THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PREPARATORY TIME AND STUDY

RESOURCES WITH ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CURRICULUM RESOURCES AT HIGHPOINT

BAPTIST CHURCH EIGHT MILE, ALABAMA

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A Project

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Educational Ministry

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by

Christina Joyce Zimmerman

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APPROVAL SHEET

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Christina Joyce Zimmerman

Read and Approved by:

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Brian C. Richardson (Faculty Supervisor)

_____

Timothy Paul Jones (Chair)

Date _____

For the glory of God.

To my daughters,

Tasha and Talisa;

to my best friend,

Dawn,

who has always supported me

in all my endeavors,

and to

Harry,

my encourager and my husband.

Thank you all for hanging in there with me.

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PREFACE

I am so grateful for my family. They have hung with me through the years as I have struggled to bring this work to a close. It has been a long, laborious journey with many high and lows. Through life changes and ups and downs, we can finally put this portion of my journey to rest.

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Thanks to my mom, Georgia Davis, and my grandchildren and godchildren for enduring the wait. Though you have not complained, this process has prevented me from

spending time with you. I have missed many games and special occasions but am looking forward to making them up.

Of course, I am deeply thankful to my companion, my soul mate, my husband, Harry, whom I met while in the midst of this process. He has stood with me in spite of interruptions in the management of our home. He has endured frozen dinners and dirty laundry, all without complaint. Thanks for your love and your patience. I will return the same support as you complete your doctoral work.

Last, but not least, I know that without the favor of God that has rested on me, none of this would have been possible. He has extended great grace and love to me, not only through the fulfillment of this goal, but in every endeavor throughout my Christian walk. Thank you, God, my Father.

Christina Joyce Zimmerman

Antioch, Tennessee

May 2013

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Education is clearly a valued strategy for teaching and learning in the United

States and throughout the world and can be defined as systematic teaching and learning,

intended to enhance the quality of life of an individual.[1] Professor of education, Dickson

A. Mungazi, contends that education's value stems from the devastation that would result

in its absence. He further believes that without education society would not advance and

humanity would suffer.[2]

The benefits of education are centered in the learning outcomes; specifically,

education enables learners to gain an understanding about humanity, society, history,

other areas of knowledge, and the world in which they live.[3] This information allows

learners to participate in the physical world, including society as viable citizens, enjoying

personal and economic growth as well as a sense of well-being.[4]

Martin Dowson and Stuart Devenish say there are two ways to view education,

secular education, which teaches learners to serve themselves so that they achieve

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[1]Sandy Baum and Kathleen Payea, "Individuals and Societal Benefits of Higher Education," The College Board, http://www.collegeboard.com (accessed January 24, 2009).

[2]Dickson A. Mungazi, *The Evolution of Educational Theory in the United States* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 159.

[3]Jay D. Scribner and Donald H. Layton, *The Study of Educational Politics* (Washington, DC: Falmer Press, 1995), 9-10.

[4]Tom Schuller, John Preston, and Cathie Hammond, *The Benefits of Learning: The Impact of Education on Health, Family Life, and Social Capital* (New York: Routledge Falmer, 2004), 3.

personal success and Christian education, which teaches learners to serve others and achieve maturity in Christ.[5] Ray Henthorne says secular education provides conceptual solutions and answers for physical educational needs, while Christian education provides the framework for non-physical or spiritual teaching and learning. He contends that "Christian education is that ministry found in many evangelical churches, which undergirds the entire ministry of worship, witness, and work of the church."[6] Christian education can be defined as the ministry that "helps people become believers and all believers discover their spiritual gifts, place of ministry, and calling to the point that they mature in Christ and do their part to help the body grow."[7] Christian education is mandated by the Bible through the Great Commission and calls Christian leaders to be disciple makers, who are God's instruments for helping others grow spiritually in knowledge and grace (Matt 28:19-20).

Like secular education, Christian education's importance arises from the devastation that would result in its absence or when it does not function well within the church. Its primary goal is spiritual transformation, which is the reformation of the inner life of man, from which "his outer existence flows and is the process by which the human spirit or will is given a definite 'form' or character."[8] This change in the life of a believer can be seen as a journey to completeness and wholeness, taking one from emptiness and

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[5]Martin Dowson and Stuart Devenish, *Religion and Spirituality* (Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, Inc., 2010), 2.

[6]Ray L. Henthorne, *A Design for Teaching-Learning* (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1967), 3.

[7]R. Wayne Jones, "Issue: Capture a Passion for Christian Education," in *Facing Critical Issues in Christian Education,* comp. by Ron Pratt (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing, 1995), 13.

[8]Dallas Williard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002), 19.

dissatisfaction to fulfillment, from immorality to morality; from weakness to strength; from brokenness to healing; from despair to hope.[9]

Research Concern

To reiterate, spiritual transformation, the goal of Christian education, is a process by which God forms Christ's character in Christians and involves the transformation of the whole person in thoughts, behaviors, and styles of relating with God and others, and results in ministries and services that impact the kingdom of God.[10] Brad Waggoner says spiritual transformation is an essential process in the life of the evangelical Christian. He said, "God's redemptive plan ultimately leads toward heaven, but the journey between now and then is to be one of radical transformation." However, he said, "Way too many professed Christians seem to demonstrate little evidence of biblical spiritual formation." He cites doctrinal erosion and biblical compromise as part of the problem, and uses "cultural seepage" as a phrase that describes ideas, perspectives, and beliefs, which are contrary to a biblical worldview.[11]

Michael Zigarelli contends that the reason Christians are not maturing spiritually stems from their busy lives. Based on results from a 2007 survey of 20,000 Christians ranging in age from 15 to 88 across 139 countries, including North America, Christians have become too busy for God. About 6 in 10 of the Christians surveyed said it's "often" or "always" true that "the busyness of life gets in the way of developing my

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[9]Ronald T. Habermas, *Introduction to Christian Education and Formation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 35.

[10]Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit, eds., *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 15-16.

[11]Brad Waggoner, *The Shape of Faith: Spiritual Formation and the Future of Discipleship* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2008), 26-29.

relationship with God." Zigarelli, who conducted the survey, speculated the problem to be a vicious cycle: (1) Christians are assimilated to a culture of busyness, hurry and overload, which leads to (2) God becoming more marginalized in Christians' lives, which leads to (3) a deteriorating relationship with God, which leads to (4) Christians becoming even more vulnerable to adopting secular assumptions about how to live, which leads to (5) more conformity to a culture of busyness, hurry and overload. And then the cycle begins again.[12]

Ed Stetzer says a lack of spiritual maturity is a major concern of churches in itself, but it produces yet another issue—a lack of disciples. Based on research, he confirmed this to be true among evangelical Christians. Church leaders are not making as many disciples as they would like, says Stetzer.[13]

Waggoner's research supports this conclusion. In a survey of 2,500 Protestants over a two year period, he discovered definitive facts about the condition of churches.

1. Only 16 percent of Protestant churchgoers read their Bible daily and another 20 percent read it "a few times a week."

2. 23 percent "agreed strongly" with the statement, "When I come to realize that some aspect of my life is not right in God's eyes, I make the necessary changes."

3. Among evangelicals, 70 percent have identified their primary spiritual gifts through a class, spiritual gifts inventory, or some other process.

4. In the past six months, 29 percent of respondents said they shared with someone how to become a Christian twice or more, 14 percent once, and 57 percent not at all.

5. 47 percent of Protestant churchgoers admitted to just "going through the motions" often during the singing and prayer portions of worship services. One-quarter strongly disagreed that they merely go through the motions.

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[12]Audrey Barrick, "Survey: Christians Worldwide Too Busy for God," The Christian Post, http://www.christianpost.com (accessed December 11, 2010).

[13]Ed Stetzer, "First-Person: The Urgent Need for Biblical Literacy," Baptist Press, http://www.bpnews.net (accessed November 21, 2011).

6.   Fasting was perhaps the most neglected spiritual discipline, with 80 percent of respondents saying they had not fasted during the past six months.

Waggoner further discovered that when surveyed one year later, churchgoers evidenced very little change in overall discipleship or spiritual formation. However, a majority believed they had grown spiritually over the course of the year.[14]

Waggoner's survey presents conclusive evidence that spiritual transformation occurs at a lower rate than desired by Christian leaders. Michael Zigarelli revealed the problem to be rooted in cultural demands. Christians are assimilated into a culture of busyness. This creates a situation of neglect in their relationship with God. Christian leaders must find a solution that counters societal influence so that Christians understand and live out biblical truths as a demonstration of spiritual transformation.

Christian Education as an Essential Discipline

The Christian education ministry of the church serves the body of Christ through teaching and enabling Christians and non-Christians to learn.[15] However, Christian education is more than the transmission of content from the teacher to the learner because it must accomplish the goal of transformation of the whole person in the likeness of Christ (Col 1:28).[16] It begins where evangelism ends, helping Christians to grow in their faith and leading them to spiritual maturity.[17] Drew Boswell says God's

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[14]David Roach, "American Protestants Deviate from Biblical Discipleship Standards," LifeWay Christian Resources, http://www.lifeway.com/research (accessed January 21, 2012).

[15]Perry G. Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth: An Introduction to Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 16.

[16]James R. Estep, Jr., Michael J. Anthony, and Gregg R. Allison, *A Theology for Christian Education* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008), 21.

[17]Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth,* 16-17.

desire has always been to see His children grow and mature spiritually because He has "strategically placed Christians where they are, in the history of time that they are in, in order to bring a lost world to Him." But Christians must be knowledgeable regarding the Bible and its doctrine. Otherwise the church becomes doctrinally shallow and easily swayed by the deception of sin (Jas 1:8).[18]

Because of its essential nature, Christian education is often viewed as a foundational ministry of the evangelical church with the responsibility of establishing a systematic strategy of biblical learning that leads to spiritual transformation. The strategy should include the elements and principles that result in accomplishing Christian education goals.

The Essential Nature of the Bible in Christian Education

One of the implications of research conducted by Ed Stetzer was that Christians are not growing spiritually because of biblical illiteracy. He said many Christians would prefer to read a devotional book than read the Bible.[19] Christian education rises from the Bible; therefore, the Bible, which is saturated with educational implications and imperatives, should be foundational to a vital church ministry and viewed as the authoritative Word of God.[20] The biblical writer of Hebrew says neglect of Bible reading and study prevents spiritual growth (Heb 5:12-13). Because of its theological foundations, the Bible is the chief tool in the teaching and learning process in

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[18]Drew Boswell, "The Importance of Christian Education," httpp://www.drewboswell.com (accessed January 14, 2012).

[19]Stetzer, "First Person," http://www.bpnews.net.

[20]Edward L. Hayes, "Establishing Biblical Foundations," in *Christian Education: Foundations for the Future,* ed. Robert E. Clark, Lin Johnson, and Allyn K. Sloat (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 31-32.

evangelical churches and the standard by which the church governs and judges its

ministers, including the Christian education ministry.[21] For education to be called

Christian, it must be built upon the Word of God, which is the Bible.[22] The Bible is the

primary source of the Christian educators' theological and educational commitments in

Scripture, and is used to test all opinions and teaching on faith.[23]

Arguably, only the Bible can provide principles and concepts for answering

fundamental questions about life. The Bible is God's gift to the church and provides the

only authoritative guidance for humanity and the Christian life.[24] Brian Richardson

extends this principle even further by revealing a correlation between an individual's

factual Bible knowledge and his attitudes and behavior. Therefore, it is imperative that

Christian education leaders communicate cognitive Bible truths for successful attitude

change.[25] Richards and Bredfeldt accentuated this discovery. They said it is only in the

Bible that learners can find the true purpose and plan for their life.[26] Most Christian

educators believe the Bible to be the means by which God intends to speak to the

Christian learner; therefore, the learner must be taught its content.[27] There is no other

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[21]Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), 198.

[22]Lois E. LeBar, *Education That Is Christian* (Colorado Springs: Chariot Victor Publishing, 1995), 10-11.

[23]Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit, eds., *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 36.

[24]Daryl Eldridge, ed. *The Teaching Ministry of the Church: Integrating Biblical Truth with Contemporary Application* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 65.

[25]Brian Richardson, "Do Bible facts change attitudes." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 140 (1983): 163-172.

[26]Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching,* 56.

[27]Howard P. Colson and Raymond M. Rigdon, *Understanding Your Church's Curriculum: Relating Learning Resources to Life in the Eighties* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981), 106.

source that makes truth known to the learner; therefore, it makes sense that the Bible should be at the center of Christian education and its resources. Without it, there would not be any Christian teaching.[28] The centrality of the Bible is major in the platform of evangelical education.[29]

The Essential Nature of Christian Education
Curriculum Resources

The Bible provides the content for learning through the Christian education ministry; however, a curriculum resource is one of the tools used by Christian education leaders for developing Christians in their spiritual growth. It has stood the test of time as an intrinsic component of education. According to encyclopedia.com, curriculum resources have existed as long as there have been systems of writing and formal education. They have existed as clay tablets; scrolls; bound sheets of papyrus, vellum, or parchment; and as modern mass-produced books. In secular education, the primary term used to identify these resources is "textbook."[30] However, in Christian education church ministry, the Bible is identified as the textbook, while a curriculum resource, which is sometimes termed "Sunday school book," is a teaching and learning tool. Simply defined, Christian education curriculum resources are materials that guide, inform, and enrich the teaching and learning process of individuals and groups, who are studying the Bible.[31] Harry Piland warns that curriculum resources should never be considered a substitute for

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[28]Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching,* 56.

[29]Gangel and Wilhoit, *Adult Education,* 36.

[30]Joseph P. Farrell, "Textbooks," Free Encyclopedia*,* http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Textbooks.aspx (accessed July 20, 2012).

[31]D. Campbell Wyckoff, *Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), 185.

a study of the Bible. They are designed to help learners understand, appreciate, and apply the Bible in their daily lives.[32]

Each educational discipline utilizes curriculum resources or textbooks that will accomplish its specific needs and goals in teaching and learning. For example a science textbook provides factual and theoretical information to fulfill the requirements on a science syllabus or curriculum plan. In addition, different textbooks are developed to provide information appropriate to a given educational level or age group. These characteristics among others are descriptive of textbooks for secular education. They are also characteristic of Christian education resources and further validate their essential nature. Both secular and Christian education resources help to educate people through the learning of information that is contained within them.

Lawrence Richards and Gary Bredfeldt believe that in order to reach spiritual transformation goals in evangelical churches, Christian education leaders should provide effective educational programs, including Bible study classes which are taught by qualified teachers who are equipped with effective tools for teaching and learning.[33] Though its truths are timeless, interpretation and application of biblical content are necessary for relevancy and to impact current cultural situations and needs; therefore, a high quality published curriculum resource is the most beneficial tool for use in Bible study teaching.[34] These resources are developed by theologically and educationally trained people to aid the teacher in guiding biblical learning and the application of biblical truths.

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[32]Harry Piland, *Basic Sunday School Work* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1980), 156.

[33]Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching,* 198

[34]Ibid.

Lin Johnson presents foundational principles on which Christian education curriculum resources should be built. They should include the following:

1. Biblical base – As already confirmed in this study, the Bible or God's Word should be the content of Christian education curriculum. It contains the record of God's truth, which should be the basis by which all other truth is judged, used, and evaluated.

2. Christological center – Because the Bible focuses reader's attention on the Person of Jesus Christ, Christian education curriculum resources should do the same. Curriculum resources should not be centered on sinful human life but on the living Word.

3. Pupil relatedness – Effective Christian education resources should be age graded. Because the level of understanding and needs of individuals vary, one curriculum resource may not be relevant to every age group. Therefore, the resources should include truths and stories that reflect each age group's needs.

4. Sound education – Christian education resources should incorporate sound teaching and learning principles and methods for every age group as well as principles on motivating people to learn.

5. Application orientation – The ultimate goal of Christian education resources is to change lives. Therefore, effective Christian education should guide learners to respond to the truths that are being studied.[35]

These principles provide the necessary framework for understanding distinctive features of Christian education curriculum resources. Johnson alludes to the belief that without these principles, curriculum resources would not be effective.

Purpose of Study

The essential nature of Bible study in Christian education settings has been reported to result in biblical literacy and spiritual maturity, however, research has determined that spiritual growth occurs at a low rate. This reveals that in spite of the

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[35]Lin Johnson, "Understanding and Using Curriculum," in *Christian Education Foundations for the Future,* ed. Robert E. Clark, Lin Johnson, and Allyn K. Sloat (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 496-97.

credibility of a confirmed discipline, Christian education, and its Bible study curriculum resources, there is a clear disconnect between the teaching and learning that takes place. This study attempts to determine whether specific catalysts make a difference in the transference of the learning of biblical content so that spiritual growth occurs at a higher rate. The catalysts identified in this study are preparational time or the length of time teachers use to prepare to teach curriculum resources and the use of biblical resources such as commentaries, study Bibles, online biblical resources, or similar Bible study resources as they prepare. The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze a possible relationship between preparation time and use of Bible study resources with Christian education curriculum resources for effective teaching that impact spiritual transformation.

