

A STUDY OF THE BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW OF
K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOL EDUCATORS

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A Study of the Biblical Worldview of K-12 Christian School Educators

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my wife, Janet Fay. Twenty-nine years have come and gone and my love for you has grown each day...each year. I enjoy being with you and want to be with no one more than you. I love our kids, God's greatest gift to us as a couple, but they can't hold a candle to your companionship. Even on our worst days—and we both have them—God's amazing grace keeps us knit tight and weathers the storm. Thank you for saying “yes” 29 years ago, and for the many sunny and occasional rainy days we've had and, Lord willing, have yet to come! I love you Janet Fay!

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Finally, to my pastor, Eldon Busenitz, a faithful and excellent expounder and expositor of the word and truth of God, thank you for teaching and modeling what it truly means to have a biblical Christian worldview. Your 40 years of faithfully shepherding the flocks God has entrusted you with is a wonderful example for all. Your wisdom, contagious love of knowledge, and exceptional teaching gift are a blessing and a delight to me. May the Lord grant you many more years in ministry!

Abstract

Mark K. Wood. A STUDY OF THE BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW OF K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOL EDUCATORS. (Under the direction of Dr. Ellen Lowrie Black) School of Education, November, 2008.

This study was designed to investigate the influence of six factors on the biblical Christian worldview of Christian school educators as measured by The Nehemiah Institute's PEERS (2003) worldview assessment. The study sample consisted of 141 Christian school educators from six different Christian schools; three Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) located in Idaho, and three Association of Classical & Christian Schools (ACCS) located in Idaho, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. A causal-comparative design was utilized and scores were analyzed using independent samples t-tests. The six factors under study are: raised in a Christian or a non-Christian home; graduated from a Christian or a public high school; earned an undergraduate or graduate degree from a Christian university or a public university; worked at the elementary or secondary level; employed by a school affiliated with and accredited by ACSI or ACCS; and, taught in Christian schools fewer than 10 years or 10 years or more. No significant differences were found in five of the six factors. A significant difference was found in the results for ACSI and ACCS affiliated and accredited schools. The difference between the means of the ACSI and ACCS participants was nearly 20 points, suggesting a more biblical Christian worldview on the part of ACCS educators. In addition, a significant difference was noted between genders. Suggestions for further research are also included.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

All of our actions “are shaped by what we believe is real and true, right and wrong, good and beautiful. Our choices are shaped by our worldview” (Colson & Pearcey, 1999, p. 13). People do not act out of a philosophical vacuum. Rather, people function and act in accordance with their worldview (Bertrand, 2007; Schaeffer, 1976). Barna (2003a) states that our “moment-to-moment decisions are shaped by the worldview we have adopted and adapted over the course of time, often without realizing that we are dependent upon such a framework for decision making” (p. 5).

Our worldview influences the way we think and therefore the way we act. Schaeffer (1972) states that no one processes information and data in an objective, unbiased manner, that all have a theory or grid or worldview through which reality is interpreted. In commenting on the work of Michael Polyani, a major thinker and intellectual in the area of the criticism of positivism, Schaeffer states:

There is no scientist in the positivistic position who does not feed knowledge through a grid—a theory or worldview—through which he sees and finds.

The concept of the totally innocent, objective observer is utterly naïve. And science cannot exist without an observer...the observer is never neutral; he has a grid, he has presuppositions through which he feeds the thing that he finds (pp. 43 & 44).

Everyone has a worldview of some ilk and everyone uses it as a filter or lens through which all of reality is processed, analyzed, and interpreted (Bertrand, 2007; Moreland & Craig, 2003). Bertrand calls it taking sides, establishing our own platforms on which to stand. This worldview drives our thinking and therefore how we live our life. Scripture agrees, “For as he thinks within himself, so he is” (Proverbs 23:7, New American Standard Bible).

We have a worldview, one “adopted and adapted over the course of time” (Barna, 2003a, p. 5), something we are not born with but something we are taught, something we learn. Learning implies teaching which intimates a teacher, and life gives us many teachers. Parents are often viewed as one’s first teachers, and Christian parents understand that “they are God’s agents entrusted with the responsibility of raising their children in the truth” (Lowrie, 1998, p. 113). Schools at every level, from kindergarten to graduate school, are filled with teachers who influence what we adopt and adapt into our worldview. Colleagues in our chosen profession are teachers in their own rights, and the amount of time we spend with and among them has potential for impacting our worldview. The professional affiliations we align ourselves with can also help shape our view of the world.

Today’s Christian school educators possess a worldview that has been adopted and adapted, at least in some measure, by the “teachers” just mentioned. This worldview may or may not be Christian. Barna’s (2003a) research finds that the worldview of most professing Christians does not reflect the basic tenets of Scripture. He states that of those who claim to be born-again Christians, only “about one-quarter make their moral and ethical choices on the basis of the Bible” (p. 21). Barna’s

findings would include some number of Christian school educators. Since the “most important factor in the development of a young person’s worldview is the influence of his teachers” (Schultz, 2002, p. 47), it seems that it would be important for Christian school educators to possess a worldview that is distinctly Christian.

The Work Research Foundation (2008) states that Christian schools are regularly graduating students who do not think from a distinctly Christian perspective, and a connection is made with the lack of a biblical worldview on the part of the teacher being responsible for the same lack in students. Students have an absence of a biblical worldview in large part because their educators’ worldviews were equally void of biblical principles (Nehemiah Institute, 1998). This is not as it should be and is the motivation for the research undertaken here. This research study examined the worldview of K-12 Christian school educators. The worldview of those educators was researched in light of the educators’ childhood upbringing, high school and university training, years of teaching in a Christian school environment, the professional affiliation of the school where they are currently employed, the years of teaching experience, and the grade level taught.

Background of Study

The role of Christ’s church in the education of children since the collapse of the Roman Empire and subsequent rise of Augustinianism has, until more modern times, been one of significant involvement with the chief purpose of inculcating Christian beliefs and values into the hearts and minds of the next generation (Kienel, 1998; McNeill, 2003). From Catholicism to Calvinism the goal has been to “impress the correct version of Christianity on the minds of the young” (Guttek, 2005, p. 115).

The Reformation, considered by some to be the most significant historical event after Christ's birth (Kienel), produced great church leaders such as Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wycliff, Huss, Tyndale, Melancton, and Zwingli. These men were strong advocates of "Christian schools and Bible-centered learning...for their basic purpose of preserving the integrity of the gospel of Christ (Kienel, p. 167). Christian thinking was a major influence in some of the first educational systems of the United States. Evangelicals in the United States were early and eager supporters of common or public schools whose main purpose was to produce a literate, productive, and law-abiding citizenry with an emphasis on Bible-reading (Guttek).

Times have changed. The moral, academic, and spiritual decline of the public schools in the United States over the past century has been paralleled by more than three decades of growth in private Christian education, which includes day schools and those who home school (Nehemiah Institute, 1998). The deterioration within the public schools and growth in Christian education are caused, for the most part, by the same phenomenon, and that is the misplaced responsibility for the education of children. The Nehemiah Institute asserts, "When state-run education began, it borrowed the spiritual capital present in schools and because of that it survived for many decades" (p. 5). The growth of Christian education over the past three decades has been the response of the minority of Christendom, however.

The overall response of the church to the usurpation of education by the state has been anemic, according to some. Voices from as early as the 1940's have clearly proclaimed the secularist and atheistic advances within the public schools and that the Christian church in America has all but unconditionally surrendered its "traditional

role of elementary education to the state” (Schultz, 2002, p. 108). Packer (1973) echoes that chorus in asserting that much of the contemporary church’s weakness lies in the fact that “Christian minds have been conformed to the modern spirit: the spirit, that is, that spawns great thoughts of man and leaves room for only small thoughts of God” (p. 6). In the face of the battle for the hearts and minds of children and young adults, the retreat of Christ’s church from the education of His disciples has turned the development of their worldview over to atheistic, secular humanist zealots (Wilson, 2001). One such man, John Dunphy, states that the public school classroom is the new battleground and the teacher its warrior, saying:

These teachers must embody the same selfless dedication as the most rabid fundamentalist preachers, for they will be ministers of another sort, utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey humanist values in whatever subject they teach, regardless of the education level—preschool day care or large state university (Schultz, 111).

The public education system, from preschool to graduate school, has become the primary provider of beliefs and values in the American culture, and that worldview is seldom Christian. J. Gresham Machen (Nichols, 2005) spoke nearly 80 years ago about this battle between God’s thinking and man’s thinking. He clearly stated the importance of recognizing the true battleground and what a Christian response should be when he said:

No, the battle between naturalism and supernaturalism, between mechanism and liberty, has to be fought out sooner or later; and I do not believe that there is any advantage in letting the enemy choose the ground upon which it shall

be fought. The strongest defense of the Christian religion is the outer defense; a reduced and inconsistent Christianity is weak; our real safety lies in the exultant supernaturalism of God's Word" (p. 21).

That battleground has been chosen—the educational system. The explosion of Christian day schools and home schools indicates that some Christians have recognized the threat and have entered the battle with intentionality. The activists on both sides of the battle recognize teachers are possibly the most significant influence on a school-age child. Teachers, then, have a profound influence on the worldview that will be communicated to, assimilated in, and exercised by students (Barna, 2003b; Noebel, 2006; Schultz, 2002). Frank Gaebelein, as quoted in Schultz says:

The fact is inescapable: The worldview of the teacher, insofar as he is effective, gradually conditions the worldview of the pupil. No man teaches out of a philosophical vacuum. In one way or another, every teacher expresses the convictions he lives by, whether they be spiritually positive or negative" (p. 52).

The teacher's worldview then becomes the root of and solution to the worldview clash. The Christian versus secular worldview issue must be recognized, understood, and confronted. Naugle (2002) states:

From the perspective of Christian theism, a clash of worldviews also assumes a crucial role in the hidden, spiritual battle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan in which the very truth of things is at stake. Between these regimes a conflict of epic proportion rages for the minds and hearts, and thus the lives and destinies, of all men and women, all the time. Since nothing

could be of greater final importance than the way human beings understand God, themselves, the cosmos, and their place in it, it is not surprising that a worldview warfare is at the heart of the conflict between the powers of good and evil. Consequently, an in-depth look at a concept that plays such a pivotal role in human affairs seems particularly worthwhile (p. xvii).

There is a growing concern that non-Christian worldviews are more prevalent among teachers and administrators who populate today's Christian schools.

Rosebrough (2002) states that most teachers, like most people, fail to ponder what they truly believe. His conclusion is that the worldviews of most are "largely unconscious and definitely unexamined" (p. 283), including those of Christian higher education faculty.

In a 2006 study of 210 public and Christian school teachers, Brown found no significant difference in the moral self-concept of teachers teaching in public schools and those teaching in Christian schools. Brown's moral self-concept may be very roughly equated to a worldview. One's moral self-concept governs what one believes to be right or wrong, true or false, and moral or immoral. Simply stated, teachers who taught in public schools often shared a worldview with teachers who taught in Christian schools. Independent studies by the Nehemiah Institute (1998) support Brown's findings, indicating that biblical worldview among Christian school educators is waning and that the secular humanist worldview moved into schools created to profess the name of Jesus Christ. Noebel joins this chorus by stating that secular humanism has "made gains in many Christian colleges and universities (especially in the areas of biology, sociology, politics, and history)" (2006, p. 20), and

that vocal supporters of such a worldview frequently can be found lecturing on Christian campuses.

Additionally, Deckard, Henderson, and Grant's (2002) research led them to conclude that "a teacher's worldview significantly impacts student worldviews" (p. 98). These findings may not surprise those Christian school leaders who hire teachers with degrees from public universities. It is, however, contrary to what one may expect when hiring graduates from Christian institutions of higher education. Conclusive data on public university versus Christian university trained Christian school teachers is not available. However, Barna's research findings indicating a dearth of biblical worldview thinking among evangelical, born-again Christians in general lends support to the notion that biblical worldview thinking of teachers trained at Christian universities is lacking at some level (2003a).

It seems trite to assert that teachers and administrators cannot give what they do not possess. However, the statement holds a profound truth: If teachers do not possess a biblical worldview, then they possess a secular or pagan worldview. This is what they will instill, knowingly or not, into the minds and hearts of their students. As Pearcey (2005) states:

A school superintendent once told me that most educators define "a Christian teacher" strictly in terms of personal behavior: things like setting a good example and showing concern for students. Almost none define it in terms of conveying a biblical worldview on the subjects they teach, whether literature, science, social studies, or the arts...In many Christian schools, the typical strategy is to inject a few narrowly defined "religious" elements into the

classroom, like prayer and Bible memorization—and then teach exactly the same things as the secular schools. The curriculum merely spreads a layer of spiritual devotion over the subject matter like icing on a cake, while the content itself stays the same (p. 37).

Perhaps much of this should not be surprising. As already mentioned, worldviews are adopted and adapted by people beginning from birth. Upbringing, education, career, and other affiliations contribute to one's worldview. But does growing up in a Christian or non-Christian home make a difference in the worldview of a Christian school educator? Does attendance at public or Christian schools and universities make a difference? Does tenure as a Christian school educator impact worldview? Does the affiliation with professional Christian educational associations increase the likelihood that a teacher will have a Christian worldview? These questions drove this study; these questions constitute the theoretical framework in which this research was undertaken.

Research Problem

The thrust of this research was to determine the level of influence of certain factors on the biblical Christian worldview of Christian school educators. These factors include a Christian or non-Christian upbringing, attendance at Christian or public schools, attendance at Christian or public universities, affiliation with Christian school associations, teacher tenure, and grade level taught.

Null Hypotheses

Proving direct cause and effect interactions is beyond the scope of this causal-comparative study. However, discovering potential cause and effect relationships

between a Christian school educator's worldview and factors that are considered influential in the formation of that worldview is at the heart of the study. The factors are presented in the form of null hypotheses and are the focus of this study. The six null hypotheses are:

- 1) There is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school educator who graduated from a Christian university and that of one who graduated from a public university.
- 2) There is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school educator who graduated from a Christian high school and that of one who graduated from a public high school.
- 3) There is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school educator who was raised in a Christian home and that of one who was not raised in a Christian home.
- 4) There is no difference between the worldview of Christian school elementary and secondary teachers.
- 5) There is no difference between the worldview of Christian school educators from Association of Classical & Christian Schools (ACCS) accredited schools and Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) accredited schools.
- 6) There is no difference between the worldview of Christian school educators who have taught in Christian schools fewer than 10 years and those who have taught in Christian schools 10 years or more.

Biblical Christian worldview understanding was determined by administering the PEERS (2003) worldview assessment to Christian educators involved in the study. The term PEERS is an acronym for the areas measured by the assessment. Those areas are politics, education, economics, religion, and social issues. Scores in each category are generated with an overall composite score. It is the composite score that was used in this research.

Importance of the Study

The worldview of teachers is less frequently examined than student worldviews in isolation. As will be seen in the review of the literature, most worldview research deals with those being taught and not those doing the teaching. The purpose of this study is to get at the worldview of the Christian school educators and the potential influence of certain factors in its development.

Wilson (1999) observes in the issue of the large increase in learning disabilities over a relatively short period of time the following:

If it is our schools which are “teaching disabled,” the symptoms of this lack would still be visible primarily in the students and not necessarily in the schools or teachers. When a doctor is incompetent, it is still the *patient* who dies. If we think about this situation carefully, we should acknowledge that *the location of the symptoms is not necessarily the location of the problem* (p. 17, emphasis added).

If the students’ lack of a biblical worldview is a symptom, Wilson would argue that the location of the worldview problem might be with the teacher. What a teacher believes and values is as much a part of that teacher as is any physical attribute. To

expect them to shed their beliefs and values when they enter the classroom is as unreasonable as expecting them to discard body parts prior to teaching. The teacher's belief system or worldview does make a difference (Rosebrough, 2002). Deckard, Henderson, and Grant (2002) likewise assert that "a teacher's worldview significantly impacts student worldviews" (p. 98).

Glanzer and Talbert (2005), in their study of education majors at a Christian university, found that "only three respondents (out of 58) indicated that their faith or worldview had little or no impact on their philosophy of education" (p. 31).

Assuming that worldview is something that all teachers will take with them into the classroom, it seems important that those teachers and administrators who serve in Christian schools should have a worldview that is Christian and biblically based. Otherwise, educators in Christian schools will be ill-prepared to help students form a biblical worldview. "Christian education is likely to be an exercise in futility if it does not prepare our young people to confront and survive the worldview challenges that they will surely meet" (Pearcey, 2005, p. 12). Teachers and administrators cannot give what they do not possess. If they do not possess a biblical Christian worldview, they cannot pass it on. The problem is actually more profound than that: if they do not possess a biblical Christian worldview, then they possess a non-biblical or secular worldview. This secular worldview is what they will instill, even if unintentionally, into the minds and hearts of their students. This study examines the worldview of Christian school educators and factors contributing to the development of that worldview.

Assumptions of the Study

A beginning assumption and one to be further articulated in Chapter two is that one's worldview is shaped; that is, it is not something we are born with. Rather, it is something that is built-up over time and can be changed.

A primary assumption of the study is that the PEERS worldview assessment correctly and adequately assesses the worldview construct. The particulars of the instrument are discussed at length in Chapter 3. Varying thoughts on what constitutes a biblical Christian worldview are discussed in Chapter 2. A biblical Christian worldview, for the purposes of this study, is defined later in this chapter.

A third assumption is that the Christian school educators understood and correctly answered the PEERS worldview assessment and the demographic data questions added by this researcher. The results presented in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5 depend upon the accuracy of the participants in the study in honestly and knowingly answering each question.

Yet another assumption regarding the PEERS worldview assessment is that the ACSI and ACCS schools accept it as a valid measure of worldview. No device measuring a conceptual construct is perfect, and it is likely none are accepted by one hundred percent of those taking them, but the assumption for the purposes of this study is that ACSI and ACCS schools alike accept the instrument.

A fifth assumption made is that the worldview of the Christian school educator will impact, at some level, the worldview of his or her students. The impact of a teacher on the thinking of a student will be discussed in Chapter 2 with supporting research presented in the second half of that chapter.

A final assumption regards the use of accredited schools. It is assumed that schools accredited by their respective association provide the best sample. Such schools, as part of the accreditation process, must provide evidence of hiring faculty that profess Christian beliefs and provide training and professional development opportunities that enhance those beliefs. It is also assumed that such schools are better representatives of their particular school association because they have dedicated themselves to the standards, beliefs, and philosophy of that organization.

Overview of the Research Design

Incorporating a causal-comparative approach to this study began by measuring the worldview of a sample of Christian school educators using the PEERS worldview assessment (Appendix A). This measurement is in the form of a composite score and is the dependent variable. There are six attribute independent variables that coincide with the six null hypotheses. The six attribute independent variables are: being raised in a Christian or non-Christian home, attendance at a public or Christian high school, attendance at a public or Christian university, teaching at the elementary or secondary level, teaching in an Association of Classical & Christian Schools (ACCS) or Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) accredited school, and teaching tenure in a Christian school.

The worldview scores of the Christian school educators were then grouped by attribute independent variable and compared with one another. Mean scores for each of two groups within an attribute independent variable were calculated and used for descriptive and inferential statistical purposes. For example, the mean PEERS score of the group of Christian school educators raised in a Christian home was compared

to the mean PEERS score of the group of Christian school educators raised in a non-Christian home. Analysis of scores was conducted to determine if any difference in the means of the two groups was significant.

Study Population and Sample

The study population included all K-12 Christian school educators in the United States who were accredited by either ACSI or ACCS. The convenience sample consisted of 141 Christian school educators from six different schools. All three of the ACSI schools and one of the ACCS schools are located in Idaho, and the remaining two ACCS schools are located in Ohio and Pennsylvania. Three of the schools are accredited by ACSI and three are accredited by ACCS. All of the Christian school educators participating in the study profess to be born-again Christians. Additional demographic data for the sample is provided in Chapter 4.

Definition of Key Terms

ACCS: Association of Classical & Christian Schools.

ACSI: Association of Christian Schools International.

Biblical Christian Worldview: Dan Smithwick, President of the Nehemiah Institute and creator of the PEERS worldview assessment, measures a biblical Christian worldview using the PEERS assessment based upon the following definition:

A firm understanding of issues as interpreted from scripture. The individual is allowing the scriptures to guide his reasoning regarding ethical, moral and legal issues to determine correct or incorrect thinking. Truth is seen as absolute for all ages for all time. God is sovereign over all areas of life; civil government should be highly limited in purpose and authority, and under the

supervision of scripture. All people will live in eternity in heaven or hell as judged by scripture (Smithwick, 2004).

PEERS Worldview Assessment:

The PEERS Test is designed to measure...“worldview philosophy” in five primary areas of interaction between members of any society: Politics, Economics, Education, Religion and Social Issues (PEERS). The test will also reflect...opinion regarding the amount of direct government involvement needed in personal lives.

The PEERS Test scientifically interprets...views on a scale of -100 to +100 with high scores meaning a traditional conservative Christian philosophy of the issues in the test and low scores meaning a liberal, secular humanist philosophy. A rating is given in each of the five subject categories as well as an overall composite score (Smithwick, 2003, p. 2).

Summary

Christian leaders must realize that “people function on the basis of their world view more consistently than even they themselves may realize. The problem is not outward things. The problem is having, and then acting upon, the right world view” (Schaeffer, 1976, p. 254). Christian school educators must possess a biblical Christian worldview in order to instill it into their students. It is the purpose of this study to assess a Christian school educator’s worldview based on the six factors mentioned.

The next chapter reviews the worldview literature and defines the concept of worldview, reviews its historical perspective, details the major worldviews in

existence today, and then reviews empirical research on the topic. Chapter 2 also further refines the construct of biblical Christian worldview from the basic theism discussed earlier in that chapter. This refined definition is consistent with the measurement of the PEERS worldview assessment.

With the theoretical and conceptual framework constructed in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 then details the methodology of the study. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study, along with statistical analysis and study limitations. Chapter 5 is a fuller discussion of the results and analysis with some conclusions drawn and recommendations made for the field of Christian education in general, and for Christian school educators in particular.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

The topic of a biblical Christian worldview for the purpose of this research includes an examination of the philosophical and theoretical literature and available empirical research on the topic from both secular and sacred perspectives. A review of the literature addresses worldview in general and biblical Christian worldview in particular, and the role such worldviews play in the shaping of the young minds influenced by those who teach.

