 1997, 56).

Jesus modeled this faith when He called His disciples to places where others had not been before. This is seen in Peter’s walking on the water. When Peter began to fall, Jesus was there for him during his time of need. Jesus did not leave Peter but instead was available to provide help when Peter reached out to Him.

Those who mentor teenagers should be willing to allow them to struggle in their faith while extending grace to them in their struggles (White and Weidmann 2001, 173). Given the fact that adolescents are still in the process of developing spiritually, there will be struggles. Mentors should be there for their proteges in order to model a growing faith while encouraging their proteges to take steps of faith.

Allowed to Practice Their Faith

Some view the role of mentoring as coaching (White and Weidmann 2001, 76). In this model of mentoring, the mentor begins to practice with his protege. As the

protege begins to develop specific skills, the mentor allows him to use these skills while the mentor observes and then encourages the protege to practice his new skills when no one is around to encourage him.

In having this approach to mentoring, one must understand that mentoring focuses on life development and not just skill development (Biehl 1996, 34). A coach is someone who teaches a specific skill to be performed at a later time. A mentor is one who teaches life skills that can be used throughout the protege's lifetime. Conversely, Jesus coached the disciples in learning skills, and these skills were used throughout the lifetime of the disciples.

Jesus sought to model godly living in front of His disciples and then encouraged them to live similar lifestyles. This truth can be seen in the Book of Acts. As Jesus was returning to be with His Father in heaven, He told the disciples, "you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). "As Jesus had been anointed at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and power, so his followers were now to be similarly anointed and enabled to carry on his work. This work would be a work of witness-bearing – a theme which is prominent in the apostolic preaching throughout Acts" (Bruce 1988, 36). He was encouraging them to live out the faith He had taught them while He was here on earth.

A mentoring relationship is one in which the mentor seeks to prepare his protege to live out what he is being taught. This preparation encompasses the mind, heart, and skills of the protege.

Preparing involves teaching people to think correctly (head). Preparing requires personal commitment to the task (heart). But the proof, the verification, the witness, the confirmation that true preparation has been made is in the service, in the

ministry, in the doing of what God has called His people to do. Skillful execution of truths result from behavioral learning. (Yount 1996, 253)

Jesus prepared the disciples to live out what they were being taught. He did not focus on His disciples obtaining knowledge but, instead, allowed them to interact with His teachings. As they began to understand what Jesus was teaching, He gave them the opportunity to practice their faith. Mentoring relationships are relationships in which the mentor ultimately allows the protege to practice the faith skills he is being taught.

A Call to Teach

Another characteristic one needs to understand when studying the example Christ set for others to follow is that Christ called other believers to mentor. This call was issued to the disciples before Jesus returned to be with the Father, and it should be carried out by those who are His followers even today. Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 28:18-20, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age."

If a follower of Christ desires to live out the commission given to him in this particular verse, he must realize that he is not only called to tell others about the saving grace found only in Christ, but he is also called to teach other believers the commands given by Christ. This portion of the Great Commission is important to mentoring because a mentoring relationship is one in which education takes place. In a mentoring relationship there is a learning partnership between the mentor and his protege (Zachary 2000, 3). The mentor aspires to influence his protege in areas where the

mentor has a greater amount of knowledge. This influence causes the protege to become involved in a learning relationship.

Jesus called His believers to do certain things. In Luke 9:23 Jesus says, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.” In Matthew 5:44 Jesus said, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” Both of these examples are not commands that might be accomplished in short periods of time but rather achieved over a lifetime.

Since commands like these take an extended period of time to accomplish, it becomes important for someone to be involved in the life of another for a prolonged period of time. Mentoring, therefore, should not consist of a short-term relationship where the emphasis is on accomplishing a goal. Mentoring relationships connect two people at a specific point of need for an extended period of time. When this happens, there will be an increased likelihood that the protege will be better equipped to follow the commands given by Jesus.

Mentoring as a Youth Ministry Model

Youth ministry is caring Christian adults who enter the world of adolescents in order to guide them into a maturing relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The emphasis is on people not programs. Teenagers growing up alone need more than a skit, a game, a video, or a discussion starter. What they need is someone who will mentor them (Rice 1998, 193). It would be wise for those involved in youth ministry to develop their philosophy of ministry around the concept of mentoring.

Biblical Model

If a youth minister chooses to enter mentoring relationships, he must first realize that this is a biblical model of ministry. Paul told his readers in Ephesians 4:11-12, “He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.” As youth connect with their mentors, they will be equipped in the work of service for the building up of the body of Christ.

Paul also lived out this model of ministry in the relationship he had with Timothy. Both 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy begin with Paul’s calling Timothy his true child in the faith. Paul had such a relationship with Timothy that he considered Timothy to be like a son to him. Just as Christ had a close relationship with His disciples, Paul had a similar relationship with Timothy.

Another aspect of Paul and Timothy’s relationship was that Paul served as a source of encouragement to Timothy. First Timothy 4:12 says, “Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.” In this passage Paul is encouraging Timothy to be an example to other believers and not to be discouraged by the fact that he was youthful. A spiritual mentor is to encourage his protegee, and Paul is found doing this in his relationship with Timothy (Anderson 1999, 48).

Philosophy

As a youth minister begins to develop his philosophy of ministry around the concept of mentoring, it is important that he remember to communicate this philosophy to

those around him (Fields 1998, 71). This communication can take place as the youth minister lives out this model of youth ministry. Those involved in the ministry will observe the behavior of the youth minister's calling to mentor teenagers, as they witness the benefits of mentoring relationships.

Developing a specific model of youth ministry will increase the likelihood for unity between those involved in the youth ministry. Those involved in any organization want to know the direction and aim of the organization. A specific model allows those interested in participating an opportunity to discern if their specific gifts and calling would work in this philosophy of ministry. Those, therefore, who chose to participate are united under the umbrella of one specific model of ministry (Miller 1995, 68).

Once the youth minister has established the effectiveness of a model of ministry with mentoring as its foundation, he can begin to empower others in the ministry to develop similar relationships. In doing this the minister must intentionally seek to train and encourage other adults to become mentors (Rice 1998, 197). It is essential for the youth minister both to encourage and to train. When a new mentor learns something disheartening, he needs to know that there is someone available to him for encouragement and continued education. This is the role of the youth minister.

Surveys conducted within the past ten years help to reveal that teenagers desire to have relationships of importance. When a group of adolescents were asked what life conditions they considered to be desirable, 84% said having close personal friendships and 80% desired one marriage partner for life (Barna 1995, 28). In a more recent survey of adolescents conducted in 2001, the results were almost identical: 84% desired close personal friendships, and 82% desired one marriage partner for life (Barna 2001, 84-85).

A ministry model developed around the concept of mentoring deals with the perceived need of relationship.

Created in God's Image

In studying the Genesis account of creation, one will find God creating man in His own image. Genesis 1:26-27 says, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." The importance of the uniqueness of the creation of man and woman is that they were created for community and relationships. No other facet of God's creation was spoken into being with the ability to relate with others as man has the ability to relate with others.

Man Was Created for Relationship

The pinnacle of God's creation was man. "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen 1:27). Out of all of God's creation, man was the only aspect to be created in God's image. Part of being created in the image of God is being created for relationship (Erickson 1998, 524). Man is the only part of God's creation that has the ability to relate with others for a lifetime. While animals might be able to relate with man, they are greatly limited when comparing this relationship to the types of relationships man has.

In the Genesis two account of creation, God once again emphasized the importance of relationships. "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for man to be

alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him” (Gen 2:18). God knew that it was not good for man to go through life without a helpmate, and knowing this, God chose to provide someone for him in the form of Eve, Adam’s wife.

Mankind was not only created to relate to one another; mankind was ultimately created to relate to God. Jesus emphasized this point when He told the parable of the lost sheep in Luke fifteen. “Speaking of Himself as the loving shepherd, Jesus says that He leaves the ninety-nine in the open country and goes in search of the lost one” (Anderson 1997, 15). When He finds the lost sheep, He brings it home to the flock and invites others to rejoice with Him over this accomplishment.

The purpose of Jesus Christ coming to this earth was to seek and to save that which was lost (Matt 18:11). When an individual does not have a relationship with the Father through the Son, he is the lost sheep that Jesus is referring to in Luke 15. Mankind was created for relationship with the Father, and a mentoring relationship which seeks to develop leaders for the church must first begin with a relationship with the Father.

Relationship Is the Heart of Mentoring

If mentoring is a lifelong process in which a mentor connects with his protege at a specific point of need for the purpose of influencing the protege, the mentor must have a relationship with his protege. Through this relationship a mentor is able to influence his protege because influence takes place through the relationship (Daloz 1999, 5).

Jesus was able to influence the disciples because He had a relationship with them. Paul was able to influence Timothy because he had a relationship with him. Elijah

was able to influence Elisha because he had a relationship with him. A mentor will be able to influence his protege if the mentor establishes a healthy relationship with the protege.

Developing the Relationship

If an individual wishes to mentor a young male whose parents have divorced, this individual must seek to develop a relationship with the young male. In developing this relationship, the individual needs to go where the youth are as opposed to waiting for youth to come to him. This action can be done by attending ball games, picking up a student for a time of fellowship after school, or a host of other possibilities (Robbins 1990, 186-87).

As the mentor does these things, the adolescent will have the opportunity to realize that this individual truly cares about him. As the individual continues to connect with the adolescent, there is an increased possibility of the adult's having an opportunity to begin to influence him in his relationship with Christ. As the relationship between the two grows, the adult will have an increased possibility of entering into a mentoring relationship with the adolescent. If, however, the adult never strives to establish a relationship with an adolescent, it will be less likely for him to have an opportunity to influence the adolescent. The adult must be proactive in seeking to establish relationships (Robbins 1990, 180).

Jesus knew the importance of developing relationships with those He encountered. This can be seen in John four. In this chapter Jesus encountered a Samaritan woman drawing water at a well. Jesus and this woman entered into a

conversation which was improper for Him to do according to the custom at that time. Jesus was able to influence her lifestyle as a result of this conversation. If, however, Jesus never attempted to develop a relationship with this woman, the outcome could have been much different.

If an adult who desires to mentor adolescents never seeks to develop relationships with adolescents, his opportunity to influence teens will be limited. Adults must actively pursue loving relationships with teenagers if they wish to mentor them. Being a spiritual mentor to a teenager does not require a perfect relationship. The relationship, however, must be genuine, caring, and reciprocating. This type of relationship requires effort, and it is earned as opposed to demanded (White and Weidmann 2001, 85).

Spiritual Relationships

Larry Crabb also discusses the importance of relationship when dealing with spiritual issues. In his book *The Safest Place on Earth*, he talks about two rooms in everyone's soul. The first is the lower room, and this is the most natural place for a person to dwell. In this room spiritual connection does not take place, and conversation deals with surface matters. In the lower room people long for good relationships, and yet they do not have them. They look after their own needs and are not concerned with the needs of others. The world both frustrates and satisfies the participants of this room. God is not in this room; at least He is not recognized or taken into account (Crabb 1999, 64).

The second room Crabb terms the upper room. In this room connection does take place. Also in this room those involved in the connection have the opportunity to experience relationships with others in the manner in which humanity was created to experience relationships. In this upper room people “share without manipulation, they listen without prejudice, they decide without self-interest” (Crabb 1999, 95).

Crabb believes that there are four furnishings of the upper room:

1. The renewed image of Christ with its passion to worship, a desire, unrivaled in potential strength, to glorify God by enjoying Him and revealing Him to others.
2. A recognition of who we are and who God is that stirs a passion to trust, a passion that makes it possible to rest in a storm and continue, quietly, our journey to God, a passion to radically depend on God.
3. An attitude that views life experiences as an opportunity to satisfy a passion to grow and as reason to celebrate trials as spiritually forming, and blessings as foretaste of what’s ahead.
4. An embracing of God’s law as the character of the Person we most love that fuels a passion to obey, not a pressure but an anger-free, supernaturally aroused eagerness to please our Father. (Crabb 1999, 106)

Mentoring relationships that are going to develop leaders for the church and help proteges continue in their personal journeys of faith need to dwell in the upper room of one’s soul.

Relational Ministries

There are others who also espouse to the importance of relationships. One author states that effective ministry takes place in relationships. He is convinced that the success of any one ministry has little to do with the structure or ministry system. Instead, the success is determined by the relationships of those involved (Whaley 2002, 61-62). If the ministry is able to generate relationships in which one individual is able to connect with another, the ministry should be considered successful.

Experts in the field of youth ministry also recognize the importance of relationships. “Only intentional pacing relationships will be adequate to build bridges across chasms of disconnections, disorientation and disillusionment. Of all the failings of twentieth-century Christian youth ministry, perhaps the greatest was using programs and techniques to shortcut that need for relational proximity” (Dunn 2001, 44). It will not be the next retreat or the next large youth event that is going to make the difference in the life of an adolescent. It is going to be the person that is connected with that adolescent who chooses to spend time with that adolescent while at the retreat or event.

If the building of a relationship between a teenager and an adult is not a primary concern for the adult, mentoring is merely a nice idea (White and Weidmann 2001, 84). A strong relationship between the adult and teenager is what allows the adult the potential to pace and lead. This relationship needs to be built upon a mutual respect between the teenager and adult, and the adult must be willing to listen to the teenager (White and Weidmann 2001, 88-93). As the adult learns to listen to the teenager, the teenager will also be willing to listen to the adult because of a mutual respect. When the adult has the opportunity to speak the truth, he will have the privilege of presenting a biblical response to a life issue, and this gives the adult a chance to influence the teenager.

Without a strong, healthy relationship with a teenager, a mentor has little chance of making a positive impact on the teenager’s decisions or lifestyle. With a good relationship, however, based on grace and mutual respect, one can influence a teenager who is eager to learn the things of God (White and Weidmann 2001, 67).

Mentors Must Look Inward

Paul told his readers in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.” Adolescents are easily impressed to follow the lead of others who are around them (White and Weidmann 2001, 225). It is important, therefore, for those who are striving to influence teenagers to make certain that they are following the commands of Christ. While this does not mean that the mentor has to be perfect, it does call for the mentor to have a constant and growing relationship with Jesus. If the mentor is stagnant in his relationship with Christ, the protege might assume that he too can become stagnant in his relationship with Christ and thus survive the daily trials of life.

Engagements

Elizabeth O’Connor deals with an inward journey in her book *Journey Inward, Journey Outward*. O’Connor believes that there are three engagements one must have when pursuing a journey inward. The first engagement is with oneself. The purpose of this engagement is to begin to ask questions of oneself (O’Connor 1968, 13). If an individual desires to mentor someone else it is important for him to know things about himself. Through this self-knowledge the mentor is better equipped to guide his protege on the protege’s own spiritual journey. If, however, the mentor has not explored his own makeup he will be ill equipped to lead another in his journey.

“An inside look can lead to real change, change from the inside out” (Crabb 1988, 23). The mentor must first experience personal change before he will be able to encourage someone else to change. If the mentor is unwilling to look inside of himself,

he will greatly hinder change in his protege because of his own lack of spiritual discipline.

The second engagement is an engagement with God. This is an engagement on behalf of the mentor to continue in a growing relationship with God. It is vital for a mentor to take whatever time is needed to develop his relationship with God (O'Connor 1968, 17). Without this engagement the mentor will be less able to help his protege in his own spiritual pilgrimage.

The final engagement is an engagement with others. "Engagement with others in depth is always difficult" (O'Connors 1968, 24). One of the reasons for this is because it takes a great deal of time and effort. Those who wish to engage with others must be willing to be authentic and vulnerable in their relationships. The pursuit of authenticity and vulnerability are noble causes which take a great deal of time and effort.

Authenticity

In searching inward for a growing relationship with Christ, the mentor must also understand that young people desire to see an authentic faith modeled before them. Authentic leaders place a greater emphasis on transparency and honesty, both with themselves and others, than on either programs or events (Rabey 2001, 202). In placing this emphasis on inward characteristics, the young person will realize that the mentor cares more about the relationship as opposed to the programs of the church.

The programs of the church are not to be viewed in a negative light but are in place to help those involved in the ministry develop relationships with the adolescents in attendance. When the programs of a ministry are used to develop relationships with those

in attendance, the young people will begin to realize that they are more important than the continuation of a ministry event.

“The Church needs leaders who can involve themselves in other people’s lives with the joy of integrity and transparency, confident that their love is unfeigned, willing to be deeply known for the sake of helping others” (Crabb 1988, 25). It is this type of leader who will be able to connect with a young person and have the potential to influence this young person in his journey with Christ. If, however, the leader chooses to conceal his love, the amount of influence the leader has would be hindered because of his lack of authenticity.

Vulnerability

This call to an inward diagnosis of the mentor’s personal journey with Christ is also a call to vulnerability. The mentor needs to be vulnerable and willing to reveal this vulnerability to those with whom he is connected. Reducing one’s vulnerability is to disconnect from one’s protege. When this happens, he builds a wall between his own inner truth and his outer performance (Palmer 1998, 17). The way to ensure that this wall is not built is for the mentor to be vulnerable in his relationship with his protege. By so doing the protege will develop a greater respect for his mentor, and the relationship will be strengthened.

Studying the Scripture brings the discovery that Jesus was willing to be vulnerable with His disciples. One example of this is when His friend Lazarus died. John 11:35 says that Jesus wept at this occasion. The disciples were able to observe the real emotions of Jesus and learn from His sharing. Mentors who follow Jesus’ style of

leadership by example will be vulnerable and expressive, unafraid to reveal their emotions and will make the best spiritual leaders (Anderson 1997, 108).

As a mentor looks inward into his own walk with Christ, his theology will also be better developed (Ochs 2001, 21). Through this self-examination process the mentor will encounter a Holy God whose desire is to transform him through the renewing of his mind (Rom 12:2). As the mentor is renewed, he will be able to understand better who he is in light of his own personal journey with Christ. The end result of which is a stronger Christian walk for the mentor that yields a greater potential to influence those he encounters throughout his life.

Mentors Must Focus Outward

When a mentor chooses to focus outward, he chooses to focus on the needs of those around him. While this does not call him to neglect his own needs, it does call him to become more of a servant. The New Testament offers several biblical examples of this type of focus and leadership.

Jesus' Example

Jesus set the example for others to follow in focusing on those around Him at the last supper. In John 13, Jesus is found with His disciples in an upper room. During the meal Jesus got up from the table, laid His garments aside, picked up a towel, and began to wash the feet of His disciples. Jesus knew that He would soon be betrayed and also that His disciples were going to forsake Him. Even in this great time of personal anguish, He was still willing to place the needs of those He was called to serve above His own needs.

The current postmodern culture is one in which the focus has moved from a mind-set of “does it make sense” to “was it a good experience” (Sweet 1999, 92). Given this change in thinking, those who operate in the realm of spiritual leadership need to present an authentic spiritual experience just as Jesus did at the last supper. The mentor’s own personal needs might have to become secondary for a period of time to the present needs of his protege. In so doing, the mentor is required to focus on the outward needs of those he is called to serve.

Paul’s Example

Another example of an outward focus is Paul’s relationship with Timothy. In 2 Timothy 2:1-13 Paul is found writing a letter to Timothy while in prison. Paul did not take this opportunity to complain to Timothy about all of the difficulties he faced. He, instead, took time to encourage Timothy to stand strong in the grace of Jesus Christ and to tell others the truth of the gospel.

If the mentor chooses not to focus outward toward the needs of the adolescent, the result can become a status quo relationship. Parker Palmer deals with this subject matter in a teaching relationship.

