

A COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF WORLDVIEW DEVELOPMENT AND  
RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT BETWEEN APOSTOLIC COLLEGE STUDENTS  
ATTENDING APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN AND SECULAR COLLEGES

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A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education

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## **ABSTRACT**

Among young people of college age in the United States a growing number who come from Christian homes are embracing a humanist/socialist worldview. The prominent purpose of a Christian education is to mold students into biblical thinking, or a biblical worldview as part of developing spiritually. The purpose of this quantitative, causal-comparative study was to examine the difference between worldviews and religious commitment of students who attend an Apostolic Christian college and Apostolic students who attend secular college, and to determine if there is a statistically significant difference in the two groups. The PEERS instrument was used to measure biblical worldview, and religious commitment was measured using the Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10). Results from an independent samples *t*-test showed that Apostolic Christian college students and Apostolic students who attend secular college did not significantly differ on biblical worldview. Descriptive analyses showed that scores on the RCI-10 were skewed, with college students having high levels of religious commitment. Due to this skewness, a chi-square test of independence was conducted and determined that the percentage of Apostolic Christian college students with high religious commitment was significantly higher than the percentage of secular college students of Apostolic faith with high religious commitment. Implications of this study are discussed.

*Key words: worldview, Apostolic, Christian college, religious commitment*

## **DEDICATION**

Without the support, patience, and sacrifice of my husband of fifty years, Tim Simoneaux, I would never have reached this level in my educational quest. Tim has been there through the tough times and through the inspiring times. He has been my rock, my sound board, and my “just keep going” coach. Thank you, Tim.

Additionally, I dedicate this work to my eight grandchildren, my legacy: Micah George Simoneaux, Lauren Christy Simoneaux, Caylie Anne Williams, Timothy Carl Simoneaux, Alyssa Jean Perry, Brittany Lynn Williams, Richard Alexander Perry, and Allanna Renea Williams.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

Apostolic School of Theology (ATS)

Association of Theological Schools (ATS)

Auto Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministry (BACM)

Bachelor of Science in Christian Ministry (BSCM)

Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU)

Faith Development Theory (FDT)

Gateway College of Evangelism (GCE)

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Hope International University (HIU)

King James Version (KJV)

New American Standard Bible, (NASB)

New King James Version (NKJV)

Politics, Economics, Education, Religion, and Social Issues (PEERS)

Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10)

United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI)

Urshan College (UC)

Urshan Graduate School of Theology (UGST)

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

The mission of a Christian college or university is to prepare students to be successful, both in their chosen career and as representatives of Christ and the Kingdom of God (Glanzer, 2013; Kanitz, 2005; Mayhew, 2012). Christian colleges and universities such as Liberty University, The Master's College, Regent University, Biola University, Urshan College and Urshan Graduate School of Theology have a mission of developing students to be committed Christians who hold a Christian worldview (Biola University, 2011; Liberty University, 2013a; The Master's College, 2011; Regent University, 2013a; Urshan Graduate School of Theology, 2013; Urshan College Catalog, 2013). Some definitional differences exist among scholars as to the meaning of worldview within the context of Christianity. Nash (2010) described Christian worldview as "a set of beliefs about the most important issues in life" (p.16). Sire (2009) described worldview as a "matter of the heart" (p. 20). These differing views, however, are all derived from the core belief that drives the Christian worldview: "a Christian worldview affirms that creation is 'very good' (Gen, 1:31) and that ... the natural realm of creation operates [through] God" (Watson, 2007, p. 137). Leading students to a biblically based worldview and a commitment to faith is a mandate of the mission of conservative Christian colleges.

This quantitative, causal-comparative study compared the worldview and religious commitment of Apostolic Christian college students and Apostolic students who attend a secular college. This chapter will give the background that led to the study, define the problem addressed, establish the purpose and significance of the study, and give an overview of the questions the study sought to answer.

## **Background**

As the United States of America is well into its third century since its formation, its culture has strayed far from its Christian foundation. Smithwick (2008), of the Nehemiah Institute, stated that 90% of young people from Christian homes are favoring the Humanist/Socialist worldview over a traditional Christian worldview. In a recent study by Woodward (2012) results indicated that there has been a decline of 11% from 1990 through 2008 of Americans who consider themselves Christians, and a 7% increase of those who claim no religion at all.

**2013 ARIS National College Student Survey.** Results from data analyses showed that college students identified with three primary religious worldviews: (a) religious, (b) spiritual, and (c) secular. Results from the study showed that 32.4% of the college students endorsed a spiritual worldview while 28.2% held a secular worldview (Kosmin & Keysar, 2013). The religious worldview was held by 31.8% of the college students. Moreover, results showed that students who identified with Christian conservative or evangelical religious beliefs comprised almost one-third (31.8%) of the students holding a religious worldview (Kosmin & Keysar, 2013).

For a society to survive as a Christian culture, based upon biblical standards, its youth must embrace a biblical worldview (Ryken, 2013). The college-career years, ages 18-25, are critical to forming a worldview (Erikson, 1968; Rindfuss, 1991). Erikson (1968) defined eight stages of psychosocial development throughout the lifespan. The fifth stage, identity versus role confusion, can be influenced by a myriad of experiences, social factors, and interpersonal interactions that are specific to the college adult (Bryant, 2011a, 2011b; King 2003; Rindfuss, 1991). The education experience, especially at college level, can potentially be more influential

upon identity and worldview than church or parental training (Kanitz, 2005; Mayhew, 2012). Christian educators have the task of guiding young people in forming a biblical, Christian worldview (Bryant, 2011a, 2011b; Rockenbach, Walker, & Luzader, 2012). It was posited in this study that attending an Apostolic Christian college or university will influence and strengthen Apostolic Christian college students' religious commitment and Christian worldview. The purpose of this study was to examine if students attending an Apostolic Christian college, as compared to Apostolic students attending a secular college (similar in student demographics), demonstrate significantly higher levels of Christian worldview and religious commitment.

The theory used in this study was the faith development theory (FDT) developed by Fowler (1981). The theory indicates that college students have certain concepts about what they perceive to be truth as it pertains to faith and spirituality. Applied to this study, this theory holds that it can be expected to indicate that an Apostolic Christian college or a secular college will have an effect upon the religious commitment and Christian worldview of students. Fowler's (1981) FDT, comprised of seven stages of faith, postulated that behavior models what is believed to be true (Green & Hoffman, 1989). According to the FDT, faith development can be measured by observing a person's common behavior (Fowler, 2004). As seen through the lens of FDT, the college student's development of his/her religious commitment and worldview is profoundly influenced and informed by numerous social forces, including family, peers, professors, courses, and curricula. Central to FDT is the premise that the individual looks to faith to provide a coherent framework to synthesize these various influences (Fowler, 2004).

College students from fundamental church groups are increasingly falling prey to humanistic and socialist worldviews (Smithwick, 2008). Youth who are affiliated with the United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI) fall within this demographic. According to

Iselin and Meteyar (2010), students are graduating from Christian high schools and entering Christian colleges without having formed a Christian worldview. There is a growing concern that students will graduate with a four-year degree from an Apostolic Christian college without formulating a scripturally-based worldview (personal conversation with Norris, 2013). In order for the Church to stand strong, the upcoming generation must hold onto truth “once delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3, King James Version [KJV]). College students are at a critical stage of identity development and a critical part of identity is faith commitment, either the lack thereof, or strong feelings of faith. Worldview development is an integral part of identity and knowing oneself (Worldview, 2010). Faith development, religious commitment, and identity will be discussed more fully in chapter two.

Searching for literature on faith development in relationship to forming a Christian worldview and religious commitment, this writer found numerous relevant articles. Sire (2009) explored various philosophical worldviews. Layton, Dollahite, and Hardy (2011) identified seven anchors of religious commitment. Morales (2013) noted the account of creation (Genesis 1:1-27), the fall of man (Genesis 3:16), and the plan to redeem the fallen man (Genesis 3:15) as foundational faith principles that form a biblical worldview. However, when a search was made on data relative to worldview development in Apostolic Christian colleges, the results were minimal, indicating a gap in the literature.

### **Problem Statement**

Christian colleges and universities have a mission of developing students to be religiously committed Christians who hold a Christian worldview (Kanitz, 2005; Mayhew, 2012; Quinn, Foote, & Williams, 2012; Watson, 2007). The problem is that minimal research has been conducted to determine if leaders of Christian colleges and universities “have succeeded in



meeting this mission” (Kanitz, 2005, p. 99). A review of literature on religious commitment and Christian worldview, as it pertains to college students of the Apostolic faith, gleans little or no information. Layton et al. (2011), Morales (2013), and Sire (2009) expounded on philosophy, fall of man, and religious commitment anchors, but literature pertaining particularly to Apostolic faith is scarce. Academic research is needed in order to ascertain if attending a Christian college founded on Apostolic ideology influences religious commitment and worldview in students.