In order to effectively investigate this topic of a biblical Christian worldview, a few definitions and general concepts must first be presented. The first part of this chapter will deal with explaining, from the point of view of major theorists in the field, the concept of worldview, the definition of a worldview, and the precise explanation of what is meant by a biblical Christian worldview. Also, the other major worldviews that are generally accepted to be those most prevalent in the world today will be presented and discussed with comparisons to the biblical Christian worldview.

Research in the area of worldview, especially biblical worldview and its presence or absence in the Christian school or university classroom, will be explored in the second half of this chapter. Empirical research into worldview is a growing area of interest, especially among the Christian community. The research presented here is divided into the following categories: general findings, the K-12 school community, higher education, and research conducted within the church itself.

The summary will tie the theoretical and empirical together and establish the foundation for this research.

Defining the Concept of Worldview

Worldview Genesis

The very beginning of one's thinking is wrapped up in what is known as worldview. Everyday thoughts concerning mundane issues, such as the location of one's car keys, to the more profound thought of one's being or worth operates within the framework of worldview. Sire (2004b) states that it is a worldview "that allows us to think at all" (p. 17). The average person is generally unaware of having a worldview, yet everyone does (Barna, 2003a; Bertrand, 2007; Colson & Pearcey, 1999; Schaeffer, 1972; Sire) and everyone uses this worldview in assessing every piece of reality they process (Bertrand; Colson & Pearcey). It "governs our thinking even when—or especially when—we are unaware of it" (Pearcey, 2005, p. 12). Philosophy of life is another way to paint worldview according to Schaeffer, and in "this sense, all men are philosophers, for all men have a worldview" (p. 3), be they ditch digger or philosophy professor. Everyone has a philosophy of life as a guide. It is not optional (Bertrand; Moreland & Craig, 2003). Once this fact is realized, understanding that worldview becomes crucial. Attempts to understand one's own worldview, however, is "a bit like trying to see the lens of one's own eye. We do not ordinarily see our own worldview, but we see everything else by looking through it" (Pearcey, p. 11).

The term *worldview* is one translation of the German word *Weltanschauung* (Naugle, 2002; Orr, 2002; Sire, 2004a). The word can also be more literally

translated as “view of the world” (Kuyper, 1931) and has been paraphrased by some into “life and world view” or “life system” (Kuyper, p. 11). Other German words, such as *Weltbild*, meaning “world picture” (Sire, p. 30), or *Weltansicht*, a compound of *Weltanschauung* (Orr), were also used synonymously to convey the concept of *Weltanschauung*. The original German concept described by these words did not translate well into English. In early English translations the concept speaks primarily of the physical realm, while the German use of the word *Weltanschauung* captured a wide angle view of reality that was not limited to the purely physical. The current English translation of “worldview,” initially introduced into secular thinking by Immanuel Kant and later into Christian theology by James Orr, better reflects the wider meaning of the concept intended by the German word *Weltanschauung*.

Initial Attempts at Worldview Definition

Defining worldview can be as difficult as coming to the understanding that one possesses a worldview. From its earliest use in German Idealism and Romanticism, the simple definition was “to denote a set of beliefs that underlie and shape all human thought and action” (Sire, 2004a, p. 23). Wilhelm Dilthey, a 19th century philosopher, defined worldview as a “set of mental categories arising from deeply lived experience which essentially determines how a person understands, feels and responds in action to what he or she perceives of the surrounding world and the riddles it presents” (Sire, p. 27). Friedrich Nietzsche, a contemporary of Dilthey and blatantly atheistic in his philosophy, supplied a much simpler definition of worldview as “a perspective on reality and basic conception of life” (Naugle, 2002, p. 100). Naugle elaborates on Nietzsche’s brief perspective as follows:

Nietzsche believes worldviews are cultural entities which people in a given geographical location and historical context are dependent upon, subordinate to, and products of...a *Weltanschauung* provides...a well-defined boundary that structures the thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors of people. From the point of view of its adherents, a worldview is incontestable and provides the ultimate set of standards by which all things are measured. It supplies the criteria for all thinking and engenders a basic understanding of the true, the good, and the beautiful (p. 101).

Ludwig Wittgenstein, one who preferred “world picture” to “worldview” defined the concept as a “way of thinking about reality that rejects the notion that one can have ‘knowledge’ of objective reality...and thus limits knowable reality to the language one finds useful in getting what one wants” (Sire, p. 30).

Christian thinkers were also involved in the worldview dialogue. Among those thinkers, James Orr, a 19th century Presbyterian theologian, stated that a worldview is “the widest view which the mind can take of things in an effort to grasp them together as a whole from the standpoint of some particular philosophy or theology” (Orr, 2002a, p. 3). Francis Schaeffer (1976) refers to worldview as “the basic way an individual looks at life...the grid through which he sees the world...the basis for their values and therefore the basis for their decisions” (p. 19). Ronald Nash describes worldview as “a conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge reality” (Sire, 2004a, pp. 37-38). The fullest and clearest definition of worldview per Sire is that provided by James Olthuis and it states:

A worldview (or vision of life) is a framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view the world and our calling and future in it. This vision need not be fully articulated: it may be so internalized that it goes largely unquestioned; it may not be explicitly developed into a systematic conception of life; it may not be theoretically deepened into a philosophy; it may not even be codified into creedal form; it may be greatly refined through cultural-historical development. Nevertheless, this vision is a channel for the ultimate beliefs which give direction and meaning to life. It is the integrative and interpretative framework by which order and disorder are judged; it is the standard by which reality is managed and pursued; it is the set of hinges on which all our everyday thinking and doing turns (pp. 36-37).

Each of the foregoing worldview definitions are but a sampling of the thinking on the concept of worldview and helpful in moving to a more comprehensive and useful definition for the purposes of this research.

Worldview Defined

Sire (2004a) provides a concise definition of worldview that will prove most helpful later as we move to the discussion of the current major worldviews. Sire's definition states:

A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of

reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being (p. 122).

Sire's definition begins by asserting that a worldview is a commitment, reflecting the sense of a worldview as something that cuts to the core of a human being, a "spiritual orientation, or...disposition (p. 123) as opposed to only intellectual assent. The spiritual nature does not necessarily invoke the God of the Bible; spiritual is what the person defines it to be and can be the cosmos, the individual, or nothing at all.

Unpacking Sire's heart orientation assertion requires further definition of the heart. Most contemporary or modern Western uses of the word heart, when not referring to the physical organ, are speaking of one's emotional throne where sympathy and tenderness abound (Bailey, 2008; Naugle, 2002; Sire, 2004a). The use by Sire is more historical and biblical and Naugle helps here by stating that the Greek word *kardia*, most often translated as heart, means "the psychic center of human affections...the source of the spiritual life...and the seat of the intellect and the will" (p. 268). Bailey (2008) concurs with Naugle and Sire and states that "the heart in the Hebrew mind included the entire interior life of the person. The feelings, the mind and the will" (p. 84) were all included in what was meant by the word heart. It is, in essence, the core of the individual. Another important aspect of the "fundamental orientation" understanding of Sire's definition is that one's worldview lies at an unconscious level and is something we do not generally think about. Rather, it is something we use to think with, to process information. One is generally unaware of the substrata through which life is lived and decisions are made.

The expression of one's worldview through story or presupposition is the next piece of Sire's definition and the emphasis is on the word *expression*. A worldview is not a story, nor is it a set of presuppositions, as some earlier definitions asserted. A worldview can be *expressed* in those two ways. When one speaks of an evolving cosmos proceeding from a big bang a particular worldview is being *expressed* in story form. On the other hand, when one begins to ask what he is really "assuming about God, humans and the universe, the result is a set of presuppositions that...can [be] expressed in propositional form" (Sire, 2004b, p. 18). This story or set of presuppositions may be true, partly true, or false (Sire, 2004a; Sire, 2004b). For example, the existence of God is assumed by some and denied by others. Only one can be correct and examples of both positions abound in the worldviews outlined below.

The consistency and level of consciousness with which one holds a worldview is next taken up in Sire's definition. As mentioned earlier, most of one's worldview is an unconscious guide to thinking and "in our daily life as thinkers and actors, the bulk of our worldview is utterly unconscious" (Sire, 2004a, p. 130). One thing that could bring pieces of one's worldview to a more conscious level would be the presence of an inconsistency. For example, Sire asserts that some Christians believe in reincarnation but fail to see how incompatible such a notion is with the Christian doctrine of resurrection. Further, in speaking about contemporary Christian scientists who profess a theistic worldview, when involved in science they become methodological naturalists, assuming "that as far as science is concerned, they do not need (and would even be encumbered by) the notion of God" (p. 158). Moreland and

Craig (2003) refer to such inconsistencies as dichotomies and fragmentations within the individual that cause them to be one thing in the lab and another at church.

Ignoring such inconsistencies does not make them go away.

The first half of Sire's (2004a) definition acts as the lens through which one's view of reality must pass. What constitutes prime reality for the individual is very different across the worldview spectrum. Answers to basic questions, such as where the world came from and what it consists of are also very different (Naugle, 2002; Noebel, 2006; Sire). All of this leads to the final component of Sire's definition of worldview and truly manifests one's worldview. One's worldview is the "foundation on which we live and move and have our being" (Sire, 2004b, p. 17) and is best illustrated in how a life is lived, not in what one professes.

Worldview "is not precisely what we may state it to be. It is what is actualized in our behavior. We live our worldview or it isn't our worldview" (Sire, 2004a, p. 133). As mentioned earlier, a Christian who espouses a theistic worldview yet believes in reincarnation lives out a different worldview than that which is articulated. This notion is at the heart of this research: Christian school teachers educated in Christian colleges professing a biblical Christian worldview may possess a non-Christian worldview.

Christianity as Worldview

Historical Perspective

Prior to the end of the seventeenth century, Christianity would never have been couched in such a secular term as worldview. As previously mentioned worldview as a concept and as a translated word was a gift from the secular

philosophy of Immanuel Kant and not from the church or other theological circles (Naugle, 2002; Orr, 2002; Sire, 2004a). Prior to the sunset of the seventeenth century Christianity did not need to be placed conceptually into a worldview because it was the nearly unchallenged view of life throughout the western world. Few denied the existence of the Judeo-Christian God or the foundational principles of biblical Christianity, and Sire (2004b) adds:

Christianity had so penetrated the Western world that whether or not people believed in Christ or acted as Christians should, they all lived in a context of ideas influenced and informed by the Christian faith...The theistic presuppositions that lay behind their values came with their mother's milk (p. 24).

Naugle agrees and states that the secularizing force of modernity over the past 150 years has ensured that "Christianity's comprehensive scope was soon forgotten, theistic perspectives were squeezed out of public life, and the essence of the faith was reduced to matters of personal piety" (p. 4). Biblical Christianity permeated Western culture until, as Sire sarcastically asserts, the "apostles of absurdity" arrived (2004b, p. 25).

Christianity, as conceived in worldview terms, has gained significant ground over the course of this same short period of time (Bertrand, 2007; Naugle, 2002). However, though "the word 'worldview' is of relatively recent origin, such a grand, systematic vision of the faith is not" new (Naugle, p. 5). The Christian faith, as seen through the pages of the Bible, and as developed by the church fathers over the centuries, has always been seen as a system for living and thinking (Calvin,

1559/1960). So why shift to the more secular *Weltanschauung* or worldview construct? Naugle looks to James Orr for four reasons. First, the more modern anti-supernatural theories are already in worldview form and can therefore be placed in juxtaposition with a well-articulated Christian worldview. Secondly, the debate that often raged regarding individual miracles now becomes part of the larger debate between a naturalistic worldview versus a theistic view of the world. Thirdly, Christianity can now acknowledge that other worldviews contain elements of truth that flow from theism. However, only Christianity “reunites all truth into a living whole with Christ supreme” (Naugle, p. 11). Finally, using a worldview perspective unites the Old and New Testaments in a way heretofore unknown to biblical religion; in a way that distinguishes it from all others, and in a way that forces non-Christian thinkers to at least engage it (Naugle).

Christians Thinking in Worldview Terms

The beginnings of the formation of what is today called a biblical Christian worldview may be found in the development of a theology of reformation in general, and Calvinism in particular (Bertrand, 2007; Kuyper, 1931; Naugle, 2002). John Calvin (1509-1564) put together a “‘Christian philosophy,’ which may be roughly analogous to a Christian worldview” (Naugle, p. 5) that touched all areas of life including economics, business, education, and religion (Gutek, 2005). It was Calvin’s comprehensive theology that ignited the worldview spark in James Orr (1844-1913) and Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) and resulted in the introduction of worldview language into Reformed Christian thinking (Naugle; Sire, 2004a). Bertrand asserts that in all practicality Kuyper’s Calvinistic worldview perspective

became that of evangelical Christians at the time and was carried forward by others, crossing many denominational and theological lines.

Orr's burden was to devise a strategy for advancing the Christian gospel and defending the biblical faith from a Western world that was plunging headlong into un-Christian and anti-Christian ways (Naugle, 2002). For Orr, nothing "less than a fresh, coherent presentation of the Christian definition of reality in all its fullness" (Naugle, p. 7) would suffice and *Weltanschauung* or worldview was the best strategy. Orr, called a "'worldviewish' theologian" (p. 13) by Naugle, stepped away from the conventions of theological argument in laying the groundwork for seeing Christianity through the lens of worldview thinking as opposed to a more apologetics-based approach. Naugle says of Orr:

That the Christian faith may be conceived as a christocentric, self-authenticating system of biblical truth characterized by inner integrity, rational coherence, empirical verisimilitude, and existential power...[and] that this Christian *Weltanschauung* was engaged with modern naturalism in a cosmic spiritual and intellectual battle for the soul of the church and the Western world. Only by presenting Christianity as a comprehensive system of belief that embraced all aspects of reality would any progress be made in this all-determinative culture war (p. 13).

James Orr was at the vanguard of biblical worldview thinking and his seminal work was the foundation upon which others built, such as his contemporary Abraham Kuyper.

Kuyper and Orr are more similar than different. It appears “Kuyper drew considerably from Orr’s thought on the topic” (Naugle, 2002, p. 17) of worldview and extended Orr’s work. Kuyper presented “Calvinist Christianity as a comprehensive worldview, or in Kuyper’s terminology an all-embracing ‘life system’” (Sire, 2004a, p. 33). Kuyper, like Orr, approached Christianity as a total worldview and therefore “an alternative to traditional apologetic strategies” (Naugle, p. 23). Kuyper (1931), in the first of five lectures on Calvinism as that all-embracing life system or worldview, says that any worldview must address three foundational relationships that each of us has as humans: with God, with man, and with the world. His answers for a Calvinistic Christian worldview are:

For our relation *to God*: an immediate fellowship of man with the Eternal, independently of priest or church. For the relation of man *to man*: the recognition in each person of human worth, which is his by virtue of his creation after the Divine likeness, and therefore of the equality of all men before God and his magistrate. And for our relation *to the world*: the recognition that in the whole world the curse is restrained by grace, that the life of the world is to be honored in its independence, and that we must, in every domain, discover the treasures and develop the potencies hidden by God in nature and human life (p. 31).

Kuyper asserted that Calvinistic Christianity, as opposed to “vague versions of Protestantism” (Naugle, p. 19), could take its stand “by the side of Paganism, Islamism, Romanism and Modernism” (Kuyper, p. 32), the dominant worldviews of

the day, and provide a comprehensive view of reality that required no more faith than any other worldview.

Probably one of the most significant contributions of Kuyper's strategy of worldview was that it provided him the intellectual instrument for effectively critiquing a scientific and scholarly community that refused to take anything based in religion seriously. Naugle (2002) relates it well as follows:

Kuyper showed that human reason is not neutral in its operation, but functions under the influence of a set of antecedent assumptions that condition all thinking and acting. This realization led to a powerful critique of the modern ideal of scientific neutrality and objectivity. Given the recognition that all theorizing arises out of a priori faith commitments, it also encouraged Christian thinkers to undertake their academic projects on the basis of theistic beliefs with confidence. It is hard to overstate the profound impact this insight has had in engendering a renaissance in Christian scholarship across the disciplines in recent days (pp. 23-24).

Though Orr and Kuyper were the leading edge of a host of great Christian thinkers who translated the gospel message into a viable, workable, and livable worldview strategy, other non-Protestant contributions to this same concept were made by Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy (Naugle). Most notable among these was Karol Jozef Wojtyla, or Pope John Paul II, and his development of what has come to be known as Catholic Christian humanism and is considered to be "an overall theistic view of life" (Naugle, p. 40). However, Protestant evangelicalism has made the largest contribution to the concept of worldview. Naugle asserts that while "it might

be too much to say that it is a characteristic *of* evangelicalism, it is certainly a prominent feature *within it*, especially in the Reformed context” (p. 54).

To understand better the import and impact of worldview, a look at the major worldviews is helpful. The biblical Christian worldview will end this section on Christianity as worldview. The other major worldviews will be examined in the next section. Issues addressed within each worldview discussion include the worldview’s assessment of what constitutes prime reality, or the really real; the nature of external reality, the world we touch and hear and see; the concept of being human; death’s meaning to the human; why we are able to know anything; if right and wrong exists and who or what makes that call; and, human history’s meaning and purpose (Sire, 2004a; Sire, 2004b). After each of the major worldviews have been presented, a more precise explanation of what this researcher means when using the term biblical Christian worldview will be provided.

Christian Theism: The God Who Is There

Biblical Christianity is considered by some to be the building block of all worldviews that developed during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries (Sire, 2004b). In its simplest form, theism is “the belief that there is a transcendent God who created the universe” (Colson & Pearcey, 1999, p. 20). This God is infinite, personal, triune, transcendent, immanent, omniscient, sovereign, and good (Sire, 2004b). In saying God is infinite is to say “he is beyond scope...beyond measure...has no twin...He is, in fact, the only self-existent being” (Sire, p. 26). Packer (1973), in speaking to God’s infiniteness, states that “He is: and it is because He is what He is that everything else is as it is. He is the reality behind all reality, the

underlying cause of all causes and all events” (p. 183). Schaeffer asserts more emphatically that it is not that Christian theism “is the best answer to existence; it is the only answer...The only answer for what exists is that God, the infinite-personal God, really is there...and that the infinite-personal, triune God is not silent” (1972, pp. 14 & 17).

God’s personal side, or personality, denotes a more human perspective in that he is like us, even though in actuality we are like him, and this clearly negates God from being an impersonal being or force or energy (Sire, 2004b). The unity and diversity that is found in God as “three persons, yet one God” (Schaeffer, 1972, p. 15) does not make Christian theism polytheistic (belief in more than one God) as some assert. Rather, Christian theism maintains its monotheism with a trinity of persons in that one God (Calvin, 1960; Noebel, 2006). Triune but one is unique to Christianity and asserts that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are coequally and coeternally the one spoken of in the Book of Deuteronomy, chapter six, verse four: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one” (English Standard Version). Calvin sums it well in stating that “when we profess to believe in one God, under the name of God is understood a single, simple essence, in which we comprehend three persons, or hypostases” (p. 144).

God is transcendent or above and beyond us and our world. He is outside of our reality and at the same time an intimate part of it. He is immanent, meaning “he is with us” (Sire, 2004b, p. 27), close by, and involved and interested in his creation. He is everywhere at once and he is with us in our daily walk. This is a critical

distinction between Christian theism and some of the worldviews to be explained shortly that also profess some type of deity within the universe.

God's omniscience means that he knows all, that all knowledge and truth and wisdom and intelligence and all that there is to know, he knows (Sire, 2004b). When Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" (John 8:38, New American Standard Bible), he was asking, "What is the really real?", and while Christ did not answer Pilate at that moment, the question had already been answered ad infinitum that the God of scripture is truth. Two examples suffice here, the first from Psalm 119, verse 160: "The sum of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting;" and, the words of Christ Himself in John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (New American Standard Bible). In speaking to the theistic view that God is truth, Moreland (1997) states:

When we affirm that the Bible is a revelation from God, we do not simply assert that God as a person is known in and through it. We also mean that God has revealed understandable, objectively true propositions. The Lord's Word is not only practically useful, it is also theoretically true (John 17:17). God has revealed *truth* to us and not just Himself. This truth is addressed to our minds and requires an intellectual grasp to understand and then apply (p. 45).

God's sovereignty is best expressed by "the fact that nothing is beyond God's ultimate interest, control and authority" (Sire, 2004b, p. 28). To say God is good is to make a statement about his character, his essence, and that he is "the absolute standard of righteousness...and...that there is hope for humanity" (Sire, p. 29).

In a theistic framework the nature of external reality begins with God creating the cosmos, speaking it into existence *ex nihilo* (out of nothing) and to operate in a uniform fashion of cause and effect in an open system (Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). That is to say, the universe is not chaotic and disorderly. Rather, it is orderly, systematic, consistent, and in many ways it is often predictable. To say external reality or the cosmos is an open system means that it is not programmed or deterministic but is open to intervention on the part of God or mankind—“God and man are outside of the uniformity of natural causes...not a part of a total cosmic machine...cause and effect sequence...[and] may be changed by God or by people” (Schaeffer, 1976, pp. 142-143). God’s original creation was perfect until Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, to “set themselves up as autonomous beings” (Sire, p. 38), thereby reordering God’s cosmos by what is known as the Fall. Sire elaborates:

Human beings were created good, but through the Fall the image of God became defaced, though not so ruined as not to be capable of restoration; through the work of Christ, God redeemed humanity and began the process of restoring people to goodness, though any given person may choose to reject that redemption (p. 37).

At a specific point in space, time, and history, man “turned from his proper integration point by choice, and in so doing, there was a moral discontinuity; man became abnormal” (Schaeffer, 1972, p. 31). Each of the other worldviews asserts the inherent goodness of the human condition. Christian theism, on the other hand, asserts the basic depravity of the human race and its tendency in that direction.