Stagnation is the state chosen by teachers who are so threatened by students that they barricade themselves behind their credentials, their podiums, their status, their research. Ironically, this choice for stagnation mirrors the disengagement of the students these teachers fear. Having been wounded by fearful young people who hold their teachers at arm’s length, these teachers fearfully fend off their students, thus feeding the cycle of fear. (Palmer 1998, 48)

Paul did not choose to focus on his own needs; he chose to focus on the person he was mentoring. In doing this, Timothy went from a child in the faith (1 Tim 1:2) to a leader in the church who was called to set an example for other believers to follow (1 Tim

4:12). It is important for a mentor to meet his protege at his particular point of need and focus in on the needs of the protege as opposed to his own personal needs at the time.

Relationship with God and Others

A Pharisee, in an attempt to test Jesus, asked Him, “What is the greatest commandment in the Law.” Jesus responded, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole Law of the Prophets” (Matt 22:37-40).

When someone enters into a mentoring relationship, he is seeking to live out the greatest commandment. The mentor should focus on his own personal relationship with Christ, while at the same time focusing on the personal needs of his protege. If the mentor is not growing in his relationship with the Savior, he will not be able to lead his protege in the protege’s faith journey. If the mentor is not seeking to connect with the protege at a point of need, the mentor does not have a relationship through which he might be able to influence the teen.

Mentoring relationships are ones in which the mentor is connected to God and to those around him. If either of these relationships begins to suffer, the mentoring relationship begins to diminish. If these relationships prosper, the mentor will continue to grow in his relationship with Christ as he seeks to lead his protege down a road he has already traveled (Anderson 1997, 53-54).

The Importance of Connecting

If mentoring is defined as a lifelong process where a mentor connects with his protege at a specific point of need for the purpose of influencing the protege, the concept of connecting becomes important. Larry Crabb defines connecting as “something that occurs when the life of Christ in one person is poured into another and awakens in the emptiest recesses of that other person’s soul the experience of life” (Crabb 1997, 44). If a mentor is going to connect with his protege, a relationship must first be formed. Without a strong, healthy relationship with a teenager, the mentor will be limited in the amount of influence he might have (White and Weidmann 2001, 84).

If someone is going to mentor a teenager, it is important for the mentor and protege to connect. The absolute center of all powerful attempts to influence people for good is done through connecting with them (Crabb 1997, 43). A connection between the mentor and protege is essential in developing the mentoring relationship that has the opportunity to influence the protege for the rest of his life. While the mentor and protege may not stay in contact with each other for the duration of their lives, the mentor’s influence does have the potential to create lifelong transformation if a connection does exist. Without a connection between a mentor and a protege, a mentoring relationship will not occur.

This section of the study will focus on the importance of connecting. It will discuss ways and places a mentor can connect with his protege. The section will finally address the benefits the protege will experience when a connection does take place.

Ways to Connect

Mentors can do certain things to connect with their proteges, ranging from learning to listen, to becoming interested in a teenager's personal lifestyle and habits. This section will address appropriate steps a mentor may take in attempting to connect with a young person.

The most benevolent, eloquent, and intelligent leaders among us must build relationships through love. 'If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing' (1 Cor 13:1-2). Every pastor, leader and Christian who truly desires to be an effective minister and follow the example of Jesus must work hard at building strong relationships that are cemented with love. To this rule there is not exception. (White 2003, 33)

Learning to Listen

The first thing to do is learn to listen. The Bible says that people should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger (Jas 1:19). All people would be wise to take this advice, but those who desire to mentor teenagers need to place emphasis on listening. Teenagers have a desire to connect with those around them, and this connection can take place as individuals learn to listen to teenagers (Chapman 2000, 34).

As the mentor learns to listen to teenagers, the mentor will have the opportunity to communicate a number of different principles and feelings to them. When conversing with a teenager, the mentor would be wise to speak no more than fifty percent of the time (Smith 1997, 83). This forces the adult to listen to the teenager and not to communicate the desired outcome the adult believes to be most effective to the subject matter being discussed.

When an adult listens to a teenager, the adult should be communicating a loving relationship to the teenager. One of the five ways teenagers experience love is when someone spends quality time with them (Chapman 2000, 75-92). An example of this would be when an adult spends time with an adolescent without interruption. In doing this the young person realizes that he is the center of attention. Nothing else is more important than what he has to say at this specific time.

When a young person feels this way, he is apt to open up and discuss what he truly believes. When this occurs, the mentor is given the opportunity to influence the adolescent's thoughts and feelings. The mentor, however, needs to listen to the young person and not cut the conversation short with antidotes or simple answers to what the adolescent perceives to be a complex situation (Smith 1997, 84).

Learning the Youth's Culture

Another way for a mentor to connect with a student is to learn about the culture in which the student resides. This can mean learning about some of the social and moral trends of the current day society. One example of this is the redefinition of family. Today the word family can mean a mother and her boyfriend trying to raise the children, or it can also mean a single-parent home (Mueller 1999, 39-43). In the past family meant a mother and father joined together for life with the purpose of raising children. If a mentor is going to meet a young person at a specific point of need, it would be wise for the mentor to understand the moral thoughts and feelings of the young person.

Postmodernism

It would be wise for the mentor to have an understanding of the postmodern belief system of today's youth. One might use a few common characteristics to understand postmodernism. This particular belief system is one in which all things are relative. "Rather than confronting and challenging an individual's beliefs, convictions, or commitments, the culture assists individuals in making peace with whatever they choose as the path to personal fulfillment" (Dunn 2001, 37).

Postmodernity brings a heightened awareness of spirituality and mystery, a greater desire for personal intimacy, a deeper appreciation of and tolerance of cultural diversity, more patience for complexity and process in human relationships, enhanced attentiveness to experiential ways of learning, broader openness to the exchange of new ideas, and greater understanding of the interconnectedness of the global village. These changes will all contribute to the growth of Christian evangelism, mission, education, youth ministry and counseling ministries around the world. More specifically, these characteristics of postmodernity provide magnificent present-tense entry points for bringing the reality of Jesus' life into youth culture. (Dunn 2001, 158)

Postmodernism and Christianity. Living under a set standard of beliefs in a culture like this becomes increasingly difficult because a Christian who believes in the absolute standards presented in God's Word has the potential of being viewed as either intolerant or legalistic. These views stand in direct opposition to a postmodern philosophy. In this particular belief system, tolerance of all beliefs is seen as a virtue that all should strive to achieve (Rainer 1997, 159).

One author believes that a postmodern culture is an anti-Christian culture. He believes that Christians can expect increased hostility toward Christianity in general and, even more so, toward organized religion in particular (Sweet 1999, 47). Those who

support the principles taught by Jesus Christ in the Bible will be viewed as enemies of a positive evolution within society.

One result of this mind-set is an increased desire for teenagers to obtain their religious beliefs outside of the organized church. Recent surveys have revealed that teenagers are using on-line learning as a place to develop their beliefs (Barna 2001, 37). Those who are involved in local church work would be wise to establish chat rooms for on-line education with those whom they wish to influence. In doing this, the church leaders could teach biblical principles, but the teaching occurs outside of the traditional classroom.

The postmodern belief system is important to the subject of divorce and mentoring because of the implications it has on society. Postmodernists believe that there are no absolute standards and place an emphasis on the positive feelings for all those involved. The result of this is that divorce becomes a morally neutral position. If a mentor seeks to influence a teenager in a mentoring relationship by helping the teenager understand that there are absolutes, the mentor is asking the teenager to think counter-culturally. Those involved in Christian mentoring relationships need to understand that they are combating not only developmental issues present during adolescence but also cultural issues present in society.

Generational Trends

The mentor might also attempt to learn the generational trends of the current culture, which is a little more difficult for the mentor to grasp because generational trends are constantly changing. The mentor can seek to discover the latest trends in music,

fashion, or other related social issues. In doing so, the mentor will be better equipped to understand the conversation of the young person.

One danger does exist in learning the culture in which teenagers reside. The mentor must make sure not to lose his leadership role with the young person in learning about the culture. A mentor is called to be a leader and not just a friend (Banks and Powell 2000, 111). It can become tempting for the mentor to begin to embrace the culture he is trying to study. While it is wise for the mentor to understand the culture, it is not wise for him to embody the culture. If the mentor does this, there is the potential of the young people seeking him as a friend and not a leader. When this happens, the mentor could lose his opportunity to influence the young people because the culture has influenced him.

Take a Personal Interest

When a mentor attempts to take a personal interest in the things young people enjoy, he will begin to spend time in the places they enjoy. Young people might become intimidated by those who are older, wealthier, or more educated. If, however, the mentor is able to connect with a young person while at a local ball game or in a gym, the young person will more likely express his authentic feelings related to the subject being discussed.

The key to this happening is for the mentor to spend time with the student in the places where the student is most comfortable. In doing this the mentor communicates to the adolescent that he is important and his likes and dislikes are also important. The

key to doing this is spending time with the adolescent and developing a positive relationship (Robbins 1990, 180).

As the mentor learns more about the young person's area of interest, the young person has the opportunity to impart knowledge to the mentor. This can lead to a feeling of importance by the young person because he is somewhat taking on the role of a teacher. If the mentor is willing to learn from the young person in a respectful manner, the young person will be more willing to learn from the mentor at a later time.

The mentor, however, must be willing to learn from the young person. Given the cognitive limitations common in adolescents, they are less likely to approach an adult and do something like this. The mentor, therefore, should first take interest in the things the adolescent likes and then later attempt to influence the adolescent in other matters. If the mentor does not take an interest in the things the adolescent likes, he will be limited in the amount of influence he will have.

Benefits of Connecting

When a mentor is able to develop a relationship with his protege and connect with this individual, certain benefits will arise. These benefits help the protege accomplish short-term goals, and they can have long-term effects on the life of the protege. This section will discuss the possible benefits when a mentor is able to connect with his protege.

Spiritual Community

Connecting can also be viewed as a spiritual community. Those involved in this type of spiritual community are willing to struggle with whom they are, whom they

want to become, and how they can overcome some deficit in their own lives (McNeal 2000, 117). Through this mutual struggle participants grow in their relationships with Christ and with each other.

A spiritual community has specific tasks that it should seek to accomplish.

These tasks are:

To provide a safe place where all that is true—both the ugly and the beautiful—can be faced. To envision what the Spirit can do, to feel the pains of childbirth as we wait for Christ to be formed in each other. To discern flesh dynamics so that we can hate and abandon them; to discern spirit dynamics so we can nourish and help release them. To pour what is alive in each of us into the other in order to restore hope that the vision can be realized. To touch each other with the power of the risen Christ that now lives in us. (Crabb 1999, 118)

A mentoring relationship is not something built overnight; it is something that is developed over time. As this relationship develops, participants connect at points where they may not connect with others. The result is a special bond between a mentor and his protege that has the potential of influencing the protege for a lifetime.

In this community all are willing to share both the pains and the celebrations of life and to experience relationships in the manner in which the Father intended. People are vulnerable with each other, and authentic love is offered in place of the counterfeit love the world has embraced. A spiritual community brings healing to those who are in need, and it brings with it a desire for additional right relationships with others who desire similar community.

Healing

When a mentor is able to connect with his protege, both participants have the possibility of dealing with hurts and pains from the present or the past. As the mentor

learns to listen to his protege, the adolescent will become more comfortable in sharing his innermost thoughts and feelings. When this takes place, the adolescent is more likely to share the hurts and disappointments he has felt over the divorce of his parents. Even if the divorce took place a number of years ago, the adolescent might still be dealing with disappointment related to the breakup.

This type of healing takes place in what Larry Crabb defined as the upper room of one's soul. In the upper room one is able to connect with another, and in the upper room spiritual community is formed. When connections are made in this upper room, those involved begin to experience a passion to worship, a passion to trust, a passion to grow, and a passion to obey (Crabb 1999, 110-11).

All of these passions are Christ centered. As the participants connect with each other and with Jesus Christ, He is able to transform them from the inside out. This transformation leads to the beginning of the healing process for the adolescent, just as the effects of a divorce are long lasting. If, however, a mentor is able to connect with an adolescent who has experienced a divorce in his family, the adolescent may be more likely to begin to deal with the hurts he has experienced.

Developmental Changes of Adolescents

In studying adolescents, one must study the changes they experience. Adolescents experience change in five different areas: physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual. These changes can occur at various times within the life of a teenager. While most teenagers experience these changes between the ages of 11 and 14, the changes can occur anywhere from the ages of 10 to 17 (Mueller 1999, 17).

Physical

The first and most evident of the changes is in physical development. “The physical transition from child to adult begins as the body produces and secretes hormones that lead to the onset of puberty” (Mueller 1999, 17). These changes mark a time of rapid growth for the life of a teenager. “The impact of the onset of physical puberty cannot be overstated. Early adolescents are not simply making a transition, they are being transformed” (Dunn 2001, 171).

This transition can be viewed in different ways for boys and girls. In males these changes occur with an increase in hand and foot size, the development of body hair, and a change in voice (Black 1991, 88). The changes associated with puberty for males typically begin later than the changes for females. It is common for these changes to take place in males between the ages of 13 and 14. Given the fact that males begin the developmental processes associated with puberty, a junior-high girl is more likely to be more advanced in her physical development than a junior-high boy.

One can witness a female changing through the development of breasts, a broadening of the hips, as well as a growth spurt (Black 1991, 88). Girls entering into adolescence will typically experience these changes at or around the age of 11 and during this time girls begin their monthly menstruation cycle. These changes mark the beginning of puberty and will commonly last until late adolescence.

Cognitive

A second area in which teenagers undergo developmental change is in the way they think. Research has shown that adolescents are able to think differently once they

enter into the teenage years (Richards 1985, 19). Psychologist Jean Piaget is the leading expert in this field. He states that a teenager transitions from concrete operational thinking to formal operational thinking (Shelton 1995, 29)

As young people transition from childhood to adulthood, their ability to think in different ways increases. Research has revealed that as the mental changes occur, young people develop the ability to think in abstract terms. Prior to these changes, young people are limited to thinking primarily in concrete terms. With this new ability to reason in abstract concepts, young people experience an increase in the quality of their reasoning ability (Yount 1996, 90). While this increase in quality may be difficult for a young person to understand at first, as he grows accustomed to this new ability, he will learn how to think and reason in new ways.

The thinking of a teenager also becomes more introspective. “Adolescents spend more time thinking about topics and personal issues in more intense ways” (Shelton 1995, 30). Adolescents begin to think about thinking, and they assume that everyone is thinking about the same thing. It is not uncommon for a young person to begin a conversation with another person in the middle of a thought he might have. If the other person involved in the conversation asks for additional information related to the subject, the adolescents might become frustrated because he assumed the other individual was thinking the same thing (Black 1991, 89).

Recent research has proven that the mind of an adolescent is not fully developed until the late teens to early twenties (Barnes 2000, 19). This truth has implications on the educational process, which is a part of a mentoring relationship. Those who mentor young people need to take into consideration the mental changes a

young person is experiencing. In doing this, the mentor needs to verify, to the best of his ability, that the concept he is trying to teach the young person is understood in its proper context. If this verification does not take place, the young person might begin to adjust his belief system according to an improper understanding of a certain principle.

Emotional

Because young people have acquired the ability to think in new ways, they have also acquired the ability to feel in new ways. They have new emotions that are often intense and completely unpredictable. One expert in the field of youth developmental psychology describes this change as an emotional roller coaster ride. “This roller coaster ride of emotions is usually attributed to hormonal changes that accompany puberty” (Rice 1998, 123). The reason for this emotional ride is because the teenager is unaware of ways to handle all of the emotional changes affiliated with puberty. One minute a teenager can be overly enthusiastic about being accepted in a peer group or based on the grade he received that day, and the next minute he is furious about the fact his mother cleaned up his room. The feelings a teenager experiences are new to him, and he is still processing how to manage them.

Since it is common for a teenager to experience a variety of emotions at any given point in time, it becomes important for a mentor to remain consistent in his emotions. If a young person witnesses his mentor modeling an unstable emotional lifestyle, the young person will be more likely to behave in the same manner. It is, therefore, important for the mentor to remain emotionally stable when working with young people.

Social

One area that typically causes a large amount of emotional distress for a student is his peer group. As a student enters the teenage years, his peer group becomes more important to him. This increase in importance represents a change in his social patterns. A student is no longer content with having his dad drop him off at the mall. It is the desire of the student, instead, to have his dad drop him off across the street so he can walk to the mall. Peer acceptance and approval are vital to teenagers no matter what the cost might be (Coleman 1993, 124).

As peer acceptance begins to play a more essential role in the life of a teenager, peer pressure begins to take place. Peer pressure does not always have to be a negative influence on the life of a teenager (Yaconelli and Burns 1986, 55). Peers can influence one another to complete positive tasks attributed to adolescents such as cleaning one's room or completing one's homework. Peer pressure, however, can have a negative impact, and adolescents are more susceptible to this because they are still in the process of seeking to discover their own identity.

Discovering one's own identity within a peer group is a natural part of a teenager's social development, and as a young person associates with a peer group, his self-esteem will be impacted. Those who associate with a peer group are found to have a higher self-esteem than those who do not have a group (Roehlkepartain 1988, 40). A mentor, therefore, would be wise to help a young person find a group of peers that would help to encourage the young person and develop the young person's self-esteem.

Faith

The final area of developmental changes associated with puberty is spiritual development. As adolescents experience changes in this area, they begin to question things they once believed to be true (Black 1991, 108). Some might worry about the faith of a teenager at this point. A parent or mentor might begin to think that the teenager is calling to question all of the basic beliefs of the faith. While the teenager is asking questions, it does not mean he is questioning his faith but rather is trying to develop an understanding of his own as opposed to the faith of his parents or mentor.

Given the new ability to reason in abstract ways, teenagers have a better ability to understand biblical principles such as faith, trust, and love (Eldridge 1995, 244). When this occurs, those who are involved in teaching youth should welcome their questions. As a teenager begins to explore the questions he has in his mind, he will have the opportunity to discover the desired answers, and in doing this, the teenager begins to develop his own personal convictions.

This particular area of development affects the other four developmental areas (Rice 1998, 142). The development of personal convictions, for example, will impact who the student will choose as a friend or what a student will read for educational purposes. Given this truth, it becomes important for a teenager to have someone who can guide him down a new road in his faith journey. Each individual's faith journey will have multiple obstacles along the way. If, however, the adolescent has a mentor who is willing to connect with him at his particular point of need for the purpose of influencing that adolescent, he has an increased likelihood of being able to navigate the obstacles he will

encounter. This further ensures that the adolescent will develop his own beliefs as opposed to simply mimicking the beliefs of those around him.

Jesus as an Adolescent

In studying the New Testament, readers discover Jesus experiencing all of these changes as an adolescent. Luke 2 reveals Jesus as an adolescent in the temple learning from and talking with the teachers of the law. As He sat among the teachers of the law, He was not content with merely listening. Jesus interacted with the teachers and asked questions. He was experiencing the cognitive changes associated with adolescents, and He was no longer content with solely listening to the law.

The last verse in this chapter says, “And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52). This verse reveals a change in His thinking ability, the physical changes associated with adolescents, and a change in the way others looked upon Him. Jesus was fully God at the point of His birth, yet He was not immune to the changes experienced with puberty, nor are the teenagers one encounters in a mentoring relationship.

The Perceived Needs of Today’s Adolescents

To gain the trust and respect of teens, and to have an impact upon them, effective youth workers make a concerted effort to inhabit the world of the teenager. Often, youth workers who mean well but have limited influence are disabled in their ministry by expecting teens to abandon what comes naturally in favor of entering the adult world. These youth workers push kids to think and act like short adults. In contrast, the most effective youth workers encourage young people to be young—acting and thinking like a human being in process. These ministers accept the immaturity and the impulsiveness as a natural aspect of being young—an aspect that may never be enjoyed at any other stage in these young people’s lives, so they ought to exploit it and enjoy it while they can. (Barna 2001, 149-50)

If someone involved in ministering to youth desires to be more effective in his ministry, it becomes important for this individual to know something about the actual needs of youth. This section of the study will focus on the perceived needs of today's adolescents.