The Selection of Preparatory Time and Bible Study Resources as Catalysts

Secular education teachers prepare for teaching careers through formal education. With this training, they develop an expertise in a specific field of study as well as an understanding of how to organize and plan for teaching. Therefore, before classes are taught, they expertly develop curriculum plans and syllabi to guide instruction. Though some Sunday school teachers may be professional teachers, many are not experts in theology and the doctrines of the Bible. With this thinking and because of the nature of Christian education and its resources, Sunday school teaching preparation could be deemed an asset.

For this project, preparation does not include formal training but the week-to-week activities that aids Sunday school teachers in preparing to teach Bible study lessons. These activities primarily include lesson development through personal Bible study;

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therefore, it is the position of this researcher that if, in preparation for Sunday school, teachers spend a healthy amount time using quality Bible study resources such as commentaries, study Bibles, and other study resources along with curriculum resources, then learners will be spiritually impacted.

Context

The context of this study is Highpoint Baptist Church in Eight Mile, Alabama, which is located outside of Mobile, Alabama. Highpoint Baptist Church is an African-American Southern Baptist Church that has been in existence since March 1986. Of special note, an African-American church was not targeted as the sample for this study nor was the African-American culture targeted for the population of this study. The criterion for selection is as described in Chapter 3 of this research project. However, because an African-American church was selected, a brief overview of the church in African-American culture is provided as the context.

Like many African-American churches, Highpoint embodies remnants of past cultural and societal struggles. The African-American church has served as the foundation of the African-American community since the days of slavery. C. Eric Lincoln said, the African-American preacher of the slave church preached and ministered in spite of plantation rules that forbid church organization and meeting together. He led what Lincoln refers to as an "invisible institution," which often met incognito. When given the freedom to meet, church activities were controlled by white plantation owners. The preacher, who was also a slave, had some knowledge of the Bible, but it was distorted and imperfect because of a lack of education and theological training. He provided religious instruction through preaching rather than teaching. This type of

leadership administered encouragement and hope but did nothing to address life needs.

The major need for the African-American slave was loneliness which was created

because of the lack of social cohesiveness. First, slaves were stripped from their

homeland, and then they were bought and sold in America, which separated families and

sometimes placed them on plantations with other slaves, who spoke different languages

because they were from different African tribes. Therefore, communication became

difficult if not impossible.[36]

The African-American church survived slavery and became the bedrock of the

Black community. The freeing of African Americans from slavery addressed some of the

organizational issues and loneliness improved as relationships and families developed

over time, however, Christian education continued to be lacking, especially in

comparison to white counterparts. Lawrence Levine said it initially fell on the African-

American church and pastor to address a foundational skill for teaching and learning,

which was reading. Because of a lack of formal education, literacy was rampant. During

those days, African Americans had a profound respect for education because they felt it

would allow them to better compete with the white population and be accepted in society.

Therefore, African-American pastors used the Bible and school readers to instruct in

reading. Levine emphasized learning to read was difficult, often painful and progressed

slowly but it was a steady progression. He made this comment about the growth of

literacy for the African American:

> At the time of emancipation at least 93 per cent of the adult Negroes in the
> United States were illiterate. In 1870 the number had been reduced to about 80
> per cent; by 1890, 56 per cent; 1900, 44 per cent; 1910, 30 per cent; 1920, 23

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[36]C. Eric Lincoln, *The Negro Church in America: The Black Church Since Frazier* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974), 12-16.

per cent; 1930, 16 per cent; 1940, 11 per cent; 1950, 10 percent. Thus in the eight decades following emancipation the figures reversed. When freedom first came, more than nine out of ten blacks had been illiterate; by the mid-twentieth century, nine out of ten were literate.[37]

Though reading had improved, cultural segregation and discrimination still kept educational standards low. Even if all things were equal in America at that time, the educational skills of African-Americans would prevent participation in a society that identified learning as foundational to success. Therefore, poverty and ignorance permeated the African-American community. W. E. B. Dubois commented that "a people thus handicapped ought not to be asked to race with the world, but rather allowed to give all its time and thought to its own social problems."[38]

During the segregation years, Lincoln and Mamiya said, the vast majority of African-American churches had Sunday school programs, which traditionally provided classes for both adults and for youth (preschool-12th grade). Most Sunday school programs tended to be small, attracting ten to twenty adults and about twenty-five to fifty children, depending on the size of the church. Many African-American Sunday school programs did not receive pastoral attention or leadership. Many had been observed to be babysitting situations for the children and lecture sessions for the adults.[39]

The African-American community depended on the church and the pastor to meet many social and family needs because it was the only institution in American society that respectfully ministered to those needs, especially in South. As a result, the

[37]Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 156.

[38]W. E. B. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Dover Publications, 1994), 5-6.

[39]C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 142.

pastor's activities extended beyond the walls of the church in unusual ways, including service to families as a lawyer, doctor, and other professional.[40]

African-American pastors rate preaching as their primary responsibility within the church and teaching is rated as second.[41] As a result, in many African-American churches, the worship service has become the center of ministry work. George McCalep says in worship-centered churches, worship is depended on to teach members in discipleship, evangelism, fellowship, and ministry. However, he says "worship cannot produce effective discipleship. Disciples, not church members, are what God called us to become. The best pulpit teaching ministry will fall short in fulfilling the command of the Great Commission if it is not supported and/or supplemented with some small group interaction."[42]

According to a LifeWay Christian Resources report, in the African-American church context, church leaders use one of two types of Sunday school models, either the TOSS (Teaching-Oriented Sunday School) or the GOSS (Growth-Oriented Sunday School). The TOSS model is the traditional African-American Sunday school model, which relies on worship to produce change in the lives of members. The TOSS model lists the Sunday school as an auxiliary along with other auxiliaries like the choir, children's ministry, ushers, and others. As a result, the worship service is the only evangelistic tool, members and their needs slip through the cracks, many members are overworked, and spiritual growth is limited. In the GOSS model, Sunday school and not

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[40]*Ebony Pictorial History of Black America* (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company, Inc., 1971), 2:111.

[41]Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church,* 136.

[42]George O. McCalep, *Faithful over a Few Things: Seven Critical Church Growth Principles* (Lithonia, GA: Orman Press, 1996), 102.

worship, is the foundational strategy used to accomplish the work of the church, including evangelism. In the GOSS model, the worship service is where the church meets with God through worship and the Word.[43]

Highpoint Baptist Church has changed their Sunday school program to the Fulfillment Hour, which utilizes many of the principles of the GOSS Sunday School model. Fulfillment Hour was developed by George O. McCalep, Jr., former pastor of Greenforest Community Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. McCalep describes Fulfillment Hour as "a model in which small groups carry out all of God's biblically mandated purposes of the church during a specific block of time normally assigned to Sunday School."[44]

In an interview on February 24, 2013, with the Sunday school director of Highpoint Baptist Church, Geraldine Turner said Highpoint began in 1986 with less than a hundred members and one Bible study class. It was established by the Mobile Baptist Association as a Southern Baptist mission because there was not an African-American church in the area. At that time, the association provided the church with Sunday school training. In 1991, the church obtained membership in the Mobile Association and the Alabama State Convention as a Southern Baptist affiliated church. Soon after that the church formed a Sunday School Council, which set ministry goals for outreach and Sunday school growth for the church. Then in 1992, the Sunday School Council expanded the Sunday school to four divisions, which included preschool, children, youth, and adults classes. Other membership training was also added such as Sunday school

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[43]"Leading Sunday School in the African-American Community" (conference conducted at LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville, Tennessee, October 2006).

[44]Jackie S. Henderson and Joan W. Johnson, *Fulfillment Hour* (Lithonia, GA: Orman Press, 2002), 1.

leadership training as well as Bible study and discipleship training. The Fulfillment Hour model was adopted by the church in January 2005.

Many churches, primarily African-American congregations, have adopted Fulfillment model for their Sunday school ministries. They not only implement the principles of the strategy, but change the name from Sunday school to Fulfillment Hour. Specifically, Highpoint Church has drafted a description of the ministry that identifies their Sunday school work, which reads,

> Fulfillment Hour is a place for us to sense our belonging as God's children and to grow in the knowledge of God's love. It is a place where we use and discover our gifts as we learn how to be Christian disciples. Individuals meet in small groups to explore and discover the truths the Bible has for their everyday life.[45]

Further, Highpoint Baptist Church has organized small groups or classes to carry out, what they have identified as God's biblically mandated purposes for the church. These purposes include evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, missions, and worship. They also describe Fulfillment Hour as a purpose-driven Sunday school that strives to reach out and connect with others while teaching the Bible.

Highpoint Baptist Church has grown in membership from 100 members in 1986 to the present day membership of 700. This is a testimony of successful numerical growth, however, Pastor Charlie York and Sunday school director, Geraldine Turner have identified the same spiritual growth and maturity concerns as mentioned in this research project.

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[45]"Fulfillment Hour," Highpoint Baptist Church, http://www.highpointbc.org/id13.html (accessed March 15, 2013).

Research Question

How does time and Christian education Bible study resources relate to the use of

Christian education curriculum resources for spiritual transformation?

Procedural Overview

During the first step of the research project, the spiritual maturity level of

participants attending Sunday school classes on a regular basis in an evangelical church

was measured. The spiritual growth was measured using a Shepherd Scale Survey

instrument, which focused primarily on each individual's faithfulness to Jesus Christ in

the areas of beliefs, behaviors, values, and attitudes. The second step in the research was

the teacher documentation of the amount of time and the number of specific Christian

education resources used in the weekly preparation process to teach the content of

Christian education curriculum resources in a Sunday school classroom setting. The data

was collected under normal conditions with no alterations administered by this

researcher; therefore, step two is not categorized as an experimental treatment. The third

step was the administration of the Shepherd Scale Survey to the same participants to

measure changes in the spiritual maturity level.

The Shepherd Scale Survey was distributed at a selected evangelical church

(Highpoint Baptist Church) and administered to participants at the beginning and at the

end of a three-month teaching experience. A Teacher Log Sheet was developed by the

researcher and used by the teacher of each of the Sunday school classes with participants

in this study. Upon completion, the surveys and log sheets were returned to the

researcher. The results entailed a detailed analysis and application of quantitative

relationships between participants' growth according to the Shepherd Scale as it relates to

a teachers' preparational time and use of Bible study resources in preparation to teach Sunday school using curriculum resources.

Possible Researcher Bias

The researcher has been employed in the field of Christian publishing for more than 13 years and has had the responsibility of Sunday school curriculum design and development as well as the editing of the content of lessons. Therefore, the majority of the descriptions and definitions related to Christian education curriculum resources in this research project are based on the experience of the researcher. However, the researcher's experience has in no way influenced the outcome of the research.

Conclusion

Issues of spiritual transformation have been statistically proven to be real. Many Christians are not growing spiritually and are not becoming disciples. The work of developing Christians spiritually and as disciples falls within the perimeters of the Christian education ministry of evangelical churches.

Christian education leaders want to see evidence of spiritual growth and maturity or spiritual transformation in the lives of members of the church body in fulfillment of their calling as leaders. They want to see believers walking by faith and practicing personal spiritual disciplines, including Bible reading and study, prayer, fasting and trusting God with a mature faith. They want to remove the chain that binds believers to the same chair Sunday after Sunday in Bible study classes, preventing them from works of service and moving them beyond the walls of the church into communities in outreach and evangelism. Finally, they want to erase the deficient in biblical literacy so

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that believers will exhibit knowledge and understanding of the Word of God, and so that they will increasingly reflect the image of Christ.

Christian education is an essential discipline for evangelical churches in teaching and learning with the goal of spiritual transformation. One of the tools utilized by Christian education leaders is the Bible study curriculum resource; however, many of them are not getting the desired results of a systematic advance toward Christlikeness in the life of believers, which indicates a need for support in their use of Christian education curriculum resources.

This project presents analysis of how catalysts, specifically time and Bible study resources can substantiate Christian education curriculum resources to address the challenges and issues of Christian education ministries related to spiritual transformation.

CHAPTER 2

PRECEDENT LITERATURE

Introduction

R. Wayne Jones states that Christian educators are called to a specific role within the church. Further, they are to help "people to become believers and all believers to discover their spiritual gifts, place of ministry, and calling to the point that they become mature in Christ and do their part to help the body grow."[1] Paul understood the gravity of this goal as he urged believers to live lives worthy of their calling (Eph 4:1). This is a challenging task for Christian education leaders, who must organize the Christian education ministry, enlist and train volunteers, and select Bible study curriculum resources to successfully accomplish this goal. Many are concerned that the spiritual maturity of church members involved in Bible study occurs either at a low rate or not all. It is the concern of this project to validate specific catalysts that encourages the purposeful application of Christian education curriculum resources so that the spiritual development of church members will be impacted.

This chapter examines literature that lays a foundation for the research concern of this project. In particular, literature for the Christian education ministry of the church has been thoroughly researched because curriculum resources are an essential tool for meeting the educational goals of Christian education. This review connects the tools to

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[1] R. Wayne Jones, "Issue: Capture a Passion for Christian Education," in *Facing Critical Issues in Christian Education* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1995), 13.

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the laborers that use them, which is the Christian education leader, both inside and outside of the classroom. Also, the literature supports the major process of Christian education methodology, which is teaching and learning as well as the desired results, spiritual transformation.

Biblical Foundations for Christian Education

The work of Christian education in the local church was mandated by Jesus through the Great Commission. Anthony and Benson acknowledged that God's desire has always been to see Christians mature in their faith and pass that faith on to subsequent generations.[2] Edward Hayes says Christian education rises from the fertile soil of the Bible; therefore the Bible, which is saturated with educational implications and imperatives, should be foundational to a vital church education ministry and viewed as the authoritative Word from God.[3]

Estep identified revelation and inspiration as the primary reason the Bible is regarded as foundational to Christian education. He further said the Bible, as God's special revelation, compels the Christian education leader to formulate a model of Christian education that lines up with God's expressed design.[4] Hayes believes the reason the Bible is central to Christian education is because it is the primary source and the only criterion of truth. Since God is the author of truth, then there is a unitary wholeness and interrelationship of truth to all subject fields. Hayes says it is essential that Christian

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[2]Michael J. Anthony and Warren S. Benson, *Exploring the History and Philosophy of Christian Education: Principles for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2003) 17.

[3]Edward L. Hayes, "Establishing Biblical Foundations," in *Christian Education: Foundations for the Future,* eds., Robert E. Clark, Lin Johnson, and Allyn K. Sloat (Chicago: Moody Press. 1991), 31-32.

[4]James R. Estep, Jr., Michael J. Anthony, and Gregg R. Allison, *A Theology for Christian Education* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008), 44-45.

education leaders teach the Bible; it, not only is a guide for life, but provides "a rudder through crisis and charts a course to remedy the ills of society."[5]

Theological Distinctives in Christian Education

Viewing the Bible as foundational to Christian education can provide a vital and authoritative theological base. George Knight contends that theology is the basis of Christian education.[6] According to Pazmino, this base provides absolutes and certainties from a revelatory truth with implications for Christian education. Theology provides the foundations and context for teaching the elements of Christian faith.[7]

Theologically speaking, first, the Scripture is the final authority from which the Christian educator is to teach the whole counsel of God so that believers "are connected to their primary source of authority for discerning the Christian faith."[8] Second, Perry Downs believes there is a need to know and understand God. When educational leaders understand what God is like themselves, it helps with understanding how to teach others for spiritual maturity. How can they teach what they do not know? It is an incumbent task for Christian leaders to walk daily with God to know him and be used by him. God uses the efforts of people to build and accomplish spiritual matters.[9] Ezra's personal resolve

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[5]Hayes, "Establishing Biblical Foundations," 32-33.

[6]George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 34.

[7]Robert W. Pazmino, *Principles and Practices of Christian Education: An Evangelical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 121.

[8]Robert W. Pazmino, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education: An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997), 56.

[9]Perry G. Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth: An Introduction to Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 14.

exemplifies this walk: "Ezra had determined in his heart to study the law of the LORD, obey it, and teach its statutes and ordinances in Israel" (Ezra 7:10 HCSB)[10].

Finally, theology helps Christian educators understand what God requires.[11] They understand what God requires through the study and teaching of the Bible.[12] Pazmino indicates that it is through educational efforts that basic biblical truths like the saving acts of God in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are shared for the purpose of a personal response and commitment to God in Christ.[13] Christian education without theological content renders it useless; therefore, theological content is a required foundation for spiritual growth.

According to James Estep, it is the integration of theology and education that makes education Christian. This conclusion is based on four convictions that relate to Christian education:

1. It should have a theologically informed and constructive use of social science theories.

2. It has a theologically informed purpose. This means that education is for the glory of God.

3. It features a theologically informed selection of content. This means that education starts with Scripture but includes theological tradition, church history, Christian living, and ministry preparation.

4. It evidences a theologically informed design. This means that education develops relevant theological assumptions for educational theory, such as teacher-learner roles and relationships, educational environment, and instructional methods.[14]

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[10]Holman Christian Standard Bible.