Human beings, though warped by the Fall, continue to be the *imago Dei*—the image of God—made in the image and likeness of the Creator God. Man and woman are rational, thinking, and decision-making beings who have value because “God has assigned a remarkable value and worth...as his creatures made in his image” (Sproul, 1997, p. 25). This value is theocentric, centered on and in God and his giving value to human life, rather than anthropocentric, or man-centered, whereby man is considered valuable in and of him or herself (Sproul). Human dignity and worth “is derived from God. But though it is derived, people do possess it, even if as a gift” (Sire, 2004b, p. 34). A theistic view of mankind also imparts purpose, equality, responsibility for the care of others, and a high regard for human life in all its forms and stages, with this high regard solidly founded on the belief that men and women are made in the image and likeness of Almighty God (Bertrand, 2007; Colson & Pearcey, 1999). Finally, theism holds that human beings are responsible moral agents who make conscious decisions for which they are held accountable (Noebel, 2006).

Death in theism is built upon the foundation that human beings are eternal souls that will live on in “a transformed existence in heaven or hell” (Sire, 2004b, p. 40), dependent upon each individual’s response to God’s aforementioned restoration process. Human beings do not disappear forever at death, nor do they return to external reality at a later date in a different form. Scripture states that “it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment” (Hebrews 9:27, English Standard Version), resulting in eternity in the presence of God or eternity separated from God. Because God created human beings with a will, God will respect the decision of each individual and award the appropriate consequence—heaven or hell.

Epistemological issues for theism find their foundation in the person and character of God because God created humankind with the capacity to know the world and to know God (Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). Clouser (2003) states: “The biblical teaching is that belief in God impacts *all* knowledge and truth” (p. 10). Sire portrays God as “the all-knowing knower of all things, so we can be the sometimes knowing knowers of some things” (p. 34). The first four verses of chapter one of John’s Gospel help here:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men (New American Standard Bible).

The Word, or Logos in Greek, speaks to God’s “logicality, intelligence, rationality, [and] meaning” (Sire, p. 35), and these things are who he is, part of his essence, and they are the basis for human intelligence and knowledge and for our system of knowing (Noebel; Sire). We are able to know the world around us because God reveals to us the wonders of his creation. The physical sciences permit a peek into God’s work in creation. God’s written word, the Bible, is a more specific revealing of God himself to his creatures and the primary way we come to know and understand him.

Noebel (2006) posits that “Christian morality is founded on the conviction that an absolute moral order exists outside of, and yet somehow is inscribed into, our very being” (p. 129). This absolute moral order flows from the Creator, not the

creature. It is through knowing God, his character and his ways that the knowledge of right and wrong is obtained. Because God is good, without moral or ethical defect, and because he originally created us in that same image, he becomes the absolute standard of measurement, not mankind (Schaeffer, 1972); “God is the original, the universal, the absolute standard for everything that is good and right” (McDowell & Hostetler, 1994, p. 94). Ethics are therefore transcendent, based upon God’s absolute standard. Therefore, “we are not the measure of morality. God is” (Sire, 2004b, p. 42). Right and wrong does exist and God makes that decision—“his character...is the moral absolute of the universe” (Schaeffer, p. 29). Morality is a fixed standard. In every other worldview morality is relativistic and therefore left to the arbitrary notions of a particular society or nation. Also, unlike every other worldview, humans have an individual moral responsibility to obey God’s standards. When individual actions are contrary to God’s absolutes, the consequences are deemed justly deserved and individuals are therefore “responsible for the evils in society” (Noebel, p. 217).

Finally, theism’s view of history is reflected in God’s purposefulness in all of his creation. There is a logical beginning, a meaningful middle, and an eventual end to time as we know it. Everything that happens over this linear passing of time called history is part of God’s sovereign plan for humanity (Bailey, 2008; Bertrand, 2007; Blamires, 2001; Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). Christians generally view history from the perspective of creation, fall, redemption, and glorification in explaining the course of history and in answering the major worldview questions (Blamires; Colson & Pearcey, 1999; Noebel; Pearcey, 2005; Sire). The primary reference for this history is the collection of books called the Bible, a document which has undergone the scrutiny

of historical and archeological criticisms with its veracity intact (McDowell, 1999; Noebel). Both biblical and extrabiblical sources document the historicity of the canon of scripture. Sire sums up the theistic conception of history thus:

In short, the most important aspect of the theistic concept of history is that history has meaning because God—the Logos, meaning itself—is behind all events, not only “sustaining all things by his powerful word (Heb 1:3) but also “in all things...[working] for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28). Behind the apparent chaos of events stands the loving God who is sufficient for all (pp. 43-44).

Other Major Worldviews

Deism: God Is Absent

Deism is a rejection of the biblical view of God as personal, involved, and working out his plan in history (Machen, 1923). Famous Deists include the French philosopher and author Voltaire, the English political philosopher John Locke, as well as Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. Deism is not an overall rejection of the concept of God Himself. God is seen as “a God who had created the world but who had no contact with it now” (Schaeffer, 1976, p.121). God is still seen as the prime reality, the Creator of the universe, but not a Creator who remains involved in or cares about what he created. God literally abandoned his creation to move onto other things and never to be seen or heard from again (Barna, 2003a; Bertrand, 2007; Machen). Deists reject the Bible as God’s inspired word. According to the World Union of Deists (2008), “the Bible is strictly a man-made collection of mythology...the Bible was not handed to mankind by God, nor was it dictated to

human stenographers by God. It has nothing to do with God.” For the deist, God is revealed to humans through nature and reason. Sire (2004b) makes clear the differences between the deist concept and the theist concept when he states:

As in theism, the most important proposition regards the existence and character of God. Essentially, deism reduces the number of features God is said to display. He is a transcendent force or energy, a Prime Mover or First Cause, a beginning to the otherwise infinite regress of past causes. But he is really not a he, though the personal pronoun remains in the language used about him. Certainly he does not care for his creation; he does not love it. He has no “personal” relation to it at all (p. 49).

The really real is God, the created world he left behind, and man’s ability to reason. However, since God is no longer involved in or cares for this world, leaving it to run on its own, then what is left of reality is the cosmos and humanity.

The nature of external reality differs radically from theism in that it is a closed system that is deterministic, closed to God and man’s reordering or intervention (Sire, 2004b), and is in essence “a giant, complex machine that was well-designed and is self-maintaining” (Barna, 2003a, p. 32). There is no room for the supernatural because deists deny “all supernatural elements in the Bible” (Pearcey, 2005, p 297). Events such as miracles are obviously impossible because the system is closed and the laws of cause and effect are in full force. Nature is the window one uses to get a glimpse of the God who created it, with reason as its sidekick, leaving personal experience, use of the intellect, and choices people make the keys to understanding and living life (Barna).

Determinism is a critical factor in how deists view human beings. People are subject to the same cause and effect laws that govern the rest of the cosmos with no ability to transcend their circumstances. Humankind is not viewed as *imago Dei* (made in God's image), though they are credited with intelligence and the ability to reason. Such abilities do not come to them from God and such abilities will permit them to better understand a universe that they cannot impact or change. Human beings have "a sort of autonomous nature just like the rest of the stuff of the universe...[and they] are what they are; they have little hope of becoming anything different or anything more" (Sire, 2004b, p. 50). Regarding the afterlife, Deism takes the position that one cannot know what happens to the individual person or soul once their physical bodies die (World Union of Deists, 2008). Deists love and trust God enough to do what is right and consider it presumptuous of any person to make claims about what God does with human beings after death.

The cosmos for the deist is in its normal state and the theistic concept of a perfect creation that "fell from grace" is unacceptable to them. The cosmos is not abnormal or in need of redemption. Rather, it is as it has always been and is the key to knowing and understanding the God who is the creative force behind it. Deists learn or know "from data and proceed from the specific to the general. Nothing is revealed to us outside that which we experience" (Sire, 2004b, p. 52). The World Union of Deists provides an excellent example of this thinking when addressing the concept of intelligent design. They state, "Intelligent Design refers to the structures in Nature, such as that of DNA, which can be observed and the complexity of which

required an intelligent Designer” (2008). Deist epistemology is based on reason and experience; not on any transcendent or supernatural revelation.

Deistic morality and ethics flow from the general revelation found in nature, accepting the universe as normal and in its original created state. Therefore, whatever *is* must be right because whatever *is* comes from God (Sire, 2004b). Responsibility for everything becomes God’s, not man’s. The concepts of evil and sin do not exist because things are as God created them. There is no foundation for calling something good or something evil. Sire commented on this lack of an ethical foundation saying, “As interested as the early deists were in preserving the ethical content of Christianity [theism], they were unable to find a suitable basis for it” (p. 54). Barna (2003a) adds that without God as the foundation for moral and ethical choices, “relativism reigns...there is no sin and there is no evil” (p. 32).

The meaning of human history in deistic thought is linear, as in theism. However, what follows from holding that the cosmos is a closed system and therefore deterministic, is that the course of nature in history was programmed into the universe at creation and cannot be changed. A closed system allows no intervention into its inner workings on the part of man or on the part of the creator (Sire, 2004b). Unlike theism, there is no ultimate purpose for the cosmos or for individuals because God is absent and uncaring. It is up to each individual to “determine their own destiny because they have been enabled to do so and because of the absence of the Creator” (Barna, 2003a, p. 32).

Naturalism: The God Who Is Not There

Deism provided a transition from Christian theism to naturalism's total rejection of the concept of a transcendent being or god (Barna, 2003a; Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). Sire clearly articulates this transition thus:

In intellectual terms the route is this: In theism God is the infinite-personal Creator sustainer of the cosmos. In deism God is reduced; he begins to lose his personality, though he remains Creator and (by implication) sustainer of the cosmos. In naturalism God is further reduced; he loses his very existence (pp. 59-60).

For the naturalist, prime reality begins with the belief that God does not exist and any perceptions of the divine are simply a projection of our own experience, there is no creator of the cosmos (Barna). On the contrary, atheism asserts that people create the notion of God and God exists only in the minds of those who profess to believe in him (Colson & Pearcey, 1999). McGrath and McGrath (2007) make it most plain when they state that the "core, incontrovertible, foundational assumption of atheism is that there is no God" (p. 53). Naturalistic thought replaces the God of theism and deism with the cosmos; the natural world. The cosmos is eternal and all matter has always existed, though perhaps in different forms (Barna; Noebel; Sire). Colson & Pearcey describe the naturalist's conception of reality as the cosmos assuming the role and position of God as follows:

Whereas the Bible says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1), naturalists say that in the beginning were the particles, along with blind, purposeless natural laws. That nature created the universe

out of nothing, through a quantum fluctuation. That nature formed our planet, with its unique ability to support life. That nature drew together the chemicals that formed the first living cell. And naturalism says that nature acted through Darwinian mechanisms to evolve complex life-forms and, finally, human beings, with the marvels of consciousness and intelligence (p 52).

The really real is the cosmos which has always been. The Christian God, or any other concept of god, had nothing to do with it. Noebel states that naturalists do not even tend to believe in “a universe that exudes too much design, because this design could be construed as evidence for a Designer” (p. 102). Atheistic evolution is the only compatible option for the naturalist. Anything else is not science and, therefore, not accepted.

The nature of external reality begins, as does deism, with the belief that the universe is a closed system that cannot be reordered (Sire, 2004b). The universe is a complex reality of cause and effect that is held together from within, of and by itself, and not by any transcendent being. Determinism is the logical consequence of a cause and effect, closed system (Schaeffer, 1976). Everything “is essentially a unified machine, with people as elements in that machine that evolved from the existing matter” (Barna, 2003a, p.33). Naturalists reject any notion that is not material or existent in nature (Noebel, 2006).

A human being is considered to be of the same substance or matter as the rest of the cosmos, with slight modifications or variances (Barna, 2003a; Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). Human beings in no way transcend the universe’s closed system, and all of the laws that apply to the cosmos apply to humanity (Schaeffer, 1976; Noebel;

Sire). Mankind, according to Schaeffer's analysis of naturalistic biology, "is only the sum of the impersonal plus time plus chance; he is nothing more than the energy particle extended and more complex" (p. 235). Viewed as complex machines, the personality that makes each person different from the next is described as "an interrelation of chemical and physical properties we do not yet fully understand" (Sire, p. 64). The mind functions as part of the machine, not something beyond the human condition, as in theism, because it "is a strictly physical phenomenon" (Noebel, p. 104). This psychological monism results logically in behaviorism, the concept that thought and personality are merely chemical reactions in the brain. Behaviorism is unacceptable to most naturalists because it "is a stultifying theory that reduces us to mere automatons" (Noebel, p. 226). Rather, human beings are considered to be distinct and separate, "unique among animals because we alone are capable of conceptual thought, employ speech, possess a cumulative tradition (culture) and have had a unique method of evolution" (Sire, p. 66). The law of behaviorism that logically flows from a closed, cause and effect system does not preclude, according to some naturalist thinking, a level of human free will, or at least a sense or perception thereof, that permits individual choices in crafting one's own decision-making and destiny.

This ability to have some degree of free will in a deterministic system is the moral and ethical basis of naturalism. Naturalists can, therefore, be held responsible for actions determined to be unethical or immoral. Also, humans are seen as basically good and the theistic construct known as the Fall is not accepted. Society and social institutions are responsible for the bad or evil things that happen, not people. In

theism, a transcendent God is the foundational structure for determining that which is right and wrong. In naturalism, it is the human being that is the ultimate foundation and “values and ethics...a human fabrication with no basis in reality or objectivity...[are] situational and inconsistent” (Barna, 2003a, p. 33). Naturalistic moral and ethical beliefs quite often reflect those of the surrounding culture, but there is nothing that binds the naturalist to any cultural convention or norm (Wilson, 2001). Schaeffer (1972) asserts that you “have situational, statistical ethics—the standard of averages—but you cannot have morality” (p. 23). Schaeffer states elsewhere that “in any form of determinism what is considered right or acceptable is arbitrary” (1976, p. 230). Lewis (1974) makes the same point and puts the arbitrariness into the hands of “some few lucky people” (p. 74). The Humanist Manifesto II states plainly the naturalistic view on morality and ethics:

We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience.

Ethics is autonomous and situational needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stem from human need and interest. To deny this distorts the whole basis of life. Human life has meaning because we create and develop our futures...The goal is to pursue life’s enrichment despite debasing forces of vulgarization, commercialization, and dehumanization (Kurtz, 1973, p. 17).

Ethical and moral values and systems are constructed, revised, and enforced by human beings with no transcendent input or assistance (Wilson). Noebel would add that Darwinian evolutionary theory, and particularly natural selection, makes survival the only moral good. Such a conclusion “became the framework for...Hitler’s Aryan policies” (p. 183).

Because man is made of the same matter as the rest of the universe, and anything transcendent is ferociously denied, when that matter which is a person “is disorganized at death, then that person disappears” (Sire, 2004b, p. 67). There is no soul or personality that lives on after the body stops functioning and “there is no life after death; nor is there Heaven or Hell” (Barna, 2003a, p. 33). The mind and body live, grow, and die together (Noebel, 2006). To the naturalist, scientific data is the only credible source of information. There is no evidence that would lead one to believe in a life hereafter or that “life survives the death of the body...[in any way other than] in our progeny and in the way our lives have influenced others in our culture” (Kurtz, 1973, p. 17).

In answering the epistemological questions, the naturalist begins with the assertion that the natural world is all that exists (Barna, 2003a; Colson & Pearcey, 1999; Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). The only way to know anything is through the use of man’s reason and intelligence applied to the tool of scientific research. The presupposition is that “the only things that are real are those that can be known and measured by experience and observation. Everything else is unreal, a product of subjective fantasy, including things like love and beauty, good and evil, God and conscience” (Colson & Pearcey, p. 419). Science is the only source of knowledge and Darwinian evolutionary theory is the filter through which all scientific inquiry passes. Darwinian naturalism holds that “the mind is nothing more than a part of nature,” rejecting theism’s assertion that the mind is “*transcendent* to matter...[and positing that the] mind is *produced* by matter” (Pearcey, 2005, p. 229). Pearcey calls this “naturalizing of the mind” (p. 230) and goes on to say:

It seemed to imply that mental functions are merely adaptations for solving problems in the environment. Ideas originate as chance mutations in the brain, parallel to Darwin's chance variations in nature. And the ideas that stick around and become firm beliefs are those that help us adapt to the environment—a sort of mental natural selection. Concepts and convictions develop as tools for survival, no different from the lion's teeth or the eagle's claws (p. 230).

There are two types of history for the naturalist; human history and natural history (Sire, 2004b). Like the theist and deist, history is linear. However, unlike the theist, there is no apparent or inherent goal of history. Sire states that “it is simply going to last as long as conscious human beings last. When we go, human history disappears, and natural history goes on its way alone” (p. 72). Human history is meaningless and the events that touch humanity have the meaning people choose to give them with no inherent or lasting meaning of their own. Matter existed, the cosmos came into being somehow, and mankind evolved from the matter of that cosmos and will eventually return to it individually and as a species (Noebel, 2006; Sire). Therefore, some naturalists with a humanistic bent see the flow of history as a progression of making life on earth its own heaven. Those whose naturalism has a Marxist-Leninist persuasion see history as a movement towards its own version of heaven on earth, global communism (Noebel).

Nihilism: The Dark Ages

The logical and rational outworking of naturalism; that is, when pressed to its outermost points, is nihilism (Barna, 2003a; Sire, 2004b), and “nihilism is the

negation of everything—knowledge, ethics, beauty, reality. The 19th century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and American author Ernest Hemingway are notables among nihilist. In nihilism no statement has validity; nothing has meaning. Everything is gratuitous...just there” (Sire, p. 87). This “anti-world worldview” (Barna, p. 34) assert the same naturalistic presuppositions regarding prime reality, that of the eternal existence of matter within the cosmos, and this matter includes mankind (Barna; Sire). The atheistic premise that God does not exist is likewise present in nihilism as it is in naturalism. However, the similarities end at this point as the nihilist treks logically through the naturalistic worldview without making intellectual exemptions, such as that made by the naturalists in positing some level of free will and therefore human responsibility.

The nature of external reality in nihilism is that matter is all that exists. It is eternal and was not created—it just is. The cosmos is a closed system, as in naturalism, and is meaningless and random (Barna, 2003a; Sire, 2004b). Because the universe is a closed system, its “activity can be governed only from within” (Sire, p. 92) the system, no intervention from without, so any change is a function of those forces from within the system, so that the past causes the present, the present causes the future. This deterministic nature of the nihilistic worldview, which it inherits from naturalism, says that the “possibility that some things need not be, that others are possible, is not possible” (Sire, p. 93). Any perception otherwise is illusory as there is no such thing as true truths, only illusions, and anyone who believes otherwise has simply forgotten that “there is no true truth, only subjective projections” (Naugle, 2002, p. 102).

The view of humanity in nihilistic thinking retains the naturalistic presupposition that man and woman are not created in the image of a transcendent God, as the theistic view holds. Rather, man is a more highly complex form of universal matter with “an interrelation of chemical and physical properties we do not yet fully understand” (Sire, 2004b, p. 64). Nihilism moves logically beyond naturalism and their shared deterministic closed system by asserting that free will does not truly exist for human beings, that all actions are pre-determined by the interaction of forces within the closed system, and that any “perception” that one is exercising choice or freedom is an illusion (Sire). Sire asserts:

A human being is thus a mere piece of machinery, a toy—complicated, very complicated, but a toy of impersonal cosmic forces. A person’s self-consciousness is only an epiphenomenon; it is just part of the machinery looking at itself. But consciousness is only part of the machinery; there is no “self” apart from the machinery. There is no “ego” that can stand over against the system and manipulate it at its own will. Its “will” is the will of the cosmos (pp. 93-94).

This means, among other things, that one is not responsible for one’s actions. It also means that there is no inherent value, worth, meaning, significance, or dignity to be found in human beings (Barna, 2003a; Sire). People are simply matter that does not matter any more or any less than any other matter.

Death in naturalism is the end of existence; extinction. This remains the same for the nihilist. The cosmos or universe is composed of matter. Everything is matter and matter is eternal. Human beings are simply a more complex form of matter, but

matter nonetheless. When a human body stops living it returns to the cosmos as a different form of matter (Sire, 2004b). Naturalism, taken to its logical extreme, leads to nihilism. Sire remarks that “if we take seriously the implications of the death of God, the disappearance of the transcendent, the closedness of the universe, we end right there” (p. 107). Human life ends and individual human history ends. Human history will last as long as humankind. Natural history will endure forever, though there may be no humans present to perceive it.

The basic epistemological premise of nihilism, according to Sire (2004b), is that “if any given person is the result of impersonal forces—whether working haphazardly or by inexorable law—that person has no way of knowing whether what he or she seems to know is illusion or truth” (p. 97). Whereas naturalism places a heavy emphasis on reason, nihilism argues that determinism abolishes the concept of reason and the only knowledge one has is the knowledge one creates. This knowledge then becomes truth for that individual though it is not true truth; truth is an illusion (Naugle, 2002; Sire). Naturalists and nihilists “pursue a knowledge that forever recedes before them. We can never *know* (Sire, p. 100).

The logical end for morality and ethics is the loss of a foundation upon which to stand. Colson and Pearcey (1999) posit that when belief in the biblical God is abandoned, any ideas of morality based upon that God have no place. Colson and Pearcey continue by asserting the correctness of the logic used by the proponents of nihilism and state that nihilists believe that Christian morality is “a morality for slaves. Kindness, forgiveness, humility, obedience, self-denial—these were characteristics of weak, repressed slaves who had rejected the joy of life” (p. 173).

Because there “is no moral plumb line, no ultimate, nonchanging standard of value” (Sire, 2004b, p. 104), nothing can be said to be good or evil, right or wrong.

Naturalists attempted to base ethical and moral considerations on human reason.

When nihilists extended the argument to show that reason was illusory, that foundation was destroyed. Ethical and moral relativism resulted. There is no absolute standard against which to measure human conduct (Wilson, 2001).