Educational Achievement

A recent survey conducted by the George Barna Research Group revealed that the number one goal for teenagers in today's society is to obtain a college degree. In the survey, 88% revealed that this was a "very desirable" goal for them to achieve (Barna 2001, 84). This perceived need or desire to obtain a college degree has implications for those who work with adolescents.

As teenagers continue to grow in their educational experiences, they will encounter a number of teachers throughout their educational lifetime. These teachers will be given the unique opportunity to influence the way their students think and believe. Some of these teachers will have the opportunity to engage in mentoring relationships.

"Mentors and apprentices are partners in an ancient human dance, and one of teaching's great rewards is the daily chance it gives us to get back on the dance floor. It is the dance of the spiraling generations, in which the old empower the young with their experience and the young empower the old with new life, reweaving the fabric of the human community as they touch and turn" (Palmer 1998, 25). The teacher has the privilege of entering into this dance with his students on a regular basis. This dance consists of the teacher teaching the students and the students assisting the teacher in his own skill development.

Those who are in teaching positions would be wise to consider this increased desire to learn among today's teenagers. Teachers will have the chance to influence a large number of students, and they will also have a chance to mentor a select few along the way. In understanding this desire among students, it once again becomes important for the teacher to develop relationships with his students.

If the role of the mentor is to influence the thoughts and beliefs of his protege, a positive relationship is essential (Eldridge 1995, 33). "Community, or connectedness, is the principle behind good teaching" (Palmer 1998, 115). The teacher needs to connect with his students at a specific point of need. In doing this, the teacher will have the opportunity to earn the right to influence his students. As the students begin to involve themselves within the relationship, the teacher should seek to strengthen the relationship and enter into a mentoring relationship with students who desire this.

If a teacher is working with younger adolescents, it is important for him to understand the developmental changes younger adolescents are experiencing. As children advance into the teenage years, they gain the ability to think in abstract terms and think in more advanced ways (Mueller 1999, 23). This change in cognitive ability will allow the teacher to educate and mentor the student at a more elevated pace. As the young adolescent matures in his thinking ability, the teacher will be able to challenge him in his thought process and the decisions he might reach. This can result in an increased opportunity to influence the young person.

Relationships

Another need, according to the Barna survey, is the desire for relationships. Of those surveyed, 84% stated that they desired a close personal friend (Barna 2001, 84).

This should come as no surprise given the fact that teenagers experience social development during puberty. As this development takes place, young people can be easily influenced by their peers.

There is a wide range of beliefs concerning peer pressure. Some believe that it can be “a life-and-death issue” (Rainey 1998, 51). Others believe that peer pressure can be a positive thing as teenagers seek to influence their friends to live according to biblical standards (Coleman 1993, 125). No matter what one’s beliefs might be concerning this subject, it is evident that young people will experience peer pressure during the teenage years.

Research proves that not only do young people want to have relationships with friends during the teenage years, but they also desire to have relationships with someone of the opposite sex for a lifetime. Of those surveyed, 82% stated that they desire to have one marriage partner for a lifetime (Barna 2001, 85). Those who are growing up in this generation have seen the effects of divorce on the lives of others, and they do not want to inflict this pain on anyone else. Because of this, young people want to commit to someone for a lifetime and not break this commitment at any cost. Time will tell if these young people will be able to stem the tide of divorce in this country. Research, however, is proving that they at least want to change the current trends.

Given the fact that young people desire relationships, those who mentor them should pursue these relationships. One protege, who comes from a broken home, states

that his mentor is a close personal friend (Lockhart 2002). This young man believes that he is able to communicate with his mentor because the mentor has made himself available to the young man over an extended period of time, and the protege feels comfortable in sharing his concerns.

Decrease in Stress

Today's adolescents are experiencing stress in a number of different areas, and it is having an impact on their lives.

School is a major stress. Family is another. Peer pressure is often overwhelming. Sexuality is baffling but ever-present. Techno-stress is very real, even to this generation that seems born to become software designers. Financial woes are widespread. The threat of crime is a daily challenge. Even the political correctness mind-set teenagers frequently embrace is a cause of stress. The current crop of teens is not the first to confront stress; it comes with the territory. Psychologists and sociologists, however, seem to concur that today's teens are drowning in a sea of tensions that threaten to paralyze them. (Barna 1995, 19)

One of the leading causes of stress within the life of a young person is when he comes to the understanding that his parents are getting a divorce (Buchanan, Maccoby, and Dornbusch 1996, 86). A divorce can cause the young person to question his own identity and how he should relate to those around him, leaving him to experience a great deal of guilt. These feelings simply add to the stress that a young person might experience even if his parents did not divorce.

Adolescents of divorced parents also experience differing amounts of stress as it relates to their living arrangements. Adolescents living with their fathers reported experiencing more stress than adolescents in other living arrangements. Adolescents who maintained a dual residence reported experiencing the least amount of stress among those whose parents have divorced (Buchanan, Maccoby, and Dornbusch 1996, 60-61). If the

young person is able to maintain contact with both parents and interact with both his mother and father, the young person experiences less change and less stress. The young person is also less likely to perceive a sense of guilt if he is able to maintain contact with both his mother and father.

Given the amount of stress teenagers are experiencing, four out of five claim to be optimistic about the future (Barna 2001, 46). This optimism comes from an increased desire to connect with those around them and develop a sense of community. A sense of optimism breeds optimism. If those who are around teenagers are optimistic, the teenagers will become optimistic. Today's teenagers find hope in those they are around.

A Quest for Moral Truth

History might remember this generation of young people as one of the most religious groups America has ever known (Rainer 1997, 151). Their religion, however, does not maintain the same beliefs as those who come from previous generations. Even though this is a religious group, one expert describes the current postmodern culture as anti-Christian (Sweet 1999, 47).

If the group is religious yet anti-Christian, the question becomes, What are they using to define their moral beliefs? Eighty-six percent of Christian teenagers who were surveyed stated they believe that the Bible is totally accurate in all of its teachings, yet only 36% of those same teenagers say that they have spent time in the Bible outside of church in any given week (Barna 2001, 131-34). Those who claim allegiance to Christ believe His teachings, but they are not taking the time to learn from His teachings.

The answer to the question of where or from whom they are learning is found in relationships. Because of the perceived need for positive relationships common to this generation, today's teenagers are willing to learn from others in their lives. If someone is willing to come along side a young person and listen to the heart of that young person while seeing beyond the words and behavior, that individual will have the opportunity to influence the young person's moral beliefs (Dunn 2001, 16).

The leader, however, must be willing to listen and lead. If the leader is not willing to listen to the adolescent, the leader might not be given the opportunity to be heard. As the leader learns to listen, he will earn the respect of the adolescent, and he will earn the right to be heard.

One author expresses both the nature of an adolescent's faith and the role of a mentor:

Because of the Fall, in the absence of true relational connection with spiritual caregivers, the natural path of the adolescent spiritual journey is into the darkness of idolatry. Adolescents need spiritual caregivers who will (1) pray for God's Spirit to work in their lives, (2) pray for their spiritual battles in the midst of a perverse world, (3) guide them to a meaningful engagement of the truths of Scripture and (4) walk with them into a personal encounter with the living God. They require caregivers who also offer assistance with self-esteem, family conflicts and life skill development (decision-making, building friendships, working through failure). In sum, adolescents need to be paced with and then led by spiritual caregivers who are able to perceive and engage a whole-life spirituality. (Dunn 2001, 56-57)

Young people need mentors who are willing to connect with them at any point and walk with them for an extended amount of time. In doing this, the mentor will be better able to meet the desire of the young person in his quest for moral development.

Benefits of Mentoring

When an adult chooses to connect with an adolescent at a specific point of need for the purpose of influencing that adolescent, certain benefits can be experienced. These benefits may be short-term, such as finding a place where he can be vulnerable and transparent. These benefits may be long-term, like developing one's leadership skills. This section of the study will deal with the benefits youth might experience when they enter into a mentoring relationship.

Mentoring Is More Than Discipleship

One of the common misconceptions concerning mentoring is that it is another form of discipleship. When an individual chooses to study the nature and benefits of mentoring, he will discover that these two forms of relationships are vastly different. One example of this is that discipleship focuses on the passing of information from the leader to the follower. The leader is to be considered the expert in the area being discussed, and the follower desires to learn from the knowledge base of the leader. In mentoring relationships the mentor's responsibility is to impart wisdom, practical advice, and skill so that the protege can continue in his faith journey (White and Weidman 2001, 73). The mentor does not claim to be an expert in the area in which the protege needs help. The mentor, instead, aspires to help the protege reach his God-given potential by leading the protege to the answer. The mentor does not simply provide an answer to be placed in a blank space within a book. The mentor allows the protege to struggle with life questions in search of a personal discovery for the truth. The mentor serves as a guide along the road to one's personal faith journey. In certain forms of discipleship, the individual

attending a class might be disciplined just through attending the class (Welch 1997, 66). In mentoring, however, the individual grows through the practice of living out what he has learned.

One author defines this concept of walking with someone on his faith journey as pacing then leading. Pacing is the language of love for effective mentoring. Pacing requires the mentor to listen to the heart of an adolescent while seeing beyond the masks of words and behaviors (Dunn 2001, 16).

“Leading requires speaking truth, in love, into another person’s life” (Dunn 2001, 19). In doing this the mentor is required to know the heart of the adolescent he is trying to lead. The mentor cannot attempt to force his will upon the adolescent regardless of how good his intentions might be. In pacing with the student, the mentor connects with the adolescent. In leading the student, the mentor endeavors to direct the student to an answer that would produce a desirable outcome. All of these characteristics help to prove that mentoring and discipleship are two different concepts.

A Place to Connect

Recent surveys have shown, and this study has stressed the fact, that young people desire authentic relationships. These relationships are ones in which the young person is able to dialog with someone about issues he is currently facing. When a young person enters into a mentoring relationship, he is entering into a relationship where he can connect with another person in an authentic relationship.

An American philosophy of individualism is not what today’s young people desire (Rabey 2001, 77). This philosophy can be built around the concept of seeking to

survive on one's own. An individual who believes in this philosophy does not need someone else to help him endure the stress and strain of life. This concept, however, is in opposition to what today's young people desire.

As a mentor connects with a young person, he will have the privilege of modeling and providing the type of relationship the young person is seeking. Once the connection takes place, the mentor will be able to influence the young person in his thoughts and actions which could lead to a transformation of how the young person will live his life.

The desired outcome of a youth ministry should not be about having more attend an event this year over last year's numbers. The outcome should be a "mind that is being transformed to think with a 'God view,' a heart being transformed in its capacity for sharing emotions and affections with God, and a will being transformed into loving obedience to his leading" (Dunn 2001, 58-59). Mentoring relationships provide the opportunity for this type of transformation to take place.

Today's teenagers also have a desire to walk with someone in their spiritual journey as opposed to listening to someone talk about a spiritual journey. "Preaching at kids has surprisingly little effect; working alongside of them to enable them to live the lessons of Scripture changes their lives" (Barna 2001, 154). The connection that takes place through mentoring allows adults to walk alongside young people. The adult is there to encourage, coach, and model for the young person. In a healthy mentoring relationship, the young person does not feel he is being preached at but rather feels he is being equipped for life.

A Place of Safety

As the mentor and protege grow in the relationship, they are able to experience the safety of a connected relationship. This safety, however, begins with the mentor's being willing to be vulnerable. "The safe hospitable space of trust and intimacy will never become a reality unless the mentor, leader, preacher, or teacher becomes vulnerable" (Anderson and Reese 1999, 87). As the mentor leads in this vulnerability, the young person will also feel comfortable in expressing his innermost thoughts and feelings. When the young person begins to express these things, the mentor will have a greater opportunity to influence the young person.

Studies have shown that young people who have experienced a divorce in their immediate family need a safe place to express their feelings. "Adolescents are often reluctant to communicate their feelings with their divorced parents since they mistakenly believe open communication with their parents will increase the stress that is already apparent in the troubled atmosphere" (Parrott 2002, 29). Open communication of the problem is what begins the healing process for the young person.

An adolescent is more apt to express his feelings to someone outside the immediate family he feels truly cares about him. A mentor who is available to meet the adolescent at a specific point of need has a greater amount of potential for helping an adolescent who is encountering new feelings related to the divorce of his parents. An adolescent, however, will disclose these feelings if he feels safe in the relationship. This sense of safety is developed as the mentor communicates with the young person in a vulnerable manner.

A Place to Develop

This research has already discussed the developmental issues associated with puberty. When a young person is involved in a mentoring relationship, this relationship can provide an opportunity to help him in the developmental process. A mentoring relationship can help a young person gain knowledge, develop leadership skills, and grow in his faith. The mentor will have the unique opportunity to influence his protege in each of these areas.

The Opportunity to Influence

John Maxwell says that leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less. If a person is unable to influence another individual, he is unable to lead him (Maxwell 1998, 11). When a mentor connects with his protege, he has the opportunity to influence that protege through short-term decisions as well as long-term lifestyle issues.

In order to increase the chances of the mentor's having a greater influence upon the life of the protege, it is important for the mentor to connect with his protege at a specific point of need. Sharon Parks deals with this issue in her book *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*. In this book she talks about the need for mentors to connect with their proteges where they are and to encourage the proteges to grow in their faith (Parks 2000, 198).

As this connection and influence continue to grow, the mentor has the unique ability to offer hope to the protege (Parks 2000, 205). This sense of hope is generated as the mentor walks with his protege through difficult circumstances or is simply there to

celebrate life experiences. This influence, however, is best able to take place when the mentor and protege are able to connect at a specific point of need.

Gain Knowledge

One expert in the field of mentoring believes that learning is the primary focus of a mentoring relationship. If learning is not taking place, then the mentoring relationship is ineffective (Zachary 2000, 1). One purpose of the mentor should be to communicate truth to his protege in a loving way and to allow the protege to learn from this new information. The mentor, however, should not make decisions for his protege. If the mentor is making all of the decisions, the young person will not have the opportunity to learn.

It is also important for the mentor to allow the young person to make wrong decisions. One of the characteristics of adolescent decision making is the inability to make wise decisions (Black 1991, 105). If the young person is allowed to make the wrong decision, he is more likely to learn from it. If, however, he is not given the freedom to fail, the young person might still think his decision was better. The mentor, while serving as a guide in the decision making process, will better serve the young person by instructing him in the process while allowing the young person to choose for himself.

A mentor can also help the young person gain knowledge in a variety of areas. For instance, a mentoring relationship does not always have to take place in a formal setting at a specific point in time. It can take place as the mentor teaches a young person how to change the oil in his car or how to balance his checkbook (www.mentoring.org

2002). When this type of relationship is established, the mentor is able to teach the young person a number of different life issues.

This type of learning is invaluable for the young person. The young person is not only able to learn more about how to make wise decisions, he is also able to learn practical life skills. The mentor who does not seek to teach his protege is neglecting his opportunity to influence the learning of the young person.

Develop Leadership Skills

Before a church leader can understand that teenagers need to be equipped for ministry, he must understand that students have the potential for being leaders.

The next generation of great leaders is already evolving, but today's adults may be too preoccupied to notice. If churches are concerned about future leaders, they would do well to nurture their children, for any strategy for developing spiritual leaders must take into account those emerging leaders currently in their preteens. It is a church's folly to consign its young people to a youth building across the parking lot so their loud music doesn't 'disturb the adults' worship. Wise churches will explore leadership opportunities for their teenagers rather than waiting until they are adults to begin finding avenues for them to lead. (Blackaby 2001, 32)

For those who use mentoring as a method of developing leaders for the local church, they are developing servant leaders. The mentor is able to develop this type of leader because he is modeling servant leadership. If the goal of the mentor is to connect with his protege at the protege's point of need, the mentor will place the needs of his protege above his own needs. This in turn will teach the protege the importance of serving others and will in turn equip the protege to serve others in his own leadership style.

Jesus set the example of servant leadership in John 13 when He washed the feet of His disciples. The washing of other's feet was a common practice in the first

century. Jesus was willing to humble Himself and serve His disciples. This was an example of placing the needs of others ahead of one's own needs. In doing this, Jesus called the disciples to do the same thing.

Develop Spiritual Gifts

A healthy mentoring relationship should help you to give voice to the song God has sung into your life, to liberate the song that has lain dormant or imprisoned in your history. You should be able to sing the song with your own voice, in your own way, as a response of joy to the amazement of hearing God sing to you. Through spiritual mentoring you will freely and vigorously exercise your God-given gifts in a ministry that is equally God-given. You will discover the voice within and let it ring out. (Anderson 1999, 155)

In a mentoring relationship the protege should become equipped for the works of ministry. This is accomplished as the mentor helps to direct the life of the protege towards his God-given calling. The mentor's goal is not to accomplish ministry on behalf of the protege, but rather to encourage the protege to accomplish ministry activities on his own through the use of his spiritual gifts.

As the protege begins to understand better his spiritual gifts and use them in his daily walk with Christ, he will grow in his faith through the use of his spiritual gifts. This growth will then have the potential to result in a greater desire to know more about God and further use his gifts in ministry (Yount 1996, 38). This growth is brought about by the mentor connecting with his protege at a specific point of need with the intended purpose of influencing the protege. The protege is influenced to use his spiritual gifts in ministry and this will bring joy to his life.

Personal Accountability

There is one word of caution in using mentoring as a form of leadership training. It is important for the mentor to model correct forms of leadership because the protege will likely model the behaviors of his mentor. If, however, the behaviors of the mentor are incorrect, the result will still be the protege's doing the same thing (Palmer 1998, 23). While the protege's perception is that he is doing the right thing, reality is that he is simply perpetuating dysfunctional behavior within the church.

In order to avoid this problem, the mentor should have someone to whom he is accountable so that he does not lead a teenager astray. If the mentor is also being mentored by someone else, he is less likely to lead his protege in the wrong direction. A church counselor describes it as multiple people aboard a ship traveling to the same destination. One person is the captain of the ship, and one is the first mate. The job of the captain is to instruct the first mate on how to sail the ship. As the first mate learns all of the techniques associated with sailing the ship, he too is given the opportunity to lead. If, however, the first mate has questions related to issues he is currently facing, he has the opportunity to ask the captain for advice (Walley 2002).

It is imperative for the person who is mentoring a teenager to have someone guiding him in the right direction. In doing this, there is less chance the mentor will lead the teenager in the wrong direction. "A relationship with an older, experienced leader is the most powerful force in the development of a younger leader" (Banks and Powell 2000, 109). A more experienced person can connect with someone with less experience and teach that individual the leadership skills necessary to survive his faith journey. In

doing this, the less experienced person is developed in his own skills and will be equipped to lead someone at a later date through a similar experience.

Once again it becomes evident that a mentor can equip his protege in a number of leadership areas. The world today needs strong leaders to show young people how to handle alcohol, money, stress, and temptation. Young people need mentors to show them how to share their faith, how to deal with anger, how to show compassion to those in need, how to live with disappointment and grief, and how to lead in the local church (Anderson 1997, 65). All of these should be considered leadership skills, and mentors have the unique privilege of developing those around them in these areas.

One mark of good leadership is ensuring that there is a legacy of the leader (Maxwell 1998, 218). When a mentor commits to developing the leadership skills of his protege, he is helping to ensure that the mentoring relationship will influence not only the immediate choices of his protege but also his long-term decisions. The mentor is helping to ensure that he will have a legacy for his leadership by developing the young person for leadership. As the young person is developed in his own leadership skills, he will have a greater chance of influencing those around him. This will result in a greater legacy for the young person.