### **Purpose Statement**

This study posited that attending a UPCI-endorsed Apostolic Christian college – as opposed to attending a secular college – significantly and positively influences Apostolic Christian college students’ religious commitment and Christian worldview. This study compared Christian worldview and religious commitment of students attending an Apostolic Christian college to Apostolic students attending a secular college. The purpose of this quantitative, causal-comparative study was to determine if students of the Apostolic faith who attend a UPCI-endorsed Apostolic Christian college have significantly higher levels of religious commitment and a stronger Christian worldview as compared to students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college that is similar in student demographics to the Apostolic Christian college. This study will contribute to an understanding among Apostolic Christian college leaders as to whether they have succeeded in their mission. The results of the study will assist Apostolic Christian colleges by assessing their worldview efficacy and will give pastors and counselors a foundation for advising young people on their choices concerning higher education.

The theories used in this study were Fowler’s Faith Development Theory developed by +Fowler (1981) and Marcia’s identity statuses (1981, 1998). Fowler (1981) hypothesized that faith unfolds in a pattern of development and it is structures of faith and not content that makes

the levels of faith evident (Fowler, 1981). Marcia's (1981, 1998) theory was based on two factors: exploration and commitment. As applied to this study, it can be expected for the independent variable, the type of college the student attends, to influence the dependent variables, students' religious commitment, and worldview. The researcher used two surveys to test these theories as related to students' Christian worldview and religious commitment.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant to the research pertaining to Christian education and Christian worldview. Christian schools and colleges have a mission to prepare students to be committed Christians in a non-Christian world (Liberty University, 2013a; The Master's College, 2011; Regent University, 2013a; Urshan Graduate School of Theology, 2013). By forming a solid biblical worldview before leaving college, students are better qualified to become salt and light (Matthew 5:13-14, KJV) in their communities and professional fields (Azusa Pacific University, 2012; Biola University, 2011; Liberty University 2013b, Regent University, 2013b; Urshan Graduate School of Theology, 2013). According to Moreland and Craig (2003), philosophy, particularly worldview, has not been a key part of Christian schools and college curriculum which "in turn, has contributed to intellectual shallowness and a lack of cultural discernment in the body of Christ" (p. 12). This study could provide stakeholders with a better understanding of the effect Apostolic Christian colleges and secular colleges have on the worldview of college-age students while helping to fill the gap in literature.

## **Research Questions**

The research questions guiding this study are:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant difference in biblical worldview between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant difference in students' level of religious commitment between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?

## **Hypotheses**

H1<sub>o</sub>. Christian worldview will not significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H1<sub>a</sub>. Christian worldview will significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H2<sub>o</sub>. Students' level of religious commitment will not significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H2<sub>a</sub>. Students' level of religious commitment will significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college.

## **Identification of Variables**

There is one independent variable in this study: type of college (UPCI-endorsed Apostolic Christian college versus secular colleges). These colleges are located in North America and the Apostolic Christian and secular colleges are similar in student body demographics. The UPCI-endorsed Apostolic Christian college in the study has a core objective to develop a Christian worldview and religious commitment in its students (Urshan College Catalog, 2013). The mission and objectives of secular colleges are not based on a religious doctrine and thus students' Christian worldview or religious commitment is not intentionally developed.

There are two dependent variables: (a) religious commitment and (b) Christian worldview. Both religious commitment, as measured by the Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10) (Worthington et al., 2003), and biblical worldview, as measured by the PEERS survey (Smithwick, 2003) were assessed using self-report surveys completed by the college students.

Religious commitment, as pertaining to this study, is operationally defined as the student's religious service attendance, intrinsic religious motivation, and religious coping (Ermakova, 2011). Biblical or Christian worldview, as defined by Nash (2010), views the world through the recognition of Jesus Christ as both God and man. Students with a Christian worldview will model their lives after Jesus Christ and biblical instruction.

## **Definitions**

*Apostolic* pertains to following the Apostolic Doctrine of the Apostles of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, especially based upon Act 2:38 (Bernard, 2011).

*Biblical Worldview* is a worldview based upon an understanding of biblical concepts. It is the imprint of God's objective truth on our inner life. These concepts assume the authenticity of the Bible and that absolute truth can be defined by using the Bible as a reference point (Brickhill, 2010). Pearcey (2008) eloquently defined worldview as, "a mental map" that tells us how to navigate the world effectively (p.221). The foundational principal of a biblical worldview is based upon II Timothy 3:16, 17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (KJV). A biblical worldview has Christ at the center and is about a relationship with Christ (Goheen & Bartholomew, 2008). The operational definition of biblical worldview, as defined by Smithwick (2003), is one's worldview perceptions of politics, economics, education, religion, and social issues. Smithwick (2003) posited that worldview is comprised of stages (socialism, secular humanism, moderate Christian, and biblical theism), with the highest level or stage of biblical worldview being biblical theism.

*Biblical Theism Worldview* is a worldview based upon God's supremacy and the infallibility of the Bible (Moreland, Meister, & Sweis, 2013; Sire, 2009).

*Christian College* is a private college that has a biblical mission statement, curriculum, and philosophy that reflect biblical ideology (M. Bryant, 2008). Glanzer (2013) defined a Christian college or university as one that has components in their mission statements, curriculum, policies, and governance that embrace Christian ideology and require courses in Bible Theology.

*Christian Worldview*, as described by Nash (2010) sees everything through the concept that Jesus Christ was both fully God and fully man.

*College student* in this study will refer to a student of the Apostolic faith attending either an Apostolic Christian college or a secular college.

*Moderate Christian Worldview* refers to a moderate Christian worldview that views God as omnipotent in religious matters, but not relevant to most life situations. A moderate Christian believes man is in control of life while God is in control of spiritual affairs (Nehemiah Institute, n.d.).

*PEERS* is a worldview assessment instrument that examines views on politics, economics, education, religion, and social issues created by the Nehemiah Institute (Smithwick, 2008).

*Postmodern Worldview* is a worldview where there is no absolute truth which makes religious tolerance essential (Ryken, 2013).

*Religious Commitment Inventory-10* (RCI-10) is a survey consisting of 10 pertinent questions relating to religious commitment developed by Worthington (Worthington et al., 2003).

*Secular College or University* is the description used in this document for private and public colleges and universities that have no religious mission, but are purely a-religious. Goheen and Bartholomew (2008) differentiated between the sacred and secular realms by comparing prayer and worship (sacred) with sex and entertainment (secular). Secularism was defined by Taylor (2010) as being non-religious, or a-religious.

*Secular/Humanism Worldview* refers to the belief that humanity is the source of all truth and knowledge (Nehemiah Institute, n.d.).

*Socialistic Worldview* is a type of worldview founded on humanity needing a ruling body to control all areas of life and that elite members of the community or nation should determine the common good (Nehemiah Institute, n.d.).

*United Pentecostal Church, International* (UPCI) ascribes to an apostolic doctrine and resulted from the merger of two Apostolic organizations, Pentecostal Church, Incorporated and Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus Christ, in 1945 (Clanton and Clanton, 1995).

*Worldview* as described by Sire, (2004): “A worldview is composed of a number of basic presuppositions, more or less consistent with each other, more or less consciously held, more or less true” (p. 20).

### **Research Summary**

This research project used a quantitative, causal-comparative, design to compare and quantify the possible causative effects an Apostolic Christian college education and a secular college education have on Apostolic students’ religious commitment and worldview. The causal-comparative study allows the researcher to gain information about a phenomenon when little is known (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013). Being exploratory in design, the causal-comparative design is often used when the researcher finds it impossible or unethical to manipulate independent variables (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013). The causal-comparative design examines possible “cause-and-effect relationships” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Gall et al. (2007) defined causal-comparative research as a “type of non-experimental investigation in which researchers seek to identify cause-and-effect relationships by forming groups of individuals in whom the independent variable is present or absent” (p. 306).

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine the null hypothesis of the first research question that there are no significant mean score differences in Christian worldview

between students of the Apostolic faith who attend a UPCI-endorsed Christian college and students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college or university. The independent variable is type of college, (i.e., Christian versus secular). One dependent variable, Christian worldview, was measured as an interval-coded variable via the PEERS survey (Smithwick, 2003). The other independent variable, religious commitment, was assessed via the Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10) (Worthington et al., 2003). An independent samples *t*-test was also conducted to examine the null hypothesis of the second research question that there are no significant mean score differences in religious commitment between students of the Apostolic faith who attend a UPCI Christian university and students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college or university. However, due to skewness of the religious commitment variable, a chi-square test of independence was conducted.

The independent samples *t*-test is used to examine mean differences on a dependent variable that is interval-or ratio-coded between two (and no more than two) independent groups (Agresti, 2013). These groups can result from randomization or can occur naturally, as in this study (Agresti, 2013). The independent samples *t*-test is commonly used in studies with a between-subjects research design, such as a causal-comparative research design (Agresti, 2013). The significance of an independent samples *t*-test is determined by a *t*-ratio value that is higher than the critical *t*-value, indicating significance at  $p < .05$  (Agresti, 2013). Significance of the test denotes that one group's mean score on a dependent variable is significantly higher or lower than the other group's mean score (Agresti, 2013).