Existentialism: An Answer to Nihilism

Existentialism, like nihilism, is an extension of naturalism. It is an extension that has as its goal the debunking of much of nihilistic thought (Barna, 2003a; Sire, 2004b). Existentialism comes in two forms “that bear a brotherly relationship but are the children of different fathers” (Sire, p. 139). The first is atheistic existentialism and the second is theistic existentialism (Schaeffer, 1976). The atheistic variety is the response to a crushing nihilism, and the theistic version is a response to what was considered “dead theism, dead orthodoxy...reduction of Christianity to sheer morality” (Sire, p. 139). Both forms of existentialism will be outlined in turn, beginning with atheistic existentialism.

Atheistic existentialism accepts many of the presuppositions of naturalism. Regarding prime reality, the material cosmos is all that exists or ever has existed. God does not exist and the universe “exists as a uniformity of cause and effect in a closed system” (Sire, 2004b, p. 114). History is considered linear, chaotic, absurd, meaningless, and purposeless (Barna, 2003a; Sire). Ethics and morality are human enterprises with no transcendent foundation. Only when it comes to the nature and

existence of human beings does this branch of existentialism fork in a different direction than its naturalistic parent.

The nature of the external reality proposed by naturalism is accepted by atheistic existentialists. It consists of the material world, the objective world of inexorable law of deterministic cause and effect that is investigated, probed, hypothesized, and observed by human beings through the tools of science and logic. However, there is also a subjective side to the cosmos that is the world of the mind and consciousness. Science and logic are not welcomed here (Schaeffer, 1976; Sire, 2004b). Atheistic existentialism splits from its naturalistic roots on this point. The subjective is not only a part of external reality, but it is the most important piece. It is more important than matter, because it brings meaning and purpose to humankind (Sire). This dualism is also referred to as a two realm or two story theory of truth. The nonrational and noncognitive is in the upper story and the rational and verifiable is in the lower story (Pearcey, 2005; Schaeffer, 1972).

Human beings perceive themselves as the only self-conscious and self-determinate beings in the cosmos, though no one knows why. This is the starting point for the atheistic existentialist (Sire, 2004b). The opportunity for significance as a human being, impossible in naturalism and nihilism, appears possible under existentialism because “significance is not up to the facts of the objective world over which we have no control, but up to the consciousness of the subjective world over which we have complete control” (Sire, p. 116). The objective world is absurd, chaotic, and ultimately of no value. On the other hand, it is in the subjective world of man that value and meaning are created. It is up to each individual to create meaning

and value by rebelling “against that absurdity” (Sire, p. 118) called the cosmos and living an authentic existence by creating his own meaning and value (Barna, 2003a; Colson & Pearcey, 1999; Schaeffer, 1976). Francis Schaeffer sums it up well when he states, “Truth is in one’s own head. The ideal of objective truth...gone” (p. 171).

Death of the person in atheistic existentialism remains the same as in naturalism and nihilism: extinction. Throughout the course of a person’s life meaning and value are affirmed repeatedly, but the subjective world is unable to stop the objective world’s intrusion into it in the form of death. Sire (2004b) states:

Atheistic existentialism goes beyond nihilism only to reach solipsism, the lonely self that exists for fourscore and seven (if it doesn’t contract the plague earlier), then ceases to exist. Many would say that that is not to go beyond nihilism at all; it is only to don a mask called value, a mask stripped clean away by death (p. 126).

What is left after death is the memory of a life lived and whether it was authentic or inauthentic. Even this will be left up to the subjective interpretation of those left behind.

For the atheistic existentialist, epistemology is also broken down into the objective and subjective realms. In the objective realm, people “know the external, objective world by virtue of careful observation, recording, hypothesizing, checking hypotheses by experiment, ever refining theories and proving guesses about the lay of the cosmos we live in” (Sire, 2004b, p. 115). From the subjective perspective, science and logic have no input. The self apprehends and internalizes the objective

world and, through self-conscious and self-determinate processes, defines oneself (Schaeffer, 1976; Sire).

Since each “of us is king of our own subjective world” (Sire, 2004b, p. 117), with no transcendent standard or authority, ethics and morality become whatever one chooses: choice becomes paramount. According to the atheistic existentialist, one can never choose evil, only good. Atheistic existentialism holds that not choosing could be the only possible evil. One’s choice does not conflict with others because nothing can be truly good unless it is good for society at large (Sire). Barna (2003a) concurs saying, “Constant conflict is avoided only because what is best for me is usually best for others, too, and thus results in a world where people’s personal choices satisfy personal longings and societal interest simultaneously” (p. 34). Individual choice is the standard and is “elevated to the ultimate value, the only justification for any action” (Colson & Pearcey, 1999, p. 23).

The second form existentialism takes is theistic, a “response to a Christianity that had lost its theology completely and had settled for a watered-down gospel of morality and good works” (Sire, 2004b, p. 127). Theistic existentialism accepts many of the presuppositions of biblical theism. Prime reality is the infinite, immanent, triune, and transcendent God of theism who is omniscient, sovereign, and good. External reality is that an *ex nihilo* (out of nothing) created order that is an open system operates with a uniformity of cause and effect. It can be reordered or manipulated from the outside by its Creator or from the inside by mankind. This creation was originally perfect but is now fallen. It can only be restored to God through Christ. There is life after death that can be spent with God or separated from

him. Finally, ethics and morality are based upon God's transcendent character and not on mankind (Sire).

Sharing much of theism's presuppositional character, theistic existentialism has as its starting point man, not God (Sire, 2004b). Theistic existentialism accepts the objective and subjective categories of atheistic existentialism. However, the stronger emphasis is on the subjective, personal, choice-centered component. Knowledge becomes more subjective and the truth is often filled with paradoxical situations that can only be overcome by faith (Sire). Objective knowledge is less important in theistic existentialism and allows for more radical departures from biblical theism, particularly in the view of history.

Sire (2004b) states that theistic existentialism took two very large steps away from theism. The first step was to "distrust the accuracy of recorded history...[and the second was] to lose interest in its facticity and to emphasize its religious implication or meaning" (p. 135). Theistic existentialism, while having most of its roots in biblical theism, also subscribes in part to some naturalistic thinking. In doing so it denies the supernatural miracles of the Bible, which in turn casts doubt on the credibility of Scripture as historical fact (Schaeffer, 1976). In many other ways the Bible's truths were undermined to the point that the Bible became historically untrustworthy for the theistic existentialist. Schaeffer adds that because this theology "says that the Bible does not touch the cosmos or history, [it] has no real basis for applying the Bible's values in a historic situation, in either morals or law" (p. 177). This led to a new emphasis stating that the "facts the Bible recorded were not important; what was important were its examples of the good life and its timeless

truths of morality” (Sire, p. 136). The narrative became important, and from the fall to the resurrection of Christ, the historical reality is shrouded in a cloud of doubt. It is accepted as a subjective piece of the experience that disciples encounter. Sire asserts that theistic existentialism’s abandonment of facticity leads to an abandonment of meaning and, therefore, leads one back to nihilism.

Eastern Pantheistic Monism: Paneverythingism

Theism, deism, naturalism, nihilism, and existentialism are all part of Western thought and practice with the latter four being mostly a response to the first one, theism. Eastern pantheistic monism is a complete departure from the five previous worldviews. Colson and Pearcey (1999) state:

When the bright image of science and progress began to fade, and optimism gave way to disillusionment and despair, many people began to cast about for answers from other cultures. Asian religions, especially Hinduism and Buddhism, have always enchanted people from Western cultures to some degree, and today these religions have become popular alternatives to the dominant Western worldview (p. 263).

This divergent path leads to an ultimate reality in which everyone and everything is god: God is all that exists. There is nothing that exists that is not god. This god is not the God of theism, but is an infinite and impersonal essence or concept or abstract (Barna, 2003a; Colson & Pearcey; Noebel, 2006; Pearcey, 2005; Sire, 2004b).

Schaeffer (1976) asserts that a “more accurate word than pantheism to describe this position is pan-everythingism” (p. 165), because using theism in the name connotes a presence of personality that this worldview denies. The “divine is a nonpersonal,

noncognitive spiritual force field” (Pearcey, p. 147) that comprises reality, and everything else is an illusion. This essence or oneness is considered the soul of the cosmos, and every individual soul is considered to be the soul of the cosmos (Noebel; Sire). The entire material world has some of god in it and all is one (Barna; Machen, 1923). Like naturalism, pantheism sees all matter within the cosmos as eternal and not created. Also, the cosmos itself is seen as good, not fallen as in theism.

Human beings, like the impersonal god, are impersonal in their essence. In theism the supreme trait of God and people is personality. They are self-conscious and self-determining beings (Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). Pantheism, on the other hand, denounces such duality and states that the supreme trait of god is oneness; “sheer abstract, undifferentiated, nondual unity” (Sire, p. 150). Human beings are a part of that oneness, not separate from it. Individuality does not exist in pantheism, and there is no inherent worth accorded to individual human beings. Pantheism professes that an embodied soul returns to the One, Atman, at death and that no individual or immortal soul survives death (Sire).

Death becomes a chance for the soul to be reincarnated into some other form found in the material world, not necessarily that of a human being. What one is or what one becomes is dependent upon past actions in former lives. Any wrongdoing must be paid for through suffering in the limitless number of incarnations (Barna, 2003a; Sire, 2004b). Because suffering is required for retribution, there is “no value in alleviating suffering” (Sire, p. 153) and perhaps some absurd good that comes from causing suffering for others. Death in pantheism really does not exist because the essence of the person is eternal and is forever working toward oneness with the One.

Just as it is said that nihilism is the anti-world worldview, so it is asserted that pantheism posits an anti-epistemological epistemology. Rather than knowing, pantheism is concerned with *being*. Knowing requires self-consciousness, self-consciousness requires personality and thus the duality of a “thinker and a thing thought” (Sire, 2004b, p. 150), all concepts rejected by pantheism. The pure consciousness pursued by pantheists is a total emptying of the mind and a union with the One. In its highest form it is a state that Sire refers to as “the state most approaching total oblivion” (p. 151). A system of knowledge and knowing are not a part of eastern pantheism. The ontological concern for being one with the cosmos is the truest and highest calling.

Ethics and morality in eastern pantheistic monism are no less complicated than those aspects of the worldview already mentioned. There is no solid basis for morality or ethical behavior. Motivation does exist to do good deeds, however, in order to be reunited “with the Universal Spiritual Essence from which we came” (Pearcey, 2005, p. 148). Sire (2004b) states more particularly that any distinction between good and evil fade away because everything is considered good in pantheism. This “everything is good” thinking appears to negate the need for good karma, but that paradox is not a concern for pantheistic adherents.

The eastern pantheistic worldview considers history “as meaningless, time is seen as cyclical” (Barna, 2003a, p. 38). In order for a soul to realize its oneness with the One it must pass beyond time (Sire, 2004b). History flows continually like a river. Brief moments can be examined and time does exist, though it is unimportant and unnecessary unless it has some present meaning. The facts of history are of no

concern unless they help today. Beyond that they are “myth and myth only, for myth takes us out of particularity and lifts us to essence” (Sire, p. 157). The goal for the pantheist is to transcend history.

New Age: Cosmic Humanism

One of the youngest, fastest growing, and most influential worldviews today is the New Age worldview or Cosmic Humanism (Noebel, 2006). It is syncretistic and eclectic in nature. It borrows from many worldviews, with primary influence from Eastern pantheism and Western naturalism (Barna, 2003a; Colson & Pearcey, 1999; Noebel; Sire, 2004b). Noebel makes the point that Cosmic Humanism, or New Ageism, differs from Christianity and secular worldviews in that “it embraces neither theism or atheism” (p. 71). The New Age worldview holds as its prime reality the person, the soul or essence of each human being rather than the transcendent God of theism or the cosmos of naturalism. It is the individual who is all important. The conscious center of the person is seen as the center of the universe (Sire). The person is seen as divine (Colson & Pearcey). God and the individual are one, they are inseparable (Noebel).

The nature of external reality begins with the self surrounded by two universes, the visible and the invisible. The visible universe is much like that of theism in that the system is open. It is orderly and able to be reordered by the individual. It is real and not illusory. The laws of nature and science operate in a cause and effect manner (Sire, 2004b). It differs from theism and reflects naturalistic thought in that the universe is eternal. It was not created, because it always has been. Darwinian evolution controls the ebb and flow of all things physical (Colson &

Pearcey, 1999; Noebel, 2006; Sire). The invisible universe, on the other hand, does not operate by the rules of the visible universe. The invisible universe is a world of altered states or levels of consciousness that allow the conscious self to “travel hundreds of miles across the surface of the earth...in the twinkling of an eye...[and where] time and space are elastic; the universe can turn inside out, and time can flow backwards” (Sire, p. 185). Spiritual beings, both good and bad, inhabit this realm and can be used by the individual in moving to the ultimate goal of higher consciousness (Barna, 2003a; Sire).

Human beings are the center of the cosmos in the New Age view of the world. The Creator God of theism is rejected, as are the concepts of the fall from grace and the concomitant imperfect world. The New Age worldview holds that as people come to realize they are divine, the world is on the verge of a spectacular change in human nature as we know it (Colson & Pearcey, 1999; Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). People “are seen as possessing unlimited potential; that potential is blocked only by our own unwillingness to move beyond our current time, space, and material constraints” (Barna, 2003a, p. 39). People are part of God. Anything that is wrong with the world is rooted in human beings forgetting that they are “part of God” (Colson & Pearcey, p. 268).

The New Age view on death is similar to that of theism in that human beings are much more than their bodies. There is a spirit or soul that lives on after physical death (Noebel, 2006). New Ageism then diverges quickly from theism on the issues of death and aligns more clearly with Eastern pantheism in its reincarnation beliefs (Barna, 2003a; Sire, 2004b). The after-life does not resemble the heaven and hell of

theism. After-life is a higher or different state of consciousness, a transition to a different state or stage of life (Noebel; Sire). Many New Age proponents profess recall of prior lives in prior ages, many of them quite specific about time, place, and circumstances (Sire). They assert that unless one can recall some particulars from these previous incarnations, then one cannot learn from the past or become more self-aware (Noebel).

The system of knowing in New Age worldview thinking begins with the rejection of reason as a basis for reality. It accepts the presupposition that reality is anything the person sees or perceives or believes is real. There is no difference between appearance and reality (Noebel, 2006). Sire (2004b) asserts that this perception takes two forms, one of the visible universe and one of the invisible universe. The visible universe is referred to as “ordinary consciousness” and the invisible is referred to as “cosmic consciousness” (p. 189). Ordinary consciousness sees the world as it is, with time linear and space three dimensional. With the exception of Eastern pantheism, this is no different from the other worldviews that have been described. In the case of the invisible universe, or cosmic consciousness, self realization is the “realization that the self and the cosmos not only are of the same piece but are the same piece” (Sire, p. 190). This involves becoming one with the cosmos and going beyond that oneness “to recognize that the self is the generator of all reality and in that sense is both the cosmos and the cosmos-maker” (Sire, pp. 190-191). This second aspect of knowing, cosmic consciousness, is an individual experience and cannot be independently confirmed or denied. This knowing lies in the realm of the individual experiencing it (Noebel).

Colson and Pearcey (1999) state that “New Age philosophy gives no basis for morality” (p. 269). This is common in all worldviews except theism (Barna, 2003a; Sire, 2004b). When the self is the “generator of all reality...the cosmos and the cosmos-maker” (Sire, p. 191), then there is no good and evil, no right and wrong. Ethics and morality become relative and self-serving (Barna; Colson & Pearcey; Sire). Barna calls this lack of an objective moral standard “moral anarchy” (p. 39), and this is sometimes the case. New Ageism does, however, maintain the belief in a host of benevolent and demonic spiritual forces that must be placated. One form of placation is obviously doing good and avoiding evil. The conflict comes in defining good and evil in a worldview that states that everything is good.

The meaning of history in New Ageism is much the same as that of Eastern pantheism. A person goes through incarnations in order to reach ultimate consciousness or oneness with the One (Colson & Pearcey, 1999). Moving towards utopia through the various altered states of consciousness in the invisible universe does not rely on historical facticity and has meaning only if it helps in the current incarnation. Unlike theism, New Ageism sees little meaning or purpose or end to human history, only elevated states of consciousness. Noebel (2006) adds that cosmic humanism explains the trajectory of the history of mankind as beginning due to “the actions of an Ultimate Cause and...marked by a reliable, though bloody evolution toward the New Age” (p. 418).

Postmodernism: Radical Relativism or Whatever

Postmodernism is said to be less than a complete worldview and, at the same time, more than a complete worldview (Sire, 2004b). There seems to be no “single

cohesive Postmodern philosophy (rather, there are several)...[but] a few consistent themes emerge” (Noebel, 2006, p. 119). Barna (2003a) finds that it “is difficult to describe because it exists to defy description and categorization” (p. 35). Considered the most recent form of naturalism by Sire, postmodernism posits as prime reality that there is no God and that the cosmos is all that exists. Human beings are the only rational, thinking creatures known to exist within the cosmos. Additionally, postmodernism accepts no over-arching metanarratives or worldviews or master stories to explain prime reality. Each individual’s perception or belief is their own creation (Barna, 2003a; Colson & Pearcey, 1999; Naugle, 2002; Noebel; Pearcey, 2005; Sire). Noebel correctly notes, however, that this notion of no metanarratives is itself an overarching metanarrative or grand story of reality.

The nature of external reality, according to postmodernists, is forever hidden from human beings. Telling stories to create narratives is all one can do (Barna, 2003a; Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). External reality for the theist was defined by God. It was defined, for the naturalist, through the autonomy of human reason, science, and the absence of God. For the postmodernist, external reality cannot be known by anyone but is constructed by everyone. This is referred to as anti-realism, the construct that human thought subjectively constructs reality. There is no *real* world, “only six billion constructions of the world” (Noebel, p. 121). No one has a claim to truth or reality and individual or group stories or narratives cannot be forced on others (Barna; Noebel; Pearcey, 2005; Sire). Further, per Sire, narratives that are used as metanarratives, such as theism and naturalism, become oppressive when they

are not one's own story. Postmodernism insists that such oppression must be rejected and doing so "is to reject all the stories society tells us" (p. 224).

The postmodernist view of human beings is similar to that presented in the atheistic existentialistic worldview explanation. "If there is not a God's-eye-view of what constitutes the individual," according to Noebel, "we are left to the changing whims of our social condition telling us who and what we are" (2006, p. 242).

Humans are the only self-conscious, self-determinate, reasoning beings in the cosmos and they "make themselves who they are by the languages they construct about themselves" (Sire, 2004b, p. 225). The narrative one creates for oneself becomes the truth for that person because there is no way of knowing what is true and what is not or what exists and what does not. A person's story "is personal, it cannot be challenged, but neither can it extend to society to represent a greater truth or body of meaning than that which it represents to the individual" (Barna, 2003a, p. 36). Unlike theism that posits a dualistic concept of the individual as one having both physical and mental capacities, postmodern psychology denies the existence of a soul and replaces it with a socially constructed self (Moreland and Craig, 2003; Noebel). Finally, the postmodern position on the death of the human being is, as in existentialism, the end of existence for the individual and his narrative.

Epistemology for the postmodernist puts no confidence in human reason or the scientific method as is found in naturalism. Postmodernism denies "that there is any known or knowable connection between what we think and say with what is actually there" (Sire, 2004b, p. 232). Intellectual constructs "must be recognized...for what they truly are, namely, the creations of human beings suffering

from severe cases of intellectual amnesia...as humanly-fabricated, self-contained conceptual systems...untethered to any external reality or objective truth” (Naugle, 2002, p. 180). It is through language and narrative that knowing is ascribed.

Postmodernism does not deny the presence of the physical world. Rather, it argues that such a world cannot be truly known and can only be reported on in the language of scientific claims because humans are not able to directly access reality (Noebel, 2006; Sire). Any system of knowing must not be allowed to become a metanarrative, unless, of course, it is postmodernism.

Since truth is self-constructed and there is no absolute standard against which to measure anything, ethical and moral conduct is relative. Truth for postmodernists is, per Sire (2004b), a “radical ethical relativism” (p. 227). Postmodernism makes no normative judgments, and moral behavior is a private matter (Barna, 2003a; Noebel, 2006; Pearcey, 2005). For postmodernists all beliefs, behaviors, views, and life styles hold equal validity. No one is to say one is wrong, right, better, or worse than any other (Colson & Pearcey, 1999). Hyper-tolerance is how Barna describes postmodernism’s acceptance of any single narrative and rejection of any moral metanarrative. This religious pluralism, the tolerance of all religious beliefs, is the warp and woof for the non-toleration of any religion that makes absolute truth claims, such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Noebel).

History’s meaning in postmodernism is basically what the historian wants it to be. It is fundamentally meaningless and purposeless, as is true in naturalism. Objective truth does not exist, so what occurred in the past is only someone else’s narrative as interpreted by them (Noebel, 2006; Sire, 2004b). This deconstruction of

language, that is, the reader constructing his or her own meaning from what is read or observed regardless of the original author's intent, holds that authors write about "their own subjective experiences, [and are] not communicating objective or eternal truths about God or humanity" (Noebel, p. 80). Blamires (2001) calls this the abuse of language. This revisionist history, "rewriting the past to serve an ideological purpose and to empower oppressed social groups" (Noebel, p. 425), is not concerned with facticity or evidence. Its focus is the desired meaning in the here and now (Sowell, 2005). Postmodern historians are focused on the present, the moment in which they live. The "pastness of the past" (Sire, p. 231) is obscured or obliterated by the obsession with the here and now. A fixed, objective historical context is not necessarily true and perhaps irrelevant. This lack of historical truth, also referred to as fiction by many postmodern theorists, is clearly illustrated by Noebel when he states, "Indeed, if history is (largely) fiction, then Mother Teresa and Adolph Hitler cannot be used as examples of good and evil. There are no 'facts.' There are only various degrees of fiction" (p. 425).

From Theism to Biblical Christian Worldview

Each of the definitions and explanations of the various worldviews in this review are general enough in nature that most would agree with what has been said. Many would also espouse some preferred variant or interpretation as the more complete truth of a particular worldview. Biblical theism is no different in this regard. Sire (1978) posits that "Christian theism, like any world view, has a multitude of colors and shades" (p. 176). Kanitz (2005) adds that there is no universally accepted definition of Christian worldview, even among Christian

university faculty. Such faculty cannot ignore that once they “enter the classroom...there is not one but multiple Christian worldviews” (p. 100). There is “common ground” on which nearly all Christians agree says Kanitz, but there is no one Christian worldview “that is uniformly agreed upon” (p. 101). Bertrand (2007) seems to concur with the notion that no one single Christian worldview exists. Asserting that a Christian worldview is theoretically possible, Bertrand states the “community of faith is riddled with factions and strife. It is not of one mind” (p. 82).