Grow in Faith

Paul told the church at Ephesus, “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph 4:11-12).

This passage teaches that those who are believers in Jesus Christ are called to equip others for the work of service. One way to do this is through mentoring relationships.

The mentor will have the opportunity to connect with his protege at a spiritual level, and in so doing, the mentor will be able to answer difficult faith-based questions the young person might be asking. These questions might be related to an assurance of one's salvation, issues related to the developmental changes associated with puberty, or questions concerning complex situations associated with life.

As the mentor assists the young person in issues like these, the mentor will have the opportunity to shepherd the young person. Shepherding is another dimension of mentoring. Shepherds feed, protect, and care for sheep (Anderson 1997, 49). The mentor will have the opportunity to protect and care for the young person under his leadership. As the young person encounters various trials associated with adolescence, the mentor will serve as a guide through the difficult times. In guiding the teenager, the mentor will be able to exhibit the characteristics associated with shepherding.

This form of development, however, can be the most trying for the mentor. A young person's faith can be determined by who he is with at the time. When at church they might behave in a Christlike manner, but when they are around their friends, they may behave in a less than Christlike manner. It is normal, however, for young people to say one thing while in a church setting and behave in a completely different way in another setting (Rice 1998, 148).

Those who participate in striving to develop the faith of their proteges should take courage in the fact that Jesus experienced these same trials. The relationship He had

with His disciples is one in which He sought to aid in the growth of their faith. It was difficult and trying at times, but it was also beneficial.

Jesus' style of equipping is not too hard to understand, but it can be difficult to implement. It is not complex, but it is costly. Equipping calls for consistent investment of time in another person's life and patience as that person appears, at times, to barely crawl up the learning curve. It also calls for vulnerability and openness—and intentional effort. The rewards, however, are immeasurable: It brings spiritual fulfillment to both the equipper and the equipped; it expands the ministry capacity of your church. Best of all, when you equip a fellow believer for ministry, you give God pleasure. (Anderson 1997, 99)

When a mentor is willing to invest in the life of a young person for an extended period of time, the mentor is more likely to see the long-term benefits of this investment. While the progress is slow at times, the mentor would be well advised not to give up on the relationship. Jesus experienced the same frustration with His twelve disciples, but the long-term effects of His relationship with them is still being studied today.

The Effects of Divorce

“With the number of students growing up in divorced homes, the false messages of youth cultural media concerning love and intimacy, and the increasing splintering of society due to postmodernity's sacred commitment to pluralism, spiritual caregivers are needed now more than ever to mentor healthy relationships” (Dunn 2001, 194). The effects divorce has on the life of an adolescent are drastic, and the need for others to help adolescents through this time is important.

When a young person experiences a divorce in his home there will be a number of negative repercussions he will experience. Some of the repercussions might be immediate, while others might take some time to manifest themselves. One researcher in

this particular field provides a list of damaging results a young person might experience when his parents divorce.

Among the more important reasons why divorce is damaging to children are the following: It signals the collapse of the family structure—the child feels alone and very frightened. This loneliness can be acute and long remembered. Parents have a diminished capacity to parent. They are preoccupied with their own emotions and survival during the critical months (or years) of the divorce. The divorce creates conflicts of loyalty in the children. Whose side do they take? Often children feel pulled by love and loyalty in both directions. Uncertainty about the future causes deep-seated insecurity. Being dependent mainly on one parent creates a great deal of anxiety. The anger and resentment between the parents, which is so prevalent in most divorces, creates intense fear in the child. The younger the child, the more damage this climate of hostility can do. Children take on much anxiety over their parents. They worry intensely about their mother, in particular, with their departure of the father. (Hart 1996, 19)

“Many of the problems seen in adolescents of divorced parents are evident before the divorce is final” (Grabmeier 2001, osu.edu). These problems can range from those listed above to outbursts at home, increase in drug use, or a change in educational performance. This section of the study will discuss the effects divorce has on the life of a teenager.

A Biblical Perspective

In studying the effects of divorce on the life of a teenager, one must first understand God’s perspective concerning divorce. God spoke about divorce in Malachi 2:16 when He said, “I hate divorce.” Jesus also spoke of this in the Sermon on the Mount when He said, “I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery” (Matt 5:32).

Anyone who chooses to read the Scripture will quickly discover that God does not condone divorce. It is something that goes against His commands and is something that is taught in both the Old and New Testaments. One, however, must understand that God's grace is also sufficient to forgive the sin of divorce. The sin of divorce is not the unpardonable sin (Matt 12:31).

One expert in the field of marriage and family counseling supports the biblical principles taught by Christ. He also states that divorce is more than just filling out the paperwork and completing the documents (Walley 2002). A divorce can occur in a house while the couple continues to live together. The divorce can be emotional, physical, or even spiritual, and God hates this type of divorce as well.

Denial

When a young person becomes aware that his parents are getting a divorce, one of his first responses might be to deny the reality of the divorce. "Some young people may respond to their parents' divorce by acting as if it isn't happening or by insisting to themselves that their parents won't go through with it" (McDowell and Hostetler 1996, 197). The young person does not want to believe that the divorce is happening, so he continues to live in denial.

When denial occurs, the teenager will be unable to begin the healing process. While the teenager does not have to agree with the concept of divorce, he does have to accept that his parents are getting a divorce. Once the young person comes to this acceptance, he can begin the healing process. As the young person begins to

acknowledge his hurt feelings, he can begin to work through the divorce himself (Akamine 1995, 25-26).

A young person who is in denial over the divorce of his parents is more likely to spend an increased amount of time away from the house. The reason for this in the home is associated with heartache and betrayal (Rhyne 2002). As long as the young person is not in the house, he does not have to deal with the reality of the divorce. As soon as the young person returns home, he is returning to a home with at least one less family member and is unable to avoid this truth when he is at home, therefore he will try to avoid coming home as much as possible. "This can work for a while, but sooner or later he'll have to face the reality of his parents' breakup" (Whiteman 2001, 65).

Another common characteristic of denial is when a young person tries to manipulate his parents. Manipulation can be as simple as not relaying a message from one parent to another, or it can even be an attempt to get his parents back together (Whiteman 2001, 85). No matter what the cause of the manipulation, the result is that the young person is still not dealing with the problem of the divorce.

Anger

"Anger is among the most common responses to parental divorce" (McDowell and Hostetler 1996, 201). "Every teenager whose family is going through a divorce has feelings of anger and anxiety, even if they are not acting on these feelings" (Witmer 2002, about.com). The feelings of anger, however, will most likely be expressed over time.

The anger an adolescent feels can be directed at several different targets. It is typical for a young person to be angry with his parents. This anger is a result of his

beliefs that his parents should sacrifice for him, but he is not required to make a sacrifice for them (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1990, 12). He can even begin to wonder why his parents were unable to make the marriage work. The fact that the young person will be required to live in two different places, even if it is just every other weekend, can become a great source of resentment for him. Because of the changes the young person will experience resulting from the divorce, he might direct some of his anger toward his parents.

It is also common for an adolescent to experience feelings of anger toward himself. This anger can originate from the belief that he had a cause in the divorce (McDowell and Hostetler 1996, 201). In the developing mind of an adolescent, it is easy to conclude that something as simple as not cleaning his room or his inability to make good grades caused the divorce. If the young person continues to harbor these feelings for an extended period of time, the result can be depression.

If a young person is experiencing anger during a divorce, it is important for him to learn to express his anger in appropriate ways. It is also important for the young person to find something constructive to do in order to help him process the anger he is experiencing. One of the worst things the young person can do is deny that the anger exists. In doing this, the young person is unable to accept the truth of the divorce, and the healing process is stifled (Akamine 1995, 5). If the young person, however, deals with his anger, he is able to understand better his own feelings and the reasons for the divorce.

Anger can also lead to feelings of abandonment. A young person's feelings can lead to a sense of fear that he will be left alone or abandoned because of the divorce (Wallerstein 1990, 12). During the adolescent years teenagers are trying to discover their

own unique role in life. If a divorce occurs during this time in their life, they can easily become confused about their own identity. "Identity comes from reactions from significant others—parents, friends, respected teachers—as well as the choices adolescents make as role models. Adolescents need firm, caring adults who understand them and listen to them while providing security by enforcing limits of acceptable behavior" (Yount 1996, 52). When a divorce occurs during the adolescent years, the young person might consider himself to be abandoned by his parents and to be without the primary role model he needs.

School Performance

When a teenager experiences a divorce between his parents, his school performance is often affected. A young person's school performance can be affected in several different areas.

Grades

It is not uncommon for the grades of a young person whose parents have divorced to be lower than those whose parents are not divorced (McDowell and Hostetler 1996, 205). Because of the increased amount of stress the young person experiences, he is unable to concentrate effectively on his studies. This lack of ability to concentrate results in a decrease in performance ability on tests and homework assignments.

There is an increased likelihood that a young person will intentionally make bad grades in order to get his parents attention. Teenagers commonly feel that they are all alone in their struggles, no one understands them, and nobody likes them, especially their mom and dad (Smith 1997, 33). One young adult whose parents divorced when he was

twelve stated that he felt like others cared only about themselves and no one cared about him (Rhyne 2002). When a divorce occurs, this can further accentuate these feelings. In order to regain the attention of their parents, teenagers may deliberately choose to make bad grades. Although the attention received from this is negative, they believe that negative attention is better than no attention at all.

Lack of Ambition

Teenagers whose parents have divorced also express a lack of ambition when it comes to matters related to schoolwork (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1990, 149). Both the denial and anger that teenagers feel has the potential of consuming a large amount of the teenager's thoughts. This type of thinking can lead to depression and can cause a lack of ambition in the academic realm and other related areas.

If a teenager experiences feelings of depression, it is not uncommon for him to isolate himself from other teenagers (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1990, 77). This isolation might take the form of sitting in the back of the room or no longer participating in extracurricular activities. The teenager who perceives that he is different from his friends will not want to spend time with them. If this occurs, the depression will be heightened.

School Discipline

Teenagers whose parents have divorced can also be considered greater discipline problems in a school setting. The discipline problems range from truancy to a general lack of respect toward those in authority (McDowell and Hostetler 1996, 205). The discipline problems at school also have the potential of creating a greater discipline

problem at home. As the young person continues to cause problems at school, the parents might be forced to deal with the problems at home.

This group of young people are also more likely to disrespect those in authority because they do not have a great deal of respect for their own parents. The fact that the parents struggle with anger issues only magnifies this problem. Young people in this group have a desire to lash out against all authority figures, and those in the school system might be prime candidates.

Depression

Depression is another common result for teenagers whose parents have divorced.

Symptoms of depression include eating and sleeping disturbances, a very low self-image, expressions of worthlessness and hopelessness, regression to a more immature stage. Lowered school performance along with heightened distractibility, social and peer difficulties, lack of interest in activities that were once of interest, and in the worst cases, escaping reality through drug and alcohol abuse. (Whiteman 2001, 93)

Depression has a host of characteristics. When a young person is experiencing depression, it is not uncommon for him to express a number of the characteristics listed above. If this occurs it is vitally important for the parents of the adolescent to maintain open communication with him (Witmer 2002, about.com). While the adolescent may not want to communicate with his parents, it is still important for the parents to remain available.

When a young person begins to feel depressed there are common signs one can look for in order to detect this. Depression is “typically characterized by: apathy, loss of appetite, loss of interest in concentration on studies, loss of ability to enjoy play, loss of

ability to enjoy peer relationships, helplessness, hopelessness irritability, obsessive self-criticism, and withdrawal (McDowell and Hostetler 1996, 204). When these characteristics become evident in the life of a young person he is most likely struggling with depression.

Depression can also be considered a defense mechanism (Whiteman 2001, 89). The young person does not want to deal with the existence of the divorce; therefore he begins to act out in ways that cause him to become depressed. If a young person begins to consume alcohol or experiment with drugs, this will affect both his grades and his option of participating in extracurricular activities. If his grades begin to drop, the result can be more self-ridicule, which can lead to an increased feeling of depression. This becomes a circular process where one habit has the potential of feeding another, which in turn accentuates the first habit and may result in an increased sense of depression.

This sense of depression can also have long-term effects. The negative effects of divorce are known to continue well into the adult life of young people who have experienced a divorce between their parents. Studies have shown the teenagers whose parents have divorced have suffered from heightened anxiety, depression, social difficulties, achieving success, and in forming enduring attachments well into their adult years (Hart 1996, 18).

This impact can lead to a transformation in his life. He may be transformed from a kid who goes home to mom and dad and kisses them both good night, to a teenager who calls one parent on the phone to say good night. After the phone call he says good night to his dad, stepmother, stepsiblings, and brother. While experiencing these changes, the young person is having to live in a new house with new roles to fill in

his family. He also has less attention from family members than he once received, and he still believes that no one else knows how he feels (Rhyne 2002). This is an all too common picture of today's society

Profile of the Current Study

The literature presented in this section helps the reader form a scriptural knowledge base for mentoring relationships. One should be able to formulate a model for a mentoring ministry based on the model provided by Jesus Christ through His relationships with His disciples. One should also be better able to understand the truth that when man was created on the sixth day in the image of God, he was created for relationship. Man was ultimately created to have a relationship with God, but man was also created to have a relationship with others.

A mentoring relationship is one in which a mentor seeks to connect with a protege at a specific point of need for the purpose of influencing the protege. Relationship is the core of a mentoring union. Given the fact that relationships are so vital to a mentoring union, it is important for the mentor and protege to connect at a specific point of need. When this type of connection takes place, the protege will be able to experience a number of benefits from the mentoring relationship. These benefits provide help for immediate problems, and the benefits may also influence the long-term decisions of the protege.

One possible area of connection between a mentor and his protege can be the divorce of the protege's parents. Research has shown that when a young person's parents

go through a divorce, the young person will suffer negative effects. Several effects are a drop in school performance, a struggle with depression, or anger-related issues.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived needs of high school male adolescents and study possible implications for mentoring those male adolescents of divorced parents. Given the fact that mentoring relationships provide certain benefits, the research sought to determine the perception of high school male adolescents concerning the concept of mentoring.

The literature reviewed in this chapter has provided a model for mentoring, an understanding of the perceived needs of today's adolescents, and the results of a divorce of one's parents on the life of a teenager. This study took the information in this chapter along with the surveys conducted for this study and endeavored to determine the perceived needs of male adolescents who attend Sunday School and their perception of mentoring relationships.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

This chapter presents a detailed description of the methodological design and the processes used in collecting data related to the mentoring of high school male adolescents of divorced parents. Additionally, the specifics of the population, samples of delimitations, limitations of generalization, instrumentation, and procedures are provided.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived needs of high school male adolescents and study possible implications for mentoring those of divorced parents.

Research Question Synopsis

Adolescent boys in today's society need help in becoming good men. Today's adolescents have fewer role models because of an increase in divorce and materialistic philosophies embraced by parents resulting in feelings of loneliness, lack of effective discipline, and a perceived lack of love by the teenager. If mentoring relationships are introduced, adolescents can experience and benefit from more positive role models.

Research Questions

This study had four lines of inquiry:

1. What are the perceived needs self-reported by high school male adolescents attending Sunday school?
2. What are the similarities and differences between the perceived needs of high school male adolescents of divorced parents and those from non-divorced homes?
3. What are the perceptions of high school male adolescents concerning mentoring relationships?
4. What is the nature of the relationship between the age of high school male adolescents and their reported relational needs?

Design Overview

The research instrument chosen for this study was a five-point Likert response scale. This instrument was distributed and administered to high school male adolescents in attendance at their Sunday school classes on the day of the survey. The survey was taken by male adolescents of both divorced and nondivorced parents. The purpose in doing this was to compare and contrast the answers provided by the two distinct groups.

The survey was created by the researcher and then given to an expert panel for the purpose of evaluation. This survey was evaluated by the experts in order to avoid a bias on the part of the researcher. The expert panel consisted of several men who have designed similar surveys in the completion of their own doctoral studies. They evaluated the survey, offered suggestions for possible changes, and changes were made according to their recommendations.

The intention of the survey was to measure the perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes of high school male adolescents. The survey was focused on behaviors such as

their perception of mentoring relationships, school performance, feelings of anger, or relationships with others.

Once the survey was developed and reviewed, it was distributed to those who were participating in the study. Upon the completion of the surveys they were collected and the data was entered in SPSS and Excel for the purpose of evaluation.

Population

The population for this research study was all high school male adolescents in Southern Baptist churches in the Nashville, Tennessee area.

Sample

The sample for this research was drawn from the northern suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee. The researcher surveyed three Southern Baptist churches in this area with an approximate sample size of two hundred high school male adolescents. These three churches provided an adequate cross section of the student population given that one church is in a rural setting, another church is in a downtown setting, and the third church is located in an upper middle-class area. The researcher used convenience sampling because of the geographic location of these three churches (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 227).

The researcher contacted the youth ministers at these three churches and gained permission to conduct the surveys in the Sunday school classes of high school male adolescents. Once the surveys were completed, the researcher collected the information and began to process the data. The researcher used all of the surveys completed by the high school male adolescents in order to complete the statistical research.

Delimitations

The study was delimited to the northern region of Nashville due to number of high school male adolescents in this population center. The delimitation to three churches also provided assistance in the supervision of the survey. The researcher lives in this area and has direct contact with these three churches, therefore making it possible for him to provide assistance to those who administered the surveys and eliminating any potential difficulties in both conducting and collecting the surveys.

Limitations of Generalization

Given the specific delimitations, there were several limitations to the results of the research for the general population. First, the data was not able to be generalized to the general public not attending church. While nonchurch attenders might find the information pertaining to the perceived needs of high school male adolescents or the effects of a divorce on the life of an adolescent useful, the results from the survey will not generalize specifically to them.

A second limitation of generalization related to the type of church being surveyed. The three churches were all part of the Southern Baptist Convention. While the makeup of the young people being surveyed was not to be limited to members of these churches, those who were surveyed at least attended these churches. These churches were all independent churches and thus operated as an autonomous body of believers. Southern Baptists, however, are known for their conservative beliefs and opinions. One who wishes to study the findings of this research will not be able to generalize the results to other denominations.

The data gathered was not to be generalized to high school female adolescents whose parents have divorced. Since men and women are created differently, the manner in which a young man or young woman responds to a divorce of his or her parents or perception of a mentoring relationship can be significantly different. The data gathered, therefore, was not to be generalized to the female population of those who have experienced a divorce in their immediate families.

Those who wish to study younger adolescents still in junior high will also have limited application of this material. All participants being surveyed were of high school age and will have already begun the developmental processes associated with puberty. These changes will result in a possible difference in the answers to questions being asked in the survey. Younger adolescents have different needs and desires from their older counterparts. The data, therefore, was not able to be generalized to those who are younger.

The data was also not able to be generalized to certain segments of the overall population. Given the fact that northern suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee, are predominately bedroom communities, those who live in the inner city will struggle to apply the findings of this study to their setting. Those, however, who live in a rural setting have a greater chance of applying the findings from this study because of the rural element that is associated with this region.

Another factor that should be addressed related to the region being studied is the socioeconomic status of those being surveyed. While the region does have a mixture of all socioeconomic backgrounds, middle-class to upper middle-class socioeconomic status made up the majority of those being surveyed. Those who live in different

socioeconomic settings might not discover the results to be as helpful as those who come from a middle-class to an upper middle-class setting.

Even if the area being surveyed is predominately middle-class to upper middle-class, teenagers still have a number of characteristics in common. All teenagers still have to experience the developmental changes associated with puberty and with thinking ability as they move from concrete operational thinking to formal operational thinking. Given the fact that all teenagers experience a number of similar changes, the socioeconomic status of the area being surveyed can be a non-issue.