The chi-square test of independence is used to examine frequency/percentage differences between two or more groups on a categorically-coded dependent variable (Agresti, 2013). The chi-square test of independence is commonly used in studies with a between-subjects research



design, such as a causal comparative research design, when both the independent and dependent variables are categorical (Agresti, 2013). The significance of a chi-square test of independence is determined by a chi-square value that is higher than the critical chi-square value, indicating significance at  $p < .05$  (Agresti, 2013). Significance of the test denotes that the dependent variable frequency/percentage is higher in one group as compared to the other(s) (Agresti, 2013).

## **Assumptions and Limitations**

### **Assumptions**

As with any study, this study has assumptions. These assumptions pertain to the sample as well as the methodology of the study. The study was conducted in a mid-western location, an area that is fairly conservative and known as part of the Bible-Belt (Brunn, Webster, & Archer, 2011). Another assumption was that students who attend the Christian college and those who have a history of church attendance would have received basic biblical training. Thus, the participants could possibly come into the study with a basic biblical worldview.

There are methodological assumptions. One assumption was that a sample size of  $N = 102$  would be achieved so that there is adequate power to detect significant results. As self-report surveys were used in this study, another assumption was that study participants would provide truthful and meaningful survey responses. It was also expected that the data would meet the assumptions for an independent samples  $t$ -test.

### **Delimitations**

This study was limited to Apostolic students attending either Urshan College or secular colleges and universities. The permission letter from Urshan College is found in Appendix B.

This limited the sample size because Urshan College is a small Christian college with less than 500 students. Additionally, the participants were required to have completed a minimum of three semesters with 48 or more credit hours. The rationale behind limiting this study to Apostolic students with these minimum requirements is because the study is examining and comparing the effects Christian and secular colleges have on Apostolic students' worldview and religious commitment. It was considered necessary for the students to have been at their particular schools for the minimum of three semesters and to have completed a minimum of 48 credit hours in order to ascertain the effects the schools' ideology and curriculum had on the students.

Now that the foundation has been laid for the study, the next chapter will review the literature on worldview, its foundations, and various worldview ideologies. Literature on religious commitment will be explored and the scriptural foundation for a biblical worldview will be discussed. History of higher education and a comparison of secular and Christian education complete the literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Among adults who claim to be born-again, 91% do not have a biblical worldview and 98% of teenagers who profess to be reborn do not possess a biblical worldview (Barna, 2005). Lanier (2010), referred to Barna's (2005) survey to illustrate that the 18-35 age bracket are the least likely to have a Christian worldview. Kosmin and Keysar (2013) found that many college-age students have a worldview different from the ideology in which they were raised. Kosmin and Keysar identified three distinctive worldviews seen in college students: (a) religious worldview with 31.8% of the student sample having this worldview, (b) spiritual worldview occurring among 32.4% of the student sample, and (c) a secular worldview existing in 28.2% of the student sample. Results from Kosmin and Keysar's study indicated that 82.1% of college students with a secular worldview and 56.2% of students who had a religious worldview had attended church regularly as a child. Interestingly, 37.2% of students with a secular worldview and 56.2% of students in the "don't know" category had also attended church regularly as a child (Kosmin & Keysar, 2013).

If the American Christian church is to influence the world, it must exemplify lives founded on biblical truth (Lanier, 2010). The most important institution affecting Western culture today is not the Church, but the university, and it is at the colleges and universities that leaders are formed that affect every aspect of Western culture (Moreland & Craig, 2003). Bryant (2011b) described the worldviews of American Christian students as having worldviews as diverse as biblical and humanistic. The problem is that there is a lack of research on the effect Apostolic higher education has on Apostolic Christian college students' worldview and religious commitment. The purpose of this study was to test the theory that an Apostolic Christian college education contributes to a biblically-based worldview and a solid religious commitment.

## **Chapter Overview**

This chapter will explore the literature on worldview and particularly biblical worldview. The basic theoretical frameworks behind the study will be elucidated followed by a review of the literature. Literature on the subject of worldview and biblical worldview will be covered, including the historical, psychological, and philosophical foundations. A review of literature on religious commitment and scriptural foundations will be followed by a literature examination of the history of higher education and the rationale behind Christian education.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Fowler's (1981) Faith Development Theory (FDT)**

The basic theoretical framework driving this study was Fowler's (1981) FDT which is made up of seven levels of faith, beginning with a pre-stage during infancy and progressing through six stages (Green & Hoffman, 1989). Fowler's theory was founded on Piaget's levels of cognitive development and Kohlberg's stages of reasoning (Fowler, 2004; Jones, 2004; McDargh, 2001). Parker (2010) conducted a review of Fowler's FDT, noting the lack of validation research due to a combination of factors. He formed two tentative hypotheses: (a) Fowler (1981) claimed in the FDT that faith unfolds in a pattern of development; and (b) it is structures of faith and not content that makes the levels of faith evident (Parker, 2010). Parker's (2010) third hypothesis pertained to the psychosocial aspects of FDT. Critics of FDT note the difference between what faith is understood to be by evangelicals and how Fowler refers to faith (Heywood, 2008; Parker, 2010). Theologians express concern for Fowler's definition of faith and accuse him of disregarding the basic tenant of the Christian faith, that there is forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ (Heywood, 2008). Despite this criticism, Fowler's (1981) FDT was

chosen as a foundational theory because it attempts to define faith development among young adults, the population chosen for this research. Table 1 presents the seven levels of faith according to Fowler's (1981) FDT.

Table 1

*Fowler's Seven Stages of Faith*

Stage	Age	Description
0 – Primal or undifferentiated	Birth to 2 years	Early learning in a safe environment
1 – Intuitive-Projective	Preschool	Fantasy and reality are mixed; most basic ideas of God are mixed
2 – Mythic-Literal	School age	Understanding the world in more logical ways; accept faith stories, taking them literally
3 – Synthetic-Conventional	Teen years	Worldview begins to emerge, but individuals are still easily swayed (many people never go beyond this stage)
4 – Individuative-Reflective	Young adulthood	Critically examine personal beliefs; easily disillusioned
5 – Conjunctive Faith	Usually mid-life	See life as a mystery; often return to early beliefs, while thinking for oneself
6 – Universalizing Faith	Rare	Firmly fixed worldview

*Note:* Table constructed from information found in Fowler (1981).

College students are traditionally between 18 and 25 years of age (Sloan, 2013). They would typically be at the fourth stage, Individuative-Reflective, where they are critically examining their personal beliefs but can be easily disillusioned (Fowler, 1981). While at university or college, students may often encounter strong influences designed to sway their worldview (Moreland & Craig, 2003). The mission of Urshan College (UC) according to Urshan Catalog (2013), is to “educate, empower, and equip” Apostolic young people “for life and

servant leadership in the church and the world” (p. 13). This is only accomplished by students forming a solid biblical worldview during their time at the college (Moreland & Craig, 2003). During the college years, which marks a transition from childhood to adulthood, students are often in the moratorium state of identity development and are “proceeding toward achievement” (Barry & Nelson, 2005, p. 246). College Students’ religious identity influences their biblical worldview (Barry & Nelson, 2005).

### **Marcia’s (1981, 1998) Identity Statuses.**

Santrock (2011) discussed Erikson’s (1968) fifth stage of development, identity. He also examined Marcia’s (1980, 1998) definition of identity that is broken into four statuses. Marcia’s four statuses were based on two factors: exploration and commitment. A diagram of Marcia’s Identity Statuses may be found at <http://www.yalescientific.org/2014/04/unsolved-mysteries-the-science-of-identity/>. If an individual has neither committed to an identity nor explored it, he/she is in the diffusion stage of identity development (Marcia, 1980, 1998). An individual who has committed to an identity without having explored it is in the identity foreclosure stage (Marcia, 1980, 1998). An individual who is exploring an identity, but has yet to commit to it is in the identity moratorium state (Marcia, 1980, 1998). An individual who has explored an identity and has committed to it is in the achievement stage (Marcia, 1980, 1998). College students are at a critical stage of identity development and a critical part of identity is faith commitment, either the lack thereof, or strong feelings of faith. Worldview development is an integral part of identity and knowing oneself (Worldview, 2010).

## Review of the Literature

### History of Worldview

Over the past two decades, worldview has developed into a leading concept in philosophical areas and has extended into science, history, anthropology, and Christian thought (Hiebert, 2008). Hiebert (2008) noted that culture was the idea behind worldview in anthropology. *Civilized* was the term used by early anthropologists to differentiate between primitive and sophisticated; then the term *culture* was introduced to differentiate between various beliefs and practices. Worldview has its roots in beliefs and practices. Beliefs are demonstrated by actions, and an individual's worldview is seen not in what is said, but in what actions are displayed (Huffman, 2012).