[11]Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 26.

[12]Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth,* 64.

[13]Pazmino, *Foundational Issues,* 57.

[14]Estep, Anthony, and Allison, *A Theology for Christian Education,* 38.

As an elaboration on these convictions, Rick Yount demonstrates that theology and Christian education should not only be integrated but dependent on one another within the context of the local church. The former provides content for teaching and essential tools with which to appreciate and understand the scriptural text. The latter provides a clear means of communicating the content.[15] LeBar believes, to the detriment of both disciplines, theology and Christian education, that sometimes Christian educators focus on social science or relationship and life needs only.[16] These items should not be negated, but the biblical and theological aspects of Christian education should be emphasized as well. If theology does not become crucial to Christian education, it will become imbalanced and will not be grounded in biblically-based teaching and instruction.[17]

Christian Education Teaching and Learning

Another important aspect of Christian education is teaching and learning. The nature and usage of curriculum resources defend the essential roles of teaching and learning in Christian education as they do in secular education. According to Jack Terry, teaching has been essential in every religion and most cultures, including Chinese, Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Greek, Phoenician, and in particular Hebrew. Terry reported that early in their history, the Hebrew people (Israelites) received instruction from God that demonstrated the importance of teaching in their culture. He instituted the

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[15]William R Yount, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church,* 2nd ed. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2008), 4ff.

[16]Lois E. LeBar, *Education That Is Christian* (Colorado Springs: Chariot Victor Publishing, 1995), 141.

[17]Estep, Anthony, and Allison, *A Theology for Christian Education,* 22.

Passover (Exod 12), which became an important means of education for all Israelites throughout all generations. The Passover was a final event in the deliverance of the Israelites from 400-years of captivity in Egypt. Through it, they received instruction from God on the way they should live.[18] Through instruction for the Passover and other historical events and activities, God developed the people of Israel so they would be set apart to carry out His plan for all people and so that they could carry the truth to all people in every nation.[19]

Hebrew education was primarily religious in nature and included two levels: an individual righteousness to God through personal faith and obedience, and a corporate identity as God's chosen people.[20] The "Shema," which was a confession of faith by which the Israelites acknowledged the one true God and His commandments supports this.

> These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (Deut 6:6-9 HCSB).

This Scripture passage represents Israel's call for instruction in the ways of God and sets the agenda for the home and the nation.[21] So strong was this principle in the heart of the Hebrew people that they equated it to life: "Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life" (Prov 4:13 NIV).

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[18]Jack D. Terry, "God as Teacher," in *The Teaching Ministry of the Church* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995), 6.

[19]Ibid., 18.

[20]C. Doug Bryan, *Relationship Learning: A Primer in Christian Education* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990), 27.

[21]Norm Lamm, *The Shema: Spirituality and Law in Judaism as Exemplified in the Shema, the Most Important Passage in the Torah* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1998), 4.

The emphasis on learning through teaching continued throughout the Scriptures. In the Great Commission, Jesus placed a heavy intensity on teaching (Matt 28:19-20). The Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament was the Bible of the early church and Paul advocated teaching from it, especially to fulfill the goal of spiritual transformation. His instruction to Timothy was "Command and teach these things … give your attention to public reading, exhortation, and teaching" (1 Tim 4:11, 13 HCSB). One of Jesus' primary roles was that of a teacher as He was referred to as Teacher at least forty-five times in the four Gospels.[22] Even God reveals Himself as a Teacher. He said to Isaiah: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you for your benefit, who leads you in the way you should go" (Isa 48:17b HCSB).

If God identified the teaching practice as beneficial for the Israelites and in the life of an Old Testament prophet like Isaiah, it behooves Christian leaders to consider teaching and learning as a priority. James D. Smart declared, "The church must teach or die." He further proclaimed that the existence of Christian education rests on the church as a teaching function. He said, the church must teach or it will not be the church.[23] Edge says teaching is a skill of persons who serve as spiritual guides and creates opportunities that are propitious for learning. Christian education teaching and learning disciplines result in the discovery of Christian attitudes or the Christian course of action in a given life situation. It also results in spiritual growth and development.[24] It is the central means of communicating God's will and God's way for evangelical Christians who seek to grow

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[22]Bryan, *Relationship Learning,* 37.

[23]James D. Smart, *Teaching Ministry of the Church* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1954), 21.

[24]Findley B. Edge, *Teaching for Results* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1956), 30.

in spiritual maturity. T.W. Hunt identified teaching, not only as a strategy for growth within the context of the church, but as a mark of servanthood.[25] The writer of 2 Timothy 2:24 says, "The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful" (NIV). These instructions, which were given to the "Lord's servants" reflects the responsibilities of a growing evangelical Christian.

Edward Hayes explains all that Christian education implies must be subject to the scrutiny of the explicit and implicit teachings of the Scriptures. This does not limit the church in its reach and resources. Rather, the Scriptures, with it biblical wellspring of principles, are "vital to the creation, perpetuation, and renewal of Christian education endeavors as well as all ministries in the evangelical church."[26]

A Teaching and Learning Model

A teaching and learning model by Gary A. Parrett and S. Steve Kang provides further validation of Christian education teaching and learning. They contend that the tasks of the church should be the objective of teaching and learning and insist that the basis of Christian education curriculum in the church should be Acts 2:42-47. This is based on the thousands of recently baptized believers in Jerusalem, who "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (v. 42 NIV). Churches who embrace this thinking suggest curriculum content that includes:

1. didachè—the teaching of the apostles;

2. kerygma—the proclamation of the Gospel, implied in Acts 2:47;

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[25]Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit, eds., *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 191.

[26]Hayes, "Establishing Biblical Foundations," 31.

3. koinònia—the fellowship;

4. leitourgia—a reference to worship and to prayer, the two latter commitments we find in Acts 2:42;

5. diakonia—service or ministry, implied in Acts 2:45;

6. prophèteia—prophetic ministries of justice and mercy, also implied in 2:45.[27]

This model highlights these six teaching and learning elements because they resulted in numerical growth and spiritual growth for the Jerusalem church.

Table 1. The gospel

The Gospel			
The Story	The Faith		
Growing in our understanding of, and engagement in the Story	The Truth: sound doctrine	The Life: communion with God	The Way: walking in love

Parrett and Kang also contend that because it is the church's responsibility to proclaim Christ, then the Gospel should be the primary message of the church and its Christian education ministry. The truths of the Gospel constitute "sound doctrine," which has implications for "sound living." Teachers should therefore, not only expound on sound doctrine but "teach what is consistent with sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1 NRSV). Table 1 is Parrett and Kang's depiction of the Gospel as the starting point for teaching and learning content. From there two different paths, Story and Faith, provide further understanding and formation in the Gospel. Central to this strategy is helping learners

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[27]Gary A. Parrett and Steve Kang, *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 79-81.

grow in their understanding of the grand narrative of the Bible and to live godly lives based on the truth that has been communicated. For example, "if God so love us, we ought also to love one another; if God was merciful toward us when we were His enemies, how dare we be less so toward others." From the Gospel emerge requirements to walk as Christ walked.[28]

The strength of this teaching and learning model is a focused goal of spiritual growth and the development of curriculum resources that accomplishes that goal.

The Relationship of Biblical Teaching and Learning to Spiritual Transformation

Crucial to understanding curriculum resources is understanding teaching and learning within the context of Christian education, especially how each relates to spiritual transformation. The Bible as the textbook of Christian education must be taught. Paul wrote that Christians should be transformed by the renewing of their minds (Rom 12:2). The "renewing of minds" requires learning as a process and implies that teaching and learning in the Christian education ministry should be a necessary practice for spiritual transformation. Biblical teaching and learning within the church helps to create a "thinking climate," which is invaluable in helping people to grow spiritually.[29] Therefore, teaching is validated as an essential practice in the Christian education ministry.

Biblical illiteracy dictates the need for biblical teaching and learning within Christian education ministries. In a 2010 survey, George Barna revealed a growing number of Christians no longer know basic, universally known truths about Christianity.

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[28]Ibid., 109, 121.

[29]Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, *The Teaching Church: Moving Christian Education to Center Stage* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 61.

He also identified that "only a minority of adults associates Easter with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Other examples include the finding that few adults believe that their faith is meant to be the focal point of their life or to be integrated into every aspect of their existence."[30] As an essential practice, teaching can potentially impact the learning of biblical content and therefore, help to eradicate biblical illiteracy.

Biblical Learning in Christian Education

LeBar contends that walking as Christ walk is not determined by what Christians hear, but by what they do with what they hear. It is the responsibility of the teacher to influence the outer forces and to transfer knowledge in the learning process from himself to the believer.[31] Learning involves knowing the content from ones area of study. However, Clark says learning becomes transformational when dramatic, fundamental change in the way learners see themselves and the world in which they live takes place. Therefore, transformational learning is defined as "learning that induces more far-reaching change in the learner than other kinds of learning, especially learning experiences which shape the learner and produce a significant impact, or paradigm shift, which affects the learner's subsequent experiences."[32] Transformational learning is necessary in the study of biblical content if spiritual transformation will take place. This does not necessarily mean transformational learning is the solution to spiritual growth, but based on its definition, can be an asset. According to Richardson, spiritual

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[30]"Six Megathemes Emerge from Barna Group Research in 2010," Barna Group Research, http://www.barna.org (accessed March 3, 2012).

[31]LeBar, *Education,* 166-67.

[32]Carolyn Clark, "Transformation Learning," *New Directions in Adult and Continuing Education* 57 (1993): 47.

transformation does not take place exclusively through the learning of Bible facts, but takes place as the Holy Spirit works within the believing Christian. "Factual Bible knowledge in the life of a Christian provides the necessary foundation on which the Holy Spirit must build."[33]

Jack Mezirow asserts it is a defining moment when learners understand the meaning of their experiences and effect change in, what he refers to as, a frame of reference. Learners have acquired coherent experiences such as associations, concepts, values, feelings, and conditioned responses. These are frames of reference that define their life and world. Frames of reference can then be defined as the structures of assumptions through which people understand their experiences. A frame of reference is composed of two dimensions: habits of mind and a point of view. Habits of mind are broad, abstract, orienting, habitual ways of thinking and feeling, and are more durable than points of view. Points of view are subject to continuing change as learners reflect on either the content or process by which they solve problems and identify the need to modify assumptions.[34]

The transformational change theory of Mezirow more closely reflects the spiritual transformation that takes place in the believer than other learning theories. Like transformational change, spiritual transformation impacts every aspect of the life of the believer, changing the lens through which the world is viewed and by which decisions are made. However, the agent of spiritual change for the believer rests on the inner and outer

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[33]Brian Richardson, "Do Bible facts change attitudes." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 140 (1983): 163-172.

[34]Jack Mezirow, "Transformational Learning Theory," http://www.lifecircles-inc.com (accessed January 21, 2012.

work of the Holy Spirit. While transformational change, especially, in secular society is largely due to the efforts of the learner.

Rick Warren says spiritual transformation requires a regular intake of the Word of God. Jesus told His followers, "If you continue in My word, you really are My disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32 HCSB).[35] According to Richards and Bredfeldt, spiritual transformation begins with effective Bible study. It requires that teachers effectively enable learners to meaningfully transfer a concept or biblical truth from one situation to another thereby applying the concept to life.[36]

Yount says this growth process is continuous. Knowledge is gained. Biblical concepts are clarified. These clarified concepts are applied to situations in the life of the learner, which leads to wisdom. As the learner grows in wisdom, more knowledge is gained and concepts are clarified. This process repeats throughout life. It's a spiral through knowledge, understanding, and wisdom in Christ. The purpose of this growth process is to live biblically or be spiritually transformed.[37]

The Importance of Effective Teachers

An effective Bible study teacher can make a difference in the spiritual transformation of Christians. Roehlkepartain says the following about teachers:

Teachers are like the narrow neck of an hourglass: Everything passes through them. When they are effective, learning flows freely and steadily. But when

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[35]Rick Warren, "Personal Bible Study Methods," http://www.pastors.com (accessed January 21, 2012.

[36]Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), 120.

[37]William R. Yount, *Created to Learn: A Christian Teacher's Introduction to Educational Philosophy* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1996), 11-12.

they are ill-equipped, learning can be clogged up or only trickle through ineffectively.[38]

Teachers are agents for change, who make a difference in the lives of learners, says Dennis Dirks. He champions teachers of God's Word as unique; therefore, they are "obligated to make a difference in the lives of learners." Further, he says teachers should not be satisfied with the status quo and they must continually engage the learner in a quest for a deeper understanding of and relationship with God. He continues that the teachers should not be satisfied with anything less than to challenge learner growth.[39]

Gene Taylor outlined a list of nine items that are descriptive of effective Bible study teachers.[40]

1. An effective teacher should be a Christian and all that it embodies, which includes praying, studying the Bible, and being a constant follower of Jesus Christ (Col 3:17).

2. An effective teacher is one who really wants to teach and loves it. He does not teach only because no one else will take the class.

3. An effective teacher is able to teach. He is able to convey thoughts with words that learners can understand. He also understands and properly uses curriculum tools and resources.

4. An effective teacher teaches the truth because he knows the truth and emphasizes the Bible, exalting it as the authoritative Word of God.

5. An effective teacher works long and does more than go over the lesson in the Christian education curriculum resource.

6. An effective teacher will sacrifice time to be well-prepared.

7. An effective teacher is dependable. They are on time for their class and will get a substitute when they are away.

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[38]Roehlkepartain, *The Teaching Church,* 100.

[39]Dennis H. Dirks, "The Teacher: Facilitator of Change," in *Christian Education: Foundations for the Future,* ed. Robert E. Clark, Lin Johnson, and Allyn K. Sloat (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 137.

[40]Gene Taylor, "Being An Effective Bible Class Teacher," http://www.bibleclassbooks.com (accessed January 21, 2012).

8. An effective teacher gets along with others, regarding others before self.

9. An effective teacher is emotionally stable, demanding and receiving the respect of all his learners. This includes knowing the learners and their needs.

Findley Edge says there are two approaches to teaching. The first approach is traditional in nature, while the second approach follows the insights of educational psychology. The following chart further defines these approaches.[41]

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[41]Edge, *Teaching for Results,* 31-32.

Table 2. Teaching approaches

Teaching Approaches		
	Approach 1 – Traditional	*Approach 2 – Educational*
Character Development	Character is developed by teaching the learner Bible knowledge.	Character is developed by leading the individual to make choices and to engage in experiences that are Christian.
The Teacher	The teacher is the source of wisdom and does all the talking. This approach holds that "telling" is teaching.	The teacher guides. Through study, the teacher knows certain things but the learner also knows certain things. Learning takes place by the sharing of ideas.
The Learner	The learner is immature; therefore, his experience and knowledge are of little value.	The learner is considered a person in his own right. His experience and knowledge has value.
Interest	Interest is important only to the extent that it leads the learners to sit quietly and listen to the teacher.	The teacher teaches those things for which the learner has a felt need and in which they are genuinely interested.
The Lesson	The teacher teaches what is printed in the curriculum resource, covering the things as suggested in the resource. The teacher feels that when he has covered this material, he has taught the lesson.	The teacher accomplishes the goal of the lesson and will not necessarily cover all of the material in the curriculum resource. The teacher will use the resource material but also other materials as suggested.
Physical Arrangement	The room arrangement contributes to the teacher doing all the talking. It will likely be arranged so the teacher can stand in front of the class.	The arrangement may be more like a circle so that the teacher can take his place along with all the other class members.

Richards presented similar approaches, which he identified as (1) idea to life and (2) life to idea. He also added a third approach, life to life. The idea to life approach is similar to Edge's traditional approach. In the relationship of the teacher to the learner, concepts have general application to all learners, and the educational method is lecture. Richards' life to idea approach marks the same characteristics as educational approach. Teachers begin with the experience of the learner, implementing discussion and role play as some of the teaching methods. The life-to-life approach of Richards' starts from the present experience of teacher and learner, the teacher participates with the learner in close relationship, and learning has specific application for the learner.[42]

Hendricks contends that effective teaching will change lives and the most effective teaching tells the learner nothing and does nothing for the learner that he can learn or do for himself. The teacher's role is that of coach, who excites and directs the players (learners). "Therefore, what's important is not what you do as a teacher, but what the learners do as a result of what you do."[43] Based on Hendricks' assessment, the second approach or the educational approach of Findley Edge and the life to idea and life to life approaches of Richards can be identified as effective for encouraging change because of the effectiveness of the teacher.

The Dynamics of Jesus' Teaching

Teacher effectiveness is a key component in the use of curriculum resources that impacts spiritual transformation and Christian teachers would do well to master their

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[42]Lawrence O. Richards, *The Theology of Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1975), 79.

[43]Howard G. Hendricks, "The Teaching Church," Discipleship Library, http://www.discipleshiplibrary.com/pdfs/B452B.pdf (accessed July 28, 2012).

teaching skills. Unquestionably, Jesus deserves the title of Master Teacher. Christian

education leaders should emphasize His teaching methodologies in training to help

effective teachers become even better. Jesus is deemed a master of teaching by a vast

number of scholars and theologians, primarily because His teaching secured results.