All of the groups mentioned above might still use the information in this research in different ways. The material provided could be used to develop a mentoring program for youth in their community. Others will be better able to determine how to meet the needs of today's adolescents in a postmodern society. While the results are not to be applied to all groups or settings, the information contained in this study can be helpful to anyone who desires to mentor today's adolescents.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this research was a utilized Likert response scale. The survey first divided the high school male adolescents into two groups: the first group was those whose parents have not divorced, and the second group was those whose parents have divorced. Once the groups were divided, the researcher compared and contrasted the two groups in the four areas being studied.

The four areas in which the researcher was seeking to obtain knowledge were the perception of mentoring relationships, anger-related issues, relationships with other

people, and school performance. The reason for researching these specific areas was that previous studies have shown that those who come from divorced homes are affected by the divorce of their parents in these areas.

The areas being surveyed were evaluated through a Likert response scale. Each area was studied with a number of statements related to each subject. One's perception of mentoring relationships included 4 statements. Assertions regarding anger-related issues included 6 statements. Assertions regarding relational needs included 4 statements, and assertions regarding school performance included 6 statements.

The researcher sought to determine the beliefs of both those who had experienced a divorce in their immediate family, and those who had not experienced a divorce. These two groups were then compared and contrasted in order to determine if there was a statistical difference between the two groups.

The instrument was also used to compare and contrast the different age groups of the high school male adolescents. Those completing the survey were asked to give their age. This information was used to organize the data in such a way as to compare and contrast the information according to age.

Procedures

The researcher took certain specific steps in order to help ensure proper protocol related to the administration of the survey. The researcher first chose a date on which to administer the surveys to the three churches. The surveys were distributed and completed in the early autumn of 2002, because it is common for a number of students to attend a Sunday school class at this time of year.

Once the researcher confirmed with the youth ministers a willingness to participate in the study, the researcher received institutional approval to conduct the study from the pastors or youth ministers of all three churches. The researcher asked the pastors or youth ministers of the three churches to provide written documentation of their willingness to allow the research to be conducted at their respective churches. The surveying of students did not take place until written documentation was obtained by the researcher.

After the researcher had obtained permission to conduct the study, the youth ministers were contacted at the two other churches in order to confirm their willingness to participate. Had two youth ministers been unable to participate, the researcher would reschedule in order to ensure that all three churches were administering the surveys on the same day. In doing this the conclusions were less likely to be biased since all churches would be taking the surveys at the same time.

The researcher also gave detailed instructions to the youth ministers concerning the administration of the surveys. The researcher asked the youth ministers to find someone other than themselves to administer the surveys. If a young person believed his youth minister had the ability to identify his survey, there was the possibility that the young person might be less than truthful. If, however, a Sunday school teacher or another member of the church was able to administer the completion of the survey while the youth minister was not present, there would be the potential for the young person to be more truthful in his response.

There was also a detailed document for the person administering the survey to read to the class before taking the survey. The person administering the survey read this

document to the young people after he had distributed the surveys but before they began to complete the survey. The reason for this was to allow the instructions to be heard by the young people immediately before they completed the survey. If the instructions were given at a different time, the young person taking the survey might find the instructions easy to forget.

This document also explained the purpose of the survey, ensured the young people they would remain anonymous, and emphasized that the teenagers should not place their names on the survey. The document stated that if a name was placed on the survey it would not be considered valid.

The survey was given at the start of the class period. The reason for doing this was to avoid taking too much of the teacher's Bible study time. The purpose of the survey was to gain information related to this subject, not take away from the Bible study time.

Once the survey was completed, the young people were instructed to turn the survey in to the teacher in a large envelope provided by the researcher. These envelopes were not marked in any way in order to guarantee that the researcher was unable to determine which church the surveys came from or who had completed them. The students were made aware of this so they would know that both the youth ministers and the researcher were unable to determine who completed which survey. The envelopes were returned to the youth minister at the end of the Sunday school hour.

The following week the researcher contacted the youth ministers to collect the surveys. Once he received the surveys and combined them all, he began to process the

data. Upon completion the researcher will provide the other two youth ministers a copy of the information gained from the study.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Chapter four is an analysis of the findings from the collected data. The researcher will discuss the processes used to collect the data, provide charts and graphs related to the material found, and provide an evaluation of the overall research design.

Compilation Protocol

Specific scientific methods were followed in collecting the information for this study. The particular theory used in this study is known as the grounded theory. This approach involves deriving information directly from the immediate data that one has collected rather than from prior research and theory. The theory is grounded in the particular set of data that has been collected (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 10).

An ordered process was used in collecting and compiling the data for analysis. First, the youth ministers at the churches being surveyed were contacted, and a meeting was arranged with them. At this meeting proper protocol was discussed for the administration and collection of the data.

Upon completion of this meeting, the number of surveys needed for each church was determined. Approximately ten to fifteen surveys were placed in large envelopes for each class of high school male adolescents at each church. Once the

envelopes were filled, the surveys were delivered to the youth ministers for the purpose of distributing them on the morning they were to be completed. At this time a detailed instruction sheet was provided to the youth ministers explaining the process for administration and collection of the data. In order to alleviate a bias, the envelopes and surveys were left unmarked, resulting in an inability to distinguish among the three churches.

Upon providing the youth ministers with the surveys needed, a mailing list of the parents of high school male adolescents from the respected churches was also collected. These lists were used to conduct a mailing to all of the parents of high school male adolescents in the three churches for the purpose of gaining informed consent. Without informed consent, the research would not have been conducted because of legal issues. The informed consent letter was mailed a week prior to the administration of the survey.

Upon the completion of the surveys, they were retrieved from the youth ministers, and the data was entered into two different computer programs. Both SPSS and Excel were used to compute the data. The use of two programs was helpful in gaining a better understanding of the information gleaned from the surveys.

If a survey was returned incomplete in any manner, it was discarded from the data set. Also, if the survey had been signed or could be identified to a specific person or a specific church, the survey was discarded. This process helped to ensure that a bias was not created which might yield incorrect outcomes.

Once the surveys were collected and filtered for nonidentification purposes, results were entered into a computer program for compilation. Upon the completion of

entering the data, several experts in the field of statistics were contacted for the purpose of analyzing the results. The purpose in doing this was once again to help ensure that a bias was not introduced into the results of the study.

Upon reaching a better understanding of the data collected from the surveys, an exploration of the data for a number of different outcomes was conducted. The data was first tested for the reliability of the survey. Both a Cronbach's Alpha test and Guttman's Split Half test were run. The result from the Cronbach's Alpha test was .8700, and the results from the Guttman's Split Half was .7400. The conclusions from both of these tests reveal that the survey was reliable in measuring the desired outcomes.

The data was also examined for the mean, median, and mode in the four areas being studied. These three measures provided meaningful information. The mean is the average value of the distribution. The median is the middle value of the distribution, and the mode is the most frequently occurring value (George and Mallery 2001, 86). These values were important to the study because they helped to begin to determine if there was any significance between the two groups being studied. For example, if the mean score for anger related issues of those who came from divorced homes was a great deal lower than the mean score for the same issue from those who came from intact homes, an investigation of this difference would take place.

Another important statistic for this study was the standard deviation. Standard deviation is a measure of the extent to which scores in a distribution deviate from the mean. The mean and standard deviation, taken together, usually provide a good description of how those who are participating in a survey might score on a particular measure (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 178).

In studying the standard deviations associated with this dissertation, the significance of the generated outcomes was determined. This significance was determined by conducting a t -test. Both two-tail and a one tail t -test were conducted in this study. The results from the t -tests were then used to generate a p value on both of these areas.

Another measure used in this dissertation was the calculation of the z score. The purpose in doing this was to compare and contrast the scores of those who come from divorced homes with those who come from intact homes. Calculating the z score helped to determine if a statistical significance existed between the two groups in the four areas studied. The kurtosis and skewness of the distributions was also examined. The purpose in these two measures was to help determine if a significant difference existed between the two groups.

Findings and Displays

This section of the chapter will discuss the findings from the 163 surveys completed for this research. The researcher will organize this section of the dissertation in such a way as to correspond to the order of the research questions.

Self-Reported Perceived Needs of High School Male Adolescents

The survey was constructed to measure the perceived needs of high school male adolescents in four distinct areas. The areas studied were school performance, relationships, the perception of mentoring relationships, and anger-related issues. This section will discuss the mean, median, and mode of each of these four areas.

In studying these specific measures, it is important for one to understand the manner in which the survey was constructed. A Likert-scale survey was used in which point values ranged from 1 to 5. A response of strongly disagree received a value of 1 while a response of strongly agree received a value of 5. The point values of 2, 3, and 4 were assigned to the responses between strongly agree and strongly disagree. Also, the statements were all created to reflect a positive response. If an individual chose strongly agree on any one statement, this would always reflect a positive response on behalf of the person completing the survey. Knowing this information will prove to be helpful to the understanding of the mean, median, and mode of the entire group who completed the survey.

The mean score for this research was conducted for the entire group on the four specific areas being surveyed. The mean score was used to help reveal high school male adolescents' overall view and rating of the four areas.

Table 1. Mean score of the self-reported perceived needs of high school male adolescents attending Sunday School

<i>Perceived need</i>	<i>Mean score</i>
Anger	3.15
School Performance	3.83
Mentoring Perception	4.00
Relationships	4.15

Table 1 reveals some important statistical data. The mean scores found in Table 1 are ranked from lowest to highest. Anger-related issues had a mean value of

3.15; school performance had a mean value of 3.83; the perception of mentoring relationships by young people received a value of 4.00; and the desire for relationships scored the highest with a 4.15. While school performance, mentoring perception, and relationships were relatively close in their mean scores, anger-related issues had a mean score much lower than the other three.

It is also important to note that relational needs and the perception of mentoring scored the highest values. This is a trend that will continue throughout the study. These two perceived needs place an emphasis on the relationships these high school male adolescents either currently have or wish to have sometime in the future. A higher mean score in these areas reveals a greater importance for those whose focus is upon these two perceived needs.

The mode and median scores were also conducted for the entire group in the four areas being studied. The median represents the middle value of the distribution, and the mode is the most frequently chosen value in the survey. In this particular study the median is the middle average of each particular survey. The score was calculated by adding all of the values associated with each particular survey and then determining the middle value of the distribution.

In this research anger scored significantly lower than the other three areas in both the median and mode scores, while relationships scored the highest. These measures reveal that all of the high school male adolescents surveyed struggle more with anger related issues and also place a high value on positive relationships in their lives. The scores for school performance and mentoring perception were second and third

respectively in value. Table 2 gives a detailed listing of the median and mode scores for the four areas studied in this research.

Table 2. Median and mode score of the self-reported perceived needs of high school male adolescents attending Sunday School

<i>Perceived need</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mode</i>
Anger	3.17	3.00
School performance	3.83	4.00
Mentoring perception	4.00	4.00
Relationships	4.20	4.00

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

Comparing the Perceived Needs of High School Male Adolescents from Divorced Homes and Intact Homes

The study compared and contrasted the perceived needs of high school male adolescents from divorced homes with the perceived needs of high school male adolescents who came from intact homes. The research compared and contrasted these two groups in all the four areas being studied.

Anger-Related Issues

In striving to compare and contrast the two distinct groups in this study, one needs to first understand the nature of the questions being asked in each of the four categories. The instrument used in this study had six statements regarding anger-related issues. The statements were all phrased in such a manner as to reward a favorable

response. If the teenager completing the survey did not perceive that anger was an issue for him, then he would answer the statement with a favorable rating. The result of this would be that those who are not struggling with anger-related issues would score high on this portion of the survey.

The first set of numbers investigated in this realm were the mean, median, and mode. The median and mode between the two groups proved to be almost exactly the same. The medians associated with the two groups were both 3.17. The modes, however, were slightly different. Those who abide in intact homes had a mode of 3.50, while those who live in divorced homes had a mode of 3.00.

The means were also different when comparing the two groups. The mean score for those who come from divorced homes was 3.10, while the mean score for those who come from intact homes was 3.16. While mean scores did not have a great deal of difference between the two of them, it was interesting to note that this was the lowest mean score for both of the groups out of the four areas being studied. Another interesting point concerning these scores was that those who came from divorced homes had a lower mean score. This fact will also be evident in the other areas associated with this dissertation.

Once the mean was calculated, the researcher was able to determine the standard deviation. The standard deviation for those who came from divorced homes was 1.18, and the standard deviation for those who came from intact homes was 1.13. Calculating this number allowed the researcher to conduct a *t*-test. The purpose of the *t*-test was to compare two sample means to see if there was sufficient evidence to infer

that the means of the corresponding population distributions also differed (George and Mallery 2001, 381).

The result of the *t*-test is a *p* value, and if the *p* value resulting from this test is $<.10$, there is an observable difference between the two sample means. The resulting *p* value for this particular area was 0.51. Since this value was $>.10$, there was no statistical significance between these two groups to be reported.

One final number was checked in order to determine further if a statistical significance existed between the two groups, and that was the *z*-score. If a *z*-score has a magnitude of <-1.96 or >1.96 , then a statistical significance exists. The *z*-score for this particular area was -0.66. While this value did reveal that those who came from divorced homes tended to score lower in this area than those who came from intact homes, it did not reveal a statistical significance between the two groups.

Table 3. Comparative numbers between divorced and intact homes on anger-related issues

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>p value</i>	<i>z-score</i>
Divorced home	3.10	3.17	3.00	1.18	0.51	-0.66
Intact home	3.16	3.17	3.50	1.13		

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

Table 3 provides a listing of all of these statistical values already discussed. This table compares the two groups only in the area of anger-related issues. In studying Table 3, one will be able to determine that there is no valid significance between the two groups as it relates to perceived anger in the lives of high school male adolescents who completed this survey.

The research also investigated the skewness and kurtosis measures. Similar to the other values already measured, these too were similar in nature. The skewness and the kurtosis for those who came from divorced homes was -0.39 and 0.35 respectively, while the skewness and kurtosis for those who came from intact homes was -0.21 and 0.19 respectively.

These numbers reveal the height and direction of the curve (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). Given the fact that both groups had a negative skewness reveals a curve that has a greater number of values larger than the mean score, and the positive kurtosis indicates a shape flatter than normal. Since both values are between -1.0 and 1.0, the measures are to be considered good for psychometric purposes (George and Mallery 2001, 86).

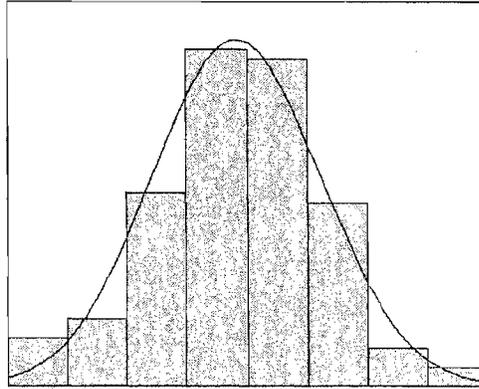


Figure 1. Anger for divorced homes

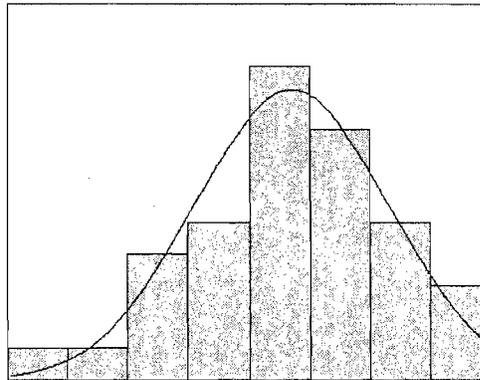


Figure 2. Anger for intact homes

School Performance

The perception of one's ideals about school was also measured. The survey contained six statements related to this particular area. The statements attempted to measure the perception of those involved in the survey concerning their attitude about school, their perceived ability to apply themselves, as well as their view of the social aspect related to school. All of the same measures calculated in the anger-related issues

were also applied in this area. The research also compared and contrasted the two distinct groups being studied.

The results associated with this specific area began to reveal statistical significance. The mean score for those who came from divorced homes was 3.70, while the mean score for those who reside in intact homes was 3.87. While there is not a large difference between the two scores, those who reside in intact homes scored higher once again. The median and mode for the two groups also had a slight variation. The median and mode for those who reside in divorced homes was 3.83 and 4.00 respectively. While the median and mode for those who dwell in intact homes was 4.00 and 3.83 respectively.

In looking at the standard deviation, one will begin to discover a greater difference between those who reside in a divorced home and those who reside in an intact home. Those who have experienced a divorce between their parents had a standard deviation of 1.18, while those whose parents have not divorced scored a standard deviation of 1.00. The significance of these two scores is that those who come from a divorced homes had a wider range of scores from those who have not experienced this. Also, the scores of teenagers of traditional homes would reflect a more standard bell curve since the standard deviation is smaller.

An even greater amount of significance begins to become evident when one looks at the p value and z score. The z score for this area was -1.94, while the p value was 0.05. Given the fact that the z score is almost two complete standard deviations outside of the mean reveals an amount of significance. Also, the p value is between .10 and .05 reveals that this value is approaching significance. Both of these values show that this specific area of research is approaching statistical significance.

Table 4. Comparative numbers between divorced and intact homes on school performance

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>p value</i>	<i>z-score</i>
Divorced home	3.70	3.83	4.00	1.18	0.05	-1.94
Intact home	3.87	4.00	3.83	1.00		

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

Additional measures, such as skewness and kurtosis, also reveal significance between the two groups in this area. The high school male adolescents who have not experienced a divorce in their immediate family had a curve that was close to normal. This can be seen in the fact that the kurtosis score was 0.00. A normal curve would have a kurtosis of 0. The skewness for this group was 1.17, which reveals a curve with a greater number of scores to the left of the mean (Figure 3).

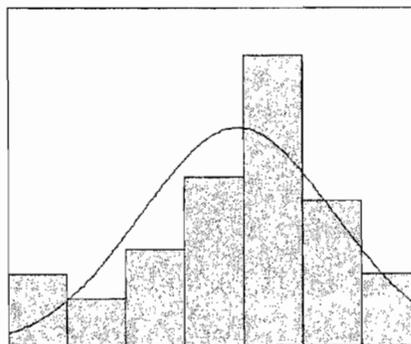


Figure 3. School performance for intact homes

The kurtosis and skewness, however, were much different for those who came from divorced homes. These values were -0.64 and -0.82 respectively. The negative kurtosis discloses a curve that has a much sharper peak, and the negative skewness discloses a curve with a greater number of values on the right side of the mean (Figure 4).

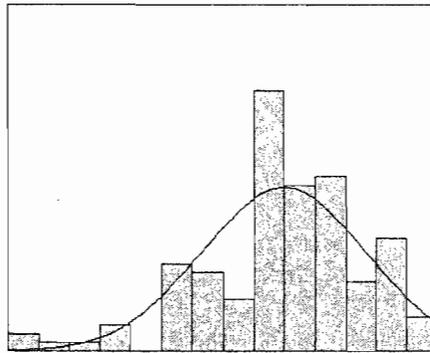


Figure 4. School performance for divorced homes

The difference in the values in skewness and kurtosis coupled with the numbers associated with the p value and z -score reveal that the information associated with this specific area between those who came from intact homes and those who resided in divorced homes is approaching statistical significance. The research reveals that those who came from divorced homes scored significantly lower in their perception of school performance.

Relational Needs

The instrument used in this study also sought to discover the relational needs of those being surveyed. The survey had five statements dealing with this issue. The statements dealt with the perception of positive relationships in the lives of high school

male adolescents. These positive relationships ranged from relationships with friends, parents, other adults, and those of the opposite sex. The point in dealing with this particular area was to discover whether there was any statistical difference between the two groups being studied. Previous research had revealed that those who come from divorced homes have a greater potential of experiencing a negative impact on their lives in this area. This particular part of the survey sought to discover if research could also be validated in this particular geographic area.