Emmanuel Kant first used the German word, *weltanschauung*, which is the origin of the English word, worldview (Ryken, 2013). Kant's basic belief was that each person uses reason only to achieve *weltanschauung* (worldview), an understanding of the world and man's place therein. Though he only used the term one time in his writings, it was critical in his thinking. The idea of a worldview flourished and was adopted by German philosophy in the nineteenth century and became a common term in German academic vocabulary by the end of that century (Goheen and Bartholomew, 2008). According to Sire (2004), worldview, from a German idealistic and romantic viewpoint, was used widely "to denote a set of beliefs that underlie and shape all human thought and action" (p. 23). Other historic figures who referred to the term, *worldview*, were Dilthey, Wittgenstein, and Schaffer (Sire, 2004). Dilthey used the term *Zeitgeist*, defined as *spirit of the times*, to describe periods of history (Hiebert, 2008).

According to Hiebert (2008), German historians of the nineteenth century studied ordinary people rather than politics and wars. Burkhardt sought meaning in the different

festivals and folk beliefs of Renaissance Italy. Spengler investigated how cultures borrowed traits from one another and manipulated these cultures into their own culture's worldview. Hiebert asked the question, "How do cultural patterns emerge, how do they spread from one region to another, and why do some die out while others persist for centuries and millennia?" (p. 14). This is the rationale behind the German use of the word *Weltanschauung*, to refer to these recurring, enduring cultural patterns (Hiebert, 2008).

Everyone has a worldview, a fundamental perspective of the world and its relationship to self (Nash, 2010). A good definition of worldview is the big story of life (Norris, 2010). Worldview is what is presupposed, a way of looking at life, the interpretation of the universe, and orientation to reality (Ryken, 2013). Ryken (2013) described worldview as coming from a heartfelt commitment and orientation. Reality is interpreted through a worldview, but worldview also guides behavior (Huffman, 2012).

### **Psychological Foundation of Worldview**

Marcia's (1980, 1998) ego identity status paradigm is rooted in psychosocial theory, causing questions to surface regarding the relationship between Marcia's (1980, 1998) and Erickson's (1968) idea on identity (Anderson, 1993). Erikson (1968) defined eight stages of development: trust, autonomy, initiative, industry, identity, intimacy, generativity, and integrity. Marcia (1980, 1998) analyzed the fifth stage, identity, and developed four statuses of identity. These statuses are identity diffusion, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium, and identity achievement (Santrock, 2011).

The identity diffusion status is before a crisis experience and the young person is still undecided about occupation, religion, and the ideological persuasion they will follow. Identity foreclosure takes place when a commitment has been made without exploration of alternatives.



Identity moratorium occurs when the individual is not able or willing to make a commitment, and identity commitment occurs after a crisis and a commitment has been made (Santrock, 2011). College-age students wrestle with self-identity and most move during their college years from exploring ideas and worldviews to committing to a particular worldview.

### **Philosophical Foundation of Worldview**

The basic philosophical question surrounding worldview is what is truth, and it goes back to the ancient philosophers including Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, and Quintilian (Gutek, 2010). Gutek's (2010) focus was on building connections between education, thinkers, and events that brought us to the world we know today. Men such as Aquinas, Calvin, and Thomas Jefferson were men who explored truth. They sought to build a worldview around the truth, and their philosophical beliefs are still influential today. Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy was based on political change brought about by non-violent means (Gutek, 2010). According to Gutek, Gandhi's humanistic worldview brought about great change to India and influenced the worldview of men like Booker T. Washington and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sire (2009) explored various philosophical worldviews, claiming that the theistic worldview was dominant up to the seventeenth century. Though not all harmonious, Christians had a basic belief in the Bible, creation, and God. Their worldview can be defined as Christian Theism. The worldview of Deism arose out of the disharmony between various religious doctrines of the seventeenth century and attempted to bring theological and philosophical unity to the divide between Lutherans, Puritans, and Anglicans. Deism's worldview varied, but the general theme was that there is a God. Men such as Voltaire, Benjamin Franklin, and John Locke embraced Deism, but their worldview differed greatly. Sire (2009) examined other

philosophical worldviews including Naturalism, Nihilism, Existentialism, Eastern Pantheistic Monism, New Age, Postmodernism, and Islamic Theism.

Moreland and Craig (2003) explored the philosophical foundations of Christian worldview and their book was an introduction to philosophy as viewed through a Christian perspective. They covered a broad spectrum of philosophical ideology including the sub-disciplines of science, epistemology, philosophy of religion, and metaphysics. On the dedication page of their book they quoted Hebrews 13:7, “Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith” (New American Standard Bible, [NASB]).

According to Moreland and Craig (2003), though the average Christian is not aware of it, there is an intellectual battle taking place in scholarly journals, professional societies, and in universities and colleges in America. A biblical worldview is being challenged by the philosophies of enlightenment naturalism and postmodern anti-realism ideology. Philosophy is foundational to every discipline, therefore making it strategically important to be influenced by a biblical, Christ-centered worldview (Moreland & Craig, 2003).

The philosophical foundation of worldview is about finding truth and the great philosophers, from ancient Confucius to modern-day Martin Luther King, Jr., sought to define the meaning of truth. John 14:6 answered this great philosophical question: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (New King James Version [NKJV]). John 17:17 states that God’s Word is truth. “The Person of Truth is Jesus Christ; the expression of Truth is this Word” (Graham, 2013).

Sire (2009) noted that a worldview is not necessarily what an individual might consider it to be:

It is rather what we show it to be by our words and actions. Our worldview generally lies so deeply embedded in our subconscious that unless we have reflected long and hard, we are unaware of what it is (p. 21).

Sire listed seven basic questions about worldview (p. 22-23). The first question was, “What is prime reality?” Sire stated that a common answer would be, “God, or the gods, or the material cosmos” (p. 21). The second question was, “What is the nature of external reality that is the world around us?” (Sire, 2009, p. 22). Sire suggested that common responses would be that “nature of reality was determined by whether we see the world as created or autonomous, as chaotic or orderly, as matter or spirit.” The third questions Sire posited was, “What is a human being?” (p. 22). Sire provided common responses such as “a highly complex machine, a sleeping god, a person made in the image of God, a naked ape” (p. 22). The fourth question posed by Sire was, “What happens to a person at death?” (p. 23). He suggested common answers may include “personal extinction, or transformation to a higher state, or reincarnation, or departure to a shadowy existence on the other side” (p. 23). “Why is it possible to know anything at all?” is the fifth question Sire asked (p.23). His sample answers to this question include creation in God’s image or evolution through a long process of survival.

Sire’s sixth question, “How do we know what is right and wrong?” was given possible answers of human choice, God’s character, what feels good, or cultural situations (p. 23). Question seven was, “What is the meaning of human history?” (p. 23). Sire stated that a possible answer could be, “to realize the purposes of God or the gods” (p.23). In his 2009 publication, Sire added an eighth question: “What personal, life-orienting core commitments are consistent with this worldview?” (p. 23). This question tied core commitments and worldview tightly together. According to Sire, core commitments may vary within a particular worldview.

## **Biblical Theistic Worldview**

Biblical Theism is one of the categories in the PEERS Instrument used for this research. Biblical Theism is a worldview based upon the infallibility of the Bible, and the supremacy of God (Moreland, Meister, & Sweis, 2013; Sire, 2009). Infallibility of Scripture has been debated through the ages and scholars have explained the term in various ways with the subject so broad that it could be a study in itself. For this study, a basic assumption is that the Bible is the literal Word of God and Scripture is inspired by God; therefore, it is infallible (II Timothy 3:16). Sire (2007) described God as infinite, personal, transcendent, omniscient, sovereign, and good.

Westminster Confession 2.1 states,

There is but one living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty; most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness, and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal most just and terrible in his judgments; hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty (p 1).

A biblical theistic worldview sees through the lens of God's Word and God Himself and can be Judeo or Christian.

## **Moderate Christian Worldview**

Moderate Christian worldview refers to a worldview that views God as omnipotent in religious matters, but not relevant to most life situations (Coletto, 2012). In today's language a moderate Christian worldview could be referred to as riding the fence. A moderate Christian

believes man is in control of life while God is in control of spiritual affairs (Coletto, 2012). This worldview divides the temporal from the spiritual: daily situations belong to man; spiritual situations belong to God. Cardinal Baronio is noted for saying, “the Bible is about how to go to heaven, not about how the heavens go” (Coletto, 2012, p. 4). This was a justification for keeping spiritual issues separate from scientific or temporal issues (Coletto, 2012). A committed Christian puts all things in God’s hands, not separating spiritual from daily living, or symbolically putting God on a shelf to be taken down and dusted off on Sunday, at christenings, weddings, or funerals (Coletto, 2012). Deuteronomy 4: 7 states, “For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for” (KJV). Ephesians 6:14 admonishes the Christian to stand, wrapped in Truth. Truth endures in all generations (Psalms 100:5). Truth is for daily living in every aspect of life, whether it can be categorized as spiritual or temporal.