Findley Edge said the teaching of Jesus "burst through the hard crust of religious

traditionalism that had engulfed the Jewish people and fanned the smoldering ember of

their faith until it became a living fire."[44] Donald Guthrie says Jesus set up a high ethical

ideal, which He perfectly fulfilled. Therefore, He could rightly claim to be a pattern for

others.

Current Teaching Practices

Effective learning requires effective teaching. Thom and Joani Schultz contend

that teaching is not synonymous with learning. They said, "We've bumped along in the

church so long doing our teaching thing that we've rarely stopped to take stock of our

effectiveness. We simply assume that if we're teaching, our flock must be learning."

Table 3 provides a description of the Schultzess claim of what learners may be learning

from some of the teaching within the church.[45]

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[44]Edge, *Teaching for Results,* 1.

[45]Thom Schultz and Joni Schultz, *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church: And How to Fix It* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 1993), 31-32.

Table 3. What We Think We Are Teaching /
What They May Be Learning

What We Think We Are Teaching	What They May Be Learning
Big doses of God's Word in a lengthy sermon.	"If God is as boring and tedious as this preacher, count me out."
Clever word puzzles that teach God's eternal truths.	"God and the Bible are confusing and hide the truth from me."
Eloquent prayers that reflect the majesty of God.	"I'll never be able to learn that foreign language God uses."
"Students please God by sitting still, being quiet, and listening to the teacher talk."	"Church is where you sit idly while other people take care of the thinking and doing."

However, Yount believes we are not called to some abstract, academic ideal either. Christian education leaders and teachers are called "for the training of the saints in the work of ministry." Before the disciples became great men of faith, who were preachers and teachers, they demonstrated they were imperfect, slow to learn, self-centered, and uneducated and unprofessional. He cited the disciples as being very human.[46]

But who are the very human teachers, who are teaching Bible study within evangelical churches? Gary Parrett and Steve Kang submit two theories related to who teachers are in today's churches. First, the most prominent teachers in the local church's Christian education ministry are volunteers. Sometimes they are deacons or pastors and sometimes they are endowed with the spiritual gift of teaching. Second, many of the

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[46]Yount, *The Teaching Ministry,* 47-49.

teaching volunteers are flowing in their gifts, doing exactly what they are supposed to be doing. This means they are gifted with the spiritual gift of teaching and are elders and pastors of the church.[47]

In spite of the spiritual giftedness of teachers, there are other considerations for Bible study teachers. First, they should consider the needs of learners when teaching. LeBar says, teachers can't learn for believers, but they can help them to learn. This means teachers must discover how people learn so that they can successfully teach.[48] They should take into consideration the many ways of knowing or learning. For the most part, teachers in Christian education ministries favor logical and verbal teaching and learning. But this neglects other ways of learning such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, and social. These neglected learning styles often are seen as second-rate abilities by society and churches, "therefore, our churches do not call forth those intelligences in the learners."[49]

Another consideration for teachers includes preparedness. According to Parrett and Kang, many teachers believe that mastery of the content or preparing an overview of the lessons constitutes preparation.[50] This type of preparation usually results in a lecture. Hurt says teachers should consider preparing for a discussion rather than a lecture, which brings out stories of others rather than their own stories. The object is to encourage

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[47]Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith,* 156-57.

[48]LeBar, *Education,* 165.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith,* 247-48.

learners to discover truths for themselves. They also advocate teachers should not only

prepare themselves, intellectually, but mentally and spiritually for teaching.[51]

Trends in Christian Publishing

Part of the responsibility for helping teachers to prepare for teaching Bible

study rests with the Christian publishers, who develop the curriculum resources. Wyckoff

says, such resources will lead learners to live in Christ, therefore, they must be

theologically accurate, acquaint the learner thoroughly with the Bible, teach church

ministry, observe the abilities and needs of the learner for age grading, breathe an

evangelistic spirit, and stress missions, stewardship, and fellowship.[52] In simpler terms,

the use of curriculum resources within the Christian ministry of the church has been

identified as an essential bridge to learning that results in spiritual growth and maturity.

The value of curriculum resources stems from their importance to the church. On their

own, churches would be challenged to produce curriculum resources that address the

change and development of learners as they age and grow spiritually and that provides

curriculum plans for meeting educational goals.[53]

Challenges in Christian Publishing

In obedience to the biblical mandate, curriculum resource designers for

Christian publishers face challenges on how to develop Bible study resources that meet

the teaching and learning objectives and needs of the Christian educational ministries of

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[51]Mike Hurt, "How to Prepare Yourself Mentally and Spiritually to Lead," LifeWay Christian Resources, http://www.lifeway.com/article/how-to-prepare-yourself-mentally-and-spiritually-to-lead (accessed July 27, 2012).

[52]D. Campbell Wyckoff, *Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), 26.

[53]Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching,* 200-01.

the church. Margaret Lawson says, because of the different doctrinal requirements of different denominations, it is a challenge to meet the educational and philosophical curriculum needs of every church, everywhere. Christian publishers often provide options from which to choose.[54]

In his book, *Access Denied in the Information Age,* Stephen Lax eludes that these challenges grow tougher partly because of an information explosion and the fast changing trends in information technology.[55] Through the Internet and other high-tech communication methodologies, evangelical Christians can study on their own through online resources. Various Web sites provide access to Christian resources and learning tools for persons who are just beginning their Christian journey as well as those who are advanced in their Christian walk and wanting deeper study. A popular Web site, Crosswalk.com, provides links to a plethora of free Christian Bible study and teachings of ministry leaders, who present Christian content (Bible study, articles, articles and so forth) from their various Web site ministries. Crosswalk.com also provides free online biblical resources, such as Bible commentaries and dictionaries to aid Bible study. Another Web site is Biblestudylessons.com, which offer free downloadable Bible study lessons about Jesus Christ, forgiveness, Christianity, worship of God, the church, and the Christian gospel.

While the information age and the Internet have created a challenge for Christian publishers, it has proven to produce benefits for education, including Bible

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[54]Margaret Lawson, "Selecting and Evaluating Curriculum," in *The Teaching Ministry of the Church,* 2nd ed.,, ed. William R. Yount (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), 371.

[55]Stephen Lax, ed., *Access Denied in the Information Age* (New York: Palgrave Publishers, 2001), 110.

study teachers and learners. According to eHow Tech, the Internet benefits education in four ways. First, information is an obvious benefit. Individuals can find "information that runs as deep as physics and philosophy to as trivial as the name of a celebrity's pet hamster." As mentioned above, the Internet provides an insurmountable list of biblical resources and Bible study tools. The second benefit is the Internet's ability to facilitate critical thinking. Because of the Internet's vast array of information from various sources, teachers and learners are forced to evaluate truth claims and value claims. The Internet becomes the reference point for which critical thinking occurs. Third, the Internet as an opportunity for creativity is a benefit. "The Internet is as much a gaping void of knowledge and values as it is a vast repository of such." The final benefit of the Internet is the ease and availability of communication. E-mail, voice chat, Skype, social networks like twitter and Facebook, blogs, forums, tutoring/coursework, and even webcams offers opportunities for sharing information and connecting with one another.[56]

In order to be appealing to Christian education leaders, teachers and learners, Christian publishers must keep abreast of changes in learning and educational strategies; especially those presented by technology, or at the least, investigate to determine the appropriate strategy for presenting biblical content.

**Educational Philosophy of
Christian Publishers**

According to a study conducted on various Christian publishers by Kathryn Lewis, the educational philosophy of publishers is indicated in what they determine to be the aim or goal of Bible study. It was determined that most publishers see the primary

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[56]Michael J. Motta, "Educational Benefits of the Internet," http://www.ehow.com/about_4762118_educational-benefits-internet.html (accessed July 27, 2012).

goal of their curriculum resources as life application of biblical principles. There are

many different meanings to this goal. Some publishers emphasize biblical knowledge,

while others utilize developmental teaching of Bible principles emphasizing the

development of critical thinking and moral reasoning as learners apply the Bible to real

situations in their lives.[57]

Through a search of "publishing leaders in Sunday School materials" on the

Internet, a list of publishers was identified. Based on their individual philosophies for

adult Sunday School, application continues to be important criteria. (The information was

identified from the publisher's respective Web sites on September 12, 2011.)

1. LifeWay Christian Resources provides Sunday School materials that are biblically
    sound for every stage of life. (lifeway.com)

2. David C. Cook Publishers' *Bible-In-Life* curriculum resources aims at
    communicating the gospel with life-changing clarity and motivating learners toward
    biblical and life application. (davidccook.com)

3. Group Christian Publishers produces Sunday School resources entitled *FaithWeaver*
    that encourages Christian families to talk about and apply biblical concepts as a
    family. (group.com)

4. Standard Sunday School Publishers uses biblical content, culturally relevant
    examples, and application activities to engage learners and give meaning to
    Scripture in the everyday lives of adults. (standardpub.com)

5. Randall House Publishers produces *D6* (Deuteronomy 6:5-7) curriculum resources,
    which guide families to take everyday opportunities to share biblical content with
    one another. (d6family.com)

6. Mennonite Publishing Network's primarily Sunday School publishing philosophy
    involves helping learners to be missional and live by godly standards; therefore,
    they develop Sunday School material that equip adults to share the message of Jesus
    as well as live out their Christian values. (mpn.net)

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[57]Kathryn Lewis, "The State of the Art in Evangelical Curriculum," *Christian Education Journal* 8 (1987): 10.

7. Urban Ministries, Inc. produces adult resources that provide "culturally relevant and theologically sound insights on God's Word and contemporary issues." The goal of their resources is to empower people to evangelize, disciple, and equip them to serve Christ. (urbanministries.com)

According to other Web sites of Christian publishers of adult Sunday school resources such as Christian Standard (christianstandard.com) and R.H. Boyd Publishers (rhboydpublishing.com), biblical content is a primary focus. Their goal includes developing lessons that teach the content of the Bible with limited application. Robert Pazmino refers to the goals of Christian publishers for Bible study as explicit curriculum, which means it "comprises the stated and planned events that are intended to yield certain educational consequences."[58]

Selection of Curriculum Resources

Because of the importance of curriculum resources, the selection of curriculum becomes an important task for Christian education leaders. Selection of curriculum resources is a component of usage and when done well makes using the resources easier. Christian education leaders should seek to select curriculum resources that meet goals within the curriculum plans of their Christian education ministries. However, according to Stubblefield, many Christian education leaders are not satisfied with the outcomes of curriculum resources. He points out two possible reasons. First, because of the variety of curriculum lines from denominational and independent Christian publishers, choosing the most effective resource may be a difficult task for Christian education leaders. Second, many teachers do not know how to use the curriculum resources effectively. They need

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[58]Pazmino, *Principles and Practices,* 93.

first hand information and insightful experience about how they function.[59] In selecting

curriculum, Harry Piland says Christian education leaders and teachers also need to

understand that though Christian education resources are not a substitute for the study of

the Bible, they are essential for providing a systematic plan of study, and tools for

learning and applying Bible principles in the daily lives of believers.[60] Further, in the

selection of curriculum resources, Christian education leaders should understand that as a

platform for communicating the content of Christian education, the resources should be

biblically sound as well as relevant, practically interpreted for personal application,

equipped with teaching strategies, and mechanically pleasing.[61]

**Christian Education Curriculum
Resources Usage**

According to Johnson, some Christian leaders believe curriculum resources are

not essential, citing the Bible as their only textbook. This belief can impact how resources

are used or whether they are used at all in the Christian education ministry. To reiterate,

good curriculum materials are designed to facilitate Bible teaching, not replace it.

Therefore, an understanding on how to use them may prove beneficial.[62] According to

Jeffrey Choppin, curriculum usage includes how a teacher draws on the curriculum, what

they understand about the curriculum resources, and how they connected curriculum use

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[59]Jerry M. Stubblefield, *The Effective Minister of Education: A Comprehensive Handbook.* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 169.

[60]Harry Piland, *Basic Sunday School Work,* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1980), 156.

[61]Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching,* 205-06.

[62]Lin Johnson, "Understanding and Using Curriculum," in *Christian Education Foundations for the Future,* ed. Robert E. Clark, Lin Johnson, and Allyn K. Sloat, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 495.

to their observations of the way learners think. It also includes how teachers read and follow recommendations in the suggested teaching plans.[63]

Curriculum resources guide both the content and the process of teaching the Bible.[64] This identifies the value of using curriculum resources effectively. Richards and Bredfeldt say teachers need a healthy attitude toward their curriculum resources and not merely use them as a crutch. Further, teachers should use the resources as guides to teaching suggestions and ideals for visual and other teaching materials. However, teachers should not rely on the curriculum resources for every point in the class. A slavish attachment to teaching plans may lessen creativity and freedom.[65]

Wyckoff suggests an awareness of the following elements of the curriculum to aid usage and selection of the best curriculum for an education ministry. Christian education leaders should be familiar with the context, scope, purpose, and process of curriculum resources. The *context* is defined as the appropriate content in curriculum for the setting in which it is used. *Scope* is the specific order in which curriculum should be presented, ideally to build on previous studies. *Purpose* defines that aspect of curriculum that accomplishes the same purpose as Christian education in general. *Process*, in curriculum, suggests a variety of teaching methods and provides resources that help teachers lead learners to discovering and responding to the truth of God's Word.[66]

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[63] Jeffrey Choppin, "Learned Adaptations: Teachers' Understanding and Use of Curriculum Resources," *Journal of Mathematics: Teachers' Edition* 14 (2011): 335.

[64] Roehlkepartain, *The Teaching Church,* 80.

[65] Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching,* 204-07.

[66] Wyckoff, *Theory and Design,* 190.

Terminology

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions are provided:

Adults: For the purposes of this research, adults are persons, who are 18 years old and over, which is the age of adulthood in the United States.[67] They are "increasingly a pluralistic group of men and women from ethnic backgrounds, with varying amounts of formal education and career experience. They include single and married adults, those who are divorced and remarried, homemakers as well as careerists, leaders and followers, the wealthy and the not-so-wealthy, [and are] individuals from varied lifestyles."[68]

Bible study. John W. Baigent defines Bible study as "the personal investigation of the meaning of the Bible. It is an individual grappling with the biblical text in order to understand it better."[69] He further specifies that Bible study is not the same as Bible reading or reading books about the Bible; it is not meditating on biblical content; nor is it listening to someone teach about the Bible.[70] It is strictly a personal and intentional learning of biblical content for understanding and life application.

Biblical illiteracy. This term describes the state of adults who know very little about the Bible. As a result these adults demonstrate a lack of faith and belief of central biblical truths.[71] Michael Williams contends that biblical illiteracy is destroying America. Through a historical investigation of the Bible's significance in this country,

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[67]"When A Child Becomes an Adult," http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c21961.htm (accessed April 13, 2013).

[68]Frederic M. Hudson, *The Adult Years: Mastering the Art of Self Renewal* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999), ix.

[69]John W. Baigent, "Bible Study: Methods and Means," *Christian Brethren Review*, 31,32 (1982): 123.

[70] Ibid., 123-124.

[71]Woodrow Kroll, *Taking Back the Good Book: How America Forgot the Bible and How It Matters to You* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), x.

Williams reports the reason to be the changing role of the government because of the erosion of our cultural values. The reason for this erosion is the eradication of the Bible as a source of knowledge in society, specifically in public schools.[72]

Curriculum framework. The curriculum framework specifies what is to be taught or learned for each subject in the curriculum. For example in curriculum development, frameworks may include the study theme, Scripture passage to be studied and so forth. Frameworks do not include detailed content nor are they as developed as outlines. Their purpose is to focus the content to be studied.[73]

Christian publishers. The term used to describe business professionals who are concerned with the production and dissemination of Christian products, including Bibles, church literature and book. Some also include music, audio and video recordings, church supplies.[74]

Curriculum. Broadly stated, curriculum can be defined as what should happen in an educational setting, and often takes the form of a plan, an intended program, the educational resources used, or an expert opinion about what needs to take place in a course of study.[75] For the purposes of this study, curriculum shall be defined narrowly as the resources used in the Christian education program of the church. This includes the

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[72]Michael Williams, *Silence in the Schoolhouse: How Biblical Illiteracy in Our Schools Is Destroying America* (Jefferson, OH: Wisdom4Today, 2008), x.

[73]Leroy Ford, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education: A Learning Outcomes Focus* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1991), 56.

[74]"About Us," LifeWay Christian Resources, http://wwwlifeway.com /Article/About-Us (accessed November 30, 2010).

[75]Allan A. Glattorn, Floyd Boschee, and Bruce M. Whitehead, *Curriculum Leadership: Development and Implementation* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006), 28.

Bible and those resources used in Bible study classes as the primary source of study of the Bible.