The research once again focused on the standard statistical measures of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, *p* value, and *z*-score (Table 5). These scores were calculated in order to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between those who came from divorced homes and those who resided in intact homes.

Table 5. Comparative numbers between divorced and intact homes on relational needs

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>p value</i>	<i>z-score</i>
Divorced home	3.98	4.00	4.20	0.91	0.00	-3.03
Intact home	4.20	4.20	4.00	0.75		

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

Several important aspects relate to these statistical measures. The first thing to note is that the median and mode for both groups were closely related. High school male

adolescents who have experienced divorce in their immediate family had a median score of 4.00 and a mode score of 4.20, while high school male adolescents who have not experienced a divorce in their immediate family had a median score of 4.20 and a mode score of 4.00.

When one begins to look at the mean, one begins to discover differences between the two groups. The mean score for those who came from divorced homes was 3.98, while the mean score for those who came from intact homes was 4.20. Once again, those who resided in divorced homes had a lower mean score when compared with those who came from intact homes.

There was also a difference in the standard deviation of the two groups. The standard deviation for those in intact homes was 0.75, and the standard deviation for those in divorced homes was 0.91. The scores of those who abide in intact homes were more tightly gathered around the mean as compared to those from divorced homes. The result of this smaller standard deviation was a more tightly group population around the mean score.

The greatest amount of statistical significance in the area of relational needs became evident in the p value and z -score. The p value associated with this specific area was 0.00. For the purposes of this study a p value $< .01$ was to be consider highly significant. The p value in this area was much lower than the required .01. The z -score also proved to be statistically significant. The value associated with this score was -3.03. This value was < -1.96 , therefore yielding a score beyond two standard deviations from the mean score. The results from these scores prove that there is a statistical significance between these two groups in the area of relational needs.

Final areas of statistical interest associated with comparing and contrasting the relational needs of those who completed this survey are the skewness and the kurtosis of the two curves. There was not a great deal of difference between the two groups in this component. The skewness for those who came from divorced homes was -0.64 and the skewness for those who came from intact homes was -0.56 . Both of the groups had a negative skewness which yields a bell curve with a greater number of participants scoring above the mean score.

Furthermore, the kurtosis for those who lived in divorced homes was 0.34 , and the kurtosis from those who abided in intact homes was 0.32 . The results of both of these scores being positive is a bell curve that does not have as high a peak associated with it. Figure 5 shows the skewness and kurtosis for those who lived in intact homes, while Figure 6 reveals the skewness and kurtosis for those who lived in divorced homes.

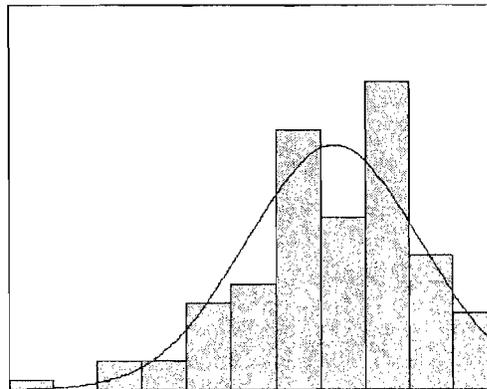


Figure 5. Relational needs for intact homes

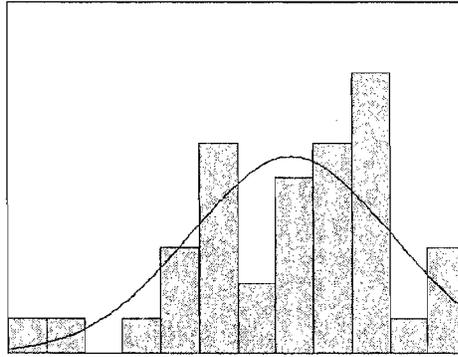


Figure 6. Relational needs for divorced homes

Mentoring Perception

The final perceived need studied in this dissertation was the perception both groups had toward mentoring relationships. The survey had four different statements related to the perception of mentoring relationships. The statements asked the adolescents to address whether they believed a mentoring type relationship would be beneficial to them in dealing with current issues in their lives.

The same measures and tests were used in this area as were employed in the other three areas. The research obtained statistical measures in the area of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, *p* value, *z*-score, skewness, and kurtosis. Each of these numbers provided information in seeking to discover if a statistical significance existed between those who came from divorced homes and those who came from intact homes in this particular area.

Similar to the other three areas already studied, the median and mode proved to be similar in both groups. All of the values except one associated with these measures for

both groups was 4.00. The only measure that did not have 4.00 as its outcome was the mode for those who live in divorced homes. The mode for this group was 3.75.

In studying the mean, however, one is able to begin to distinguish a difference between the two groups. The mean score for those who came from divorced homes was 3.84 while the mean score for those who came from intact homes was 4.04. The standard deviation for the two groups also proved to be different. The standard deviation for those who resided in a divorced home was 0.81 and for those in intact homes it was 0.83.

A two tailed *t*-test was also used to help compute the *p* value and *z*-score for this perceived need. This test yielded a *p* value of .01. Given the fact that the *p* value was between the values of .05 and .01, the result was statistically significant between the two groups in the area of mentoring perception. The *z*-score also revealed this in the fact that its value was -2.55. Table 6 provides a listing of all of the values associated with comparing and contrasting those who came from divorced homes with those who came from intact homes in the area of mentoring perception.

Table 6. Comparative numbers between divorced and intact homes on mentoring perception

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>p value</i>	<i>z-score</i>
Divorced homes	3.84	4.00	3.75	0.81	0.01	-2.55
Intact homes	4.04	4.00	4.00	0.83		

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

The skewness and kurtosis associated with this perceived need also provided insightful information. The skewness for those who occupied a divorced home was -0.36, and the skewness for those who occupied an intact home was -0.82. Both of these numbers were negative revealing that a larger number of participants scored above the mean average.

There was also a difference in the scores related to the kurtosis. The kurtosis for those who came from divorced homes was 0.19, and the kurtosis for those who came from intact homes was 1.33. Since both of these numbers were positive, the result is a bell curve that does not have an overly elevated peak. Figure 7 and Figure 8 provide a visual picture of the skewness and kurtosis for these two groups.

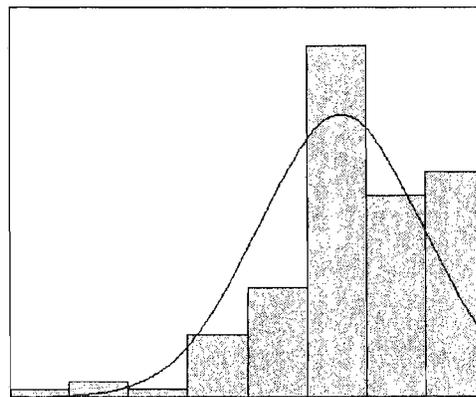


Figure 7. Mentoring perception for intact homes

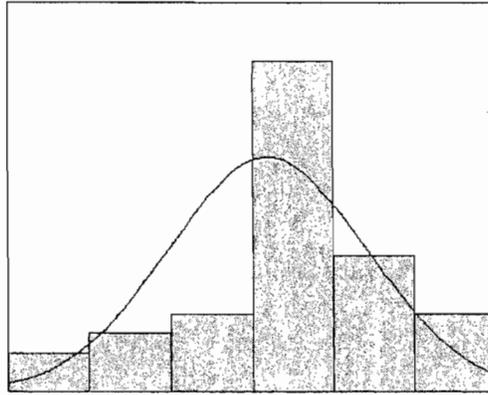


Figure 8. Mentoring perception for divorced homes

All of the information provided in this section of the study seeks to compare and contrast the two groups being studied. The comparison takes place in the four areas being studied in the survey: anger-related issues, school performance, relational needs, and mentoring perception. A statistical significance exists between the two groups in the area of mentoring relationships, while the two groups are approaching significance in the area of school performance, and they are highly significant in the area of relational needs. The only area that did not prove to be significant in any manner was anger-related issues. This perceived need, however, did have the lowest mean scores for both groups.

Desire for Mentoring Relationships

Another facet of this survey was to try to determine the overall perception high school male adolescents have concerning mentoring relationships. The difference between this particular reporting section and the previous one is that the population is not divided between those who have experienced a divorce between their parents and those who have not experienced a divorce.

At the top of the survey a definition of mentoring was provided. The definition used was: a relationship in which a teenager is able to identify with an adult at a point of interest for the teenager, and the teenager is influenced in and through this relationship. After the young person was asked to provide his age and state whether his parents had divorced, he was asked to state whether he was currently or had been involved in a mentoring relationship that fits the definition of mentoring provided. Out of the 163 high school male adolescents who completed the survey only 19 stated that they did not currently have or at one time had a mentoring type relationship. The other 144 young people completing the survey did believe they had or were currently involved in this type of relationship. The percentages related to this information is 11.7% who were not involved in a mentoring relationship and 88.3% who were involved in a mentoring relationship.

Table 7. Involvement in mentoring relationships

	<i>Actual number</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Involved in mentoring relationships	144	88.3%
Not involved in mentoring relationships	19	11.7%
Totals	163	100%

In order to understand better the overall perception of those who completed the survey, it is important to study the responses they provided to the statement concerning mentoring relationships. The survey contained four statements related to one's overall

perception of mentoring type relationships. Each was worded in a positive manner, thus resulting in a higher score for those who desired a mentoring relationship. The overall mean score for this group of statements was 4.00, the median was 4.00, the mode was 4.00, and the standard deviation was 0.68 (see Table 8).

Table 8. Overall perception of mentoring

Mean	4.00
Median	4.00
Mode	4.00
Standard deviation	0.68

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

The skewness and kurtosis identified with this specific area also proved valuable. The skewness was -0.69 while the kurtosis was 1.00. Given the fact that both of these values were in between 1.0 and -1.0, the numbers should be “considered excellent for most psychometric purposes” (George and Mallery 2001, 86). The histogram related to these statistics can be seen in Figure 9.

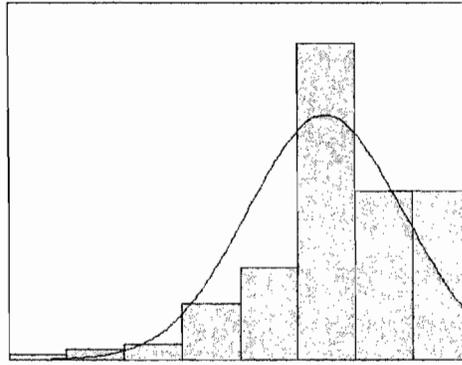


Figure 9. Overall perception of mentoring

Both Table 8 and Figure 9 report the overall perception of high school male adolescents regarding mentoring relationships. The statistical measures connected with this specific need reveal the universal perception of high school male adolescents who completed the survey.

Relationship between Age and Relational Needs

The research also sought to compare the nature of the relationship between the age of high school male adolescents and the reported relational needs of high school male adolescents. This was accomplished by organizing the data according to the age of the person completing the survey. Once the data was organized in this manner, statistical measures were obtained in the four areas being studied.

Anger-Related Issues

The first area studied, according to age, was anger-related issues these young people might be facing. The survey was constructed in such a manner as to show that the higher the score, the less anger evinced by the young person. The young person was asked to respond to six statements with a strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or

strongly disagree. Point values were assigned to each response, and statistical measures were applied to the results. The following results were obtained in this specific area (see Table 9). The only value introduced in this table is N which represents the number of respondents for each individual age group. N will represent the number of respondents throughout the remainder of this study.

Table 9. Nature of the relationship between age and anger related issues

	<i>Age 14</i> <i>n=26</i>	<i>Age 15</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Age 16</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Age 17</i> <i>n=34</i>	<i>Age 18</i> <i>n=9</i>
Mean	3.05	3.32	3.13	3.00	3.19
Median	3.00	3.33	3.17	3.00	3.33
Mode	2.83	3.83	3.00	3.00	3.33
Standard deviation	0.84	0.59	0.83	0.58	0.76
Skewness	-0.22	0.15	-0.16	-0.62	-1.37
Kurtosis	0.52	0.19	-0.52	0.26	2.75

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

Several statistical measures proved to be interesting. The first is the mean scores for 17 and 15 year olds. Seventeen year olds scored the lowest in this area with a mean score of 3.00. This reveals that the 17-year-old students are struggling the most with anger-related issues. Those 15 years old, on the other hand, had the highest mean score of 3.32. They seem to have the least amount of trouble with anger in their lives.

Fourteen-year-old teenagers, however, also appeared to be struggling with this particular issue. While they did not have the lowest mean score, they did have the lowest mode. The mode represents the most frequently occurring score, and the 14 year olds had a mode of 2.83. Their mean score in this area was also second lowest with a value of 3.05. These two values suggest that 14 year olds have the tendency to struggle in this particular area also.

One final area of interest identified with these scores is the skewness and kurtosis of the curve for the 15-year-old adolescents. The skewness and kurtosis were 0.15 and 0.19 respectively. These two values were the closest to the value of zero, and thus closest to a normal bell curve. Figure 10 provides a visual example of the skewness and kurtosis of this specific curve.

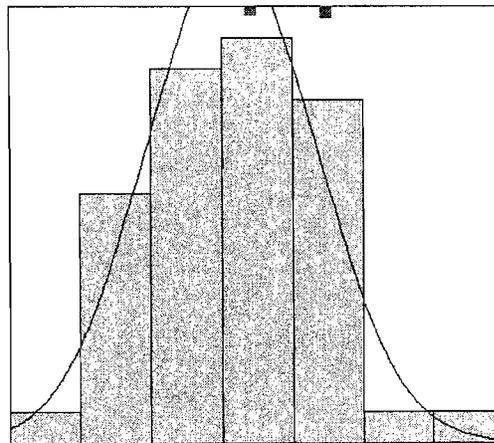


Figure 10. Anger curve for 15 year olds

The standard deviation for this curve was 0.59. This was the second smallest standard deviation in this specific area; the only one smaller was 0.58 for the 17-year-old

adolescents. A standard deviation this small reveals that the scores for this age group were closely gathered around the mean score of 3.32, resulting in a bell curve with a sharp peak. One final point of interest for this specific area is the trend of the mean scores. Of the four areas surveyed in this study, all five age groups scored their lowest mean scores in the area of anger. This reveals that anger is something this specific group deals with no matter what the age or what the living situation might be at home. The mean score for this area averaged almost an entire point lower than the highest mean score for each age group. The mode scores were also at their lowest for each age group, thus revealing a tendency to struggle in this area.

School Performance

The second area of study related to the needs of high school male adolescents and their age is school performance. Once again the information dealing with this area of study was obtained from six statements related to each person's viewpoint concerning school. These statements attempted to measure each adolescent's viewpoint on issues such as grades, extracurricular activities, and social skills related to school. The respondents were asked to share their opinions by answering the statements with strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. Numerical values were then assigned to each response, and statistical measures were calculated. The results from the surveys for this area can be found in Table 10.

Table 10. Nature of relationship between age and school performance

	<i>Age 14</i> <i>n=26</i>	<i>Age 15</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Age 16</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Age 17</i> <i>n=34</i>	<i>Age 18</i> <i>n=9</i>
Mean	3.55	3.87	3.83	3.95	4.04
Median	3.75	3.83	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode	4.00	3.83	3.83	3.00	3.83
Standard deviation	0.79	0.58	0.76	0.74	0.44
Skewness	-0.61	0.06	-1.32	-0.64	0.72
Kurtosis	0.37	-0.33	1.50	0.12	1.40

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

The most important thing to note about this specific table is the difference in response between the 14 and the 18 years old in almost every area. The 14 year olds had the lowest mean score of 3.55, while those 18 years old had the highest mean score of 4.04. The 14 year olds also had the lowest median score of 3.75.

This discrepancy between the 14-year-old and 18-year-old teenagers could be the result of the age difference in where each group is in their own personal lives as it relates to school. An 18 year old is typically a senior in high school, while a 14 year old is usually a freshman. It is not uncommon for seniors to be more concerned with school-related issues than freshmen because they will soon be making additional serious decisions about their lives.

Comparing the histograms affiliated with these two age groups will also help in understanding the difference between the two age groups. Figure 11 represents the

histogram for 14 year olds. This histogram has a standard deviation of 0.79, a skewness of -0.6130, and a kurtosis of 0.367. Each of these values factored in yields a bell-shaped curve with a larger number of values on the right side of the mean.

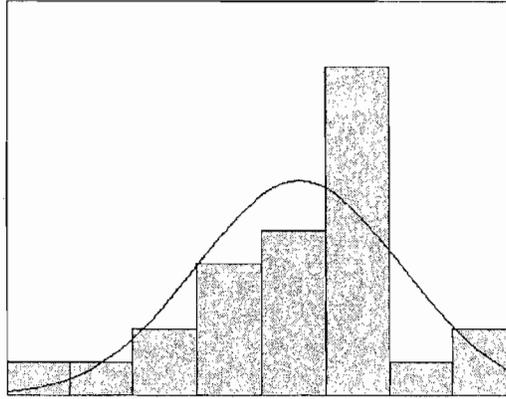


Figure 11. School performance curve for 14 year olds

Figure 12 is the histogram for 18 year olds. This histogram has a standard deviation of 0.44, a skewness of 0.72, and a kurtosis of 1.40. Given the fact that this particular standard deviation was the smallest related to this specific area reveals a histogram with a large number of scores gather around the mean.

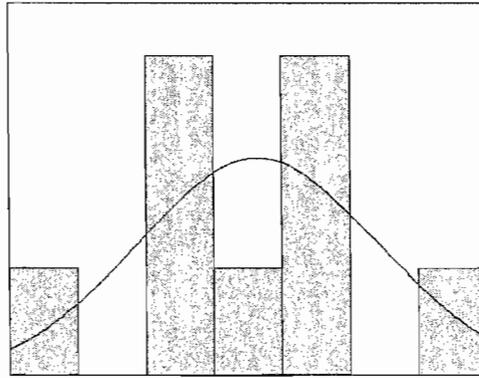


Figure 12. School performance curve for 18 year olds

Relational Needs

This portion of the survey attempted to measure the perceived ability to relate with others. The survey contained five statements concerning this area, once again using the Likert scale. Those taking the survey were asked to rate their desire for relationships with adults, parents, friends, and possible marriage partners. Once the adolescents completed the survey, values were calculated and statistical measures were applied. The results from this calculation process are revealed in Table 11.

There were several interesting statistical measure related to this area. The first is the mode scores. In each case the mode score for all five different age groups was either 4.00 or 4.20. This shows that the value most commonly obtained in this portion of the survey was closely related to 4.00. The mean values for each age group also reflects the fact that 4.00 and 4.20 were the mode scores. While the values fluctuate from 3.96 to 4.38, the scores are still tightly grouped around the mode score.

Table 11. Nature of the relationship
between age and relational needs

	<i>Age 14</i> <i>n=26</i>	<i>Age 15</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Age 16</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Age 17</i> <i>n=34</i>	<i>Age 18</i> <i>n=9</i>
Mean	3.96	4.14	4.16	4.23	4.38
Median	4.00	4.20	4.20	4.30	4.20
Mode	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.20	4.20
Standard deviation	0.62	0.49	0.54	0.56	0.37
Skewness	-0.60	-0.37	-1.06	-0.59	0.36
Kurtosis	1.14	-0.01	1.56	-0.27	-0.13

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

Another interesting fact dealing with relational needs is the overall mean scores for each age group. The mean score for each of the individual ages received its highest mark in this specific area. This shows that relationships are vitally important to the young people who completed this survey whether they come from a divorced home background or an intact home. Since the survey was constructed so that a high score identifies an increased desire for this specific need, this reveals that this group of teenagers strongly desire relationships in their lives.