### **Postmodern Worldview**

Postmodern worldview is an atheistic worldview where there is no absolute truth which twentieth- century culture, did not accept the scientific method or reason (Bebbington, 2011). According to Bebbington (2011), Friedrich Nietzsche had a strong influence on postmodernism through his teaching that there is no god, nor order of the universe. In postmodernism theory there is no epistemology because there is nothing to know (Bebbington, 2011). Postmodernism, while once used only in academia, has now become deeply ingrained in intellectual life (Sire, 2009). Norris (2010) defined truth to a postmodern professor as Truth with a capital T: “My definition of Truth is something that informs everything else you believe” (p. 128). Norris proceeded to debate with the professor by saying,

Now, even if you say that by definition nothing can be absolutely true, the ironic thing is that you have just made a statement you believe to be absolutely true – thus, you have just defined for yourself your own truth with a capital T because it informs everything else you do (p. 129).

According to Huffman (2011), postmodernism sprang from modernism and both concepts affect modern-day philosophy and culture. Postmodernism, like modernism, denies the involvement of God in personal knowledge. Huffman proclaimed that Truth is “God’s knowledge of himself and of creation and that our worldviews are true only when they agree with God’s knowledge” (p. 66). Huffman’s statement makes the Scripture, “Buy the truth, and sell it not” (Proverbs 23:23) personal to every human being.

### **Secular Humanism Worldview**

Secular humanism worldview refers to the belief that humanity is the source of all truth and knowledge (Huffman, 2011). In the United States secular humanism is the most well-organized secularist movement (Cimino & Smith, 2011). According to Cimino and Smith (2011) there are two types of secular humanism: (a)atheistic free-thought and (b) religious humanism. Religious humanism grew from the Unitarianism and Universalism religious doctrine (Cimino & Smith, 2011).

Goheen and Bartholomew (2008) described secular humanism as humanism that rejects the authority of God over humanity. Secular humanists, such as John Dewey, did not reject religion; rather, their religion was their faith in humanity. The humanist traits of empathy and compassion are basic Christian characteristics; however, humanists relate these to human nature (Cimino & Smith, 2011). Christians understand that true empathy and compassion comes only through the love of God.

## **Socialistic Worldview**

The Nehemiah Institute (n.d.) has defined the socialistic worldview, one that is founded on humanity needing a ruling body to control all areas of life, as having the opinion and faith that elite members of the community or nation should determine the common good. Three words are often used to define the socialistic worldview: liberty, equality, and fraternity (Cockshott et al., 2012). Cockshott et al. (2012), argued that of these three values, equality was the most central to the meaning of socialism. Socialism was founded on the principal of human equality, a faulty principle. Human beings are not equal; rather the human race is a diverse race (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Humanity is equal in that every human was created in the image of God; however, humanity is not equal in personal traits such as size, color, intelligence, or ability (University of Chicago, 2014).

A socialistic worldview sees man as the answer to the needs of the world. According to Fletcher (2013), the central force of American education moved from being essentially Christian to building the dignity of man. Socialism is rooted in faith in humanity, or humanism, the belief that education and a strong ruling force can elevate humanity above crime and poverty, with everyone being equal, and no one going without (Cimino & Smith, 2011).

## **Christian Biblical Worldview**

When discussing biblical worldview it is necessary to define both *biblical* and *worldview*. The term *biblical* comes from the root word, *bible*. The word *bible* comes from the Greek word, *biblia*, and literally translated means scrolls or parchment. The Scripture was referred to as the Bible as early as c. 223 (Bible, n.d.). Biblical simply means pertaining to the Bible.

Sire, (2004) stated, “A worldview is composed of a number of basic presuppositions, more or less consistent with each other, more or less consciously held, more or less true” (p. 20).

Goheen and Bartholomew (2008) defined worldview as basic beliefs as part of a grand story. A biblical worldview is comprised of basic beliefs founded on the Bible. Scripture describes the meaning of worldview, “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7 NKJV). The Israelites of the Old Testament proclaimed their worldview daily, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one” (Deuteronomy 6:4, NKJV).

Jesus was the first to teach a Christian worldview in his Sermon on the Mount in Matthew Chapter 5. A Christian worldview sees the world as Jesus Christ saw it, embracing its beauty while renouncing its sin. Simply, a Christian biblical worldview is a worldview based upon the Bible and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

**Biblical framework.** The Bible is the foundation of a Christian worldview. Romans 12:2 instructs, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing, and perfect will” (New International Version [NIV]). Proverbs 23:23 exhorts, “Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding” (New King James Version [NKJV]).

What is truth? That question is among the great philosophical questions that have been asked throughout the ages. Truth is not tangible, but is personified in the person of Jesus Christ (Graham, 2013). Jesus told Thomas in John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (NKJV). Jesus Christ taught truth and captured it in His word, “For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endures to all generations” (Psalms 100:5 NKJV). Though the Jewish system, the Roman Empire, and the dark ages tried to resist, stamp out, and hide this truth, it endures to all generations (Graham, 2013). Postmodernism, an atheistic worldview where there is no absolute truth, tries to dilute truth with pragmatism (Ryken, 2013). However, truth



“endures forever” (Psalm 117:2 NKJV). The Bible is public truth and is true for everyone, universally valid. It tells the truth about the world’s reality (Goheen & Bartholomew, 2008).

As Christians, believers must begin their worldview with the gospel of Jesus Christ (Goheen and Bartholomew, 2008). Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom of God during his three year ministry on earth (Mark 1:14; Luke 9:11). This gospel, which is the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, announces God’s design for the history of the whole world (Mark 1:1).

The infallibility of the Scripture is defined in II Timothy 3:16 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (NKJV). Morales (2013) noted the account of creation (Genesis 1:1-27), the fall of man (Genesis 3:16), and the plan to redeem fallen man (Genesis 3:15) as foundational faith principles that form a biblical worldview. Watson (2007) stated, “Scripture is to guide the conscious development of our thinking about life and practice” (p. 361). A biblical worldview is formed by using Scripture as a life roadmap. II Corinthians 13:5 exhorts Christians to continually assess themselves in their faith, depending upon Jesus Christ to keep them.

**John Calvin (1509—1564).** Calvin influenced worldview with his writings, expounding on Scripture that gave a basis for understanding God and man’s place in the world (Lanier, 2010). Calvin was a leading influence in the Reformation because of his ability to open the Scripture to the common man using his writing and thinking skills (Gordon, 2009). Central to Calvin’s worldview was his belief in original sin, the belief that humanity is separated from God by humankind’s disobedience dating back to Adam (Schnorbus, 2010). This is a basic biblical concept, “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23, KJV). According to Schnorbus (2010), Calvin believed that only God can guide a person to self-

identity and forming a correct conception of God, or in other words, forming a biblical worldview. Calvin believed and taught that humanity is embedded with a pre-theoretical knowledge of God, and once exposed to Scripture a Christian worldview unfolds (Sire, 2004).

Though few realized it, Calvin had a profound effect on the thinking of early American settlers through the New England Primer, a basic textbook of the eighteenth century that reinforced Calvinism catechism (Guttek, 2010). Children learned to read using this text and as a result, a religious worldview, known as the Protestant ethic, is a legacy of Calvin (Guttek, 2010).

**James Orr (1844—1913).** A Scottish theologian, James Orr, was referred to by Wood (2008) as “the vanguard” (p. 28) of biblical world thinking and stated that his work laid the foundation for others such as Abraham Kuyper (1837—1920). Both Orr and Kuyper referred to the Christian faith as a total view of reality. Their particular worldview was replicated by others such as Carl F.H. Henry, a theologian; Francis Schaffer, an apologist; and Charles Colson, known as a prison evangelist (Wood, 2008). Through visionaries like these men the Christian worldview became a part of thinking in evangelical churches and schools by the end of the twentieth century. Christians began to integrate learning and faith into academic disciplines and every aspect of life (Ryken, 2013).

**A biblical worldview is an unwavering commitment.** Naboth, in I Kings 21:3, refused to sell his vineyard to Ahab, saying it was an inheritance from his fathers. He had an unwavering commitment to holding onto his inheritance that was entrusted to him. Ruth was willing to leave her homeland and follow Naomi because she was committed to her mother-in-law, Naomi, saying I will go where you go (Ruth 1:14). Job said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15 KJV). These biblical characters had an unwavering commitment to whom they trusted. Their worldview was founded in this commitment and trust.

A Christian biblical worldview is made up of an unwavering commitment to follow the precepts laid out in Scripture. A worldview speaks through actions, not just words (Sire, 2009). Everything a person says and does demonstrates a worldview, but action often outweighs what is said; the committed Christian demonstrates by action a biblical worldview that reflects Christ. A Christian biblical worldview is an unwavering commitment to follow God regardless of circumstances; rich or poor, healthy or sick, through good times or bad, following the concepts of Christ (Graham, 2014). Psalm 27:5 exalts, “Commit thy ways unto the Lord.” The epitome of a biblical worldview is located in II Timothy 1:12, “For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (KJV).