Discipleship. In the Christian context, discipleship is defined as those who follow Jesus and learn His way. Both the requirements for and the steps toward discipleship are found throughout the Bible. Discipleship is not just a matter of simple beliefs, but affects the worldview, choices, relationships, and the very lives of those who follow Jesus.[76]

Educational philosophy. Educational philosophy is the study of "the purpose, process, nature and ideals of education. This can be within the context of education as a societal institution or more broadly as the process of human existential growth, i.e. how our understanding of the world is continually transformed via physical, emotional, cognitive and transcendental experiences." [77] In this study this term reflects the goals of Christian publishers. It provides answers to questions like what the curriculum resources are and what are its purposes. Educational philosophy helps:

1. In becoming acquainted with the basic problems of education
2. To evaluate better the wide variety of suggestions offered as solutions to these problems
3. In clarifying thinking about the goals of life and education
4. In the development of an internally consistent point of view and program that relates realistically to the larger world context.[78]

Educational philosophy also defines the results of studying curriculum resources.

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[76]James Reapsome and Martha Reapsome, *Discipleship: The Growing Christian's Lifestyle* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 2002), 3.

[77]"Educational Philosophy," Dictionary.com Encyclopedia, http://www.dictionary.com (accessed June 4, 2010).

[78]George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 5.

Great Commission. The Great Commission, found in Matthew 28:18-20, is a mandate issued by Jesus, who sent His disciples into the world, to teach and make disciples. This Scripture passage has shaped the evangelical movement more than any other passage of Scripture. The Great Commission has played a huge role in the numerical, cultural, and geographical spread of the Christian faith.[79]

Nominal Christianity. This term is used to describe a reorientation from a religious commitment of Christian teaching. It is a direct result of a rift between the sacred and the secular, which calls the supernatural into question, tempting the individual to abandon the commitment to a personal God, many times, in favor of a more concrete ideology or material object.[80]

Secular education. "Secular" is defined as belonging to the world or the age in which we live. Secular education, then, refers to a system of public education for equipping individuals to function within the culture in which they live. The goals of curriculum in American secular schools include cognitive development, cultural transmission, citizenship education, social membership, and material competency. For some, it is viewed as a boundary line, opposing it on moral grounds and arguing that it hinders the development of socially-dictated character, generally based on a set of religious virtues.[81]

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[79]Martin I. Klauber and Scott M. Manetsch, *The Great Commission: Evangelicals and the History of the World Missions* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing Group, 2008), 1.

[80]David J. Hesselgrave and Eward Rommen, *Contextualization: Meanings, Methods, and Models* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2000), 246.

[81]Richard C. McMillan, *Religion in the Public Schools: An Introduction* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1984), 211.

Spiritual formation. Spiritual formation is a process that begins at birth and results in the development of the human spirit, giving it definite form or character. This is without regard to any specifically religious context or tradition.[82]

Teaching and learning. This phrase describes the function of developing, establishing and imparting knowledge, giving instruction and undertaking the learning process for the benefit of learners. Teaching and learning are different in Christian education. The teacher must not only dispense vast amounts of knowledge but must help learners grow in their relationships, morals, theology, and service.[83] Teaching, however, serves no purpose if learning does take place. In Christian education, learning includes the development of the mind as well as the heart for empowerment to live out Christian truths in daily lives.[84]

Research Hypothesis

Christian education methodology relates positively with Christian leadership that has time and resources to substantiate Bible study curriculum resources that lead to spiritual transformation.

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[82]Dallas Williard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002), 7.

[83]Kenneth O. Gangel and Howard G. Hendricks, eds., *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1988), 68.

[84]LeBar, *Education,* 170.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The goal of this research was to validate a relationship between time and Bible study resources in the lesson preparation process with Christian education curriculum resources. This study will be invaluable to Christian education ministries within evangelical churches as evidence that establishes a relationship between teaching and learning and specific preparatory activity. With this information in hand, ministry leaders can more easily provide instruction and direction on what impacts the spiritual growth of Bible study learners.

This chapter presents a detailed description of the methodological design and the processes used to determine the relationship between preparatory time and use of Bible study resources with Christian education curriculum resources for the spiritual transformation of learners.

Research Question Synopsis

There will be a significant difference in spiritual transformation if Christian education leaders, including teachers, use preparatory time and Bible study resources to substantiate Christian education resources that lead to spiritual transformation.

As a result of this study, the following question guided this research: How does time and Christian education Bible study resources relate to the use of Christian education curriculum resources for spiritual transformation?

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Design Overview

The research design for this study was a relationship model, which explored the relationship between preparation time and resources used in preparation to teach Bible study with Christian education curriculum resources that lead to spiritual transformation. Data was gathered through the administration of a survey to Sunday school class members at an evangelical church before and after the logging of preparatory activity by Sunday school teachers for a specific number of weeks.

Following the completion of the specified period, data was analyzed for a relationship between the preparatory time and Bible study resources with the teaching and learning of Christian education curriculum resources.

Population

The population for this study consisted of the adult membership, ages 18 and over, at Highpoint Baptist Church in Eight Mile, Alabama, which utilize *Life Words* curriculum resources in their Sunday school classes. Highpoint Baptist Church is an African-American Southern Baptist Church with a membership of approximately 700 in worship and 200 in Sunday school. This particular church was chosen because of its use of one curriculum resource in five out of ten adult Sunday school classes and because of the number of adults registered for the classes.

Sample

The researcher drew the sample through purposive sampling from adult Sunday school classes within the church that utilized the *Life Words* Sunday school curriculum resource and had at least twelve members on the roll. Five of the classes met

these criteria. The researcher provided one hundred Shepherd Scale Surveys (Appendix 1) and five Teacher Log Sheets (Appendix 2) so that each class received twenty Shepherd Scale Surveys and one Teacher Log Sheets.

The Sunday school classes were identified as Groups A – E and had the following breakdown in membership:

1. Group A had 35 on the membership roll.

2. Group B had 30 on the membership roll.

3. Group C had 27 on the membership roll.

4. Group D had 22 on the membership roll.

5. Group E had 29 on the membership roll.

Though a specific number were identified on the roll, because of irregular attendance, the researcher was advised to send only twenty surveys per class.

Life Words Sunday School Curriculum Resources

In order to narrow the focus, this researcher collected data from Sunday school classes that utilized *Life Words* curriculum resources. *Life Words* is a member of one of the adult Sunday school curriculum lines produced by LifeWay Christian Resources called *Bible Studies for Life* (BSFL). The foci of the BSFL resources are life-stage Bible studies based on a comprehensive learning model. The goal of BSFL resources is disciple-making spiritual transformation, which LifeWay curriculum defines as "God's work of changing a believer into the likeness of Jesus by creating a new identity in Christ and by empowering a lifelong relationship of love, trust, and obedience to glorify God."[1]

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[1]"Sunday School Curriculum Guide," LifeWay Christian Resources, http://www.lifeway.com/curriculumguide (accessed April 11, 2011).

Life Words is based on the King James Version of the Bible. It was chosen for this study because is developed cognitively for all adults, ages 18-years-old and up, which means that the relevancy and application of biblical truths and principles will apply broadly to the adult audience.

Delimitations

The researcher delimited the sample to include only adult individuals eighteen years of age or older who were participating in a weekly Sunday school class at Highpoint Baptist Church. The rationale underlying the sample delimitations were as follows:

1. The researcher delimited the sample to include only classes with adult learners participating in a weekly scheduled Sunday school class based on the assumption the teachers and members in the class possessed an interest in Christian maturity and therefore, would provide the most useful data for this research.

2. The researcher delimited the sample to exclude younger adults under eighteen years old to reduce the possibility of intra-sample differences based on cognitive development.

3. The researcher delimited the sample to include only classes that used *Life Words* as their Sunday school curriculum resources.

4. The researcher delimited the study to the sample participants and did not address the curriculum resource design.

5. The researcher delimited the sample to collect data from only those teachers who taught *Life Words* curriculum resources.

Limitations of Generalization

Though the findings from this study offered important information, related to teaching and learning in the use of Christian education resources, there are some limitations to the study. Because of the small size of the sample and population, the data

from the samples may not necessarily generalize to all evangelical Christian adults in the United States.

Instrumentation

The researcher utilized two research instruments in this study. Both the Shepherd Scale and a Teacher Log Sheet were used to gather data for this research.

The Shepherd Scale

The instrument utilized to assess the level of Christian maturity was the Shepherd Scale, which was developed in 1981 to differentiate Christians from non-Christians. The design of the instrument is based on the assumption that there is "an observable and measurable life pattern which is distinctly Christian." The Shepherd Scale is designed to measure obedience to biblical principles, which are categorized into two groups, belief, which reflect the basic theme of faith and Christian walk, which represent a mixture of behaviors, values, and attitudes.[2] Further testing on the validity of the Shepherd Scale has deemed it "worthy of consideration in studies addressing Christianity."[3]

The Shepherd Scale is presented in a four-point Likert response scale format, consisting of thirty-eight items with potential responses of "not true," "generally not true," "generally true," or "true." For this study, the researcher assigned a one to four scale for each item, with the answers defined as follows: 1=not true, 2=generally not true,

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[2]Rodney L. Basset et al., "The Shepherd Scale: Separating the Sheep from the Goats," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 9 (1981): 336.

[3]Julia A. Pecnik and Douglas L. Epperson, "A Factor Analysis and Further Validation of the Shepherd Scale," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 13 (1985): 42.

3=generally true, and 4=true. Each item is phrased in the first person with potential scores on the Shepherd Scale ranging from 38 to 152.

Shepherd Scale original reliability. The developers of the Shepherd Scale administered the instrument twice and two weeks apart to introductory psychology students from a Christian college. There were 67 in the first group and 36 in the second group. The developers reported a split-half reliability coefficient of 0.82 with the Cronbach alph coefficient as 0.86. The test-retest reliability coefficient was reported as 0.82. The mean score was 136.00 and had a standard deviation of 8.70. In a second experiment, the developers used the Shepherd Scale to survey 15 individuals, who identified themselves as non-Christian. They found that the Christians scored significantly higher on the Shepherd Scale then the non-Christians ($t[28] = 6.29$, $p<.001$).

Table 4. Correlations among three
measures of Christianity

1. Shepherd Scale	1.00	0.65(59)	0.41(55)
2. King & Hunt		1.00	0.44(58)
3. Dimensions of Religious Commitment			1.00
The values in parentheses represent the number of participants for each analysis.			

Correlations with other instruments that measured Christianity were also reported by the developers. The King and Hunt instrument, which was developed in 1975 and the Dimensions of Religious Commitment instrument, which was developed in 1965 were already established as reliable. The Shepherd Scale correlated significantly with

both, especially with the King and Hunt instrument. Table 4 shows the correlations that

were reported as 0.65 (n = 59) and 0.41 (n = 55), respectively as well as other figures.[4]

The Teacher Log Sheet

The Teacher Log Sheet (see Figure 1) was a form developed by this researcher

so that teachers of the test classes could record information about their preparatory time

and resource usage. For time in preparation, the form presented four options: 4 hours or

more; 3 hours; 2 hours; or 1 hour or less. For preparatory resources, there were six

options: Member Book (indicating the teacher used the member in preparation); Teacher

Book; Study Bible; Commentary; Online Resources; and other. The form provided 13

sections of these options so that each teacher could record their activity once a week over

a 13-week period. Each section was delineated by the Sunday calendar date.

Because the Teacher Log Sheet collected concrete data and did not collect

opinions, a reliability or validity test was not necessary. For purposes of analyzing the

data, the hours and resources were presented in a four-point Likert response scale format.

The hours were 4 for 4 hour or more hours, 3 for 3 hours, 2 for 2 hours, and 1 for 1 hour

or less. The resources were simply tallied by the number used. If one resource was used

by the teacher, then 1 was the score, if two, then 2, if three, then 3, and if four, then 4. No

teacher used more than 4 resources per week in preparation.

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[4]Basset et al., "The Shepherd Scale," 344.

Lesson	Preparation Time (Choose one)	Resources Used (Choose all that apply)
November 4	❏ 4 hours or more ❏ 3 hours ❏ 2 hours ❏ 1 hour or less	❏ Member Book ❏ Teacher Book ❏ Study Bible ❏ Commentary ❏ Online Resources ❏ Other _____

Figure 1. Teacher Log Sheet sample

To further enhance understanding of this process, the specific elements of the Teacher Log Sheet are defined.

Preparation time. In the context of this research, preparation time is that period before a Sunday school lesson is taught. Because of the nature of Bible study, which utilizes a first century book that was translated from the Hebrew and Greek languages as its textbook (the Bible), time to prepare is essential for effective teaching. Since most Sunday school classes meet on a weekly basis, the maximum preparation time ranges from Sunday to Sunday or one week. Many Christian publishing companies provide resources such as teaching plans and other teaching aids to assist preparation. LifeWay Christian Resources provides an optional plan for teachers to follow, which include seven steps in preparation for teaching a Sunday school lesson. The steps are:

Day 1 (Sunday): Evaluate and Record. Write down insights that were gained about members and their needs, actions to take, and general teaching observation.

Day 2 (Monday): Read the Bible Passages. Read the verses to be studied to identify key words, people, places, and actions.

Day 3 (Tuesday) Study the Bible Passages: Define key words, people, and places and list potential points of application from the Scripture verses for the lesson.

Day 4 (Wednesday) Identify a Goal: Determine a central theme for the lesson and what is hoped will happen in the lives of the learners as a result of the study.

Day 5 (Thursday) Develop a Session Plan: Outline steps to introduce the lesson (why study it), examine the Bible content, and move people to apply the biblical truths to their lives. The plan should be based on the goal from Day 4.

Day 6 (Friday) Gather, Review, and Refine Your Lesson. Gather the items you need to teach the lesson and continue to review.

Day 7 (Sunday) Teach Your Lesson. Follow your plan, adjusting as you go.[5]

Christian Education resources. *Member book* is the resource developed for learners or members of Sunday school classes. In the member book, most Christian curriculum developers underscore and strengthen the relevancy of biblical content to ensure that learners can identify with first century Bible narratives. Biblical culture during that time was very different from today's culture. Of course, technology had not been developed so there were no televisions, microwaves, or cell phones and the primary mode of transportation was by foot, camel, or mule. Because of these and other differences, curriculum developers must develop content that identifies with the members and leads to a significant and rewarding learning experience.

Teacher book is the resource developed for teachers of Sunday school classes. Most teacher books provide suggestions for leading the Sunday morning lesson, study aids, such as commentary, the Scripture text, the goal of the lesson, maps and charts, as

well as application content and other study or teaching extras. Christian publishers will either provide suggestions for the various components of the teaching plan so that the teacher can select and organize a personalized lesson or one suggestion for a teaching plan, which will be in a step-by-step format.

Study Bible is a Bible that provides biblical text as well as other extras such as notes, exegetical content, references, and articles. It is developed for a more in depth examination of the Scriptures.

Commentary is a resource that aid in the study of Scripture by providing interpretation and explanation of the biblical text. A commentary also provides an understanding of background information about the biblical text such as dates, the occasion for the writing, setting, purpose, history, authorship, and other information.

Online Resources provide Bible study aids in electronic form. Many commentaries, study Bibles as well as lexicons, Bible dictionaries, and Bible study notes and articles are available on such Web sites as biblestudytools.com and mystudybible.com.

Procedures

The method of research in this study utilized a *t* test for dependent means to compare the scores between the pretest and the posttest of each group and the Pearson's *r* to determine a relationship between preparatory time and Bible study resources with curriculum resources. This test will allow the researcher to determine the extent of the relationship between preparatory time and use of Bible study resources with curriculum resources.

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[5]David Briscoe, ed., "Preparing to Lead a Group Bible Study Experience: A Timeline," in

Preliminary Steps to Collection of Data

Before data was collected, several steps were implemented to secure support in

the data collection process. The steps are as follows:

1. Phone call was made to Biola University's Journal of Psychology & Theology office, which are the copyright owners of the Shepherd Scale Survey. The researcher spoke with office assistant, Alice Mwangi, who asked that the request be made by e-mail and sent to her.

2. An e-mail, requesting permission to use the Shepherd Scale Survey was sent to Alice Mwangi, who forwarded the e-mail to the editor of the "Journal of Psychology and Theology," Dr. Todd W. Hall. Dr. Hall granted permission.

3.   The researcher called LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, Tennessee requesting a list of churches that used *LifeWords* Sunday school curriculum in their Sunday school classes. For ethical reasons, LifeWay could not provide the list; however, upon my request, a LifeWay church consultant provided a list of three churches from his contact list.

4. The researcher contacted each pastor of the three churches explaining the nature of the research, but only one expressed interest. Therefore, permission was granted from the pastor of Highpoint Baptist Church in Eight Mile, Alabama, Rev. Charlie York to conduct the research at his church.

5. Rev. York placed the researcher in contact with the church's Sunday school director, Mrs. Geraldine Turner, who was asked to assist the researcher. Mrs. Turner accepted the responsibility and was given the title of research assistant by the researcher.

6. Mrs. Turner was mailed a package that contained a letter with instructions that related to her assistance (Appendix 3) and an Assistant Researcher Information Sheet (Appendix 4), which provided more information and disclaimers for the assistant researcher.