This “common ground” upon which most Christians can ostensibly agree is rebuffed by Schaeffer (1981) when he states:

Related to this, it seems to me, is the fact that many Christians do not mean what I mean when I say Christianity is true, or Truth. They are Christians and they believe in, let us say, the truth of creation, the truth of the virgin birth, the truth of Christ’s miracles, Christ’s substitutionary death, and His coming again. But they stop there with these and other individual truths.

When I say Christianity is true I mean it is true to total reality—the total of what is, beginning with the central reality, the objective existence of the personal –infinite God. Christianity is not just a series of truths but *Truth*—Truth about all of reality. And the holding to that Truth intellectually—and then in some poor way living upon that Truth, the Truth of what is—brings forth not only certain personal results, but also governmental and legal results (pp. 20-21).

Schaeffer is stating that a biblical Christian worldview encompasses all of reality, including government, education, business, and so forth. It is not just what is

typically considered the spiritual sphere of life, and this takes one well beyond the “common ground” of Kanitz (2005). Johnson (2004) asserts that the “cultural commission and the great commission are inseparable because all of creation belongs to God (Ps 24:1) and all authority has been given to Christ (Mt 28:18)” (p. 6). Colson and Pearcey agree when they state:

Genuine Christianity is more than a relationship with Jesus, more than a relationship expressed in personal spirituality, church attendance, Bible study, and works of charity. It is more than believing a system of doctrines about God. Genuine Christianity is a way of seeing and comprehending all reality. It is a worldview (pp. 14-15).

Noebel (2006) supports this viewpoint by suggesting that any worldview must clearly articulate a perspective on each of the following ten areas: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history. Noebel further contends that biblical Christianity clearly addresses each of these areas more satisfactorily than any other worldview. He finds that Christians are not “overstepping their bounds” (p. 31) when they view as sacred what some, including many Christians, consider secular. Noebel refers to these ten areas as dimensions or categories about which “we live and move and have our being (our very essence and existence)” (p. 32). In Sire’s (2004a) worldview definition that was adopted earlier, these ten dimensions would be considered foundational for the biblical Christian behavior that should follow such thinking. Naugle (2002) summarizes it well:

While there will never be a perfect agreement between the Bible and a biblical worldview, every effort must still be made to shape a Christian perspective of the universe by the teachings of the scriptures. In brief, a genuine Christian *Weltanschauung* must always be formed and reformed by the Bible as the Word of God (p. 336).

It is the fullest counsel of God that is sought by this researcher as it relates to defining a biblical Christian worldview, not the partial application of the scriptures that accompanies a “common ground” approach. A biblical Christian worldview must speak to “the truth about all of reality” (Schaeffer, 1978, p. 21) and not just address the overtly religious aspects. It is this *applied* Christianity that is responsible for much of what is good and progressive in Western civilization, and this is especially true in the founding and development of schools and universities (Kienel, 1998; Sowell, 2005). This research goes beyond the common ground perspective of biblical Christian worldview. An approach more consistent with Schaeffer’s total reality (1981) and Pearcey’s total truth (2005), an approach that recognizes that Christianity should speak to all practical aspects of daily life, is the one preferred by this researcher.

Biblical Christian Worldview Research

General Empirical Research Findings

The empirical research on biblical Christian worldview, as it relates to Christian education, generally focuses on one of two populations, the students or the teachers, with the preponderance focused on students. This part of the literature review will begin with a general research review concerning the worldview of

students, with the assumption that the overall worldview held by students somehow reflects that of their teachers. A general sense of the worldview of students can be obtained through Barna's (2001, 2003a, 2003b) research of pre-school, elementary, junior high, and high school age students. Barna's research findings show that a single-digit percentage of Christian, born-again young people view the Bible as a lens through which to view all aspects of life.

To be fair to teachers, one must admit that there are many influences on the thinking of young people. However, while parents are the number one influencer (Barna, 2001), teachers are not far down the list. Teachers can, at times, be even more influential than the parents, especially if that teacher also coaches a sport. Barna (2003b) focused some of his research on elementary age children and found "an astounding level of consistency between the religious beliefs of adults and children" (p. 37), indicating, among other things, that children believe what the adults in their lives believe. Barna also found that children under the age of 12 were the most receptive to the formation of a worldview. Once a child entered his teenage years the probability of his worldview changing was very low.

In his work with mostly adults, Barna (2003a) found that only nine percent of adults who identify themselves as born-again Christians had a biblical Christian worldview. For teenagers Barna's research revealed that only two percent of those who identify themselves as born-again Christians hold a biblical Christian worldview. It is important to note that Barna's research was conducted with a *common ground* or *religious* perspective, and not the more encompassing perspective of this researcher. Nonetheless, Barna's research noted here seems to support the finding that children

tend to believe what the influential adults in their lives believe. If the adults do not possess a biblical Christian worldview, passing such beliefs from one generation to the next is highly unlikely.

K-12 Empirical Research Findings

Winsor (2004) conducted a qualitative study designed to describe ways in which a biblical Christian worldview is woven into the fabric of independent, evangelical Christian college preparatory high schools. Winsor assessed worldview by careful review of internal organizational documents, such as mission statements, statements of faith, and educational philosophy pronouncements. Winsor established a definition of biblical Christian worldview similar to the general definition presented earlier in this chapter on theism. When organizational documents mirrored that biblical Christian worldview, and the teacher, administrator, or board member signed the statement indicating agreement, it was considered one piece of evidence for a biblical Christian worldview on the part of that individual. Further evidence included interviews of teachers in which they were asked if their “Christian understanding of” (p. 157) creation, sin, redemption, and sanctification affected their teaching. Winsor also included student interviews and classroom observations. The assessment of one’s worldview was determined by subjective self-assessment and observation on the part of the researcher. The researcher was an administrator of the school and not necessarily without bias. She found those assessed in her school to possess a biblical Christian worldview while other nearby schools in the study were found to be lacking a biblical Christian worldview. Also, while the researcher’s definition of a biblical Christian worldview fell within the purview of theism as outlined earlier, she did not

research those areas in the expanded version of a biblical Christian worldview posited by this researcher.

In a 2006 study of 210 public and Christian school teachers, Brown found no significant difference in the moral self-concept of teachers teaching in public schools and those teaching in Christian schools. Brown's moral self-concept may be very roughly equated to a worldview and one's moral self-concept governs what one believes to be right or wrong, true or false, and moral or immoral. Simply stated, teachers who taught in public schools were as likely to have the same worldview as teachers who taught in Christian schools. Placing this into proper perspective, the public school teachers who participated in Brown's study were randomly selected and their religious background was not part of the selection process. So, some number of the public school participants would not consider themselves Christian. On the other hand, teachers from the participating Christian schools were professing Christians as evidenced by signed professions of faith in the hiring process. The only statistically significant finding in Brown's research was that elementary teachers in both public and Christian schools tended to have a slightly higher moral self-concept than secondary teachers. However, overall findings indicated no difference in moral self-concept or worldview. Independent findings by the Nehemiah Institute (1998) support Brown's findings that biblical Christian worldview understanding among Christian school teachers is lacking.

The Nehemiah Institute (2008) has tested more than 20,000 students from more than 1,000 schools using the Politics, Economics, Education, Religion, and Social issues (PEERS) worldview assessment which reports a student's worldview as

either biblical theism (biblical Christian worldview), moderate Christian, secular humanism, or socialism. McDowell (2006) reports that PEERS testing found that 85% of students from Christian homes who attended public schools did not embrace a biblical worldview. That is, 15% scored in the biblical theism or moderate Christian categories, while the remaining 85% were either secular humanist or socialist in their thinking. This research also found that students from Christian schools “scored slightly higher than their counterparts attending public schools...(but) only six percent (6%) of students embraced a biblical theism worldview” (p. 14).

Higher Education Empirical Research Findings

Davis (2004) conducted a case study of graduates from Focus on the Family Institute (FFI). This is a one semester, college-level program designed to provide Christian worldview perspective for college juniors and seniors. Davis detailed the FFI worldview assessment tool and shared overall results for one group of program graduates. About half of the FFI students came from what Davis called “at least nominally Christian colleges” (p. 48). The other half came from secular universities and colleges. The FFI program is built upon teaching a biblically Christian worldview perspective around what FFI calls its five pillars. These pillars or guiding principles are evangelism and general worldview, marriage, children, sanctity of life, and the relationship of church, family, and government.

When students arrive for the beginning of a new semester they are given a 45 question pre-test that measures current worldview beliefs, skills, and motivation within the five pillars mentioned above. After completion of the one-semester course, graduates are given an identical post-test. Davis (2004) looked at graduate scores

from the fall semester of 2002 and found that total average gain for all areas was 54%. Additionally, Davis shared that “each of the five pillars demonstrated gain from a low of 35% to a high of 63%, and each area (beliefs, skills, motivation) demonstrated gain from a low of 43% to a high of 66%” (p. 49). Davis’ data does not provide evidence of those attending Christian colleges as having scored higher on their pre-test. Davis’ comments on the eight case study subjects, four of whom attended Christian colleges, does not show the Christian college students believing they entered the FFI program with a more Christian worldview than any of their classmates from secular universities.

Fledderjohann (2000) studied 325 college freshmen who had chosen to attend one of six “religious” higher education institutions, institutions with solid biblical principles governing them. The freshmen were graduates from either a Christian high school or a public high school. Fledderjohann was investigating the moral views and behaviors of each group concerning movies, heavy petting, premarital sex, abortion, homosexuality, hard rock music, pornography, cheating, stealing, and the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. Fledderjohann found no significant difference in the views or behaviors of these two groups, meaning that students who graduated from Christian high schools were as likely to think or behave as their public school counterparts. As with Brown’s (2006) research of the moral self-concept of public and Christian school teachers, one could conclude that the public high school graduates in this study possessed the same biblical Christian worldview as the Christian high school graduates. Again it seems the more logical assertion to conclude that Christian high school graduates possess the same unbiblical and

unchristian worldview as their public high school counterparts. It seems safe to assert that if students from religious colleges do not have a biblical Christian worldview as it concerns the ethical and moral issues researched by Fledderjohann, then it is unlikely they possess a biblical Christian worldview on such areas as philosophy, sociology, education, or economics.

Thornbury (2002) cites research conducted by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) of its member schools that portrays a much brighter picture. Thornbury states that alumni from most of these schools realized and appreciated the Christian worldview that was being inculcated during their college years. It was considered by many of the alumni to be the single biggest influence the college had on their lives. Worldview assertions by Christian universities are common and two examples suffice here. The first example is a Bible college in southeast Pennsylvania that asserts that its mission “has remained unchanged: educating Christian men and women to live according to a biblical world view and to serve through professional Christian ministries” (Lancaster Bible College, 2008). The second is a Christian liberal arts university in the south which states that its “professors integrate a Christian worldview into every subject area. This biblical foundation is the cornerstone upon which we build academic excellence” (Liberty University, 2008).

Church Empirical Research Findings

In a qualitative study of his own church congregation, Olson (2003) was driven by the observation that his congregation and other mainline denominational church congregations are in decline due to what he calls “cradle Christians...sadly

lacking in the basic knowledge and understanding necessary to articulate a Christian worldview and so fail to have their lives informed by such a worldview” (p. 63). It was Olson’s assessment that his congregation’s idea of living a Christian worldview was “synonymous with being a civic-based service club” (p. 39). They expertly raised money and funded projects, but these were “no more expressions of our Christian faith than were the actions and activities of the local Lions, Kiwanis, or Exchange Clubs” (p. 39). His thesis was that for a congregation to be spiritually healthy, “an accepted and shared Christian worldview is necessary” (p. 64).

Olson (2003) developed a 57-question testing instrument designed to determine one’s biblical literacy, Christian worldview, and personal activity based on that Christian worldview. The test questions were almost exclusively aimed at church or church-related issues, not the broader issues of worldview, such as politics or economics. He administered the instrument as a pre-test, conducted an 8-week Bible study that addressed each test question, and then used the same instrument as a post-test. Olson’s findings showed double-digit percentage improvements in most areas tested, granting some level of support to the possibility of increasing one’s Christian worldview based on interventions such as focused Bible studies.

Johnson (2004), a youth pastor in Indiana, was concerned about the absence of a biblical worldview in the lives of professing believers and any possible correlation with the current disconnect in Christian belief and practice. Johnson had developed a comprehensive worldview curriculum for high school students some 10 years earlier but had never evaluated its effectiveness. This curriculum defined and taught worldview much as this researcher has defined it: something that impacts every

aspect of life. Johnson developed pre-test, mid-term, and post-test instruments all aimed at determining current worldview thinking and the student's grasp of the material taught during the 15-week course. An additional "final exam" was patterned precisely after Barna's (2001; 2003a) Ethical Decision Making Survey and then compared to Barna's national results. While Johnson's pre-test results indicated less than half of his students had understood a Christian worldview, the results from the Ethical Decision Making Survey clearly indicated that his students scored well above those in Barna's data. Identifying a lack of Christian worldview in his students and then teaching them what it means to think and act biblically seems to impact such survey results.

Summary

Worldview is a concept that is only a few hundred years old. This concept of worldview, originally conceived by secular thinkers, was adopted by great Christian thinkers who immediately went to work on putting biblical Christianity into the form of its secular "competitors" as a means of gospel apologetics. Many definitions of what the construct worldview entails have been put forth and Sire's (2004b) is the most acceptable of those definitions for this researcher. While the world offers many different worldviews, the major current themes are Christian theism, deism, naturalism, nihilism, existentialism, eastern pantheistic monism, new age, and postmodernism. Each has been briefly and generally examined in this chapter. This researcher's interest is in a biblical Christian worldview that entails the most comprehensive meaning of Christian theism, not the more limited "common ground" approach. Regardless of one's worldview persuasion, it is the instrument through

which one views, thinks, and acts in the areas of theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history. A biblical Christian worldview is more than religious experiences or spiritual disciplines. It entails all of life.

The empirical research on biblical Christian worldview focuses mostly on the religious or spiritual aspects of worldview. Even with this more narrow focus, most research data indicates that those who claim to be Christians do not differ significantly, if at all, from the non-Christian populations to which they are compared. Research indicates Christian education at the K-12 and higher education levels did not appear to make a measurable difference in the worldview of students. The data from several studies of adults, to include teachers, is consistent with the other findings that most Christian adults and teachers lack a biblical Christian worldview. This could be an important factor in explaining why students do not possess a biblical Christian worldview. The goal of this research is to investigate more thoroughly the worldview of the adults in Christian K-12 education in order to advance the cause of Christ by helping to identify those areas in which our thought and behavior are inconsistent with the revealed word of God. It is the same goal found in 2 Corinthians 10:5: “Our battle is to bring down every deceptive fantasy and every imposing defense that men erect against the true knowledge of God. We even fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ” (J. B. Phillips).

Chapter 3

Method

The foregoing chapter provided a review of the theoretical and empirical literature on worldviews and how one's worldview impacts thoughts and actions, particularly on the thoughts and actions of those Christian educators commissioned to teach and disciple the next generation of Christ-followers. The research is clear on the impact that the teacher's worldview has on his or her students, but room exists for additional research on precise assessment of the worldview of Christian school educators. This study is designed to provide additional data regarding the worldview of Christian school educators. This chapter details the research methodology for the study.

This study measured the worldview of a sample of Christian school educators using the PEERS worldview assessment. This measurement is in the form of a composite score and is the dependent variable. There are six attribute independent variables that coincide with the six null hypotheses and these variables are: being raised in a Christian or non-Christian home, attendance at a public or Christian high school, attendance at a public or Christian university, teaching at the elementary or secondary level, teaching in an Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS) or Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) accredited school, and teaching tenure in a Christian school. The PEERS worldview assessment will be described in greater detail later in this chapter, to include why it was selected for use in this research.

General Perspective

This causal-comparative study used quantitative analysis techniques to compare educators, grouped by the six factors outlined above, to determine the impact of those factors on the teachers' worldviews. The t-test for independent samples was used to determine any significant differences between the means of the paired samples at the .05 probability level for each of the six research areas. This research was aimed at retaining or rejecting the six null hypotheses using data obtained from the PEERS Worldview Assessment.

Research Context

The history of Christian education in the world has, according to Kienel (2005), occurred in three movements, two of which are dead. The first movement started in the early church for the advancement of "Christianity throughout the entire Roman world" (Kienel, p. 307) and operated from the year 70 to 590. The next movement was the result of the Reformation and also existed for the propagation of the Christian faith, with Martin Luther "as much a champion for Christian school education as he was a champion for Bible-based churches" (Kienel, p. 307). This second movement of Christian education existed from 1517 to 1850 before declining and, ultimately, perishing.

There is a third movement of Christian school education addressed by Kienel (2005) which grew in popularity after World War II and continues to this day. The growth of Christian schools in this third movement was rapid and widespread (Kienel; Nehemiah Institute, 1998) and spawned a new phenomenon that the first two movements did not: "the development of state, regional, and national Christian

school associations” (Kienel, p. 310). Kienel lists 20 such regional, national, and international associations, though others exist as of this writing. This researcher selected two Christian school associations, one on Kienel’s list and one more recently formed, from which to select schools for this study. These two associations represent Christian schools that differ in their educational philosophies and operations. The two Christian school associations chosen were: the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and the Association of Classical & Christian Schools (ACCS).

The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) was founded in 1978 as the result of a merger of three other Christian school associations: the National Christian School Education Association; the Ohio Association of Christian Schools; and, the Western Association of Christian Schools (Association of Christian Schools International, 2009). The purpose of ACSI is to enable and equip Christian educators and schools around the globe to effectively educate their students with the mind of Christ. This association is not designed to promote one style (e.g., classical) of elementary and secondary education to its members. ACSI currently has 5,300 member schools in approximately 100 countries serving more than 1.2 million students. Within the United States ACSI has 4,178 member schools with 795 of those schools accredited through ACSI.

The Association of Classical & Christian Schools (ACCS) was formed in the early 1990’s with the sole purpose of establishing, promoting, and equipping schools that were committed to a classical approach to elementary and secondary education. ACCS promotes a Christian worldview with its foundation in both the Old and New Testament Scriptures (Association of Classical & Christian Schools, 2008). Classical

education, also known as the Trivium, consists of grammar, logic, and rhetoric with heavy emphasis on the study of Western culture. ACCS currently has 205 member schools and 29,907 students within the United States and 9 other countries. Only 14 of the 205 ACCS member schools are accredited through ACCS. The small number of accredited schools is due in large part to the relative infancy of ACCS.

Research Participants

This researcher has a history with particular schools from both ACCS and ACSI and selected four of those schools to participate in this research study. The remaining ACCS accredited schools were contacted and informed of the study's particulars. The schools were asked to participate in this study and only two of the accredited ACCS schools self-selected and agreed to participate. Only schools accredited by their respective associations and with both elementary and secondary school programs were selected for this study. Three ACSI schools and three ACCS schools were included, providing 88 participants from the ACSI schools and 53 participants from the ACCS schools, for a total of 141 participants.

The first ACCS school is located in Boise, Idaho, and opened its doors in the fall of 1995 serving kindergarten through eighth grade. Ten years later, it added a high school. The school is non-church affiliated, representing more than 70 churches in the faculty, staff, and student body. The school includes more than 300 students in grades k-12. It is an independent, evangelical protestant Christian school that uses the classical educational format known as the Trivium and is accredited through ACCS.

The second ACCS accredited school is located in southern Ohio. It was founded in 1996 and currently serves more than 216 students in grades k-12. The school is non-church affiliated and does not require parents or students to subscribe to its statement of faith, though they must abide by it as long as they are associated with the school. This school ascribes to a classical pedagogy and curriculum with a statement of faith that is evangelical Christian and reformed in nature.

The third ACCS accredited school is located in southeastern Pennsylvania and was founded in 1996 as a charter member ACCS. It currently serves approximately 165 students in kindergarten through grade twelve. The school is an independent, evangelical protestant Christian school that uses the classical educational format known as the Trivium.

The first ACSI school is an inter-denominational, church-affiliated, evangelical protestant school with multiple campuses located in southwest Idaho. The school serves approximately 720 students in grades k to 12. The school was started by its sponsoring church in 1972 and merged with another Christian school in 1999. The school follows a more traditional pedagogical and curricular approach than the ACCS schools mentioned above. At least one parent must be a professing Christian as defined by the school in order to enroll a student.

The second ACSI school is also located in southwest Idaho, and is the result of a 1960s merger of three Christian schools in the area. Today the school is a k-12 school with 600 students on two campuses. The school is a non-denominational, non-church affiliated, evangelical Christian school that partners with Christian parents for the education of their children. As with the first ACSI school mentioned above, at

least one parent must be a professing Christian and agree with the school's statement of faith. This school is accredited by ACSI and follows a traditional curricular approach.

The third ACSI accredited school is located in south central Idaho. The school was started in 1995 as a ministry of a non-denominational evangelical protestant church, and the school remains affiliated with the church today. This school is a traditional curriculum school with more than 300 students in grades k-12 on one campus. The school considers themselves to be a discipleship school like the other two ACSI schools mentioned above and require at least one parent to have a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

Instrument Used In Data Collection

Finding or creating the proper instrument for data collection was a critical part of this research project. According to Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorensen (2006), selecting or developing the scales and instruments that one will use in measuring complex constructs, like achievement, personality, self-concept, or in the case of this study, worldview, is an important task for the researcher because of the direct bearing on the outcome of the research. Existing measures that fit the research often work better than creating an instrument anew because the former are proven tools in the research toolbox. Such is the case with the PEERS worldview assessment. The acronym PEERS stands for the areas measured by the chosen assessment: politics, economics, education, religion, and social issues. The PEERS worldview assessment measures the level to which one does or does not think and reason biblically in the five areas mentioned (Nehemiah Institute, 1998).