**Arguments against a fundamentalist biblical worldview.** Mercer (2009) wrote a scathing commentary on fundamentalist worldview, entitling his book *Slave to Faith*. His book refers to fundamentalists as naïve and “woefully ignorant” of religious history (p. 3). Mercer contended that a fundamental worldview is a modern development and has no basis in religious history. van Beek (2012) answered Mercer’s arguments with a critique of his own. According to van Beek conservative colleges and seminaries have “minimal levels of intellectual honesty and knowledge of science” (para. 4). An interesting aspect of Mercer’s and van Beek’s ideology is that they were both at one time fundamentalists themselves, but now claim to have outgrown such narrow-minded thinking.

A rebuttal to these scathing remarks is found in the catalogs of universities such as Liberty and Regent and the accomplishments of their alumni. While not being considered fundamentalist in the sense of more legalistic schools such as Bob Jones and Pensacola Christian, these universities and others like them are Christian liberal arts universities offering sound academics from a Christian perspective. It is true, unfortunately, that some religious

schools are narrow minded and lacking in academic rigor. However, to assume this is true of all conservative colleges and seminaries is absurd. A fundamentalist worldview is well founded in Scripture and a Christian college with solid academics and sound liberal arts curriculum should be able to guide students to form their own personal worldview (Holmes,1987; Kanitz, 2005).

### **Scriptural Foundation for a Biblical Worldview**

II Timothy 3:16 is the foundational Scripture for a biblical world view, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (KJV). The inspired Scripture is the perfecting instrument for Christians, laying out doctrine, correcting and instructing. Christ and a relationship with Him is the center of a biblical worldview (Goheen & Bartholomew, 2008).

As stated earlier, Romans 12:2 also lays a foundation for a biblical worldview, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing, and perfect will” (NIV). Humans are inclined to act upon what they believe. In this Scripture the Apostle Paul referred to the importance of the renewing of the mind (Brickhill, 2010).

Recognizing truth and holding it sacred is illustrated in Proverbs 23:23, “Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding” (NKJV). What is truth is the great philosophical question, and this Scripture relates the importance of once finding the truth, never letting it go. It also demonstrates the correlation between truth and wisdom, instruction, and understanding.

The Epistle to the Galatians exclaims the essentiality of accepting and not changing the gospel, the foundation on which a biblical worldview is built.

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Galatians 1:8-9, KJV).

I Peter 4:17 declares the necessity for obedience to the gospel, “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (KJV). The gospel is not simply something to know or to believe. It is a biblical worldview that colors every aspect of a Christian’s life. In II Thessalonians 1:8 (KJV) it is called “a flaming fire” that is to be obeyed. Ephesians 1:13 explains the word of truth is the gospel of salvation “in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise” (KJV).

The Apostle Paul expounded on the evangelical portion of a biblical worldview, “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (I Timothy 2:4, KJV). I Peter 3:15 adds to this, “. . . always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (NIV). A worldview is displayed through actions and when others see the display of a biblical worldview, Christians have a testimony of Christ’s work in their lives. Philippians 2:5 explains that the attitude of a biblical worldview is the same as that of Jesus Christ. When others see this Christ-like attitude, opportunities open for testifying of life change through Jesus Christ.

## **Religious Commitment**

**Levels of religious commitment.** Sire (2009) stressed that worldview is not just a word but is the way a Christian lives life. Because religious commitment involves a lifestyle it is reasonable to deduce that worldview and religious commitment are indivisibly linked. Levels of

religious commitment can be defined using Marcia's (1981, 1998) identity statuses. At Marcia's (1980, 1998) diffusion status, the lowest level, a commitment has not been made because no crisis has been experienced. College students may enter college without forming a worldview because they have never encountered opposition to the worldview inherited from their parents, church, or culture. In contrast, they may have committed to an inherited worldview but have not experienced opposition, or a crisis, related to these worldviews; this is the identity foreclosure stage, or the second level of commitment. Identity moratorium, the third level of commitment, occurs when the student encounters oppositional crisis, but has not formed a solid allegiance, or the dedication is vague. Marcia's (1981, 1998) final status of identity is achievement, which can be linked to the highest level of religious commitment. When a person has made a solid commitment, he or she has achieved a personal identity (Santrock, 2011). Christian colleges desire their students to attain this last stage, identity achievement, reaching the highest level of religious commitment (Urshan College Catalog, 2013).

**Religious commitment and morality.** Research has shown a relationship between religious commitment and morality (Layton, Dollahite, & Hardy, 2011; Walker & Reimer, 2006). Good and Willoughby (2007) as well as King (2003) related identity formation with religious commitment. Worldview formation of adolescents and young adults is centered on identity and religious commitment, or lack thereof, and morality is an integral part of worldview (Helseth & Huffman, 2011).

Some year ago this writer wrote a research paper on the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) pandemic in Southern Africa (Simoneaux, 2004). The results of the research for the paper showed that even secular theorists recognized that religious commitment was a defining factor in avoiding the AIDS virus. The researcher theorized that young people who

were committed to their religious beliefs, whether they were Christian or Muslim, were less likely to be infected. The reasoning behind this theory was that their religion included the moral stance of abstinence before marriage and fidelity after marriage; thus, the major contributing factor to AIDS infection, sexual promiscuity, was avoided. Trinitapoli and Weinreb (2012) did an empirical study on religion and AIDS and one of their findings was that religious commitment has often had a positive effect, resulting in fewer infections.

**How does religious commitment impact peoples' lives?** According to Tix, Dik, Johnson, and Steger (2013) a prominent question in religion psychology is how religion impacts people's lives. They documented research that showed religiousness had little effect on quality of life, including core life experiences such as marital satisfaction and effective parenting (Tix et al., 2013). This led them to question whether different types of religions had different effects on life outcomes, or what direction an individual's life takes (Tix et al., 2013). Their research results demonstrated that there are considerable differences between three main religions in the United States: Catholicism, mainline Protestantism, and Evangelical Protestantism (Tix et al., 2013). Evangelical Protestants demonstrated more religious commitment and greater effects on life outcomes than either Catholics or mainline Protestants (Tix et al., 2013).

**Religious commitment and life satisfaction.** Adegoke, Brewer, Fife, and McCoy (2011) conducted a study on religious commitment and life satisfaction among African American and Caucasian American students. Their results discovered no significant relationship between religious commitment and life satisfaction; rather, their study found evidence of a relationship between social support and life satisfaction (Adegoke et al., 2011). Mitigating factors in life satisfaction, according to Adegoke et al., were quality of housing, finances, and health. There was no discussion of worldview in their article, but it could be inferred that their study focused

more on a humanistic worldview, judging from the emphasis on life satisfaction and human comfort. The conclusion could be drawn that religious commitment had little to do with faith itself, but pertained more to the social aspect of religious practice.

**Seven anchors of religious commitment.** Layton, Dollahite, and Hardy (2011) identified seven anchors of religious commitment. The most common anchor is religious traditions formed through family rituals, developed personal rituals, and commitment to religious laws (Layton et al., 2011). Common traditions are Lent, fasting, and marriage traditions. These traditions are not necessarily religious, but are social in nature (Layton et al., 2011). Common traditions among Apostolic youth are camps and youth conferences. Many young people attend these for purely social reasons having little to do with religious beliefs (Layton et al., 2011).

Religious rituals, the second part of this anchor, can include church attendance, regular Bible reading, and family devotions (Layton et al., 2011). Personal rituals also include church attendance, prayer time, and Bible reading. Family rituals have close ties to religious rituals and personal rituals. Family devotions and church attendance are family rituals that most religious families observe on a regular basis (Layton et al., 2011).

Religious laws make up the third part of this anchor (Layton et al., 2011). Some religions have strict laws concerning diet, dress, and abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use. Apostolic followers particularly have restrictions concerning modesty in dress. Generally, among persons of the Apostolic faith, women do not cut their hair and men do not have long hair. These are laws, often called convictions that are not necessarily observed because of the followers' commitment to Christ; rather they can be followed as a tradition only.

The second anchor, according to Layton et al. (2011) is a commitment to God. This commitment to God was referred to by Layton et al. as a "source of authority" (p. 396). Another



way of committing to God is through a relationship with God. Fundamentalists speak of having a close relationship with God, of knowing Him personally. A dimensional commitment to God includes devotion to Him and trusting Him in all things. Seeking God for life guidance is a form of trusting Him to lead and direct in life pathways. Finally, some commit to God out of a sense of responsibility or duty (Layton et al., 2011).

Other anchors of commitment are faith tradition or denomination, commitment to a sense of community, and commitment to parents (Layton et al., 2011). Dortch, C.D. (2014) stated, “The observation has been made that students who have involved parents are more likely to remain involved in the church themselves” (p. 5). Three factors that contribute to retaining young people in the church are (a) committed Christian parents (b) value of the parents intentionally being passed to the children, and (c) a strong family relationship (Dudley as cited in Dortch, 2014). The family is a strong determiner in whether a young person will continue to follow Christ into adulthood (Dortch, 2014).