Collection of Data

The researcher sent 100 Shepherd Scale Surveys and 5 Teacher Log Sheets in a

package to the research assistant. The research assistant administered the Shepherd Scale

Surveys on the first Sunday at the beginning of a 13-week period to Sunday school

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Explore the Bible Leader Guide (Nashville: LifeWay Press, Spring 2012), 8-9.

members in each of five adult *Life Words* Sunday school classes to determine their

spiritual maturity level.

      The assistant researcher provided each teacher of the *Life Words* Sunday

school classes whose members completed a Shepherd Scale Survey with a Teacher Log

Sheet with instructions to indicate preparatory time and Bible study resources. The

teachers were instructed to log in this information on a weekly basis over a period of

thirteen weeks (one quarter). Of those 13 weeks, only 9 weeks were instructional weeks.

For four of the weeks, the classes meet in general session for a master class. Therefore,

the teachers did not record any preparatory activity for those weeks.

      One month before the 13-week period ended, the researcher mailed the

research assistant a second set of Shepherd Scale Surveys to administer to members of

the same Sunday school classes. The purpose of the retesting was to determine whether

spiritual growth occurred as a result of the teachers' time in preparation and use of Bible

study resources with the Christian education curriculum resources (*LifeWords*).

      From the 40 Shepherd Scale Surveys for Group A, the assistant researcher

returned 13 from the pretest and 11 from the posttest for a total of 24. However, one

survey did not respond to five questions in the pretest, so it was dropped. Therefore, the

number for the pretest was 12. The Teacher Log Sheet for Group A was returned.

      From the 40 Shepherd Scale Surveys for Group B, the assistant researcher

returned 14 from the pretest and 15 from the posttest for a total of 29. The Teacher Log

Sheet for Group B was returned.

From the 40 Shepherd Scale Surveys for Group C, the assistant researcher returned 8 from the pretest and 10 from the posttest for a total of 18. The Teacher Log Sheet for Group C was returned.

From the 40 Shepherd Scale Surveys for Group D, the assistant researcher returned 14 from the pretest and 13 from the posttest for a total of 28. The Teacher Log Sheet for Group D was returned.

The Teacher Log Sheet for the teacher for Group E was not returned; therefore, Group E was not included in this research.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to analyze a possible relationship between preparatory times as well as the use of Bible study resources with teaching, using Christian education curriculum resources for spiritual transformation. The precedent literature of this study validates that the goal of Christian education is spiritual transformation. This requires the planning and implementation of an educational program, which include well-developed Christian education curriculum resources. However, statistics confirm that a significant number of Christians are not spiritually impacted. The data in this research seek to show that preparatory time and Bible study resources are catalysts that impact teaching that utilizes Christian education curriculum resources and lead to spiritual transformation.

Compilation Protocols

The data in this study was compiled through the use of two instruments, which were a Shepherd Scale Survey and a Teacher Log Sheet. The sample for this study consisted of four adult classes in one church that used the same adult Christian education curriculum resource in their Sunday school classes. Demographic data are limited because this information was not relevant to this study. The demographic data offered is used for identification purposes and was gathered by a personal interview with the Sunday school director, who served as the assistant researcher for this study.

The instruments were used to gather two types of data: the Shepherd Scale Survey gathered Christian values and behavioral attitudes (from learners in each of four Sunday school classes) and the Teacher Log Sheet gathered time and Bibles study resource factors (from teachers, who taught those classes). The factors were submitted in hours for time and type for Bible study resources, which were converted to points, one point per resource. Learners were instructed to complete the survey twice, at the beginning and end of a 13-week period of which 9 of those weeks were used in this study because they were instructional weeks. For the other four weeks, the church used a master class format when all adult classes were combined in a general session. Teachers were instructed to log preparatory information for the instructional weeks.

Choice and Usage of Statistical Tools

The measurement of spiritual transformation is based on behavioral and attitudinal characteristics, which were studied using a pretest-posttest design. The basis for the posttest was to identify gains in spiritual maturity levels. Preparatory time and the number of Bible study resources were logged as possible catalysts. For the purposes of this study two statistical tools were utilized. The first was descriptive statistics, which was used to summarize the general nature of the data for descriptive purposes. The mean, median, standard deviation, and skewness in this study utilized descriptive statistics.

The second statistical tool was inferential statistics, which was used to help this researcher make a decision about the data. Based on the research design, the sample size, and the type of data collected the *t* test for dependent means was used to test the research hypothesis and infer a decision about the data. The *t* test assesses whether the means of two groups are statically differently from each other and is appropriate when a

comparison of the means of two groups is necessary. This study required the use of the *t* test for dependent means, which is used when two groups of observations are based on the same sample of subjects who were tested *twice* (e.g., before and after a treatment).

To determine whether a relationship existed between the means of Groups A, B, C, D and the means of the amount of time as well as the means of the number of Bible study resources, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson's *r*) was utilized. The Pearson's *r* examines the relationship between two variables that are continuous in nature such as the variables in this research project. Time, Bible study resources, and the scores on the surveys can assume any value along an underlying continuum.

Findings from the Study

The data in this study was collected from the same group under two different conditions, which was data from a pretest without a catalyst identified and a posttest with the identification of the catalysts, preparatory time and the use of Bible study resources during preparation. The relationship between those scores is one of the focuses of this study to determine whether growth occurred. The study also focused on the relationship between the means of the groups and time and the relationship between the means of the groups and Bible study resources.

Testing of the Hypothesis

The researcher postulates that the scores of the posttest for each group will increase because spiritual growth will take place as a result of preparatory time and the use of Bible study resources, proving that a relationship exists between these variables.

Because the same group was tested, a *t* test for dependent means was used to compare the scores for each group and the Pearson's *r* was used to determine the relationship between the scores and time as well as Bible study resources. The hypothesis of this study, stated in null form was there is no difference between the means for the pretest and the posttest scores on spiritual growth; therefore, there is no relationship between preparatory time and Bible study resources with curriculum resources. The level of risk associated with the null hypothesis was set by the researcher at .05. This means that the probability will be less or more than 5% on any one test of the null hypothesis that the average posttest scores is greater than the average of pretest scores due to chance alone, depending on the results of the test.

Group A Descriptive Statistics

Group A consisted of 35 adult members, who were 30-60 years old. As Table 5 indicates, only 12 members participated in the pretest and 11 in the posttest. This was due to absenteeism. The mean, median, and standard deviation for Group A on the pretest and posttest instrument are also presented in Table 5. The highest score made on the pretest surveys was 148 and the lowest score was 131. While the highest score on the posttest was 152 and the lowest score was 142. Also, the sum of the scores for the pretest was 1,707 and the sum of the scores for the posttest was 1,604. However, when one of the scores from the pretest was randomly dropped so that the comparison of learner numbers was the same, the sum of scores was 1,561.

Table 5. Group A stats

	N	Mean	Median	Std. dev.	High score	Low score	Sum of scores
Pretest	12	142.5	144	5.5	148	131	1,707
Posttest	11	145.8	144	3.5	152	142	1,604

The distribution of the pretest scores is negatively skewed at -1.5. Most of the scores were toward the high end; therefore, the bell-shaped curve is skewed to the right. The skewness of the posttest scores is positive at 1.8, which skewed the bell-shaped curve to the left, meaning that most of the scores were low. Table 6 demonstrates the frequency distribution of those scores, which supports the skewness.

Table 6. Group A frequency distribution

Pretest		Posttest	
Class Interval	*Frequency*	*Class Interval*	*Frequency*
150 – 153	0	150 – 153	2
146 – 149	5	146 – 149	3
142 – 145	3	142 – 145	5
139 – 142	2	139 – 142	1
135 – 138	0	135 – 138	0
131 – 134	2	131 – 134	0

This study also collected the preparatory time and resources for the teachers of each group, the means and standard deviation of the data for Group A follows. Table 7 shows that Group A teacher spent an average of 3.7 hours in study each week and used an average of 3.2 resources.

Table 7. Group A teacher
mean and standard deviation

	Mean	*Std. dev.*
Teacher A Time	3.7	.7
Teacher A Resources	3.2	.6

Group A Findings

Using the *t* test, the researcher tested the scores around the means for Group A. The test revealed that the degree of association between the scores for the pretest and the posttest of the learners was negligible ($t_{(11)}$ = -2.05, p>.05). A critical value of 1.813, which was obtained from a table of critical values (Appendix 5) was compared with the obtained score of -2.05 and found that the obtained score does not exceed the critical value. Therefore, the probability is greater than 5% on any one test of the null hypothesis that the average of the posttest scores will be greater than the average of the pretest scores due to chance alone. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there would be no difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest was retained. Even though there was an increase of the scores in the posttest, the increase was just a matter of chance.

Group B Descriptive Statistics

Group B consisted of 30 adult members, who were 35-70 years old. As Table 8 indicates, only 14 members participated in the pretest and 15 in the posttest. This was due once again to absenteeism. The mean, median, and standard deviation for Group B on the pretest and posttest instrument are also presented in Table 8. The highest score made on

the pretest surveys was 149 and the lowest score was 126. While the highest score on the posttest was 152 and the lowest score was 128. Also, the sum of the scores for the pretest was 2,002 and the sum of the scores for the posttest was 2,178. However, when one of the scores from the posttest was randomly dropped so that the comparison of learner numbers was the same, the sum of scores for the posttest was 1,561, making the posttest sum higher.

Table 8. Group B stats

	N	Mean	Median	Std. dev.	High score	Low score	Sum of scores
Pretest	14	143	144	5.9	149	126	2,002
Posttest	15	145.2	147	6.9	152	128	2,029

The distribution of both the pretest and posttest scores of Group B is negatively skewed with the pretest at -1 and the posttest at -1.8. Therefore, most of the scores were toward the high end and the bell-shaped curve is skewed to the right. Table 9 demonstrates the distribution of Group B scores through the frequency of scores, which supports the skewness.

Table 9. Group B frequency distribution

Pretest		Posttest	
Class Interval	*Frequency*	*Class Interval*	*Frequency*
150 – 152	0	150 – 152	3
147 – 149	5	147 – 149	5
144 – 146	4	144 – 146	3
141 – 143	2	141 – 143	1
138 – 140	1	138 – 140	0
135 – 137	1	135 – 137	1
132 – 134	0	132 – 134	1
129 – 131	0	129 – 131	0
126 – 128	1	126 – 128	1

The means and standard deviation of the data for Group B teacher follows in Table 10. Group B teacher spent an average of 2.3 hours in study each week and used an average of 1.2 resources.

Table 10. Group B teacher
mean and standard deviation

	Mean	*Std. dev.*
Teacher B Time	2.3	1.2
Teacher B Resources	2.8	1.2

Group B Findings

Using the *t* test, the researcher tested the scores around the means for Group B. The test revealed that the degree of association between the scores for the pretest and the

posttest of the learners was negligible ($t_{(13)}$ = -.75, p>.05). A critical value of 1.771, which was obtained from a table of critical values was compared with the obtained score of -.75 and found that the obtained score does not exceed the critical value. Therefore, the probability is greater than 5% on any one test of the null hypothesis that the average of the posttest scores will be greater than the average of the pretest scores due to chance alone. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there would be no difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest of Group B was retained. Even though there was an increase of the scores in the posttest, the increase was just a matter of chance.

Group C Descriptive Statistics

Group C consisted of 27 adult members, who were 27-70 years old. As Table 11 indicates, only 8 members participated in the pretest and 10 in the posttest. This was due once again to absenteeism. The mean, median, and standard deviation for Group C on the pretest and posttest instrument are also presented in Table 11. The highest score made on the pretest surveys was 152 and the lowest score was 114. While the highest score on the posttest was 152 and the lowest score was 122. This group had a significant spread between scores with a difference of 30 or more. This indicated different levels of spiritual growth among the members. The sum of the scores for the pretest was 1,098 and the sum of the scores for the posttest was 1,426. However, when two of the scores from the posttest were randomly dropped so that the comparison of learner numbers was the same, the sum of scores for the posttest was 1,138.

Table 11. Group C stats

	N	Mean	Median	Std. dev.	High score	Low score	Sum of scores
Pretest	8	137.3	139.5	10.9	152	114	1,098
Posttest	10	142.6	146.5	10.4	152	122	1,426

For Group C, the distribution of both the pretest and posttest scores is negatively skewed with the pretest at -2.2 and the posttest at -3.9. Therefore, most of the scores were toward the high end and the bell-shaped curve is skewed to the right. Table 12 demonstrates the distribution of Group C scores through the frequency of scores, which supports the skewness.

Table 12. Group C frequency distribution

Pretest		Posttest	
Class Interval	*Frequency*	*Class Interval*	*Frequency*
149 – 153	1	149 – 153	4
144 – 148	0	144 – 148	2
139 – 143	4	139 – 143	0
134 – 138	1	134 – 138	2
129 – 133	1	129 – 133	1
124 – 128	0	124 – 128	0
119 – 123	0	119 – 123	1
114 – 118	1	114 – 118	0

The means and standard deviation of the data for Group C teacher follows in Table 13. Group C teacher spent an average of 2.6 hours in study each week and used an average of 3 resources.

Table 13. Teacher for Group C
mean and standard deviation

	Mean score	*Std. dev.*
Teacher C Time	2.6	1.1
Teacher C Resources	3.0	.8

Group C Findings

Using the *t* test, the researcher tested the scores around the means for Group C. The test revealed that the degree of association between the scores for the pretest and the posttest of the learners was negligible ($t_{(7)}$ = -.09, p>.05). A critical value of 1.895, which was obtained from a table of critical values was compared with the obtained score of -.09 and found that the obtained score does not exceed the critical value. Therefore, the probability is greater than 5% on any one test of the null hypothesis that the average of the posttest scores will be greater than the average of the pretest scores due to chance alone. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there would be no difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest of Group C was retained. Even though there was an increase of the scores in the posttest, the increase was just a matter of chance.

Group D Descriptive Statistics

Group D consisted of 22 adult members, who were 30-60 years old. As Table 14 indicates, only 14 members participated in the pretest and 13 in the posttest. This was due once again to absenteeism. The mean, median, and standard deviation for Group D on the pretest and posttest instrument are also presented in Table 14. The highest score

made on the pretest surveys was 152 and the lowest score was 121. While the highest

score on the posttest was 152 and the lowest score was 130. In Group D pretest, this class

had a difference in the scores of 30 or more, which indicated an extensive difference in

the level of spiritual growth among the members but that gap closed by 10 in the posttest.

The sum of the scores for the pretest was 1,965 and the sum of the scores for the posttest

was 1,840. However, when one of the scores from the pretest was randomly dropped so

that the comparison of learners was the same, the sum of scores for the pretest was 1,819.

Table 14. Group D stats

	N	Mean	Median	Std. dev.	High score	Low score	Sum of scores
Pretest	14	140.4	142	9.7	152	121	1,965
Posttest	13	141.5	139	8.2	152	130	1,840

For Group D, the distribution of the pretest scores is negatively skewed at -1.4.

Most of the scores were toward the high end; therefore, the bell-shaped curve is skewed

to the right. The skewness of the posttest scores is positive at 2.5, which skewed the bell-

shaped curve to the left, meaning that most of the scores were low. Table 15 further

demonstrates the frequency distribution of those scores, which supports the skewness.

Table 15. Group D frequency distribution

Pretest		Posttest	
Class Interval	*Frequency*	*Class Interval*	*Frequency*
151 – 155	3	151 – 155	3
146 – 150	3	146 – 150	2
141 – 145	1	141 – 145	1
136 – 140	3	136 – 140	4
131 – 135	1	131 – 135	2
126 – 130	2	126 – 130	1
121 – 125	1	121 – 125	0

The means and standard deviation of the data for Group D teacher follows in Table 16. Group D teacher spent an average of 2 hours in study each week and used an average of 3.1 resources.

Table 16. Teacher for Group D
mean and standard deviation

	Mean score	*Std. dev.*
Teacher D Time	2	0
Teacher D Resources	3.1	.3

Group D Findings

Using the *t* test, the researcher tested the scores around the means for Group D. The test revealed that the degree of association between the scores for the pretest and the posttest of the learners was negligible ($t_{(12)}$ = -.59, p>.05). A critical value of 1.783,

which was obtained from a table of critical values was compared with the obtained score of -.59 and found that the obtained score does not exceed the critical value. Therefore, the probability is greater than 5% on any one test of the null hypothesis that the average of the posttest scores will be greater than the average of the pretest scores due to chance alone. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there would be no difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest of Group D was retained. Even though there was an increase of the scores in the posttest, the increase was just a matter of chance.

Relationship of Test Scores with Time and Bible Study Resources

The means of group scores, time, and study resources is shown in Table 17. The pretest and posttest of each group reveals growth. Note that Table 18 shows an increase of the scores between the pretest and the posttest even though the increase is not very significant. Group C had the largest increase of 5.3 and Group D had an increase of only 1.1. The means of the time used by teachers to prepare lessons ranged from 3.7 hours to 2.0 hours while the number of resources used ranged from 3.2 to 2.0.