One more important note is the low mean score and high standard deviation for the 14 year old. The mean score for this group was 3.96, while the standard deviation was 0.62. This was both the lowest mean and highest standard deviation for the five different groups. This revealed that the fourteen year old had a decreased desire for relationships when compared with other groups, and that they had the widest variety of

responses when compared to the other groups. Figure 13 is a histogram of this group in the area of relational needs.

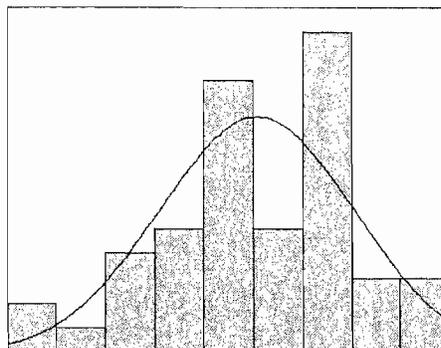


Figure 13. Relational needs curve for 14 year olds

The group with the closest set of values identified with a normal bell curve was the 15 year old. With a mean score of 4.14, a median of 4.20, and a mode of 4.00, all values were closely grouped together. Also a skewness of -0.37 and a kurtosis of -0.01 disclose a bell curve that is close to normal (see Figure 14).

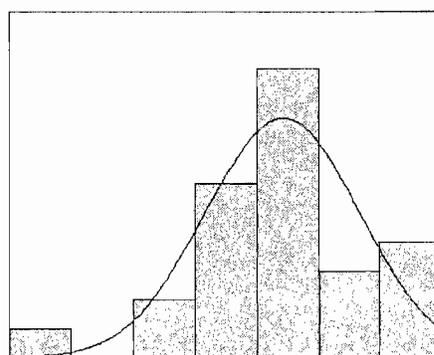


Figure 14. Relational needs curve for 15 year olds

All of the data proves that relationships are something this group of teenagers greatly desire. The mean scores are at their highest, and the median and mode scores are closely related to the means. This reveals a number of bell curves that are tightly grouped around the mean. Each of these statistical measures reveal that this is a perceived need this group of young people highly desires.

Mentoring Perception

This section of the survey measured the overall perception of male adolescents toward mentoring relationships. Those completing the survey responded to four statements regarding mentoring relationships. The statistical results from this section of the survey grouped according to age are listed in Table 12.

Table 12. Nature of the relationship between age and mentoring perception

	<i>Age 14</i> <i>n=26</i>	<i>Age 15</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Age 16</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Age 17</i> <i>n=34</i>	<i>Age 18</i> <i>n=9</i>
Mean	3.95	4.02	3.99	3.97	4.08
Median	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode	3.75	3.75	4.00	3.75	4.00
Standard deviation	0.58	0.64	0.77	0.73	0.45
Skewness	-0.20	0.05	-1.34	-0.56	1.01
Kurtosis	-0.53	-0.58	2.21	0.33	1.13

Note: The mode scores are an averaging of mode scores from the Likert response scale survey

Once again the mean, median, and modes are all grouped closely around a value of four. Those who were 14 had the lowest mean score of 3.95, and those who were 18 had the highest mean score of 4.08. All age groups had a median of 4.00, and a mode of either 3.75 or 4.00.

Some of the bell curves for this area proved to be of interest. First, 16-year-old teenagers had a standard deviation of 0.77, the highest value of the five age groups. Also, a skewness of -1.34 proves that a large number of respondents scored above the mean. The bell curve for this group can be seen in Figure 15.



Figure 15. Mentoring perception curve for 16 year olds

The curve for the fifteen year old is the one most closely grouped around the mean score. With a skewness of 0.05 and a kurtosis of -0.58 there are a few more values less than the mean score, and the bell curve will have a slightly raised peak. This bell curve can be seen in Figure 16.

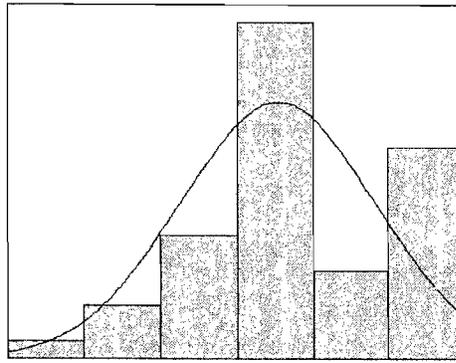


Figure 16. Mentoring perception curve for 15 year olds

There are a couple of things to note concerning the overall trends in studying the perceived needs of high school male adolescents according to age. There was a trend related to the mean scores of those 14 and 18 years old. Those 14 years old had the lowest mean score in three of the four areas being studied. The only area in which they did not receive the lowest mean score was in the realm of anger. In this specific area the mean score for those who were fourteen was 3.05 and for those seventeen 3.00. Eighteen-year-old young people, however, had the highest mean score for all but one of the four mean scores. In observing the mean scores for anger, those eighteen had a mean score of 3.19, while 15-year-old young people had a mean score of 3.32. This was the only mean value for 18 year olds that was not higher than the other four age groups.

A second trend related to this particular research question was evident in the mean scores in the area of relational needs and one's perception of mentoring relationships. These two areas focus on relationships with other people, while anger-related issues and school performance are not as highly relational. The mean scores for relational needs and mentoring perception were higher for all five age groups than the mean scores for anger

related issues and school performance. This information reveals that high school male adolescents tend to place a higher value on the more relational aspects of life.

Research Design

The procedures associated with this research proved to be effective. The steps the researcher went through in completing the research process helped to accomplish the purpose of this dissertation. These steps were as follows. First, the researcher determined a date for the completion of the survey. Once the date was determined, all participating churches were contacted and enlisted. The researcher accomplished this task by setting an appointment with the youth ministers and explaining the research process to them.

After this meeting institutional approval was garnered. A listing of all of the parents of high school male adolescents was obtained in order to mail them a letter to get their informed consent. This letter explained the purpose of the research and let them know that their son will be asked to complete a survey if they were in Sunday school on September 15, 2002. If, however, the parent(s) did not want their son to complete the survey he simply did not have to fill it out when it was passed around. The letter also gave the contact information of the researcher in case the parent(s) had any questions.

The surveys were distributed to the participating churches on September 13, 2002. A detailed instruction sheet was provided to the youth ministers outlining the administration and collection process. After the surveys were completed, the researcher collected them on September 16, 2002 and began to process the data.

There are both strengths and weaknesses associated with this design method. One strength of this method was the number of surveys completed. The study was based on

163 completed surveys generated from three churches in the northern suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee. Given the fact that a sample this large was generated, the findings of the research may be generalized to the rest of the population in this study.

A second strength was the close proximity of the churches participating in the study. All three churches were in the same geographic region, resulting in less trouble for the distribution, completion, and return of surveys. If surveys had been mailed to other areas there was the possibility of a decrease in response from other churches and a decrease in the return rate of the surveys.

Another strength was the four areas studied in the survey. Prior research has shown that those who experience a divorce might struggle in the four areas associated with the survey. This research focused on these four areas in an attempt to determine whether those who come from a divorced background would benefit from a mentoring relationship.

A fourth strength was the fact that the study focused only on high school male adolescents, the majority of whom had begun the changes common to puberty. Most middle school male adolescents, however, have not begun this developmental process yet; and given this fact, high school males were more likely to have a better understanding of their own desires and were better able to express those desires in the survey.

Also, since the survey focused solely on males, the research did not have to account for the difference between the perceived needs of male and female adolescents. Previous research has found that the needs of males and females at this age are different. This study, however, was able to pinpoint the specific needs of only males.

A final strength was the age comparison aspect of the research. As teenagers experience developmental changes during adolescence, those who are younger have a different perception of the areas being studied. This dissertation was able to determine whether there was a difference in the perceived needs because of the age comparison that was used.

One possible weakness of this study was an imposed limit on the number of areas being measured. High school male adolescents whose parents are divorced might experience feelings in more than the four areas studied in the survey. Other experts in this field, however, have determined that these are the most likely areas a youth might act out his disappointment related to the divorce of his parents. High school male adolescents also are not limited to the four areas being studied. The perceived needs of this population can have a much wider range.

An additional weakness was the limited geographic area of the study. While this did prove to be a strength in the completion of the surveys, it is also a weakness because of the economic status of the area. The northern suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee do not account for an inner-city region. An inner-city region would have the potential of yielding different results for the survey. This research, therefore, would prove to be weak in this demographic area.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

The summary of the research findings are discussed in this chapter. First, the research questions and purpose that guided this study are reviewed. Second, the implications from this study as it relates to the precedent literature are discussed. Third, the applications from this specific study are addressed. The application are in the form of subjective proposed outcomes as a result of the findings from this study. Finally, future areas of research are recommenced.

Research Questions

This study had four lines of inquiry.

1. What are the perceived needs self-reported by high school male adolescents attending Sunday school?
2. What are the similarities and differences between the perceived needs of high school male adolescents of divorced parents and those from non-divorced homes?
3. What are the perceptions of high school male adolescents concerning mentoring relationships?
4. What is the nature of the relationship between the age of high school male adolescents and their reported relational needs?

*Perceived Needs of High School Male Adolescents
Who Are Attending Sunday School*

Recent surveys have revealed that today's young people have a strong desire for relationship. George Barna discovered that 84% of young people desired a close personal friendship with someone else, and 82% of young people desired one marriage partner for life (Barna 2001, 84). This research also supports Barna's findings.

In the four perceived needs addressed in this research, those that dealt with relationships had the highest scores. The two areas of one's perception of mentoring relationships and one's desire to relate with others had higher mean scores than anger related issues and score performance. This reveals that today's teenagers have a stronger desire to connect with someone as opposed to dealing with anger or achieving high marks in school.

It is also important to note that anger-related issues had the overall lowest scores in this study. It did not matter whether the young person came from an intact home or a divorced home, and the age of the young person did not matter, this perceived need scored lower than the other three perceived needs.

Barna's research of young people has also revealed that this is a generation that feels a great deal of stress. This stress can be a result of self-imposed expectations, the desire to compete with others, or outside influences on the home (Barna 1995, 19). The fact that all of the different groups of teenagers in this study scored low in anger-related issues reveals that they are not dealing with these stress levels in an effective manner. The stress that they are encountering is affecting the way they view life and deal with issues that they confront.

Stress is also affecting the ways they deal with others around them. The survey conducted in this study asked the young people to rate their perceived ability to handle conflict and anger associated with this conflict. Since all of the groups scored low in this area, the conclusion is that they are not dealing well with others when they enter into a conflict situation.

Comparing and Contrasting Divorced Homes and Intact Homes

“With the number of students growing up in divorced homes, the false messages of youth cultural media concerning love and intimacy, and the increasing splintering of society due to postmodernity’s sacred commitment to pluralism, spiritual caregivers are needed now more than ever to mentor healthy relationships” (Dunn 2001, 194). In comparing and contrasting those who came from divorced homes with those who came from intact homes, the results of this study proves the statement by Dunn to be true.

Previous research had proven that young people whose parents have divorced are more likely to struggle with anger issues as opposed to those whose parents have not divorced. One expert goes so far as to say, “Anger is among the most common responses to parental divorce” (McDowell and Hostetler 1996, 201). Given this information, this study focused on a possible difference between the two groups in the area of anger.

This study was able to determine a slight difference between the two groups, but it was unable to replicate a significant difference between those who came from divorced homes and those who came from intact homes. Those who came from divorced homes scored slightly lower in this area than those who came from intact homes, which

reveals that the first group struggles in this area more than the second. But the difference between the two groups was not considered significant.

Other studies have also determined that one's school performance can be affected if he resides in a home where his parent's have divorced. Teenagers whose parents have divorced have a tendency to express a lack of ambition when it comes to matters related to schoolwork (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1990, 149). These matters can range from a desire to participate in extracurricular activities to the ability to pay attention and complete assignments in the classroom.

This study chose to focus in on this possible effect, and it was able to replicate other's findings. In comparing and contrasting the two groups in this area, the results revealed values that were approaching significance, proving that there is a difference between the two groups. Those who came from divorced homes were apt to wrestle with school-related issues more than those who came from intact homes.

Mentoring is defined as a relationship in which a mentor seeks to connect with his protege at the protege's point of need for the purpose of influencing the protege. Mentoring a young person is attempting intentionally to connect that young person with an adult in an effort to negate what the world is attempting to accomplish in and through individuals (Rice 1998, 195). This study compared the desires and perceptions of young people in the area of mentoring relationships. Once again, this section of the study focused on comparing those who came from divorced homes with those who came from intact homes.

The result of this perceived need revealed a statistical significance between the two groups. Those who came from divorced homes scored significantly lower than those

who came from intact homes, proving that those who reside in divorced homes struggle in this area more than those who reside in intact homes. Young people whose parents have divorced find it more difficult to engage in mentoring relationships than those whose parents have not divorced.

The final area in which the two groups were compared was the desire for healthy relationships. Experts in the field of youth ministry have recognized the importance of building relationships with young people. “Only intentional pacing relationships will be adequate to build bridges across chasms of disconnections, disorientation and disillusionment. Of all the failings of twentieth-century Christian youth ministry, perhaps the greatest was using programs and techniques to shortcut that need for relational proximity” (Dunn 2001, 44). The young people who participated in this study echoed the sentiment expressed by Dunn.

Of the four perceived needs researched in this study, this is the one area that proved to be highly significant. Once again, those who came from intact homes scored significantly higher. This proves that those who reside in divorced homes tend to struggle more when building healthy relationships.

Experts have discovered that when a divorce occurs between one’s parents a possible outcome is the sense of depression (Whitman 2001, 93). Given this outcome, those who have experienced this divorce will be less likely to engage in healthy relationships because of potential depression. Depression will cause them to want to seclude themselves in order to avoid the probability of additional pain experienced through unhealthy relationships.

In comparing and contrasting these two groups, it becomes evident that the divorce of one's parents does have some adverse effects upon the lives of high school male adolescents. This study was able to reproduce similar outcomes as other experts in the perceived needs of school performance, perception of mentoring, and the desire for healthy relationships. The only areas not replicated were anger related issues.

Those who came from divorced homes tended to encounter more difficulty in these three areas than those who came from intact homes. The greatest amount of significance was discovered in the areas dealing with relationships. Those who resided in intact homes did not experience as much of a problem in developing and maintaining healthy relationships with others.

Perception of Mentoring Relationships

Christ set the example for mentoring relationships through the relationship He had with His disciples. In this relationship Jesus met the disciples at a specific point of need and then encouraged them to grow in their faith from that point. This example was set almost two thousand years ago, and people are still learning from it today.

This study sought to discover if today's young people would desire a type of relationship in which they had the opportunity to connect with an adult at a point of need in their lives and be encouraged in their faith journey. The vast majority responded to this question with a yes. An overwhelming number of young people stated that they believe they are either currently involved in or have been involved in a mentoring type of relationship. Of the 163 who completed the survey, 144 stated that they had been or are currently involved in a this type of relationship.

The cumulative mean score for this specific area was also high. The mean score for the collective group was 4.00. The highest score that could have been achieved would have been a 5.00. The actual mean score reveals a total close to the highest possible score. This discloses the fact that today's adolescents do have a desire to connect with other adults for the purpose of being influenced in their faith journey.

Nature of the Relationship Between Age and Reported Relational Needs

Previous research has discovered that as children enter into the time of adolescence they experience a number of changes. These changes occur with the onset of puberty and typically begin at or around the age of 11 for girls and 13 for boys. Teenagers experience changes in five areas: physical, emotional, social, mental, and spiritual. The study of these changes plays an important part in this study because of the nature of mentoring relationships. When young people enter into a mentoring relationship, there is a high likelihood that the changes they experience will have an effect on the nature of the relationship.

In order to study the possible effects the developmental changes adolescents experience could have on mentoring relationships, this study subdivided the sample into their appropriate age groups. The results disclosed that the age of the young person completing the survey did have an effect on his perceived need. In all four areas studied the mean scores for the younger teenagers who participated was lower than the mean scores for the older teenagers who participated.

There is a viable reason for this increase in mean linked to an increase in age. As young people continue in the developmental processes, they begin to understand better

themselves and those around them. One researcher discovered that the mind of an adolescent is not fully developed until the late teens to early twenties (Barnes 2000, 19). This discovery alone discloses that older high school male adolescents would have a greater ability to understand their own perceived needs simply because their minds are more developed than young high school male adolescents.

As a young person's mind continues to develop, his ability to think in abstract concepts increases (Black 1991, 88). When dealing with perceived needs, these can be considered abstract terms. In talking about one's ability to handle situations that make him angry, the statements were constructed in abstract terms. An older high school male adolescent will have a better understanding of this statement and will also better understand how to handle this situation because of the increase in developmental changes. Given this information, it is easier to understand why older male adolescents scored higher than their younger counterparts.

Another important factor is the social and spiritual development that occurs in the high school years. If a young person who attends church has been involved in a mentoring relationship, he is likely to be more knowledgeable in the benefits of this relationship. Given this increase in knowledge, there is an increased possibility that he will desire this type of relationship again. Also, given the spiritual nature of the relationship, and the increased understanding of his own faith, the young person will obtain greater results from a mentoring relationship.

Research Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of divorced parents on high school age male adolescents' perceived needs and seek to discover if mentoring

relationships helped in meeting those needs. The findings from this study reveal that a divorce of one's parents does have an effect on the perceived needs of high school male adolescents.

In three out of the four perceived needs that were studied in this dissertation, some level of significance was found to exist between the two groups. In each situation those who came from divorced homes scored lower than those who came from intact homes. In the one area in which significance was not found to exist, those who came from divorced homes still scored lower than those who came from intact homes.

The second part of the purpose of this dissertation was to discover if mentoring relationships would make a difference in meeting the perceived needs of high school male adolescents who reside in divorced homes. Both this study and previous studies find that mentoring relationships would be beneficial. The vast majority of participants in this study (88.3%) are either currently involved or have been involved in mentoring relationships. The general perception of the participants concerning mentoring relationships was also high. The participants of this study believed that mentoring relationships were beneficial to them, and they were actively engaging in them.

Couple the results of this study with the finding of other experts in this area, and one discovers that mentoring relationships would benefit those who reside in divorced homes. These types of relationships provide an opportunity for young people to connect with someone else and discuss topics that are relevant to them. This study discloses that young people who come from divorced homes find it more difficult to connect with others. One possible reason for this is because of the hurt they have experienced as a result of the divorce. The answer to this problem with connecting to

others is not to allow the young person to isolate himself or try to force a relationship upon him. The answer, instead, is to try to engage the young person at his point of need and encourage him in his faith journey. When this takes place, the outcome should be a “mind that is being transformed to think with a ‘God view,’ a heart being transformed in its capacity for sharing emotions and affections with God, and a will being transformed into loving obedience to his leading” (Dunn 2001, 58-59).

Research Implications

Research implications represent impact issues of this study. This section will interact with material from precedent literature and continue to draw conclusions resulting from this study. These conclusions will be based on information both from this study and others represented in the precedent literature.

Vulnerability

Experts in the field of mentoring have found that it is important for the mentor to be vulnerable with those he is mentoring. The mentor needs to be vulnerable and to be willing to reveal this vulnerability to those with whom he is connected. Reducing one’s vulnerability is to disconnect from one’s protege. When this happens, he builds a wall between his own inner truth and his outer performance (Palmer 1998, 17).

As the mentor becomes vulnerable with his protege he is able to further influence his protege. The reason for this is because the mentor begins to provide a safe place where the protege can begin to share his feelings. As the young person shares with his protege, the mentor will have the opportunity to further influence the young person which is one of the primary objectives of mentoring relationships (Zachary 2000, 1).

The results also substantiate the importance of vulnerability. Today's young people desire authentic relationships (Rabey 2001, 28). They desire to connect with others. When someone has the opportunity to connect with a young person at a specific point of need, it is important for that individual to be vulnerable in the relationship.