The final anchor discussed by Layton et al., (2011) is commitment to Scripture. In this writer’s opinion, commitment to Scripture is the strongest religious commitment. Being able to utilize Scripture to provide a rationale behind certain practices gives the commitment an undeniable defense. An example of this is the practice among Apostolic women to refrain from cutting their hair. The scriptural foundation for this is found in I Corinthians 11:15, “But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her, for her hair is given her for a covering” (KJV). Though some might not cut their hair because of tradition, many Apostolic women do not cut their hair because of the scriptural foundation given. An Apostolic woman who does not cut her hair because of a scriptural commitment can give a commentary on this Scripture and point to other Scriptures that confirm the commentary.

As demonstrated by the literature, religious commitment has an impact on life, both social and spiritual. The social aspect of religious commitment is tangible and finite. Lives can be improved by a religious commitment, but true life change that is unshakeable and eternal comes through religious commitment based upon Scripture. Religious commitment based on social or familial ties can be eroded easily, but a religious commitment based on Scripture has a sure foundation that will stand strong in the face of opposition. “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:16, 17, KJV).

## **Higher Education in America**

**History of higher education in America.** Education began in America with the purpose of converting Native Americans to Christianity (Spring, 2011). In the years between 1615 and 1619 money was raised to build Henrico College for Native Americans in Virginia (Spring, 2011). Twenty years later, in 1636, Harvard College was founded by the Massachusetts Bay Colony for the express purpose of ensuring an educated ministry for the colony and building both faith and moral character in the citizenry (Abelman & Dessandro, 2009; Henck, 2011; Spring, 2011). Because of the severe hardships in the fledgling colony, the settlers feared their ministry would die and no replacements would come from England, thus leaving them without educated spiritual leadership. *New England's First Fruits* from 1642 explained this reasoning, “dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the Churches, when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust.” John Harvard donated money and books for the founding of Harvard College (Spring, 2011).

Spring (2011) outlined five basic themes that began in colonial times and endure to present day: (a) to prepare the population to obey the law of the land, (b) to prevent crime,

immorality, and poverty, (c) to maintain social class differences, (d) to attain social mobility and, (e) to address cultural differences. Each of these themes has been emphasized in the history of education by public and private primary, secondary, and post-secondary schools. Regardless of the theme emphasized, early education was founded on Christian principles, observed daily prayer and Bible reading, and required Christian morality (Spring, 2012).

Dartmouth College was founded in 1769 to “educate youth of Indian tribes and Christianize” children of pagans, (Spring, 2011, p. 15). The colonials had two major reasons for educating the Native Americans: (a) to civilize them by Christianizing them, and (b) to avoid war (Spring 2011). Dedicated Christian colonials had a spiritual desire to see Native Americans become Christians to better their lives and receive salvation, while the politicians and more worldly minded leaders considered it less expensive to educate the Native American population than to go to war with them.

Harvard and Dartmouth were among nine colonial colleges founded primarily for religious reasons (Morales, 2011). Yale University was founded by the Puritans in 1701 and Brown University was founded by Baptists in 1764. Presbyterians founded Princeton University in 1747, while The Church of England founded College of William and Mary in 1693, Columbia University in 1754, and University of Pennsylvania in 1755. Rutgers was founded by the Dutch Reformed church in 1766.

Following the American Revolution, secularization of higher education quickly became the trend and by the twentieth-century, schools such as Harvard were fully secular in their mission and curricula (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2009). This swing away from a Christian mission continued through the nineteenth-century and well into the twentieth-century with many evangelical colleges moving from intentional religious commitment to generalized religious

commitment to finally having no religious claim or identity (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2009).

Supreme Court interpretation of the Constitutional separation of church and state contributed to the secularization of higher education (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2009).

Humanism refers to the belief that humanity is the source of all truth and knowledge (Smithwick, 2008). In the beginning of American higher education the central purpose was to train citizens to be Christians, both morally and ideologically. The doctrine of humanism moved this central driving purpose in American higher education from Christianity to the dignity of man (Fletcher, 2013). God and Christianity were replaced with the belief that humanity is the source of all truth and knowledge. The doctrine of humanism is not new, but has its roots in the Old Testament character of Nimrod. The followers of Nimrod said, “Go to, let us build a city...” (Genesis 9:4, KJV). They relied on their humanity rather than on God.

Since World War II there has been a revival of Christian higher education. Christian colleges expanded their programs beyond just religious degrees, but kept their religious ideology (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2009). One example of this is Urshan College (UC), formerly Gateway College of Evangelism (GCE). Gateway was a Bible college with no secular degree programs when it was founded in 1966 by the Missouri of the UPCI. It was endorsed by the UPCI and began operation in September of 1968 at a temporary location in Florissant, Missouri. Gateway moved to its present location in Florissant in 1971, a beautiful 15 acre campus that was once a Jesuit monastery and has the distinctive history of being the site of the first higher education facility west of the Mississippi. In 2012 GCE was purchased by the UPCI and became Urshan College, a Christian liberal arts college, offering more than purely religious degrees, but keeping its distinctive Apostolic ideology (Urshan College Catalog, 2013).

The future of the small Christian college was considered bleak between 1968 and 2002 (Glanzer, Carpenter, & Lantinga, 2011). According to Henck (2011), however, there has been a 70.6% enrollment growth in schools affiliated with the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) in the two academic periods from 2005-2007. To sustain and support this growth the small Christian college needs intentional strategic planning in every facet of its agenda (Glanzer et al., 2011; Henck, 2011).

**Changing face of higher education in America.** Over the past fifty years the face of higher education has taken a dramatic change (Baum, Kurose, & McPherson, 2013). Change has taken place in faculty composition, expenditure allocation, pedagogy, and technology (Baum et al., 2013; Ehrenberg, 2012). Most colleges and universities use adjunct faculty and the majority of these part-time faculty members do not have doctoral degrees (Ehrenberg, 2012). Another change has been in the nature of the higher education institution. The term post-secondary, once considered academic instruction after secondary school completion, now pertains to any institution offering education of any kind post-secondary, occupational as well as academic, public as well as private (Baum et al., 2013). Baum et al. (2013) claim that the majority of job training in the United States now takes place in institutions called colleges.

Enrollment in degree-granting undergraduate schools grew by 37% between 2000 and 2010 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Though this growth appears to be positive, there is a negative aspect. Statistics also show that only 26% of high school students who took the ACT, a college readiness test, met benchmark requirements in all four subjects: English, reading, math, and science (ACT, 2013). Of those tested in 2013, 64% met the English requirement, 44% met the mathematics requirement, and only 36% met the science requirement. These statistics indicate that while enrollment is increasing, college preparedness is decreasing.

Colleges will need to give careful planning to meet these challenges by selecting only qualified students or preparing remedial programs to bring freshmen up to college level.

**Changing mode of instruction.** The mode of instruction in higher education is also changing. Baum et al. (2013) put forth the argument that sustained investment in education is vital to the future of the United States, while advocating for higher education institutions to make every effort to contain costs by using creative methods with information technology. A survey taken in 2011 revealed that over six million students are now taking classes online, one-third of all higher education students (Allen & Seaman, 2011). According to Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, and Jones (2009), online education and regular classroom education have similar efficacy, especially in mature students. When the two methods, classroom and online instruction, are blended the training is even more effective (Means et al., 2009).

**Demographic of higher education in America.** Research indicates that there is still a sizable gap between lower and upper income students attending a higher education institution. College attendance has been on the rise over the past 50 years, however, the gap between students from low and high income families has barely moved since 1975 (Baum et al., 2013). In 1975 the gap was 29% and in 2003 the gap was again 29% after rising to 35% in 1993, thus demonstrating that there is still a sizable differential between low and high income students going to college, even with the growth in financial aid (Baum et al., 2013).

While enrollment in higher education in the United States has increased steadily over the last 50 years, one area of the United States will have a decreasing number of post-secondary students over the next 20 years (Bidwell, 2013). Bidwell (2013) predicts a decline of 65,000 students in northeast college and universities due to declining numbers in high school graduates, lower amounts of state appropriations, and unstable endowment returns.

**Costs of higher education in America.** According to Ehrenberg (2012) private four-year undergraduate tuition in the United States has exceeded the inflation rate by 3.5% each year for the past three decades. This is compared with an annual rise of 5.1% in public four-year institutions and 3.5% in public two-year institutions (Ehrenberg, 2012). Ehrenberg attributes this rise in tuition to increased expenses per student and higher achievement aspirations. Additional factors driving tuition rates include published rankings and parent/student perceptions of quality of education being linked to the price of tuition (Ehrenberg, 2012). Technology growth has led to higher quality in education, but it has also contributed to the rise in tuition (Ehrenberg, 2012).