Table 17. Mean Scores of Groups, Time, and Study Resources

	Pretest	Posttest	Time in hours	Study Resources
Group A	142.5	145.8	3.7	3.2
Group B	143.0	145.2	2.3	2.8
Group C	137.3	142.6	2.6	2.0
Group D	140.4	141.5	2.0	3.1

Table 18. Mean Differences of Pretest and Posttest

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
3.3	2.2	5.3	1.1

Relationship Findings

The researcher used the Pearson's *r* to determine the quality of relationship between the means of the pretest scores with time. The Pearson's *r* value was obtained using excel software. The obtained value of .252 revealed a positive association, which indicates that as the amount of preparatory time increased, the pretest scores increased. Using the level of risk for this test as .05 and a one-tailed test, the critical value is .900. The results are that the obtained value (.252) did not exceed the critical value of .900 ($r_{(2)}$ = .252, p>.05); therefore, the probability is greater than 5% on any one test that the relationship between the average pretest scores and time is due to chance alone. This means there is no relationship between the pretest scores and time.

This same test was run to determine a relationship between the posttest and time, the pretest and Bible study resources, and the posttest and Bible study resources. See Table 19 for the results for all. The values for the relationship between the pretest and time are also included in the table.

Table 19. Relationship Between the Mean Scores

	Level of Risk	Obtained Value	Critical Value	Results
Pretest and Time	.05	.252	.900	$r_{(2)} = .252$, p>.05
Posttest and Time	.05	.692	.900	$r_{(2)} = .692$, p>.05
Pretest and Resources	.05	-.105	.900	$r_{(2)} = -.105$, p>.05
Posttest and Resources	.05	-.102	.900	$r_{(2)} = -.102$, p>.05

The results for all of the tests for significance were the same as described for the above test for a relationship between the pretest and time. Note in Table 19 that the obtained values from the test for a relationship between both the pretest and posttest and resources resulted in a negative correlation. This means the scores from the tests increased as the amount of time and number of resources decreased. Further, the obtained value for each test did not exceed the critical of .900; therefore, the probability is greater than 5% on any one test that the relationship between the average pretest and posttest scores with time and Bible study resources is due to chance alone. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no relationship between the scores of the pretest and posttest and preparatory time and use of Bible study resources.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter contains an interpretation of the findings in the analysis of data, the ministry implications for Christian education leadership, and a response to the research question. Additionally, theological reflections in light of the precedent literature are examined. Finally, recommendations for practice and study in the area of Christian education that leads to spiritual transformation are provided.

Analysis of Results

The intention of this study was to provide empirical support for spiritual transformation that resulted from the teaching of Christian education curriculum resources that had been enhanced by preparation time and using additional Bible study resources. The researcher established a hypothesis that stated Christian education methodology related positively with Christian leadership that has time and resources to substantiate Bible study curriculum resources that lead to spiritual transformation. The data, however, did not provide significant results to support the established hypothesis of this study. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

Several possible reasons exist for retaining of the null hypothesis in this study. First, the teachers may not have been trained and equipped to teach effectively. The precedent literature identified the elements of effective teaching and the importance of training teachers in Christian education. This study tested the impact of the prepared

nature of teaching but in addition to being prepared to teach the lesson, teachers also need to understand how to teach biblical content so that members can value what they learn and apply it to their lives. This is effective teaching. As also revealed in the precedent literature, gaining knowledge is only part of the process of spiritual growth. Rick Yount says it is one third of the process. The other two thirds consist of understanding biblical concepts so that biblical truths are valued and so that they are applied to life. Christian teachers should place a balanced emphasis on learners knowing, valuing, and applying biblical truths for change to occur. Imbalanced teaching has the potential to result in Bible study that is cold, academic dogmatism because the teaching is primarily informational, or Bible study will be a means to an emotional end because the teaching is eisegetical fluff, rather than exegesis, or Bible study will induce burn out because the emphasis is on doing.[1]

Another possibility for retaining the null is a lack of personal practice of spiritual disciplines. Research has determined that one of the reasons people don't grow spiritually is because they are too busy. Learners must take responsibility for their own spiritual growth. When Jesus returns we will be changed and be like him (1 John 3:2), but until he comes back he intents for Christians to grow in Christlikeness. Christians are not to just wait for change to happen, but pursue it. The biblical writer says Christians should "make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Heb 12:14, NIV).

The spiritual disciplines include an intake of the Word through Bible reading and study and listening to the preached Word as well as prayer, fasting, meditation,

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[1]William R. Yount, *Created to Learn: A Christian Teacher's Introduction to Educational Philosophy* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1996), 14-16.

journaling, and learning. Though there are others, these are the basic disciplines for personal growth. However, the fast-pace of today's culture does not allow time for these disciplines to be incorporated into the busy lives of Christians.

The null hypothesis may have been retained for yet another reason. Teachers may be well prepared, effectively trained, and practice spiritual disciplines, however, individually and collectively, these elements are still not sufficient for spiritual transformation. In this study, spiritual transformation has been defined as a process by which God forms Christ's character in Christians and involves the transformation of the whole person in thoughts, behaviors, and styles of relating with God and others, and results in ministries and services that impact the kingdom of God.[2] The central phrase in this definition is that "God forms Christ's character in Christians." The responsibility of spiritual change belongs to God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, as Christian education teachers, it is essential that there is an intentional practice of seeking the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This is a definitive mark in Christian teaching. It is not an optional enrichment activity. Harry Piland states it this way:

> Given the best curriculum, the finest methods, well-defined organization, and the best space and equipment, success in teaching is not assured. One thing more is needful: The Holy Spirit. Teachers cannot, must not, teach in their own power. Without the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, there is no power.[3]

According to Wilhoit and Rozema, anointed teaching is an empowering of the Holy Spirit for teachers who want to impact the lives of the people they teach. It is power to do something that cannot be done by mere human efforts. There are no formulas that

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[2]Kenneth O. Gangel, and James C. Wilhoit, eds., *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 15-16.

[3]Harry Piland, *Basic Sunday School Work* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1980), 165.

guarantee the Spirit's effectiveness. The Holy Spirit works only by the sovereignty of God.[4] Yet, there are practices, both private and public, that foster anointed teaching. It is the contention that without the anointing of the Holy Spirit, teachers are pretty much on their own as they attempt to share life-changing content from the Bible.

Finally, the null hypothesis may have been retained because of technicalities in circumstances around teaching the lesson. For example the biblical theme of study during the instructional weeks of this study may not have addressed the specific items for which the learners scored the lowest on the pretest and the posttest. One of the items on the survey was "I believe that everyone's life has been twisted by sin and that the only adequate remedy to this problem is Jesus Christ." One of the members marked this item as "not true," which indicated a lack of knowledge about how to remedy the sin problem. The lessons during the instructional weeks may not have addressed how to remedy the sin problem as part of the lesson. The survey measured what it was supposed to measure but there was not a way to control specific details about the lessons. One possible way to address this issue is to extend teaching time between the pretest and posttest.

Response to Research Question

The research question for this study asks: How does time and Christian education Bible study resources relate to the use of Christian education curriculum resources for spiritual transformation? The teachers of the test groups logged preparatory time and use of additional Bible study resources over a period of 13 weeks with 9 of those weeks as actual instructional weeks. The posttest revealed that spiritual growth

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[4]James C. Wilhoit and Linda Rozema, "Anointed Teaching," *Christian Education Journal* 3 (2005): 240.

occurred; however, a test of the hypothesis revealed the spiritual growth that took place in the four test groups was by chance. Therefore, this study did not substantiate a relationship between preparation time and Bible study resources with the use of Christian education curriculum resources for spiritual transformation.

Contribution to Literature Review

The literature review identifies Christian education as a discipline that guides individuals toward knowing and experiencing God's purpose and plan for their lives. Ultimately, the application of Christian education should produce Christian disciples who are spiritually mature and practicing the disciplines that demonstrate their maturity. However, based on research, evangelical churches are filled with many nominal Christians, who do not practice their faith or know and understand the biblical narrative. This does not imply that Christian education has failed. Continuance of time and consistency has established the theories of Christian education as static, consistent, and effective. Christian education leaders can confidently utilize Christian education methodologies, specifically curriculum resource usage and effective application of teaching and learning principles to successfully employ Christian education curriculum resources that affect spiritual transformation.

Inherit in the methodologies of Christian education is the use of curriculum education resources, which includes effective teaching and learning that results in spiritual growth and maturity. Christian education teaching and learning are essential for spiritual transformation; however, the modifier that makes the difference is "effective." Effective teaching and learning can have impact when curriculum resources are properly

used. The nature of the biblical content of Christian education requires enlisting and equipping teachers to teach effectively.

Essential tools for effective biblical teaching and learning are Christian education curriculum resources. The precedent literature has indicated that curriculum resources will systematically propel Christian learners to spiritual transformation and discipleship. When properly chosen and implemented with effective teaching and learning, curriculum resources can make a difference in the cognitive, affective, and conative domains of learning. This discovery creates a need for Christian education leaders to implement best practices for the application of Christian education methodologies for effective use of curriculum resources. One of the best practices is to be well prepared by spending time in study, using additional resources such as commentaries, study Bibles, Bible dictionaries, and so forth. However, this research has revealed that preparatory time and use of additional Bible study resources alone do not impact spiritual transformation. Therefore, Christian education leaders should not rely on these activities alone. Because of the nature of the biblical content, which is studied and the goal of biblical learning, spiritual transformation, a specialized strategy of teaching preparation and training may have more positive results.

Recommendations for Christian Education Practice

Based on the result of the research project and precedent literature of this study, this section provides recommendations for Christian education practice. This project has determined that there is a high probability that spiritual growth of the adults in Sunday school does not occur as a result of teachers' spending time in preparation and the using various Bible study resources. Any spiritual growth that does occur is a matter

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of chance. However, because of the nature of Christian education, which is a teaching and learning ministry; the textbook used in this ministry, which is the Bible, a first-century resource that needs interpretation for relevancy; and the status of the Christian teachers, who are primarily volunteers, preparation is essential. Preparation is essential, not only in the hours spent in study and the necessary resources that Sunday school teachers use to prepare to teach their lessons, but also in teacher training and equipping by Christian education leaders so that teachers teach effectively. In the precedent literature of this study, Gene Taylor outlined a list of nine items that describe effective Bible study teachers. These items as well as others should be identified, cultivated, and nurtured in a way that learners benefit in their spiritual walk.

The precedent literature has also revealed that teachers can make a difference in the lives of learners through their teaching. Therefore, investments in the training and development of effective teachers should be an intentional ongoing priority. The following recommendations for practice are meant to encourage initial steps toward a Christian education teacher training strategy..

Recommendations for Practice

Based on Gene Taylor's description for effective Bible study teachers, teachers, first, should be serious about their own spiritual growth and, second, really want to teach Bible study. Because spiritual transformation is the goal of Christian teaching and learning, these should be two foundational elements, which do not develop through training but are part of the consideration in teacher enlistment and decision by teachers in their acceptance of the teaching role. With that Christian education leaders should devise

an effective training strategy that meets the needs of the educational ministry of the church. Based on this research project, specific training needs should be addressed.

Teachers need to understand the curriculum. Christian education leaders must prepare teachers by helping them to become familiar with the curriculum principles or educational standards of the curriculum resources. Colson and Rigdon recommends this practice because an understanding of the curriculum principles will lead to using them more intelligently and to dealing more creatively with opportunities and problems in specific learning situations. To enforce this, they cite the following illustration:

> A driver does not need to be a master mechanic to operate an automobile. With a little knowledge and skill, he can drive successfully for hundreds of trouble-free miles. However, the more he knows about the mechanical functioning of his automobile the more likely he is to obtain its maximum performance and to be able to service it when trouble develops.[5]

Although curriculum resources may provide teaching and learning tasks, with knowledge and understanding of the curriculum principles, teachers will be able to adapt the curriculum resources to their teaching and learning needs much more readily. In the precedent literature of this study, the curriculum principles presented were biblical base, Christological center, pupil readiness, sound education, and application orientation. These provide the educational standards and necessary framework for understanding distinctive features of Christian education curriculum resources.

Christian education leaders must train teachers to adapt curriculum resources to meet the needs for their specific learners. Adaptation of curriculum resources may be necessary because curriculum designers and developers do not know the learners in your

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[5]Howard P. Rigdon, and Raymond Colson, *Understanding Your Church's Curriculum* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1991), 29.

Bible study classes. One curriculum will not meet the needs of all people, everywhere.

Therefore, it is recommended that Christian education leaders train teachers to adapt

printed curriculum resources. The following steps to adapt the resources are suggested by

Lin Johnson:[6]

1. Survey – Get the big picture by skimming through the entire teaching or leader resource. Make a note of the overall study themes and unit goals.

2. Study – Read through the teacher plan, and then study the Scripture and related texts. (It may be necessary to train teachers to study the Bible using a study method such as the inductive Bible study method.) Discourage teachers from using the curriculum resources only as a means of study. This step is an opportunity to discover the truth personally. Also, the Lord may have something else in mind for lesson. Advise teachers to also read the learner or student resource and do the work required of the learners. This step has another purpose: Leaders will be spiritually impacted by the lesson before they teach learners. A spiritually transformed teacher has a higher chance of impacting the heart of learners.

3. Determine needs – Find a point of intersection between the learners' lives and the biblical theme without proof texting. Lessons are more interesting when learners see how the Bible relates to them.

4. Write your goal – Good curriculum always includes a statement of what learners will accomplish as a result of studying the lesson. Read the goal of the lesson and determine whether it is relevant for your learners. If not, adapt or rewrite it. Your personal Bible study and knowledge of the learners in your group should be considered. Keep in mind too, that if you rewrite the goal of the lesson, you probably will not be able to use the printed lesson exactly as written.

5. Develop the Lesson – Using the goal of the lesson as a guide, read through the teacher book. Your lesson should be balanced with an introduction that grabs attention and sets a goal (hook), a study on the biblical content (book), an explanation on how the biblical content relates to everyday life (look), and a response to the lesson (took). Hook, book, look, and took have different titles in the curriculum resources but serve the same function.

Teachers need to teach effectively. Christian education leaders must train

teachers to be effective in their teaching. Howard Hendricks said the best Bible study

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[6]Lin Johnson, "Understanding and Using Curriculum," in *Christian Education Foundations for the Future,* ed. Robert E. Clark, Lin Johnson, and Allyn K. Sloat (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 501-02.

curriculum resources will not have life changing impact if teaching is poor. Bible study

teachers should be equipped before they can equip others, and they must be passionate

about what they are doing.[7] Therefore, strengthening teaching skills has been included as

a necessary task for curriculum usage in this study.

Countless resources and guides exist on how to train Bible study teachers.

Therefore, Christian education leaders should select training based on the needs and skills

of the teachers. However, this researcher has discovered teaching suggestions and

enhancements that have been specifically identified as teaching approaches that will

make a difference in the lives of learners; therefore, they are included in this study.

First, there is a traditional and outdated teaching pattern that must be corrected.

Bergevin said, learners are given facts and information but are generally not taught to

integrate them into their lives. Teachers are concerned with sharing information but are

not concerned about the learner.[8] Dirks suggests, for teaching to make a difference in the

lives of learners so that spiritual change takes place, teachers should bridge the gap

between the classroom and life. Some of the most significant connectors are learner felt

needs, which are concerns like a problem to be solved, curiosity to be satisfied,

knowledge that is needed, frustrations to be worked through, and so forth. Focusing on

learner needs is an opportunity to influence change.[9]

Ligon suggests that teachers use exposure, repetition, understanding,

conviction, and application as a process. *Exposure* is what the word implies; learners

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[7]Howard Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives: Seven Proven Ways to Make Your Teaching Come Alive* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 1987), 17-19).

[8]Paul Bergevin, *A Philosophy for Adult Education* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1967), 89.

[9]Dennis H. Dirks, "The Teacher: Facilitator of Change," in *Christian Education: Foundations for the Future,* ed. Robert E. Clark, Lin Johnson, and Allyn K. Sloat (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 142.

must be exposed to Bible truth before they can learn it. This is a responsibility of the teacher, who must continually reach out to learners so that they are present in class to receive biblical teaching. However, teachers must recognize that getting learners in class is just the first step in the process of teaching for spiritual growth.

They must reinforce learning through the use of *repetition*. Secular education recognizes the need for repetition in effective learning. Constant and persistent repetition would likewise be an effective help for learners in the development of Christian attitudes and habits. However, first teachers must overcome two problems. Sunday school or Bible study is done in intervals of one week. It is quite easy for learners to forget what they learn from one Sunday to the next. Second, Sunday school lessons are different every week. To overcome these situations, Ligon suggests the teachers emphasize the same spiritual truth whenever possible, make it a practice to review the lesson for the past Sunday at each class time, and remember that most Christian education curriculum designers repeat the biblical doctrines and spiritual ideals year after year.

Understanding is one of the most important steps in learning, but as indicated by the lack of spiritual growth, it could be the most neglected. Many learners know what the Bible says about various things, but do not understand what the teachings mean so that they can be applied to their daily, personal lives. For example, we believe, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 5:3, NIV). But what does it mean for daily living? What would you begin to do if you were to carry out this teaching of Jesus? These truths are of little value to learners if they cannot understand what they mean for their specific attitudes and actions.