Development of the PEERS worldview assessment began in 1986 and was completed in 1988 (Smithwick, n.d.). The assessment has been modified only slightly in the past 20 years, and according to D. J. Smithwick (personal communication, March 11, 2008), the worldview assessment is “98% today of what it was in 1988.” The PEERS includes versions for various age levels, from adult to elementary school students. For the purposes of this research the 70 question adult version was used (Appendix A).

The author states that the PEERS worldview assessment was designed and field-tested for 70 foundational statements that would be used to determine one’s worldview as it relates to politics, economics, education, religion, and social issues (Smithwick, n.d.). Based on one’s responses, the worldview would fall into one of four general categories: biblical theism; moderate Christianity; secular humanism; or, socialism. Smithwick is careful to assert that the “results only portray the person’s general worldview philosophy based on responses to PEERS Test items...[and in no way makes] a judgment on an individual’s personal relationship to God” (p. 6).

The PEERS worldview assessment on-line or paper versions can be completed within a 45 to 55 minute timeframe (Nehemiah Institute, 2008). For this study, the on-line version was used. This on-line version could be accessed from any computer with internet access and completion monitored by the test proctor. The school administrators proctored the PEERS test. Participants received instructions for logging onto the Nehemiah Institute’s website and accessing the PEERS worldview assessment. Participants entered their names and mailing addresses in order to receive individual results. Smithwick of the Nehemiah Institute assured that the

researcher would not have access to any identifying demographic data that would allow the researcher to identify any PEERS results with a specific participant, thereby allowing full anonymity for each research participant (D. J. Smithwick, personal communication, March 11, 2008).

The on-line PEERS worldview assessment also collects demographic data on gender, age, and religious and denominational affiliations, and this data was dissociated from the participants' identifying data prior to delivery to this researcher. The Nehemiah Institute also gathered data using the Attribute Independent Variable Questionnaire authored by this researcher (Appendix B). The Nehemiah Institute relayed the data for each participant's answers without compromising participant anonymity.

The PEERS worldview assessment consists of 70 questions or statements that are answered through the use of a Likert scale (Appendix A). The choices are strongly agree, tend to agree, neutral or no opinion, tend to disagree, and strongly disagree. Nehemiah Institute (2008) explains that each of the 70 statements or questions is framed in such a way that the participant must agree, disagree, or express no opinion on a biblical principle. Further, statements or questions are said to have no denomination-specific orientation in areas such as baptism, communion, or eschatology.

Validity of the data gathering instrument is, according to Ary et al. (2006), the most important consideration as the researcher develops an instrument or evaluates one for possible use. Validity includes "the extent to which an instrument measured what it claimed to measure" (Ary et al., p. 243), as well as the proper use and

interpretation of the data collected by the instrument. Because educational and psychological test instruments measure hypothetical constructs and not physically visible and measurable items, validity must be assured if the resulting data is to be useful.

The Nehemiah Institute used two separate methods in determining the validity of the PEERS worldview assessment: item discrimination test and construct validity (Smithwick, n.d.). The item discrimination test looks at individual questions to see if poor test item construction invalidates the instrument. Hundreds of randomly selected tests administered during a particular three year period were analyzed. Of the 100 test statements used in the random sample of tests, only 1 failed the item discrimination test. Construct validity, “the extent to which a test is measuring the psychological construct it is intended to measure” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 313), was accomplished by identifying two groups of people with very different and strong opinions on worldview. The first group consisted of biblical worldview scholars. The second group included Humanist and New Age adherents. Both groups were given the PEERS worldview assessment with the expectation that the results would show the biblical scholars with a biblical theist worldview and the Humanist and New Age adherents with a secular humanistic or socialistic worldview. This is precisely what occurred; the PEERS “reflected strong differences in views from these two groups” (Smithwick, n.d., p. 3) across the spectrum.

Reliability, or the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures what it purports to measure (Ary et al., 2006), of the PEERS worldview assessment was determined through the use of a test-retest procedure and a professional study.

The test-retest procedure involved more than 200 individuals who took the PEERS twice, with several months between testing sessions in order to compare the results (Smithwick, n.d.). Additionally, Ray (1995) conducted a validity and reliability study of the PEERS worldview assessment and found:

The PEERS test is designed to measure the degree to which a person has or holds a biblical Christian worldview with respect to major aspects of life (i.e., political, economical, educational, religious, and social). The evidence examined during this evaluation indicates that the validity of the instrument is more than satisfactory for most purposes, and its reliability (i.e., structural consistency) is very strong (Cronbach internal consistency rating = .94).

The findings of this study suggest that the PEERS Test may be successfully used for individual assessment, group assessment, and research purposes (p. 7).

The combination of the item discrimination test, construct validity assessment, test-retest procedure, and an affirming university study greatly increase the confidence this researcher has in using the PEERS to measure a participant's worldview and seek possible relationships between one's worldview and other concepts of interest.

Procedures Used

This researcher chose one of the three ACCS schools and the three ACSI schools as samples for data collection primarily because of familiarity with the schools and their respective leaders, thereby making access easier to achieve. Also, each program has successfully accomplished the process of accreditation through their respective Christian school associations. The remaining ACCS accredited

schools were contacted and informed of the study's particulars. The schools were asked to participate in this study and only two of the accredited ACCS schools self-selected and agreed to participate. The PEERS Worldview Assessment was given to teachers from the six schools between August 15 and September 1, 2008.

The Nehemiah Institute collected the data from the PEERS worldview assessment, as well as the attribute independent variable data obtained from the additional questions posed for this research. The PEERS data and attribute independent variable data were forwarded in the form of Microsoft Excel files. The electronic files contain no identifying information that would allow the researcher to associate a particular set of data with the name of an individual participant, thereby maintaining full anonymity for all who participated (D. J. Smithwick, personal communication, March 11, 2008).

Data Analysis

The data from the Microsoft Excel files received from the Nehemiah Institute was imported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 16.0. The SPSS software was used to perform appropriate t tests for independent samples in order to test the null hypotheses. The t test for independent samples and other statistical procedures were used to show relationships that existed. Each of the six null hypotheses was analyzed using the commonly accepted confidence level of .05 (Ary et al., 2006; Howell, 2008).

Summary of Methodology

This causal-comparative study was designed to determine the extent to which members of the identified samples differed from one another when grouped by the

attribute independent variables to better understand what influences a teacher's worldview score. The participants included 141 Christian school educators from three ACSI and three ACCS schools at the elementary and secondary levels. The dependent variable is the worldview of the teachers as measured by the PEERS worldview assessment, and the attribute independent variables are: being raised in a Christian or non-Christian home, attendance at a public or Christian high school, attendance at a public or Christian university, teaching at the elementary or secondary level, teaching in an Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS) or Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) accredited school, and teaching tenure in a Christian school. The findings may benefit future discussions on the cause of and impact from worldview, as well as recommendations for further empirical research.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter presents the biblical Christian worldview of K-12 Christian school administrators and teacher participants as measured by the PEERS worldview assessment. The variables examined were type of high school, type of college/university, type of home environment, grade level taught, and years of experience. This chapter lays out the results of the six null hypotheses outlined in Chapter 1. First, a comparison will be made of Christian school educators who graduated from either Christian or public universities; and second, Christian school educators who graduated from either Christian or public high schools. A third comparison is made between Christian school educators who were raised in a Christian home environment and those who were not. Fourth, a comparison is made between Christian school educators at the elementary and secondary levels. Fifth, a comparison between Christian school educators employed by schools affiliated with and accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS). Finally, a comparison between those Christian school educators who have taught in Christian schools fewer than 10 years and those who have taught in Christian schools 10 years or more will be made.

Measuring the worldview construct will be done using the composite scores from the PEERS worldview assessment. This assessment measures an individual's biblical worldview using a five point Likert scale and placing individuals into one of

four categories: Biblical Theism (70-100); Moderate Christianity (30-69); Secular Humanism (0-29); or, Socialism (<0) (Smithwick, n.d.). Smithwick (2004) provides the following definitions of each of the four categories:

Biblical Theism: A firm understanding of issues as interpreted from scripture.

The individual is allowing the scriptures to guide his reasoning regarding ethical, moral and legal issues to determine correct or incorrect thinking.

Truth is seen as absolute for all ages for all time. God is sovereign over all areas of life; civil government should be highly limited in purpose and authority, and under the supervision of scripture. All people will live in eternity in heaven or hell as judged by scripture.

Moderate Christian: Basically, ‘one foot in the Kingdom and one foot in the world.’ A blended view of God as creator and ruler, but man as self-determiner of the world. This position generally sees God as supreme in matters of religion, but not concerned with matters related to governments, economics, and to some degree, education. God is concerned with the soul and eternal life; man must control temporal issues.

Secular Humanism: Man is supreme. By chance, the human race has evolved to the highest form of life, but has responsibility to see that lower forms of life are not abused by man. The masses are more important than the individual. There is no “biblical” God; man is the predestinator and savior of the human race; eternal life exists only in the sense of how each person is remembered for the good or bad he has done. Ethics are relative to each generation.

Socialism: Mankind cannot prosper as individuals acting alone. A ruling authority is necessary to ensure that all facets of life are conducted fairly and in harmony. The authority must be the state (civil authorities) with the elite of society serving as its leaders. Individualism is not good; a civil body-politic is necessary with control of assets and redistribution of wealth as seen fit by leaders for the good of all.

Table 1 contains descriptive data relating to the population of Christian school educators who participated in this research study.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for PEERS Worldview Assessment Scores of Sample Christian School Educators

Category	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	% of Total
Biblical Theism	15	80.72	6.92	10%
Moderate Christianity	94	49.61	10.32	67%
Secular Humanism	28	19.59	5.68	20%
Socialism	4	-25.22	21.54	3%
Total	141	44.83	22.64	100%

There were originally 196 Christian school educators from 6 different Christian schools committed to this study. Of the 196, 151 Christian school educators

took the PEERS assessment. Each of the 6 schools in the study failed to test the number they committed to in advance, and for reasons unknown to this researcher, for a total of 45 individuals who did not take the assessment as expected. Of the 151 tested, 10 test scores had to be dropped because the individuals taking the assessment were not degreed. Given that one of the null hypotheses deals directly with university training, including the data from the 10 non-degreed, high school graduates would have corrupted the data.

Demographics collected but not used in the study included gender, ethnicity, and age. Women comprised 60% ($n = 85$) of participants with men making up 40% ($n = 56$) of the sample. Nearly 96% ($n = 135$) reported ethnicity as Caucasian/White, slightly over 1% ($n = 2$) reported ethnicity as American Indian/Alaskan Native, and less than 1% ($n = 4$) reported ethnicity as Chicano/Mexican American, Hispanic, Puerto Rican, or Other. The age demographic was collected by decade and 14% ($n = 20$) were between the ages of 20-29; 24% ($n = 34$) were between the ages of 30-39; 35% ($n = 49$) were between the ages of 40-49; 18% ($n = 26$) were between the ages of 50-59; 8% ($n = 11$) were between the ages of 60-69; and, less than 1% ($n = 1$) reported being 70 years of age or older.

Analysis of the results of each of the six null hypotheses is done using the *t-test* for independent samples. Independent samples are two independent groups or samples randomly selected from a given population (Howell, 2008). The study population included all K-12 Christian school educators in the United States who were accredited by either ACSI or ACCS. The convenience sample consisted of 141 Christian school educators from six different schools. Two independent groups will

be formed from the convenience sample based upon the null hypotheses. The goal is to assess whether mean scores from the independent groups differ in a meaningful and significant way at the commonly accepted statistical level of significance of .05. The purpose of the *t-test* is to determine if a statistically significant difference exists in the mean scores of two independent groups, thereby leading to the acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis (Pallant, 2007).

Null Hypothesis One

This null hypothesis examines whether differences exist between the worldviews of Christian school educators who attended Christian universities and those who attended public universities. Tables 2 and 3 contain descriptive data relating to the first null hypothesis.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for PEERS Worldview Assessment Scores for Christian School Educators and University Attended (Undergraduate)

Attended	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
Christian university	62	45.30	24.54	3.12
Public university	79	44.47	21.19	2.38

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for PEERS Worldview Assessment Scores for Christian School Educators and University Attended (Graduate)

Attended	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
Christian university	41	49.27	21.66	3.32
Public university	42	49.23	19.02	2.93

Undergraduate and graduate university training data was gathered and is represented in two separate tables. The total sample ($n = 141$) is represented in Table 2 with public university graduates comprising 56% ($n = 79$) of the sample and Christian university graduates comprising 44% ($n = 62$). Graduate level university training data is presented in Table 3 where the two sample sizes ($n = 83$) are nearly identical. The difference in the means (M) of both sets of samples is miniscule and the t test will determine if what little difference exists is significant. The standard deviation scores from both sets of samples indicate only slightly more homogeneity in the distribution of scores for the public university sample as opposed to the Christian university sample. The standard error of the mean (SE of M) describes “how much the means of random samples drawn from a single population can be expected to differ through chance alone” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 639). The larger the sample size, the smaller the standard error of the mean, and the smaller the standard error of the mean, the more accurate the sample mean becomes in relation to the parametric

mean. In both sets of samples the public university sample was larger with a correspondingly lower standard error of the mean, indicating that the public university means more accurately reflect the population mean than that of the Christian university sample.

Part of the *t test* calculations for the two sets of samples for this null hypothesis was Levene's test for the equality of variances. The dependent variable, the PEERS assessment cumulative scores, is checked for equal or homogenous variances. Unequal or heterogeneous variances increase the likelihood of Type I and Type II errors. Levene's test for the equality of variance "tests whether the variance (variation) of scores for the two groups...is the same" (Pallant, 2007, p. 234), and the assumption of equal variances using Levene's test was obtained for the scores in research area one. Data from the *t test* conducted on null hypothesis one is contained in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4

Independent Samples t Test for Christian School Educators Attending Christian or Public Universities (Undergraduate)

<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	<i>M</i> Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
				Lower	Upper
.216	139	.829	.834	-6.788	8.456

Table 5

Independent Samples t Test for Christian School Educators Attending Christian or Public Universities (Graduate)

t	df	p (2-tailed)	M Difference	95% confidence interval	
				of the difference	
				Lower	Upper
.009	81	.993	.038	-8.768	8.844

The independent samples t test was conducted to compare the PEERS assessment scores of Christian university trained Christian school educators and public university trained Christian school educators at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Undergraduate level results are reflected in Table 4 with a mean difference of .834. A t test on the difference between means was not statistically significant ($t(139) = .216, p > .05$). The 95% confidence interval of -6.788 to 8.456 includes zero (0) and is therefore “consistent with...(retention) of the null hypothesis” (Howell, 2008, p. 339). Graduate level results are contained in Table 5 with a mean difference of .038. A t test on the difference between means was not statistically significant ($t(81) = .009, p > .05$). The 95% confidence interval of -8.768 to 8.844 includes zero (0), thereby supporting the retention of the null hypothesis. This supports the hypothesis which states that there is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school

educator who graduated from a Christian university and that of one who graduated from a public university.

Null Hypothesis Two

This null hypothesis examines whether differences exist between the worldviews of Christian school educators who graduated from Christian high schools and those who graduated from public high schools. Table 6 provides descriptive statistics for null hypothesis two.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for PEERS Worldview Assessment Scores for Christian School Educators and High School Attended

Attended	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
Christian high school	28	42.92	21.38	4.04
Public high school	113	45.31	23.01	2.16

High school graduation data was gathered and is represented in Table 6. Those graduating from Christian high schools ($n = 28$) comprised 20% of the sample while public high school graduates ($n = 113$) comprised 80% of the sample. The difference in the means (M) of the sample is small and the t test will determine if the difference that exists is significant. The standard deviation scores indicate somewhat more dispersion in the distribution of scores for the public high school graduates as

opposed to the Christian high school graduates. The standard error of the mean (SE of M) is smaller for the public high school graduates, a function of the larger sample size, and indicates that the public high school graduate mean more accurately reflects the population mean than does the mean of the Christian high school graduates. The t test calculations for the sample for this null hypothesis included Levene's test for the equality of variances. Levene's test found equal variation and the assumption of equal variances is made for research area two. Data from the t test conducted on null hypothesis two is contained in Table 7.

Table 7

Independent Samples t Test for Christian School Educators Attending Christian or Public High Schools

t	df	p (2-tailed)	M Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
				Lower	Upper
-.498	139	.932	-2.39	-11.864	7.088

The independent samples t test was conducted to compare the PEERS assessment scores of Christian school educators who graduated from Christian high schools and those who graduated from public high schools. The results are shown in Table 7 with a mean difference of -2.39. A t test on the difference between means

was not statistically significant ($t(139) = -.498, p > .05$). The 95% confidence interval of -11.864 to 7.088 includes zero (0) and is consistent with not rejecting the null hypothesis. This supports the hypothesis that states that there is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school educator who graduated from a Christian high school and that of one who graduated from a public high school.

Null Hypothesis Three

This null hypothesis examines whether differences exist between the worldviews of Christian school educators raised in Christian homes and those who were raised in non-Christian homes. Descriptive data for null hypothesis three is located in Table 8.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for PEERS Worldview Assessment Scores for Christian School Educators and Home Environment

Environment	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
Christian home	106	45.18	22.60	2.20
Non-Christian home	35	43.78	23.06	3.90

Home environment data was gathered and is represented in Table 8. Those self-reporting being raised in a Christian home ($n = 106$) comprised 75% of the sample while those self-reporting being raised in a non-Christian home ($n = 35$)

comprised 25% of the sample. The difference in the means (M) of the sample is less than two points and the t test will determine if the difference that exists is significant. The standard deviation scores, while indicating less variability in the distribution of scores for those from Christian homes, are less than one-half point different from one another. The standard error of the mean (SE of M) is larger for those with non-Christian home backgrounds and is attributed to the substantially smaller sample size and is less reflective of the parametric population mean than the mean score of those raised in Christian homes. The t test calculations for the sample for this null hypothesis included Levene's test for the equality of variances. Levene's test found equal variation and the assumption of equal variances is made for null hypothesis three. Data from the t test conducted on null hypothesis three is contained in Table 9.

Table 9

Independent Samples t Test for Christian School Educators Raised in Christian or Non-Christian Homes

t	df	p (2-tailed)	M Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
				Lower	Upper
.316	139	.752	1.40	-7.354	10.157

The independent samples *t test* was conducted to compare the PEERS assessment scores of Christian school educators who self-reported being raised in Christian homes with those who self-reported being raised in non-Christian homes. The results are shown in Table 9 with a mean difference of 1.40. A *t test* on the difference between means was not statistically significant ($t(139) = .752, p > .05$). The 95% confidence interval of -7.354 to 10.157 includes zero (0) and is supportive of retaining the null hypothesis. This supports the hypothesis which states that there is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school educator who was raised in a Christian home and that of one who was not raised in a Christian home.

Null Hypothesis Four

This null hypothesis examines whether differences exist between the worldviews of Christian school educators who teach at the elementary level and those who teach at the secondary level. Table 10 contains descriptive statistics for null hypothesis four.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for PEERS Worldview Assessment Scores for Elementary and Secondary Christian School Educators

Level taught	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
Elementary	64	44.46	20.42	2.55
Secondary	77	45.15	24.47	2.79

Teaching level data was gathered and is represented in Table 10. Christian educators at the elementary level ($n = 64$) made up 45% of the sample while those at the secondary level ($n = 77$) made up 55% of the sample. The difference in the means (M) of the sample is less than one point and the t test will determine if the difference that exists is significant. The standard deviation scores show much more homogeneity in the distribution of scores for those teaching at the elementary level when compared to those teaching at the secondary level. This substantial difference in standard deviation scores helps explain the standard error of the mean (SE of M) being smaller for the elementary Christian educators even though the sample size is smaller. The t test calculations for the sample for this null hypothesis included Levene's test for the equality of variances. Levene's test found equal variation and the assumption of equal variances is made for null hypothesis four. Data from the t test conducted on null hypothesis four is contained in Table 11.

Table 11

Independent Samples t Test for Elementary and Secondary Christian School Educators

t	df	p (2-tailed)	M Difference	95% confidence interval	
				of the difference	
				Lower	Upper
-.180	139	.857	-.69	-8.291	6.907

The independent samples *t test* was conducted to compare the PEERS assessment scores of Christian school educators at the elementary and those at the secondary level. The results are shown in Table 11 with a mean difference of -.69. A *t test* on the difference between means was not statistically significant ($t(139) = -.180$, $p > .05$). The 95% confidence interval of -8.291 to 6.907 includes zero (0) and is supportive of retaining the null hypothesis. This supports the hypothesis which states that there is no difference between the worldview of Christian school elementary and secondary teachers.

Null Hypothesis Five

This null hypothesis examines whether differences exist between the worldviews of Christian school educators in ACSI affiliated schools and those in ACCS affiliated schools. Descriptive statistics for null hypothesis five can be found in Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for PEERS Worldview Assessment Scores for Christian School Educators and School Association Affiliation

School association	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
ACSI	88	37.86	20.32	2.17
ACCS	53	56.40	21.71	2.98

School association affiliation data was gathered and is represented in Table 12. Christian school educators from schools affiliated with and accredited by ACSI ($n = 88$) comprised 62% of the sample while those affiliated with and accredited by ACCS ($n = 53$) comprised 38% of the sample. The difference in the means (M) of the sample is nearly 20 points and the t test will determine if the difference that exists is significant. The standard deviation scores differ by little more than one point with the greater variability indicated on the part of the ACCS scores. The standard error of the mean (SE of M) is slightly smaller for the ACSI sample and is consistent with the larger sample size of ACSI Christian school educators. The t test calculations for the sample for this null hypothesis included Levene's test for the equality of variances. Levene's test found equal variation and the assumption of equal variances is made for null hypothesis five. Data from the t test conducted on null hypothesis five is contained in Table 13.