The results from this study replicate the findings of others in this area. The area with the highest statistical scores dealt with relational needs. This reveals that the adolescents completing this survey have a great desire for relationships with others their own age as well as those who might mentor them. If a mentoring relationship is developed, the mentor must be willing to be vulnerable with his protege in order to be effective.

In further proving this point, those who participated in this study placed a high rating on mentoring relationships. Of the four perceived needs that were studied, mentoring relationships scored second highest, second only to relational needs. The adolescents who completed this survey stated that they would be willing to participate in mentoring relationships if the opportunity presented itself. Couple this with the fact that 88.3% of those in the survey are either currently engaged in or have been engaged in a mentoring type relationships reveals both the desire and the need for mentoring relationships on behalf of the adolescents completing the survey.

Connecting

Part of the quest for vulnerability is the importance of connecting. Connecting is "something that occurs when the life of Christ in one person is poured into another and awakens in the emptiest recesses of that other person's soul the experience of life" (Crabb

1997, 44). If mentoring is going to occur, a connection must be established between the mentor and the protege.

It is through this connection that a mentor is able to influence an adolescent through his faith journey.

Consequently the greatest resource spiritual caregivers offer adolescents is their own life of intimate connection with the heart of God. Like a conduit for life, the love of a spiritual caregiver links the adolescent with a real God whose real love is available in the midst of real life. It is for such a relationship with him and others that God created and now acts to redeem those made in his image. (Dunn 2001, 57)

The goal of the mentor is not to change the life of the teenager, but rather to connect with the teenager and influence him through the relationship. It is this connection which serves as the channel through which to influence him in his faith journey.

The survey asked the young people if they were either currently involved in or had been involved in a relationship in which they were able to identify with an adult at a point of interest for them and then be influenced by this adult through this relationship. An overwhelming majority (88.3%) responded positively to this statement. An important point in this statement is the fact that the adult connects with this young person at the young person's point of interest. The mentoring relationship is developed around the specific needs of the adolescent, not the desires of the mentor. Stu Weber affirms this when he states that a mentor must make himself available to his protege's point of need (Weber 1997, 187).

Connecting occurs when the mentor meets the learner at the learner's point of need and then influences him. This connection takes place as the mentor seeks to develop a relationship with his protege through a loving relationship. "Every pastor, leader and Christian who truly desires to be an effective minister and follow the example of Jesus

must work hard at building strong relationships that are cemented with love. To this rule there is no exception” (White 2003, 33).

This study proves that today’s adolescents desire this type of relationship. The two perceived needs that scored the highest dealt with relationships. This goes to prove that today’s young people have a desire to connect with adults who will care for them during the teenaged years.

Anger Issues

An additional implication is the apparent anger issue these young people are facing. Researcher George Barna has found that this generation of young people is an angry generation (Barna 1995, 44). Their anger can be the result of a divorce in their immediate family, the possibility of upcoming economic problems, or a host of other situations. No matter what the situation might be, Barna has found that this generation is skeptical concerning their future.

This study also found this to be true. The scores dealing with anger issues were the lowest of the four perceived needs studied. This was true for those who came from either divorced or intact homes. Those who came from divorced homes, however, did score slightly lower than those who came from intact homes, revealing that they tend to struggle with anger issues moderately more.

The fact that those who came from divorced homes scored lower than those who came from intact homes is also supported in precedent literature.

Anger is among the most common responses to parental divorce. A young person may be angry simply because the divorce disrupts his or her family environment, creating disorder where before there was order. A youth may feel anger because he or she resents being separated from one parent. His or her feelings of abandonment

may create anger, or he or she may resent being different from friends who still live in intact families. (McDowell and Hostetler 1996, 201)

Previous research has discovered that the divorce of one's parents has a negative impact upon the life of children. One possible negative impact is anger related to the situation. This research has also discover this to be true.

The mean scores for this specific issue were the lowest out of the four areas studied for each of the age groups. This reveals that all ages, no matter what there background might be, are struggling with anger related issues. While those who came from divorced homes scored slightly lower this perceived need had the lowest mean score in all age groupings. The implication for this is that those who work with today's adolescents need to be aware that they are struggling with anger related issues and that they should be willing to meet today's teenagers at this specific point of need.

Couple the noticeable anger of today's young people with the postmodern culture in which they are maturing, and a large amount of cynicism can occur. Some consider the postmodern society to be anti-Christian (Sweet 1999, 47). When a Christian adult attempts to connect with an angry young person, the adult has the potential of encountering hostility and reluctance on the part of the adolescent.

Given the desire for relationship and the anti-Christian postmodern society, those who wish to influence adolescents need to discover ways to connect with them. Barna has found that teenagers are using on-line learning opportunities as a place to develop their own beliefs (Barna 2001, 37). Someone who aspires to mentor young people would be wise to develop a manner in which he could mentor them through an on-line or on-line enhanced method.

Postmodernity teaches young people to be pessimistic about others who say they believe in absolutes, yet postmodernity also teaches the importance of community. If an adult desires to connect with an adolescent, it is important for him not to fear rejection which can come from the anger that the young person is experiencing or from the belief system under which he is living. Today's young people are indignant, but those who desire to connect with them need to see through their anger and seek this connection.

Effects of Divorce

An expert in the field of divorce has found that teenagers who come from broken homes are significantly more likely to have difficulty in engaging in healthy relationships (Akamine 1995, 24). This study would affirm this belief. In the two perceived needs dealing with healthy relationships researched in this study, those who came from divorced homes scored significantly lower than those who came from intact homes. Also, in the other two perceived needs not associated with relationships, those who came from divorced homes scored lower. These dual truths reveal that those who experience a divorce in their immediate family will be adversely affected.

In studying the perceived needs of mentoring relationships and relational needs, those who came from divorced homes scored significantly lower than those who came from intact homes. This reveals that adolescents whose parents have divorced have a more difficult time connecting with others. One possible reason for this is because they deal with depression, which is common among those whose parents have divorced (Akamine 1995, 40). Feelings of depression can be the result of feelings of loneliness, anxiety over the future, feelings of hurt, or a number of other issues.

Depression can also be considered a defense mechanism (Whiteman 2001, 89). The young person can use his depression to avoid connecting with others in his life. This is a defense mechanism against getting hurt in another relationship. The pain that an adolescent experiences when his parents divorce is immense, and the young person will do anything to avoid encountering this pain again. Because of this, the young person will isolate himself in his depression and not connect with those around him.

The divorce of one's parents can also explain the difference between the two groups in the area of school performance. Teenagers whose parents have divorced also express a lack of ambition when it comes to matters related to schoolwork (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1990, 149). It is not uncommon for a young person to desire the attention of those around him. When a teenager's parents divorce, he might feel that he has lost the attention of his parents, so in order to regain their attention, he might intentionally become less ambitious concerning his schoolwork.

Another possible answer to this drop in school performance is the amount of stress that a divorce places on a young person. One of the leading causes of stress within the life of a young person is the understanding of a divorce between his parents (Buchanan, Maccoby, and Dornbusch 1996, 86). The teenager is ill-equipped to handle this amount of stress, and his performance at school can be adversely affected.

Professionals in the area of youth developmental psychology and the effects of divorce have all discovered that when a young person's parents divorce the young person will be negatively affected. This study has replicated these findings. Those whose parents had divorced scored lower in all of the four perceived needs associated with this study the study also revealed that those whose parents had divorced scored significantly

lower in the areas dealing with relationships. Young people who have endured the divorce of their parents are less likely to engage in relationships because of the fear of being hurt once again.

Research Applications

This section of the study represents the subjective proposed outcomes as a result of the findings. Specific findings were revealed related to the perceived needs of today's high school male adolescents. This portion of the study will discuss how one can apply these findings to meet the perceived needs of today's adolescents through mentoring relationships.

Connecting at a Point of Need

Those who have studied this generation have found that today's young people desire relationships. "They flourish when they experience it, and they shrivel when they don't" (Rabey 2001, 74). Given this truth, if someone desires to influence a young person, it is vital for him to connect with this young person. The apprehension this postmodern generation has toward adults negatively affects them when it comes to the development of healthy relationships; however, they still desire to connect and have community with others.

Since this is true, mentoring relationships and youth ministries as a whole should be constructed around the development of healthy relationships with teenagers. Ministering to teenagers takes place when caring Christian adults enter the world of adolescents in order to guide them in their journey with Christ. The emphasis is on people, not programs. Teenagers growing up alone need more than a skit, a game, a

video, or a discussion starter. They need someone who will connect with them at their point of need and love them when things are difficult (Rice 1998, 193).

One important point in developing this type of ministry is for the needs of the teenagers to determine the ministry. No longer is the desire of the youth minister or youth leaders the determining factor in the development of the youth ministry. The needs of those who are being ministered to determines the ministry model. If a young person is having a difficult time connecting with adults or peers, someone must intentionally try to develop a relationship with this young person. If the youth group as a whole is struggling with materialistic thoughts, use ministries designed to deal with this specific issue.

When this type of ministry is established programs become the conduit through which relationships are developed. As these relationships are developed the result is a transformation within the life of the teenager and the adult who is on the journey with him. This type of approach to ministry yields a desired outcome of “a mind that is being transformed to think with a ‘God view,’ a heart being transformed in its capacity for sharing emotions and affections with God, and a will being transformed into loving obedience to his leading” (Dunn 2001, 58).

Jesus modeled this in His ministry by meeting the people He taught at their point of need. When He encountered the woman at the well in John 4, He knew that she was thirsty, and He offered her living water. In Mark 5, when Jairus was grieved over the death of his daughter, Jesus raised her to life. When one studies the Bible, one discovers that Jesus was willing to meet people at their point of need and then encourage them to continue in their own faith journey. This is the model Jesus employed, and it is the model that others should also use to connect with a young person at his point of need. The

mentor will then have an increased likelihood of being an influence on this young person throughout his lifetime.

Development of Mentoring Ministries

Today's teenagers have a desire to walk with someone on their spiritual journey as opposed to listening to someone talk about a spiritual journey. "Preaching at kids has surprisingly little effect; working alongside of them to enable them to live the lessons of Scripture changes their lives" (Barna 2001, 154). Those who work with young people should seek to develop and implement mentoring ministries.

If mentoring is to be defined as a relationship in which a mentor connects with his protege at a specific point of need for the purpose of influencing the protege, then strategies need to be developed with the goal of influencing teenagers for a lifetime as the measure of success. No longer should the completion of a program be the determining factor on the success of a ministry. The relationships that are developed in and through the program should be the success indicator (Whaley 2002, 61).

It is also important to note that both those who came from intact homes as well as those who came from divorced homes scored high in the area of mentoring relationships. A vast majority of those who completed this survey were either involved in or have been involved in mentoring relationships. While those who came from divorced homes scored lower than those who came from intact homes, those from divorced homes are still involved in mentoring relationships.

Adults involved in ministering to the needs of today's adolescents should note that they desire to connect with adults in mentoring relationships. When this connection takes place, both the young person and the adult experience benefits. These benefits have

the potential of influencing the adolescent throughout his lifetime. Adults who seek to minister to young people would be wise to note the desire of today's adolescents to be mentored and should seek to engage young people at this specific point of need.

Further Research

One might choose to pursue a number of different areas related to this study. One could develop a similar study, but instead of focusing on high school male adolescents, the researcher could focus on younger adolescents or children. The perceived needs of these different age groups might change the need for or benefits of mentoring relationships. While the effects of a divorce of one's parents at this age might be prevalent, the manner one might choose to help a young adolescent or child might be different.

Also related to this matter could be the study of college aged students. The research done by Barnes and Jackson reported that the mind of an adolescent does not finish its developmental process until the late teens or early twenties (Barnes and Jackson 2000, 19). Given the findings of Barnes and Jackson, the effects of the divorce of one's parents might be different for someone who is in college. The perceived needs of those who are in college might also be different.

Another area of future research might be to focus on high school female adolescents as opposed to high school male adolescents. Research has proven that the needs of male and female adolescents are different. The needs of female adolescents are more relationally based while the needs of male adolescents are more performance based. Given this difference, would a high school female adolescent experience similar benefits from a mentoring relationship?

Future researchers in this area could also choose to study a different set of perceived needs. This dissertation focused on four areas, but a future researcher might choose to focus on additional perceived needs or an entirely different set of perceived needs. In doing this the results of this new study combined with the results of this study would yield a more comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of high school male adolescents.

An additional area of study could also be to study a different sample group. This study focused on the perceived needs of high school male adolescents in the northern suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee. One could choose to replicate this exact study in a different geographic region. By changing the region, the perceived needs could yield different outcomes from the data and different interpretations because of this.

A future researcher might also choose to study high school male adolescents who attend a different denomination besides the one studied in this dissertation. All of the participants involved in this study attended Sunday school in Southern Baptist churches. A study of high school male adolescents who attended Catholic churches could result in different outcomes.

Another possible area of research would be to have a study that compares the perceived needs of high school male adolescents with the perceived needs of high school female adolescents. In having different needs, one could study about these differences and determine how to best meet the needs of both groups in a ministry setting.

One final area of future research would be to focus on high school male adolescents who do not attend church. A future researcher might choose to survey high school male adolescents in a local school system as opposed to a local church. This

might provide the researcher with a better cross section of adolescents and a better understanding of the needs of today's adolescents.

APPENDIX

PERCEIVED NEEDS OF HIGH SCHOOL MALE ADOLESCENTS SURVEY

This appendix is all of the information associated with the instrument used in this study. First is the informed consent letter that was mailed to the parents of all high school male adolescents who had the opportunity to participate in this survey. This appendix also contains the instruction sheet that was provided to the Sunday School teachers for the administration of the survey. Finally, the survey that was distributed to the high school male adolescents who attend Sunday school is also in this appendix.

Dear Parent(s) of High School Male Adolescent(s):

My name is Tod Tanner, and I am currently in the process of completing my dissertation for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the perceived needs of high school male adolescents and study possible implications for mentoring those of divorced parents.

In completing this dissertation I need to ask for your assistance. More specifically, I need to ask for the assistance of your son. I have asked and have been granted permission from your church to survey your son at the beginning of his Sunday School class on Sunday, September 15, 2002. In doing this, however, I need your informed consent. If you do not mind your son taking this survey, all you need to do is inform him that he has your permission. If your son completes the survey given on this date, this will be an indication of his being given informed consent.

Let me assure you that there is little to no risk in completing this survey and that all information gathered in this survey will be held confidential. If a young man places his name of the survey, it will be immediately destroyed in order to guarantee that no one will be able to match the survey with an individual.

The survey will attempt to measure the opinions and attitudes of high school male adolescents in the northern suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee, in four areas: their perception of mentoring relationships, anger-related issues, school performance, and relational needs. All statements in the survey will only attempt to measure the perception of or opinion of the individuals being surveyed.

If your son does not wish to participate in this survey, he is not required. If your son wishes not to complete the survey once he has started, he may discard it at any time. If your son experiences any stress related to this survey through the expression of his own opinions and wishes to talk to someone, he may contact Dr. David Walley at 824-6154.

Thank you for your time and attention related to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this survey or this study, please feel free to contact me at 824-6154.

Sincerely,

Tod Tanner
Director of Student Ministries
First Baptist Church Hendersonville, TN

SURVEY INSTRUCTION

Please read these instructions verbatim to the class before completing the survey.

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to investigate the perceived needs of high school male adolescents and study possible implications for mentoring those of divorced parents. This research is being conducted by Tod Tanner for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete a survey. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported along with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

In order to complete the survey, please follow the instructions on it. Once the student has completed the survey please, collect them and place them back in the envelope provided to you. Once you have collect all of the surveys, return the envelope to the youth minister at your church.

For the purpose of this survey, *mentoring* will be defined as “A relationship in which a teenager is able to identify with an adult at a point of interest for the teenager, and the teenager is influenced in and through this relationship.”

In question 1 please circle one of the following 5 responses.

1. How old are you as of today's date?

[14]

[15]

[16]

[17]

[18]

In question 2 and 3 please indicate your answer by either circling yes or no.

2. Have your parents divorced?

[Yes]

[No]

3. Do you currently have or have you ever had a relationship with an adult in which you feel like you can talk to him or her about things of interest to you and receive good advice in which you are willing to act upon?

[Yes]

[No]

In statements 4-24 choose one of the following related to each statement: Strongly Disagree [SD]; Disagree [D]; Neutral [N]; Agree [A]; Strongly Agree [SA]. You can make your choice by circling your selection. You may indicate your choice by circling your response.

4. Given the definition of mentoring listed above, this is a type of relationship that I would desire.

[SD]

[D]

[N]

[A]

[SA]

5. I believe that I would benefit from a relationship in which I could talk about things that are of interest to me.

[SD]

[D]

[N]

[A]

[SA]

6. I believe that I would benefit from a relationship in which I could talk about current issues in my life.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

7. I believe I would benefit from a relationship in which I could receive both practical and spiritual advice related to issues I am currently experiencing.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

8. I believe it takes a number of different circumstances for me to get angry.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

9. I believe I remain calm during stressful situations.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

10. I am able to calm down in a short period of time after a stressful situation.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

11. I find it difficult to argue with my parents.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

12. I find it difficult to argue with fellow students.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

13. I find it difficult to argue with adults that I know.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

14. I am able to maintain positive relationships with people my own age.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

15. I am able to maintain positive relationships with adults.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

16. I am open to receiving advice from adults that I know personally.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

17. I have a growing desire to be involved in a committed relationship with a female who is approximately my own age.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

18. Loving someone of the opposite sex and being married to this person for a lifetime is a great desire I have.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

19. I maintain grades that are either average or above average.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

20. I am involved in a number of extracurricular activities at school.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

21. School, while it is a task I must complete, is still something I desire to do.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

22. Teachers would say that I listen and pay attention while in class.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

23. I enjoy both the social and educational aspects of school.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

24. I hope to be able to apply myself in school now so I might have the opportunity to further my education after high school.

[SD] [D] [N] [A] [SA]

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ABSTRACT

THE PERCEIVED NEEDS OF HIGH SCHOOL MALE ADOLESCENTS AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR MENTORING ADOLESCENTS OF DIVORCED PARENTS

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived needs of high school male adolescents and study possible implications for mentoring those of divorced parents. The researcher defines adolescents, discipleship, mentoring, needs based ministry, and the traditional home for the purpose of this study.

The researcher presents a model for mentoring in studying the example Christ set in the relationship He had with His disciples. This relationship was one built within a small group that later had a large impact on others following the commands of Christ. The dissertation discusses the importance of developing relationships with others in order to influence them both now and in the future.

The research also addressed the perceived needs of today's high school male adolescents. Some of these needs are relationships with other people, a desire to excel in educational achievements, and other related issues. These perceived needs have a direct impact upon the ways a young person lives his life.

The research for this study was conducted in the northern suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee. The researcher surveyed high school male adolescents who attend Sunday

school in three Southern Baptist churches. Once this was completed the researcher collected the surveys and tabulated the result.

The study presented charts and graphs comparing the perceived needs of high school male adolescents who come from divorced homes with those who come from intact homes. The four areas being compared was one's perception of mentoring relationships, anger related issues, one's perception toward school, and relational needs.

Once the information was tabulated and displayed the researcher drew conclusions related to mentoring relationships. Those who come from divorced homes had lower mean scores in all four areas. This statistical information helped to reveal that high school male adolescents who have experienced a divorce between their parents would benefit from a mentoring relationship. The research also discovered that today's high school male adolescents struggle with anger related issues and have a high perception of mentoring relationships.

Key words: benefits of connecting; connecting; developmental changes; discipleship; divorced home; influence; intact home; mentoring; perceived needs; relationships

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