But understanding is not enough; *conviction* is also a part of the learning process and must be present. Learners must believe the teaching to the point that they are willing to follow it at any cost. The conviction must be so strong that it will lead to action. For example we believe Jesus when He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt 16:24, KJV). However, in spite of our belief in this teaching, our lives indicate we believe in self-interest rather than self-sacrifice. The teacher must lead learners to accept and believe the spiritual truths with a conviction that is so deep that they become active and directive forces in changing their lives.

Application is the last step in the learning process for transformation. However, application in this step takes on a stronger meaning than the usual exhortation and moralizing in some teaching plans. Teachers are encouraged to plan with the learners an opportunity to express in action the truth they have studied. For example, if the lesson is on evangelism, what will the class do about it? Shall the class go to some place and share their faith? Planning for an expression of biblical truth should be just as much a part of the teaching process as the other steps. Learners have not learned the teachings of Jesus until His teachings are put into practice in their daily experiences.[10]

Teachers need to understand the teaching and learning process. Though a portion of solutions for this need have been addressed in the need to teach effectively section, there are still other principles that should be identified within the teaching and learning process. Christian education leaders should train teachers to understand the

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[10]Earnest M. Ligon, *A Greater Generation* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), 10-14.

dynamics that create an environment and circumstances for successful learning. Consider teaching approaches. The precedent literature revealed two different approaches to teaching, the traditional and educational. Christian education leaders should help teachers to understand the difference between the two and strive to use the approach that is more impactful. Decisions should be made related to each element of the teaching approaches as identified in the precedent literature. They are character development, the learner, interests, the lesson, and physical arrangement. For character development, teachers should either teach Bible knowledge (traditional), trusting that the learner will grow from biblical content only or lead the learner to live out the biblical principles through their application (educational). For the teacher element, the teacher should decide how he or she will instruct the class. Will the teacher do all of the talking and simply tell learners what to do (traditional) or will learning take place as a result of verbal interactions between the teacher and learners as well as through discussion among the learners (educational)? For the learner element, teachers should decide how the learner will be viewed during class. This may involve spending some time getting to know the learners. The decision to be made is whether to view the learner as unknowledgeable and in need of instruction (traditional) or as knowledgeable and able to contribute to his or her own learning (educational). For the interest element, which is defined as what the learners hold as important; the teacher should decide whether learners need to be motivated to learn by a reward (traditional) or whether the application of biblical content to felt needs creates an interest to learn (educational). For the lesson element, teachers need to decide whether to teach the lesson as it is printed in the curriculum resource (educational) or whether to teach to accomplish the goal of the lesson, which means that some of the

content in the curriculum resource may not be covered (educational). And finally, in the physical arrangement element, the teacher needs to decide how the room will be arranged, either with the teacher as the focal point and the learners quietly listening (traditional) or with the teacher sitting at the same level and as part of the class, discussing the content of the lesson (educational).

Based on curriculum design and development experiences of the researcher and on the research for this project, the educational approach is the best option; however, there may be times when it becomes necessary to use elements of the traditional approach. For example, at times there may be a need to teach the contents of the curriculum resource as it is written and at other times, there may be a need to deviate from the lesson to address concerns or issues of the learners. But clearly the approach that will impact spiritual growth is the best option.

The goal of the teaching and learning process in Christian education is to teach learners to serve others and be spiritually transformed. As Paul said, learning is a big part of spiritual transformation (Rom 12:1-2). But learners must be interested in learning and want to grow. If there is no interest on the part of the learner, then learning will be challenged; therefore, motivation (interest), which is one of elements in teaching approaches mentioned above, deserves more attention. The Christian education leader should train teachers on how to motivate learners to learn.

There is a wide array of principles that guide motivation in learning; however, the researcher has opted to present the structural factors, listed in italics, that motivate learning as presented by Richards and Bredfeldt in their book, *Creative Bible Teaching.*

These structural factors address how teachers create the best learning opportunities for the way learners learn and motivating learning.

People learn best when learning is patterned; therefore, teachers should organize their teaching around a goal that learners can see and work toward. Organization helps to keep lessons from wondering aimlessly and gives some intentionally to helping learners to learn.

People learn best when learning is sequenced. This means teachers should presents ideas in a logical order so that they build on one another. A haphazard, conglomerate of thoughts and principles will not achieve successful learning. Ideas need to be attached so that the whole will be understood and applied.

People learn best when learning is encouraged. This means that the class should be learner centered so that learners feel successful and confident in the learning process. This is in opposition to a teacher-centered class when the teacher teaches just to be teaching facts with no thought on whether learners understand biblical principles. Learners must be given the privilege to control their learning in an environment that encourages their active participation through questions and discussion.

People learn best when learning is stimulated. Teachers should help learners to feel comfortable in the classroom in a couple of ways. First, learners should be made to feel comfortable through the seating arrangement and informal dress requirements. Second, learners should be made to feel comfortable through the use of engaging teaching and learning methodologies.

People learn best when learning is relevant. Teachers should begin the teaching and learning with what learners already knows and move to what they do not know. With this, teachers are able to build new concepts on prior knowledge.

People learn best when learning is applied. Teachers should understand that successful learning begins with motivation, and motivation encourages learners to respond by living out the principles, then coming back for more.[11]

The recommendations for practice presented in the study are just a few of the necessary teaching principles that guide effective teaching. Christian education leaders should train teachers over a period of time and continue to investigate ways to help teachers reach teaching and learning goals that result in the spiritual transformation of learners.

Recommendations for Study

This study focused primarily on whether spiritual growth occurs as a result of the use the catalysts, time and Bible study resources, in preparation to teach with Christian education curriculum resources. The study did not confirm that spiritual growth occurred as a result of these preparation activities. This implied that spiritual growth occurs as a result of another element or a combination of elements. As already suggested, teaching may have been an issue due to ineffective teaching.

Further research is needed in the area of Christian education for the purpose of spiritual transformation, specifically, in the area of teaching. Research needs to examine how much time teachers spend in personal Bible study and practicing of disciplines and

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[11]Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), 235-40.

the difference it makes on the spiritual growth of learners. Also, research needs to examine the methods used in the classroom to determine the effectiveness of teaching.

A study that delves into learners' spiritual discipline practices would be appropriate considering some of the scores on the surveys. This would determine whether learners' are taking some of the initiative in their own spiritual growth.

Even though this study rejected the null and determined that the spiritual growth that occurred in the classroom was the result of chance, it would be beneficial to duplicate this study but control the catalysts by using at least one of the classes as a control group with a teacher who did not properly prepare to teach or did not prepare at all. Also, the study may need to be conducted over a longer period of time so that a wider range of biblical topics can be taught.

Also, the repeat of this study, using a larger population may help to solidify and challenge the findings of this research.

THE SHEPERD SCALE SURVEY

This is the Shepherd Scale Survey that was used in this project. Each Sunday school class received an identification label of Group A, B, C, or D. This survey form was for Group A.

Group A

The Shepherd Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: These questions consider different aspects of Christian experience. Note that some of the items consider how you think about or act toward Christians. These items should not be thought of as exclusive. In other words, having respect for Christians does not mean that you lack respect for non-Christians.

		Not True	Generally not true	Generally true	True
1	I believe that God will bring about certain circumstances that will result in the judgment and destruction of evil.	0	0	0	0
2	I believe I can have the personal presence of God in my life.	0	0	0	0
3	I believe that there are certain required duties to maintaining a a strong Christian lifestyle (i.e., prayers, doing good deeds, and helping others).	0	0	0	0
4	I believe that it is possible to have a personal relationship with God through Christ.	0	0	0	0
5	I believe that by following the teachings of Jesus Christ and incorporating them into my daily life, I receive such things as peace, confidence, and hope.	0	0	0	0

		Not True	Generally no/true	Generally true	True
6	I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.	0	0	0	0
7	I believe that God will judge me for all my actions and behaviors.	0	0	0	0
8	I believe that by submitting myself to Christ, he frees me to obey him in a way I never could before.	0	0	0	0
9	I believe in miracles as a result of my confidence in God to perform such things.	0	0	0	0
10	Because of God's favor to us, through Jesus Christ, we are no longer condemned by God's laws.	0	0	0	0
11	Because of my personal commitment to Jesus Christ, I have eternal life.	0	0	0	0
12	The only means by which I may know God is through my personal commitment to Jesus Christ.	0	0	0	0
13	I believe that everyone's life has been twisted by sin and that the only adequate remedy to this problem is Jesus Christ	0	0	0	0
14	I am concerned that my behavior and speech reflect the teachings of Christ.	0	0	0	0
15	I respond positively (with patience, kindness, self control) to those people who hold negative feelings toward me.	0	0	0	0
16	I do kind things regardless of who's watching me.	0	0	0	0
17	Status and material possessions are not of primary importance to me.	0	0	0	0
18	I do not accept what I hear in regard to religious beliefs without first questioning the validity of it.	0	0	0	0
19	I strive to have good relationships with people even though their beliefs and values may be different than mine.	0	0	0	0
20	It is important for me to conform to the Christian standards of behavior.	0	0	0	0

		Not True	Generally no/true	Generally true	True
21	I am most influenced by people whose beliefs and values are consistent with the teachings of Christ.	0	0	0	0
22	I respect and obey the rules and regulations of the authorities which govern me.	0	0	0	0
23	I show respect toward Christians.	0	0	0	0
24	I share things that I own with Christians.	0	0	0	0
25	I share the same feelings Christians do whether it be happiness or sorrow.	0	0	0	0
26	I'm concerned about how my behavior affects Christians.	0	0	0	0
27	I speak the truth with love to Christians.	0	0	0	0
28	I work for Christians without expecting recognition or acknowledgments.	0	0	0	0
29	I am concerned about unity among Christians.	0	0	0	0
30	I enjoy spending time with Christians.	0	0	0	0
31	My beliefs, trust, and loyalty to God can be seen by other people through my actions and behaviors.	0	0	0	0
32	I can see daily growth in the areas of knowledge of Jesus Christ, self-control, patience, and virtue.	0	0	0	0
33	Because of my love for God, I obey his commandments.	0	0	0	0
34	I attribute my accomplishments to God's presence in my life.	0	0	0	0
35	I realize a need to admit my wrongs to God.	0	0	0	0
36	I have told others that I serve Jesus Christ.	0	0	0	0
37	I have turned from my sin and believed in Jesus Christ.	0	0	0	0
38	I daily use and apply what I have learned by following Jesus Christ.	0	0	0	0

Please carefully read and respond to this section.

This research is designed to analyze persons' religious attitudes. This study is being conducted by Christina Zimmerman for the purposes of dissertation research. Any information you have provided will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported 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 and signing your initials in the blank below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

_____Initials of Participant

APPENDIX 2

TEACHER LOG SHEET

Teacher for Group A

Sunday School Curriculum Resource _____

INSTRUCTIONS: This log sheet is to be used by the teacher of Group A class to log the amount of time spent and resources used in preparation for Bible study lessons. The sheet is to be completed on a week-by-week basis before each lesson is taught and covers a period of 13 weeks or one full quarter.

Lesson	Preparation Time (Choose one)	Resources Used (Choose all that apply)
November 4	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
November 11	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
November 18	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
November 25	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____

Lesson	Preparation Time (Choose one)	Resources Used (Choose all that apply)
December 2	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
December 9	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
December 16	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
December 23	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
December 30	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
January 6	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____

Lesson	Preparation Time (Choose one)	Resources Used (Choose all that apply)
January 13	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
January 20	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____
January 27	❑ 4 hours or more ❑ 3 hours ❑ 2 hours ❑ 1 hour or less	❑ Member Book ❑ Teacher Book ❑ Study Bible ❑ Commentary ❑ Online Resources ❑ Other _____

Please carefully read and respond to this section

This research is designed to collect data related to the time and resources used in preparation for Bible study. This study is being conducted by Christina Zimmerman for the purposes of project research. Any information you have provided will be held in strictest confidence, and at no time will your name be reported with your responses.

By your completion of this form and signing your initials in the blank below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

_____ Initials of Participant

LETTER TO ASSISTANT RESEARCHER

October 25, 2012

Christina Zimmerman
My Address
My City and State

Geraldine Turner
Church Address
Church City and State

Dear Sister Turner:

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in the study that we talked about on the phone. Please find enclosed nine packets for each of your nine Life Words Bible study groups, a postage-paid envelop, and a copy of the administration protocols.

These packets should be distributed to the teachers of your Bible study groups on or before November 4, 2012. Included in each packet are fifteen (15) Shepherd Scale Surveys and one Teacher Log Sheet. Each teacher is to administer The Shepherd Scale Survey to their class members on November 4 and immediately return the surveys to you. The teachers will then keep a weekly log of the time spent and resources used for Bible study preparation. They should complete this information weekly on the Teacher Log Sheet for a period of thirteen weeks or one quarter, beginning November 4, 2012 and concluding January 27, 2012.

 Once you have collected the Shepherd Scale Surveys, please return in the postage-paid envelop no more than three days after the last group has completed them. This will complete the first part of the research. In early January, you will receive another set of Shepherd Scale Surveys with further instructions for the second part of this research. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Thanks again for your cooperation and please express my heartfelt appreciation to Pastor York as well. I look forward to hearing from you soon. May God richly bless you.

In Him,

Christina Zimmerman

APPENDIX 4

RESEARCH ASSISTANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The research assistant *should…*

1. . . .   explain clearly the instructions for completing the instrumentation after distributing the survey packets.

2. . . .   state before and after explaining the instructions that, if persons do not wish to take part in the survey, they are free to stay and observe or to leave under no circumstances should anyone feel obligated to participate in the study.

3. . . .   state clearly that persons should answer not on the basis of how they *should* act or think but on the basis of how they *actually* do act or think.

4. . . .   emphasize that all responses are and will remain completely anonymous.

5. . . .   place all surveys, both blank and completed, in the provided postage-paid envelope and return them to the researcher *no more than three days* after administering the survey packets.

6. . . .   regard every student, whether or not he or she participates in the study, with utmost respect. This includes treating every completed survey packet as a confidential document.

7. . . .   recognize that the survey instruments are copyrighted and, therefore, may not be used outside this study without the express written permission of the copyright holders.

8. . . .   state clearly, after persons have completed the survey, that if they should experience stress or distress due to the completion of this survey they are free to discuss their feelings with the researcher or research assistant. Research assistants may provide the researchers telephone number or email address to such participants.

The research assistant *should not…*

1. . . .   attempt to score, compile, or tabulate any portion of the survey packets.

2. . . .   administer the survey packets in any setting besides the setting discussed with the researcher. If the number of respondents in the approved setting is lower than anticipated, feel free to can the researcher at _____.

Research Assistant Responsibilities.[1]

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[1]Timothy Paul Jones, "An Analysis of the Relationship Between Fowlerian Stage-Development and Self-Assessed Maturity in Christian Faithfulness Among Evangelical Christians" (EdD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003), 167.

APPENDIX 5

t VALUES NEEDED FOR REJECTION OF THE NULL HYPOTHESIS

	One-Tailed Test		
df	0.10	0.05	0.01
1	3.078	6.314	31.821
2	1.886	2.92	6.965
3	1.638	2.353	4.541
4	1.533	2.132	3.747
5	1.476	2.015	3.365
6	1.44	1.943	3.143
7	1.415	1.895	2.998
8	1.397	1.86	2.897
9	1.383	1.833	2.822
10	1.372	1.813	2.764
11	1.364	1.796	2.718
12	1.356	1.783	2.681
13	1.35	1.771	2.651
14	1.345	1.762	2.625
15	1.341	1.753	2.603
16	1.337	1.746	2.584
17	1.334	1.74	2.567
18	1.331	1.734	2.553
19	1.328	1.729	2.54
20	1.326	1.725	2.528

Chart for *t* values needed for rejection of the null hypothesis.[2]

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[2]Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who Think They Hate Statistics,* 3rd Ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA, 2004), 358.

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PREPARATORY TIME AND STUDY
RESOURCES WITH ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
CURRICULUM RESOURCES AT HIGHPOINT
BAPTIST CHURCH EIGHT MILE, ALABAMA

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The purpose of this study was to analyze a possible relationship between two catalysts: the amount of time and the number of Bible study resources teachers use in preparation to teach Sunday school with Christian education curriculum resources. The precedent literature of this study validates that the goal of Christian education is spiritual transformation. However, statistics confirm that a significant number of Christians are not spiritually impacted. Using the Shepherd Scale Survey, members of adult Sunday school classes at Highpoint Baptist Church in Mile High, Alabama were surveyed at the beginning and end of thirteen weeks of classes to determine whether there was a relationship between the catalysts and the curriculum resources. During that time, teachers logged their preparation activities. This study revealed that spiritual growth occurred at the end of testing time, however, there is no relationship between preparatory time and Bible study resources with the curriculum resources. The implications of this study reveal that Christian education teaching and learning requires effective teaching.

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