Table 13

Independent Samples t Test for Christian School Educators and School Association Affiliation

t	df	p (2-tailed)	M Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
				Lower	Upper
-5.11	139	.000	-18.54	-25.707	-11.374

The independent samples *t test* was conducted to compare the PEERS assessment scores of Christian school educators from schools affiliated with and accredited by ACSI with those from schools affiliated with and accredited by ACCS. The results are shown in Table 13 with a mean difference of -18.54, almost one full standard deviation difference in the means. A *t test* on the difference between means was statistically significant ($t(139) = -5.11, p < .05$). The 95% confidence interval of -25.707 to -11.374 does not include zero (0) and is supportive of rejecting the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, supporting the conclusion that Christian school educators in this study who are in schools affiliated with and accredited by ACCS produce significantly higher PEERS worldview assessment scores than those Christian school educators from schools affiliated with and accredited by ACSI.

Null Hypothesis Six

This null hypothesis examines whether differences exist between the worldviews of Christian school educators who have taught in Christian schools fewer than 10 years and those who have taught in Christian schools for 10 years or more. Table 14 contains descriptive statistics for null hypothesis six.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics for PEERS Worldview Assessment Scores for Christian School Educators and Experience Level

Experience Level	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE of M</i>
Less than 10 years	88	43.16	23.37	2.49
10 years or more	53	47.61	21.31	2.93

Experience level data was gathered and is represented in Table 14. Christian school educators with fewer than 10 years of experience ($n = 88$) comprised 62% of the sample while those with 10 or more years of experience ($n = 53$) comprised 38% of the sample. The difference in the means (M) of the sample is slightly more than 4 points and the t test will determine if the difference that exists is significant. The standard deviation scores differ by slightly more than two points with the greater variability observed on the part of the less experienced teachers' scores. The standard error of the mean (SE of M) is slightly smaller for the less experienced Christian school educators and is consistent with the larger sample size of this group of Christian school educators. The t test calculations for the sample for this null hypothesis included Levene's test for the equality of variances. Levene's test found equal variation and the assumption of equal variances is made for null hypothesis five. Data from the t test conducted on null hypothesis six is contained in Table 15.

Table 15

Independent Samples t Test for Christian School Educators and Experience Level

<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	<i>M</i> Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
				Lower	Upper
-1.13	139	.260	-4.45	-12.229	3.324

The independent samples *t test* was conducted to compare the PEERS assessment scores of Christian school educators with fewer than 10 years of experience and those with 10 or more years of experience in Christian schools. The results are shown in Table 15 with a mean difference of -4.45. A *t test* on the difference between means was not statistically significant ($t(139) = -1.13, p > .05$). The 95% confidence interval of -12.229 to 3.324 includes zero (0) and is supportive of retaining the null hypothesis. This supports the hypothesis that states there is no difference between the worldview of Christian school educators who have taught in Christian schools fewer than 10 years and those who have taught in Christian schools more than 10 years.

Summary

This chapter presented the data collected in this study and reported on its analysis. The data and analysis are organized according to the six null hypotheses outlined in Chapter 1. Usable data was collected from 141 degreed Christian school

educators in 3 ACCS and 3 ACSI affiliated and accredited schools. The three ACSI schools and one of the ACCS schools were located in Idaho, and the two remaining ACCS schools were located in Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Descriptive and inferential (*t test* for independent samples) statistics were used in the analysis of the data collected. The means from five of the six null hypotheses were found to not be statistically significant and the associated null hypotheses were retained. Null hypothesis five dealt with Christian school educators from ACCS and ACSI affiliated and accredited schools and was found to be significant. The findings presented in this chapter will be more fully discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Summary and Discussion

The final chapter will begin with a review of the research problem, the six null hypotheses derived from that problem, and a review of the methodology used in the course of this study. The larger share of this chapter will deal with summarizing and discussing the results of the study put forth in Chapter 4. The implications of the current study, as well as recommendations for further research into the area of biblical Christian worldview, will also be provided.

Problem Statement

All thought and therefore all action derives from what one considers right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly, and real and true. All of reality is viewed and acted upon through a filter or lens that can be called worldview (Barna, 2003a; Bertrand, 2007; Colson & Pearcey, 1999; Pearcey, 2005; Schaeffer, 1976; Sire, 2004b). This worldview is adopted and adapted over the course of one's life and is especially influenced by parents and teachers (Barna, 2003a; Barna 2003b; Deckard, Henderson, & Grant, 2002; Fyock, 2008). This should be of special concern to those who teach in Christian schools.

The worldview of Christian school educators should be biblical and thoroughly Christian, but the research indicates that this may or may not be the case (Brown, 2006; Fledderjohann, 2000; Fyock, 2008; Nehemiah Institute, 2008). The worldview of the Christian school educator will impact, at some level, the worldview of his or her students. What factors influence the worldview of a Christian school

educator? The thrust of this research was to determine the level of influence of certain factors on the biblical Christian worldview of Christian school educators. It began with the assumption that there was no significant difference in the worldviews of Christian school educators when considering the independent variables identified in the six research areas.

Review of Methodology

The purpose of this study was to determine if a statistically significant difference exists between the biblical Christian worldview of Christian school educators as measured by the PEERS worldview assessment and the six null hypotheses.

- 1) There is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school educator who graduated from a Christian university and that of one who graduated from a public university.
- 2) There is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school educator who graduated from a Christian high school and that of one who graduated from a public high school.
- 3) There is no difference between the worldview of a Christian school educator who was raised in a Christian home and that of one who was not raised in a Christian home.
- 4) There is no difference between the worldview of Christian school elementary and secondary teachers.
- 5) There is no difference between the worldview of Christian school educators from Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS)

accredited schools and Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) accredited schools.

- 6) There is no difference between the worldview of Christian school educators who have taught in Christian schools fewer than 10 years and those who have taught in Christian schools 10 years or more.

Summary of Research Results

No statistically significant results were found for five of the six research areas. All sample variances were tested using Levene's test for the equality of variances and met the requirements for the assumption of equal variances. There was one statistically significant finding and that was in research area five. This research area dealt with Christian school educators from schools affiliated with and accredited by ACSI and ACCS and will be discussed at greater length later in this chapter.

Discussion and Analysis

The worldview of Christian school educators involved in this study, as measured by the PEERS worldview assessment, appears to be lower overall than the worldview of Christian school educators who have taken the PEERS worldview assessment from 2001 to 2007 (D. J. Smithwick, personal communication, September 16, 2008). The mean of the cumulative scores of this larger sample ($n = 1386$) is 50.73 as compared with the mean of the cumulative scores of the sample of this study ($n = 141$) of 44.83.

The mean scores within the categories of Biblical Theism, Moderate Christianity, and Secular Humanism are within one point of each other in the two separate samples. However, the Socialism mean for the larger sample of Christian

educators is -7.86 and the mean for the sample from this study is -25.22. The percentages of those falling into the four categories differ as well and most noticeably in the Biblical Theism and Socialist categories. In the larger D. J. Smithwick (personal communication, September 16, 2008) sample 20% of the scores fall into the Biblical Theism category while the number for this study is 10%. Likewise, the Socialist category for the larger sample is less than 1% and is 3% for the sample from this study. If the larger sample is considered to be more representative of the overall population, then the worldview scores from this sample are below average.

In the current study, research area one was designed to see if university training made any difference in the biblical Christian worldview of the Christian school educator. Everyone in the sample ($n = 141$) had at least a bachelor's degree, with 56% ($n = 79$) obtaining their degrees from a public university and 44% ($n = 62$) obtaining their degrees from a Christian university. Graduate education was also considered part of this research area, and of those completing a graduate degree ($n = 83$), 51% ($n = 42$) obtained their degrees from public universities and 49% ($n = 41$) obtained their degrees from Christian universities. The differences in the mean scores between those who attended Christian university versus public university, whether undergraduate or graduate, were less than one point and were determined to be insignificant based on the results of a *t test* for independent samples. Those with graduate degrees, both public and Christian, had a mean score four points higher than those with undergraduate degrees, both public and Christian, but all means fell within the lower half of the Moderate Christian category of the PEERS worldview

assessment. It appears that Christian university training makes no difference in the development of a biblical Christian worldview in Christian school educators.

Research area two also looked at the impact of Christian versus public education on the development of one's worldview, and this area looked at those Christian school educators who graduated from public high schools and those who graduated from Christian high schools. Public high school graduates ($n = 113$) comprised 80% of the study sample while Christian high school graduates ($n = 28$) made up the remaining 20% of the study sample. The mean difference, just over two points, favored those graduating from public high school, but the difference was not significant based on *t test* results. Whether university or high school, Christian education seems to be no more effective at imparting a biblical Christian worldview than the public system. Also, the means for public and Christian high school graduates, like those of the university sample, were in the bottom half of the PEERS Moderate Christian category.

The third research area dealt with the Christian home and its influence in the development of a biblical Christian worldview. Surprisingly, 75% ($n = 106$) of respondents self-reported being raised in a Christian home while the remaining 25% ($n = 35$) reported being raised in a non-Christian home. The mean difference of 1.40 and the lack of significance as determined by the *t test* for independent samples would seem to indicate that there is little to no difference between a Christian home upbringing and a non-Christian home upbringing when it comes to determining the biblical Christian worldview of Christian school educators. Like the first two

research areas, the mean scores of both groups fall into the lower half of the PEERS Moderate Christian category.

Before moving to research area four, a look at some disaggregated data from the first three research areas proves interesting. Of the total study sample ($n = 141$), 13% ($n = 19$) self-reported being raised in a Christian home, graduating from a Christian high school, receiving their undergraduate degree from a Christian university, and earning their graduate degree, if they had one, from a Christian university. One would expect to find a major positive difference in the means of this group with the overall sample population. Such is not the case. The mean of this smaller group is 42.50 while the larger sample mean is 44.83. So, not only is the mean not substantially higher, it is actually lower. One must be careful not to infer more than the data dictates, but it seems safe to state that this additional data proves to be a consistent summary of the first three research areas.

Research area four looked at whether elementary or secondary Christian school educators differed from one another in their biblical Christian worldview based on the PEERS worldview assessment data. Elementary teachers ($n = 64$) made up 45% of the sample and secondary teachers ($n = 77$) made up 55%. The mean difference in scores was less than one point and statistical analysis showed no significance to the difference. The means also fell into the bottom half of the PEERS Moderate Christian scoring range.

The only area with a statistically significant finding was research area five. This research area looked at the difference in the biblical Christian worldviews of Christian educators from schools affiliated with and accredited by ACSI and those

from schools affiliated with and accredited by ACCS. The ACSI educators ($n = 88$) comprised 62% of the sample while ACCS educators ($n = 53$) comprised 38% of the sample. The mean difference was -18.54 and was found to be significant at the .01 level of probability. The mean of the ACCS educators was nearly one full standard deviation higher than the mean of the ACSI schools. This would seem to indicate some differentiating factor (s) in the schools that affiliate with and are accredited by ACCS that causes the biblical Christian worldview of its educators to be higher.

The final research area compared Christian school educators with less than 10 years of experience in Christian schools to those with 10 years or more in a Christian school setting. Those with less than 10 years ($n = 88$) made up 62% of the sample while those with 10 years or more ($n = 53$) made up the remaining 38% of the sample. The mean difference was nearly four and one-half points in favor of the more experienced Christian school educators, and though the p value was much closer to meeting the assigned significance level of .05 than any of the other non-significant p values in the other research areas, it fell short of meeting the criteria of the t test for independent samples and is therefore not significant. Though close, from a statistically significant perspective, time in the Christian school environment does not seem to have a positive impact on the development of a biblical Christian worldview for Christian school educators.

Research Implications

The findings of this research seem to have considerable meaning for those Christian school educators interested in instilling the mind of Christ into their students. Teachers give what they have; they pour out who they are. If what they

have and who they are does not flow from a biblical Christian worldview, then they will fail to instill such a worldview. That is the good news. The bad news is that a worldview will be transmitted from teacher to student, but it will not be the one the teacher professes to be passing on, intentional or otherwise.

As mentioned above, the PEERS testing of 1,386 Christian school educators from 2001 to 2007 established a baseline mean of 50.73 (D. J. Smithwick, personal communication, September 16, 2008). The mean from this research study was 44.83. When disaggregating data from the current study to identify those who were raised in a Christian home, graduated from a Christian high school, and earned an undergraduate and perhaps even a graduate degree from a Christian university, the mean drops to 42.50. This is an inverse relationship. The more Christianity applied by parents, school, and university, the less of a biblical Christian worldview a Christian school educator possesses. The intent and goal is the reverse, but this research study would indicate that good intentions and right goals may not be enough.

Teaching at the elementary or secondary level also makes no difference in a Christian educator's worldview. In his research of public and Christian school educators on the construct of moral self-concept, roughly equal to worldview, Brown (2006) reported that elementary teachers had a statistically significant higher moral self-concept than secondary teachers. This study found no difference. Also, tenure of Christian school educators was assessed and made no difference in a biblical Christian worldview. Spending substantial time around fellow Christian school educators, in the environment and atmosphere that such association should produce,

was apparently of no effect in aiding the further development of a biblical Christian worldview.

The one significant finding, and significant at the .01 level, was that there is something different about the Christian educators in ACCS affiliated and accredited schools that appears to cause them to have more of a biblical Christian worldview than their ACSI colleagues. It apparently has nothing to do with the type of home in which one was raised, the type of schools and universities where one was educated, or whether one teaches kindergarten or high school seniors for more or less than 10 years. Something, apparently, makes a difference. Is it the ACCS organization? Is it something that differs in the people drawn to such schools?

A couple of observations concerning why there is a significant difference in the means of ACCS and ACSI schools seem appropriate. First, it seems that denominational ties may have had an effect here. Two of the ACCS schools had 3 to 5 different denominations represented, while 2 of the ACSI schools had approximately 20 different denominations represented on their staffs. A second observation would be the type of teachers drawn to ACCS schools. The classical curriculum emphasizes the Latin and Greek languages, as well as the study of the classics from those ancient cultures. Perhaps this approach does not appeal to many teachers trained with and comfortable in a more common curricular approach.

Finally and perhaps most significantly, is what might be perceived as a more focused, intentional, and profound theological commitment on the part of ACCS. Schools affiliating with ACCS are required to subscribe to a lengthy Confession of Faith that includes the Apostle's Creed and two chapters of the Westminster

Confession of Faith. Schools affiliating with ACSI must ascribe to a substantially shorter and more general Statement of Faith. The seeming emphasis on a more specifically articulated theological perspective on the part of the ACCS organization may translate into member schools that are more closely aligned with the biblical Christian worldview measure found in the PEERS worldview assessment.

Prior Research and Precedent Literature

The research on biblical Christian worldview generally focuses on one of two populations, students or teachers, with the preponderance focused on students. The assumption of this study has been that the overall worldview held by students somehow reflects that of their teachers. Deckard, Henderson, and Grant (2002) found that the worldview of the teacher “significantly impacts student worldviews” (p. 98). To be fair to teachers, one must admit that there are many influences on the thinking of young people. However, while parents are the number one influencer (Barna, 2001), teachers are not far down the list.

Research indicates that an intentional, focused, and specific biblical Christian worldview course of study conducted by a teacher produces positive results in increasing the biblical Christian worldview of students (Davis, 2004; Fyock, 2008; Johnson, 2004; Olson, 2003). While one could argue that content, not the teacher, made the difference, it seems the more logical conclusion is that a teacher could not conduct classes on such a topic and with such success without himself possessing the view he is espousing.

The literature concerning Christian educators possessing a biblical Christian worldview and passing it on through intentional and focused worldview training and

integration is, however, not the preponderance of the research on the topic. The Work Research Foundation (2008) asserts that Christian schools are regularly graduating students who do not think from a distinctly Christian perspective, and a connection is made with the lack of a biblical worldview on the part of the teacher being responsible for the same lack in students. Students have an absence of a biblical worldview in large part because their educators' worldviews were equally void of biblical principles. The Nehemiah Institute (1998) and Noebel (2006) support this assertion with their own findings that indicate that a biblical Christian worldview among Christian school educators is waning.

As mentioned earlier, Brown, in a 2006 study of 210 public and Christian school teachers found no significant difference in the moral self-concept of teachers teaching in public schools and those teaching in Christian schools. Brown's moral self-concept may be very roughly equated to a worldview. One's moral self-concept governs what one believes to be right or wrong, true or false, and moral or immoral. Simply stated, teachers who taught in public schools often shared a worldview with teachers who taught in Christian schools. Furthermore, of the 210 participants, 131 were employed by Christian schools which require a profession of faith in Jesus Christ in order to be employed at the school. The 79 teachers from the public schools make no such profession and Brown's research did not differentiate between Christians and non-Christians in the selection of the public school participants. While it cannot be known how many of the 79 are professing Christians, it seems safe to assume that at least a portion of the 79 are not professing Christians.

There is a growing body of research that seems to indicate that non-Christian worldviews are more prevalent among teachers and administrators who populate today's Christian schools and universities. Rosebrough (2002) states that most teachers, like most other people, fail to ponder what they truly believe. His conclusion is that the worldviews of most are "largely unconscious and definitely unexamined" (p. 283), including those of Christian higher education faculty. Sadly, the findings from this study seem to reinforce and add to this growing body of worldview research.

Research Limitations

This study had as its driving purpose the objective of investigating the influence of several factors on the measured worldview of Christian school educators. Like every other piece of research work ever done, this one is not perfect and not without an occasional, "I wish I would have seen that coming!" This lack of perfection or desire to perhaps do some things differently does not necessarily color the data and conclusions in a bad light. Nor does it mean that the way things were done was necessarily wrong. It does mean, according to Fyock (2008), that "there are always those reflective moments which allow for assessment of the purposes and effectiveness of the process used to accomplish those purposes" (p. 106). It is time for some reflection.

The first limitation is in the type of research conducted. Experimental research, one in which the researcher manipulates the independent variable (s), controls other outside influences, and then observes effects on dependent variable (s), "is the most convincing evidence of the effect that one variable has on another" (Ary

et al., 2006, p. 284). Ex post facto or causal comparative research is the next best thing when variable manipulation could be viewed as unethical, illegal, or simply impossible. Causal comparative research must deal with cause and effect after the cause and effect has occurred and the danger is that it “is more hazardous to infer genuine relationship between” (Ary et al., p. 357) variables. However, relationships can be cautiously and tentatively advanced and the body of research knowledge enhanced and increased by the wise use of the causal comparative tool, sometimes the only tool in the educational researcher’s toolbox.

A second limitation would be the use of a convenience sample. Some form of probability sampling, sampling that would grant every Christian school educator in the total population of Christian school educators an equal chance of being selected for the research study would be the perfect way to conduct research. Ary et al. (2006) considers convenience sampling, using available cases rather than truly random samples, “as the weakest of all sampling procedures” (p. 174). Time, money, and logistical concerns do not permit this researcher to conduct anything but some type of nonprobability sampling procedure.

Additionally, there is the limitation of using only those schools that are accredited by the Christian school association with which they are affiliated. Schools that undergo the accreditation process submit themselves to the rigorous tool of self-examination as well as external examination. Christian schools that walk through this process with a Christian school association such as ACSI or ACCS must not only prove they are really schools, but they must also prove that they are thoroughly Christian in their objectives. Non-accredited schools may or may not have Christian

educators who are more likely to have a biblical Christian worldview. However, it was the assumption of this researcher that those schools that put themselves through the paces of Christian school association accreditation were more likely to achieve the higher standards that come with such successful efforts. True or not, it was an assumption of this study and is listed as a possible limitation.

A fourth limitation of this study was the failure to clearly define the term Christian home. Barna (2003a) is very specific in how he defines the term born-again Christian and people must accept that definition or not accept the label. In this study it was surprising to find that 75% of respondents considered themselves to have been raised in a Christian home. This researcher's input to test proctors regarding this research question was to allow each individual participant to define in her own mind what she considered to be Christian and then to answer accordingly. Not clearly defining what constitutes a Christian home makes interpretation of the data fuzzy at best, problematic at worst. Future attempts at similar research would certainly include a more precise definition of what is meant by a Christian home.

The final study limitation is the composition of the convenience sample itself. Christian school educators were compared with Christian school educators. Christian school educators were not compared with their public school counterparts, as in Brown (2006), and the reader must keep this in mind. The PEERS worldview assessment measures worldview in a much clearer and distinctly Christian manner, while the instrument used in Brown was secular and concerned primarily with moral and ethical worldview issues. The Nehemiah Institute (2008) research shows that Christian school students score on average about four times better than that of the

average Christian student in a public school. If the same thing holds true for Christian teachers in public schools, then it seems safe to assert that the Christian school educators would outscore Christian public school teachers. However, without specific research and concomitant data, no such assumption should be made. The limitation of this study in this matter need only be duly noted.

Practical Implications of the Study

An assumption that weaves in and out of this research study that has yet to be explicitly stated is that Christian homes, Christian schools and universities, and time spent in Christian community should produce disciples who think and act like their Savior in all areas of life. Such institutions and environments should help to instill a biblical Christian worldview into young minds, and this can only be done if those doing the teaching possess such a biblical Christian worldview themselves.

The purpose of this research has been to test that assumption against data. The findings generated by this data paint a picture quite the opposite, for the most part. Beginning with the bad news, it appears that a Christian home has no more influence on the biblical Christian worldview of a Christian school educator than does a non-Christian home. Also, Christian high schools and universities fare no better than their public counterparts when it comes to instilling a biblical Christian worldview into those same Christian school educators. Finally, time spent in Christian community with other Christian school educators, also known as tenure, appears to make no difference in the development or enhancement of a biblical Christian worldview.

The good news of this research study is the “for the most part” mentioned above. This research found a significant positive difference in the biblical Christian worldview of those Christian school educators who were employed by schools that were affiliated with and accredited by the Association of Classical & Christian Schools. What makes them different is not known. However, different they are, and this good news, along with the bad news above, must lead to some practical applications on the part of Christian school educators.

First, and most importantly, Christian school leaders must begin by “confronting the brutal facts of their current reality” (Collins, 2001, p. 88). Though one school association appears to have performed better on the PEERS assessment, and though some schools performed better than others, none of the schools scored in the Biblical Theism category overall, indicating all of the schools have work to do when it comes to the biblical Christian worldview of teachers. When this research is combined with the growing body of knowledge in the area, a problem beyond the six schools in this study emerges. Collins goes on to assert that leaders should conduct “autopsies without blame...creating a climate where truth is heard...to search for understanding and learning” (p. 78). The cause of Christ is not served by rationalizing or blaming the victim; school leaders must face the issue and confront whatever may come. This means that Christian school leaders themselves possess a biblical Christian worldview, or as a minimum, they are reading and studying to grow in this area.

Second, and somewhat related to the first, is that if Christian school leaders do not know the status of their flock, the current worldview of their faculty, then

investing in worldview assessment is a starting point. There are other instruments available, most of which do a fine job of measuring the religious or spiritual aspect of Christianity, but few measure biblical Christian worldview across the spectrum from philosophy to economics to government like the PEERS worldview assessment.

Third, Christian school leaders must realize that developing a biblical Christian worldview in their faculty is a process that never ends and is not an event that happens once a year at a back-to-school in-service that lasts for a few hours. Building time into a weekly schedule needs to happen.

Fourth, the curriculum guide must reflect a biblical Christian worldview perspective. The best biblical integration in the classroom is a teacher who possesses a biblical worldview, and their most powerful tool, aside from God's word, is the guidance that comes from a well-thought-out and superbly written curriculum guide. Such a guide provides assistance in incorporating a biblical Christian worldview into every subject area.

Finally, and once the Christian school educators can be said to truly have a biblical Christian worldview and are able to teach effectively from it, then student worldview evaluation becomes appropriate. Once the faculty is equipped with a biblical Christian worldview, then worldview evaluation is necessary. Barna (2003b) states that when "there is no defensible evaluation process, assessment is based on assumptions and intuition" (p. 126).

Further Research

Three potential areas for additional research came to light in the presentation and the analysis of the data in Chapters 4 and 5, and a fourth was unrelated to this

study. The first was the possibility of a difference in Christian school educators and a biblical Christian worldview based on gender. Though it was not one of the original research areas, the data was collected as a part of the larger process of data collection and therefore available for analysis. What this researcher found was that 40% of the sample ($n = 56$) were male and 60% ($n = 85$) were female, and the mean difference of 11.11 in favor of the males was significant at the .01 level; $p = .004$; ($t(139) = 2.927$, $p < .01$) with equal variances.

The second area of suggested further research would be into the denominational background of Christian school educators. Data collected by the Nehemiah Institute and forwarded to this researcher, though not used in this research study, was the self-reported denominational background of those taking the PEERS worldview assessment. The PEERS worldview assessment provides for 40 different denominational selections, and it appeared that those schools with the most denominationally heterogeneous respondents were those schools that scored most poorly on the PEERS. On the other hand, the two schools with the most homogenous respondents, and with the vast majority of those respondents self-reporting either Presbyterian or Reformed, had the highest scores of all schools.

The third area directly related to this study would be further or continued research into the school associations. Initial additional research could continue to focus on ACSI and ACCS schools, attempting to discern what caused the differences noted in this study or to refute the findings of this research. Any such research should be conducted in the spirit of adding to the body of knowledge and improving Christian education in general and not promoting one school association over another.

Setting one association up as better or worse than another was not the intended goal of this researcher and is not the lens through which the results of this study have been viewed.

A fourth area of suggested further research unrelated to the findings of this study would be in the area of intentional and focused worldview training, such as that conducted by Fyock (2008), Davis (2004), Olson (2003), and Johnson (2004). Chapter 2 of this study described these studies and the results obtained; results that supported the notion that focused, intentional worldview training facilitated the development of a biblical Christian worldview in the individuals undergoing the training. The research cited included Christian school students, college students, and church congregations and youth groups.

Summary

Worldview is the filter through which all of one's thoughts must pass before becoming words or actions. Worldviews can be God-honoring or God-denying; most are the latter, yet Christians are called to the former. Christian school educators should possess a biblically Christian worldview, but the results of this research study seem to indicate such is not the case. Why? Is it because, as Schaeffer (1972) asserts, they have "accepted...the other set of presuppositions...by means of injection, without realizing what has happened to them" (pp. 85-86)? This would be Sowell's (2005) assessment of the current situation, and it is not unlike the thoughtlessness that attached itself to the issue of slavery. Sowell asserts:

It was not because people thought slavery was right that it persisted for thousands of years. It persisted largely because people did not think about the

rightness or wrongness of it at all. In very hierarchical societies, where most people were born into their predetermined niches in the social complex, slaves were simply at the bottom of a long continuum of varying levels of subordination based on birth....That such an institution could last so long unchallenged, on every inhabited continent, is a chilling example of what can happen when people simply do not think (pp. 168-169).

As Christians, we are called to “not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of (our)...mind” (Romans 12:2, New American Standard Bible). We are to think, to think anew, and to think with God’s word as our only guide to thought and action. May the Lord cause it to be so, and may He use this research study as He will towards that end.

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Appendix A
The PEERS Test

A
NEHEMIAH®
PUBLICATION



THE
PEERS
T E S T
NEHEMIAH INSTITUTE INCORPORATED

TEST VERSION AA14

263099

PEERS INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose of Test

The PEERS Test is designed to measure your “worldview philosophy” in five primary areas of interaction between members of any society: Politics, Economics, Education, Religion and Social Issues (**PEERS**). The test will also reflect your opinion regarding the amount of direct government involvement needed in personal lives.

The PEERS Test scientifically interprets your views on a scale of –100 to +100 with high scores meaning a traditional conservative Christian philosophy of the issues in the test and low scores meaning a liberal, secular humanist philosophy. A rating is given in each of the five subject categories as well as an overall composite score.

***Note:** It is imperative that you honestly record your personal opinion of the statements listed. Do not attempt to guess what is the proper conservative or proper liberal position.*

In addition to the above scores, the PEERS Test will provide a numerical measurement of how opinionated you are (conviction of beliefs) and how consistent you are in your philosophy of life. It also rates the amount of impact you are likely to have on others from your “point of view.”

Results of the Test

Your test results will be illustrated on the PEERS Personal Scorecard. The report will provide a numerical rating on each of the five subject areas, a Limited-Government rating, and a Composite Score rating. The report will also show your answers, grouped by the five subject categories enabling you to review your results by question.

Enter Your Name Here
(please print)

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Nehemiah Institute, Inc.
3735 Harrodsburg Rd.
Suite 150
Lexington, KY 40513

PEERS INSTRUCTIONS

Taking the Test

1. Beginning with the first statement, read each statement carefully, twice if necessary to understand what it is saying.
2. Judge whether you agree or disagree with the statement according to the following guidelines:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| (A) Strongly Agree | This is the truth. You have a conviction that the statement is correct in all ways; you would defend it without compromise. |
| (B) Tend to Agree | Basically you agree with the statement. You may not completely understand the subject, and you may not want to debate it, but it seems more right than wrong. |
| (C) Neutral | You do not understand the statement; you have no opinion about the issue; you think the issue is irrelevant to daily life. |
| (D) Tend to Disagree | The statement does not sound right to you but you are not sure that you could prove it wrong. |
| (E) Strongly Disagree | You are firmly convinced the statement is false. You have a conviction, not just a preference, that the statement is in total error and that you could defend the opposite viewpoint. |

Note: You should mark your answer in the test booklet as well as on the PEERS ANSWER SHEET on the tear-out page. This will provide you with a record of your answers for review purposes when your test results are returned.

3. Upon completion of the test, verify that each answer block has one and only one oval filled in. Although erasures can be made, any statement with duplicate entries, or no entry, will automatically be scored "C" (neutral opinion).

Preliminary Steps for the Test

1. Print your name on page 2 in the provided space.
2. You will need a number two pencil with a good eraser.
3. Remove the perforated sheet from the back of the test booklet. Complete all profile information as requested.
4. Leave the Group Code and Association Code blank unless you are given a code by a group administrator.

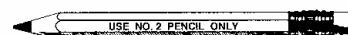
MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Use a no. 2 pencil only.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.
- Darken the oval completely.
- Do not make any stray marks.

Proper Mark



Improper Marks



READ ALL ABOVE INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE PROCEEDING.



THE PEERS TEST

Be sure to bubble your answers here as well as on the tear-out Answer Sheet.

Strongly Disagree
Tend to Disagree
Neutral
Tend to Agree
Strongly Agree

1. Unemployment is primarily caused by a lack of demand for goods and services. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
2. Human nature, because it constantly adapts and changes, has an unlimited potential for progressive development. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
3. All religious belief is personal and should never be imposed on others, particularly on children. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
4. Human life came into existence less than 10 thousand years ago. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
5. The accumulation of wealth by individuals is necessary for a nation to be financially strong. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
6. Government should rest as directly as possible on the will of the people. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
7. Absolute truth exists in all areas of life and can be known. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
8. There is a Supreme Being known as God, all powerful and all knowing, who created and sustains life. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
9. Educational programs must be supervised by the government to ensure fairness, uniformity and equal opportunity to all citizens. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
10. Fractional reserve banking (loaning out more money than what a bank can actually back up with gold or silver) should be prohibited by law. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
11. The major obstacles to social progress are ignorance and faulty social institutions. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
12. Parents have the primary and final responsibility for the education of their children. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
13. An individual can share in the divine nature of God through many avenues other than a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
14. Competitive free-enterprise is the fairest type of economic system. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
15. It is always preferable to settle disputes among nations by free discussion and compromise, not by conflict or war. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
16. A government run program to ensure financial security at retirement age (e.g.: Social Security) is in the best interest of the nation as a whole. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
17. The ideal government guarantees the citizens a minimum income, health insurance and housing. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
18. The chief purpose of education should be to teach a world and life view that will glorify God. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
19. Elementary and secondary schools should be operated with no financial assistance from state and/or federal tax revenues. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
20. In political dialogue, all persons should be allowed to express their opinions, regardless of content, with complete freedom. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
21. A democratic government should guarantee unemployment income and re-employment training benefits to all its citizens. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
22. Society, not the individual is chiefly responsible for social evils. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
23. In a democratic society, citizens have a civil right to an education, and this right must be protected and enforced by civil governments. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
24. Teachers and students should be allowed to express their opinions with complete academic freedom. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
25. Individuals should be allowed to conduct life as they choose as long as it does not interfere with the lives of others. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
26. Centralized government is inefficient and is counter-productive for society as a whole. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
27. Private ownership of property is a necessary requirement for a nation to grow in economic strength. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
28. Social reform should be designed and enforced to correct inequalities in schooling, housing, employment, and recreation. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)

THE PEERS TEST

Strongly Disagree
Tend to Disagree
Neutral
Tend to Agree
Strongly Agree

29. Truth is constant and exists as a 'body of knowledge,' transcending time, culture and social mores. This truth should be taught to all generations in all societies. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
30. Even though world-wide communications and commerce activity now exist, it is unnecessary and unwise for all nations to be using the same currency. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
31. The concept of family, traditionally understood as father, mother and children (in marriage recognized by the church and the state), needs to be redefined to include other types of committed relationships. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
32. Human life as a real and unique person begins at conception. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
33. Jesus Christ was, and is, both fully God and fully man, yet remains one person. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
34. Decentralized government is more likely to be efficient and cost effective than centralized government. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
35. Progressive taxation (higher rates for higher income) is the fairest form of taxation in that it relieves poor people from a heavy tax burden, which they are unable to pay, by taking a larger tax percentage from the rich who are able to pay more. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
36. Just as a minimum wage law helps poor people earn a fair income, a maximum wage law would benefit all citizens by using the abundance of money exceeding the maximum wage amount to finance programs beneficial to all (e.g.: education, transportation, health care, etc.). (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
37. A person's sexual habits should be governed by the Bible and enforced by church and/or state law rather than only by personal preference. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
38. The Bible is meant to be a guide or an example to individuals, not an authoritative rule over lives. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
39. Instruction in any field should present all known theories about the given subject in an unbiased manner and encourage each student to develop his/her own beliefs. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
40. Welfare programs run by families/churches would be more efficient, reduce taxes, and do more overall good than what is presently being done by state and federal programs. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
41. Tithing (traditionally understood as 10% of earned income given to a local church) should be a matter of personal choice, not a religious law. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
42. The Old Testament laws were necessary to govern Israel until the arrival of the Messiah. However, we are now governed by the Holy Spirit through grace and are not bound to any kind of Old Testament law. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
43. All people are conceived with a sinful nature which, from birth on, creates desires in them to commit evil deeds. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
44. The best form of civil government is the one that has the greatest amount of direct participation from the people, where everyone votes on everything. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
45. Parents have the ultimate responsibility for the education of their children and, therefore, should be allowed to instruct their own children if so desired. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
46. The family is the basic and most important institution in society. The church and the government should be structured in such a way as to strengthen the family. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
47. All Scripture is inspired by God and is inerrant in every detail as recorded in the original manuscripts. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
48. In spite of present world-wide communication, transportation and commerce activity, nations would not benefit by having a world government. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
49. Because the Bible is inerrant in all areas, learning through science and reason must be understood in light of what the scriptures say. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
50. The most effective way of curbing inflation is for the government to impose wage and price controls. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
51. Because human nature is constantly changing, values and ethics will also change. Therefore, each generation should be free to adopt moral standards appropriate to their preferences. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)

THE PEERS TEST

Strongly Disagree
Tend to Disagree
Neutral
Tend to Agree
Strongly Agree

52. The Bible provides the foundation of civil law and should be the primary source of instruction for establishing civil government in all nations. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
53. Capital punishment for certain crimes should be enforced in our society. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
54. Church leadership should be held by men. The ordination of women to function as pastors is contrary to God's mandate for church authority. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
55. The human mind has an infinite potential for learning but is inhibited by a negative environment and/or faulty social institutions. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
56. Nationalism (the sovereignty of a nation) is a hindrance to nations working together for world peace. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
57. Education should be conducted such that children understand and support the need for a gradual change to a world government. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
58. Each person has a soul which will live forever after the body dies. This soul will either live in happiness with God in heaven or in torment with the devil in hell. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
59. Day-care schools for infants and toddlers, under the supervision of professional educators, will enhance the educational process of children and will produce more well-developed and productive citizens. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
60. The foundation of all government is self-government under God. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
61. Homosexuality is a criminal offense against society. Persons caught conducting a homosexual act should be tried and sentenced in a court of law. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
62. Federal and state governments should provide price support programs to industries providing essential services (e.g.: agriculture, housing, and medical care). (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
63. A federal Department of Education is necessary to ensure harmony of instructional technique and content of learning in all schools. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
64. Civil government, at both the state and federal levels, should not have responsibility for the economic well-being of the citizens. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
65. Traditional male and female roles are the result of special and distinct qualities with which men and women are born. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
66. Pre-marital sex is always wrong and should not be condoned by society. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
67. There is not a single "best system" of economics for all nations to use since the natural wealth and the types of major industries vary greatly from one part of the world to another. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
68. A function of civil government is to enact educational and social programs designed to prevent over-population of its land. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
69. The Constitution of the United States recognizes power in the people primarily, the states secondarily and the federal government last of all. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)
70. A society or civilization can only increase the material well-being of its citizens by taking a long-term approach to problem solving, rather than a fix-it-now approach. (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)

**DOUBLE CHECK YOUR PROFILE INFORMATION
TO INSURE IT IS CORRECT.**



TEAR HERE

PEERS PROFILE

PRINT INFORMATION AND BE SURE TO FILL IN CORRESPONDING BUBBLES.

LAST NAME										FIRST NAME										MI
A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B		
C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		
D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D		
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		
F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F		
G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G		
H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H		
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I		
J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J		
K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K		
L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L		
M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M		
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O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		
P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q		
R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		
S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		
T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T		
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V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V		
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X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z		

TEST DATE		
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<input type="radio"/> JAN		
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<input type="radio"/> MAY	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 2
<input type="radio"/> JUNE	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 3
<input type="radio"/> JULY	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 4
<input type="radio"/> AUG	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 5
<input type="radio"/> SEPT	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 6
<input type="radio"/> OCT	<input type="radio"/> 7	<input type="radio"/> 7
<input type="radio"/> NOV	<input type="radio"/> 8	<input type="radio"/> 8
<input type="radio"/> DEC	<input type="radio"/> 9	<input type="radio"/> 9

STREET ADDRESS										CITY										ST.
A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B		
C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		
D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D		
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		
F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F		
G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G		
H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H		
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I		
J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	J		
K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K		
L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L		
M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M		
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N		
O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		
P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q		
R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		
S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		
T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T		
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V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V		
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X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
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ZIP CODE

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5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9

PEERS PROFILE

1. GENDER:

☐ Female ☐ Male

2. ETHNIC:

☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native ☐ Chicano/Mex. American
☐ Asian/Pacific Islander ☐ Hispanic
☐ Black/African American ☐ Puerto Rican
☐ Canadian Aboriginal ☐ Other
☐ Caucasian/White

3. AGE:

☐ 15-19 ☐ 50-59
☐ 20-29 ☐ 60-69
☐ 30-39 ☐ 70+
☐ 40-49

4. EDUCATION: (Mark highest completed or current enrollment)

☐ Grade School ☐ Bachelor's
☐ High School ☐ Master's
☐ Technical ☐ Doctorate

5. OCCUPATION: (Mark closest field)

☐ Business ☐ Education
☐ Elected Official ☐ Entertainment
☐ Government ☐ Homemaker
☐ Law ☐ Media
☐ Medical ☐ Ministry
☐ Student ☐ Other

6. INCOME: (Family Income)

☐ Less than \$20K ☐ \$50K - \$75K ☐ Greater than \$100K
☐ \$20K - \$50K ☐ \$75K - \$100K

7. POLITICAL:

☐ Democrat ☐ Other
☐ Republican ☐ No Preference
☐ Independent

8. RELIGION:

☐ Catholicism ☐ Judaism
☐ Humanism ☐ Other
☐ Islam ☐ None
☐ Protestant

9. If you are associated with a school, please bubble the one that closest defines your position:

☐ Freshman, grade 9 ☐ Junior, grade 15
☐ Sophomore, grade 10 ☐ Senior, grade 16
☐ Junior, grade 11 ☐ Administrative
☐ Senior, grade 12 ☐ Faculty
☐ Freshman, grade 13 ☐ Headmaster
☐ Sophomore, grade 14 ☐ School Board

(Leave blank unless
given code by instructor)

GROUP CODE				
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3	3	3	3	3
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6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9

ASSOC. CODE				
A	0	0	0	0
B	1	1	1	1
C	2	2	2	2
D	3	3	3	3
E	4	4	4	4

TEST VERSION CODE				
				1
B	B	2	2	
		3	3	
		4		

PEERS ANSWER SHEET

- | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. A B C D E | 15. A B C D E | 29. A B C D E | 43. A B C D E | 57. A B C D E |
| 2. A B C D E | 16. A B C D E | 30. A B C D E | 44. A B C D E | 58. A B C D E |
| 3. A B C D E | 17. A B C D E | 31. A B C D E | 45. A B C D E | 59. A B C D E |
| 4. A B C D E | 18. A B C D E | 32. A B C D E | 46. A B C D E | 60. A B C D E |
| 5. A B C D E | 19. A B C D E | 33. A B C D E | 47. A B C D E | 61. A B C D E |
| 6. A B C D E | 20. A B C D E | 34. A B C D E | 48. A B C D E | 62. A B C D E |
| 7. A B C D E | 21. A B C D E | 35. A B C D E | 49. A B C D E | 63. A B C D E |
| 8. A B C D E | 22. A B C D E | 36. A B C D E | 50. A B C D E | 64. A B C D E |
| 9. A B C D E | 23. A B C D E | 37. A B C D E | 51. A B C D E | 65. A B C D E |
| 10. A B C D E | 24. A B C D E | 38. A B C D E | 52. A B C D E | 66. A B C D E |
| 11. A B C D E | 25. A B C D E | 39. A B C D E | 53. A B C D E | 67. A B C D E |
| 12. A B C D E | 26. A B C D E | 40. A B C D E | 54. A B C D E | 68. A B C D E |
| 13. A B C D E | 27. A B C D E | 41. A B C D E | 55. A B C D E | 69. A B C D E |
| 14. A B C D E | 28. A B C D E | 42. A B C D E | 56. A B C D E | 70. A B C D E |



PLEASE DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA

263099

Appendix B

Attribute Independent Variable Questionnaire

- 1) Is your undergraduate degree from a public (to include private non-Christian) university or college or is it from a Christian university or college?
☐ (Public) ☐ (Christian) ☐ (No degree)
- 2) Is your graduate degree from a public (to include private non-Christian) university or college or is it from a Christian university or college?
☐ (Public) ☐ (Christian) ☐ (No graduate degree)
- 3) Did you graduate from a public (to include private non-Christian) high school or a Christian high school?
☐ (Public) ☐ (Christian)
- 4) Were you raised in what you would consider a Christian home?
☐ (Yes) ☐ (No)
- 5) Do you teach at the elementary or the secondary level?
☐ (Elementary) ☐ (Secondary)
- 6) Have you taught in Christian schools less than 10 years or 10 years or more? (Count only full years served)
☐ (Less than 10 years) ☐ (10 or more years)

Appendix C

Liberty University IRB Approval Letter

LIBERTY

UNIVERSITY

Center for Counseling and Family Studies

IRB Approval 620.060408, Mark Wood
 A STUDY OF THE BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW OF K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
 EDUCATORS
 July 3, 2008

Dear Mark,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must resubmit the study to the IRB. See the IRB website for appropriate forms in these cases.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
 IRB Chair, Liberty University
 Center for Counseling and Family Studies
 Liberty University
 1971 University Boulevard
 Lynchburg, VA 24502-2269
 (434) 592-4054
 Fax: (434) 522-0477

address 1971 University Boulevard
 Lynchburg, VA 24502-2269

phone (434) 592-4049
 fax (434) 522-0477

email counseling@liberty.edu
 web www.liberty.edu

Appendix D

PEERS Permission to Publish Letter

NEHEMIAH INSTITUTE, INC.

554 Groves End Lane
Winter Garden, FL 34787
1-800-948-3101

Daniel J. Smithwick
President

October 8, 2008

Mr. Mark Wood
367 Oak St.
Mt. Morris, MI 48458

Dear Mr. Wood,

This is to grant permission for the inclusion of the full PEERS Test as an appendix in your dissertation with Liberty University. The permission is granted with agreement that the PEERS test will be included in its original form, without divulging proper answers to test items. Permission is granted with no limits on its distribution via your dissertation.

Sincerely yours,

Dan Smithwick
(sent via email)