**Christian higher education.** Morales (2013) did an extensive analysis of the history of Christian Higher education in America. Her research led her to the conclusion that the purpose of higher education in colonial America was “primarily to train Christian ministers and promote an educated civil leadership” (Morales, p. 26). This writer had the privilege to tour Yale University campus and to view the original documents of its foundation. The original charter for Yale included the words “wherein Youth may be instructed in the Arts and Sciences [and] through the blessing of Almighty God may be fitted for Publick [sic] employment both in Church and Civil State” (Yale University, 2013a). Visiting the Yale campus and website today, the university’s Christian foundation can be recognized only by its founding documents and ageless buildings. On the president’s page (Yale University, 2013b) no mention is made of God or Christian concepts; rather humanistic values of community and man’s achievements are representative of what Yale is today. The Yale of today has the following mission statement (Yale University, 2013c):

The mission of Yale College is to seek exceptionally promising students of all backgrounds from across the nation and around the world and to educate them, through

mental discipline and social experience, to develop their intellectual, moral, civic, and creative capacities to the fullest. The aim of this education is the cultivation of citizens with a rich awareness of our heritage to lead and serve in every sphere of human activity. Again, no mention is made of the original charter's mission; rather a clearly humanistic mission has evolved.

In Morales' (2013) analysis of early higher education she did a comparison of Harvard as it was founded and Harvard today. She first quoted the original "Rules and Precepts" adopted in 1646. (Please note the original spelling is retained in the quotation below.):

Let every Student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the maine end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3) and therefore to lay Christ in the bottome, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and Learning. And seeing the Lord only giveth wisdom, Let every one seriously set himself by prayer in secret to seeke it of him (Prov. 2:3). Every one shall so exercise himselfe in reading the Scriptures twice a day, that he shall be ready to give such an account of his proficiency therein, both in Theoreticall observations of Language and Logick, and in practical and spiritual truths, as his Tutor shall require, according to his ability; seeing the entrance of the word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple (Psalm 119:130). (Harvard Graduate, 2012, p. 1)

According to Morales (2013), as of 2012 Harvard University did not have a defined mission statement. However, she referred to a statement made by the Dean of Harvard College:

Harvard strives to create knowledge, to open the minds of students to that knowledge... The support the College provides to students is a foundation upon which self-reliance and habits of lifelong learning are built: Harvard expects that the scholarship and collegiality



it fosters in its students will lead them in their later lives to advance knowledge, to promote understanding, and to serve society (Harvard, 2012, p. 1).

Clearly the original ideology of Harvard was from a biblical worldview and the ideology of Harvard today promotes a humanistic worldview. Just as Yale's biblically centered worldview evolved into today's humanistic worldview, Harvard no longer embraces the concepts of its original Christian values. There has been a drastic paradigm shift in higher education in America from the early American foundations. The shift has been so drastic that the founders of Yale and Harvard, as well as founders of other colonial schools that are still in existence today, would not recognize anything about today's schools except for the ancient buildings.

**Apostolic higher education.** The history of Apostolic higher education has been primarily the Bible college paradigm. Two institutions that offer liberal arts degrees have been endorsed by United Pentecostal Church International, (UPCI): Great Lakes University and Urshan College (2014). There are currently six Bible colleges endorsed by the UPCI: Apostolic Bible Institute, St Paul, Minnesota; Christian Life College, Stockton, California; Northeast Christian College, Fredericton, New Brunswick; Centro Teologico Ministerial, Pasadena, Texas; Indiana Bible College, Indianapolis, Indiana; and Texas Bible College, Lufkin, Texas (United Pentecostal Church International, 2014). Apostolic Bible Institute, founded in 1937, is the oldest operating UPCI endorsed Bible college (Apostolic Bible Institute, 2014).

Urshan Graduate School of Theology (UGST) was the first fully accredited Apostolic graduate school offering Master of Theology, Master of Arts in Christian Ministry, and Master of Divinity degrees. It was founded in 1999 and was accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in 2010. UGST is owned and operated by UPCI and is part of the Urshan Community (Urshan Graduate School of Theology, 2013). Apostolic School of Theology (AST)

of Elk Grove, California offers certificates in Bible subjects, Bachelor and Master theological degrees and is an institute of Hope International University (HIU). All AST degree programs are regionally accredited through HIU by Western Association of Schools and Colleges (Apostolic School of Theology, 2014). Apostolic School of Theology is endorsed by the Worldwide Pentecostal Fellowship and the United Apostolic Church.

### **Why Christian Higher Education?**

Young people are encouraged by their parents and society to attend a college or university often without evaluating the worth of the college beyond vocational or social benefits (Yount, 2012). Holmes (1987) explored the ideology behind choosing a Christian college and the benefits and possible pitfalls students fall into when choosing a college. He asks, “Is the idea of a Christian college, then, simply to offer a good education plus biblical studies in an atmosphere of piety?” (Holmes, 1987, p. 5). While these are desirable goals, could they not be reached by attending a secular college while receiving biblical instruction through a local church without the capital, both monetary and human, being put into maintaining a Christian college (Holmes, 1987)? As the cost of private education skyrockets, some observers feel that valuable church resources are best put into other endeavors and higher education should be left to state universities and community colleges.

Holmes (1987) expressed doubt of whether Christian colleges have aptly articulated the mission of Christian education. According to Holmes, differing reasons have been given for a Christian college, and among these have been the desire to protect young people from humanistic ideology. Other reasons have been to train vocationally for specific ministries such as pastoral, evangelical, or missionary work. While these are sound missions of a Christian college, the basic underlying ideology that sets the Christian college apart from the secular college is a

conviction that “Christian perspectives can generate a worldview large enough to give meaning to all the disciplines and delight of life and to the whole of a liberal education” (Holmes, 1987, p. 10). The prominent purpose of a Christian education is to mold students into biblical thinking, or a biblical worldview as part of developing spiritually (Yount, 2010). The foundation of Christian education at any level is Scripture. Yount (2012) called Scripture the “structural steel of Christian Education” (p. 56).

Holmes (1987) challenged his readers to answer the questions, “Why should the Christian college exist? Why choose to attend a Christian college? What meaning has Christian liberal arts education today?” (p. 11). He responded by giving a theological foundation for Christian education and then explaining the role of liberal arts in a Christian education. The Christian college, Holmes posited, is an “extended arm of the church” but it is also a liberal arts institution (p. 45). The qualifying factor of a Christian college is that it touches the whole student, encompassing life and learning into a blend of liberal arts and Christian training (Holmes, 1987).

While education trains in specific skills, it also empowers the student to think creatively and to form new skills and patterns of thought. An educated Christian has the ability to use critical judgment and to make sound decisions using a solidly formed biblical worldview. Education can also bring confusion to the young Christian who is not grounded in a biblical worldview. Moreland and Craig (2003) described college and universities as being more influential than the church in forming today’s leadership and stressed the importance of students being well founded in a Christian worldview so they are not easily swayed. Yount (2012) stated,

Scripture is totally sufficient to do everything it is intended to do, but it should not be used to artificially limit our study of other fields that prove helpful to Kingdom work. So, we embrace Scripture as the structured steel of Christian Education (p. 56).

Fyock's (2008) dissertation focused on the relationship between student and teacher worldviews. The results of this study found the driving force behind a biblical worldview, or the lack thereof, in students who attend a Christian school, is the worldview of the faculty. This leads to the question of how much an anti-biblical worldview of a faculty member can affect the worldview of students.

### **What Makes a Christian Education Institution Transformational?**

Zigarelli (2012) gave five conditions that exist in a Christian institution of higher learning for the transformation of students to a strong Christian biblical worldview and religious commitment. These conditions were (a) a critical mission statement that names the central goal of transforming the student; (b) a Christian-based and driven curriculum; (c) qualified and intentionally transformational faculty; (d) the coordination of spiritual formation activities throughout the institution; and (e) both an institutional and student culture of being God-centered (Zigarelli, 2012).

### **Summary**

Both religious commitment and Christian worldview have been defined in research literature and in Scripture. The Bible gives a comprehensive framework for committing to a religion as well as forming a Christian worldview. Psychological and philosophical foundations of worldviews point to the importance of forming and committing to a worldview based upon truth. What is not well documented is how the college that a student chooses to attend may impact that student's religious commitment and Christian worldview. The purpose of this study is to fill this void in the literature. Today's college student is bombarded by anti-biblical ideology and can only have a Christian influence in the world by forming a solid biblical worldview. By knowing and understanding the truth of a biblical worldview a young mind will

not be swayed by humanistic ideology; rather, by holding fast to a biblical worldview a Christian young person can sway others to Christ (Huffman, 2011).

The research design for this study will be explained in chapter three. The design for the study, research questions, and hypotheses will be given. Participants, setting, and instrumentation, as well as procedures and data analysis, will make up the basis of this next chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

A causal-comparative research design was used to compare the worldview and religious commitment of Apostolic students in a United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI) Christian college to Apostolic students of similar demographic in a secular college. This chapter will begin with an explanation of the research design, research questions and hypotheses. Details of participants will be specified, including sample demographic and relevant details of the population and sampling procedures. A power analysis, conducted to determine the appropriate sample size for the study, is included in this part of the chapter. The setting, instrumentation, and procedures will be outlined and particulars of data analysis will be explained.

### **Design**

A causal-comparative design was used to compare the worldview and religious commitment of students in an Apostolic Christian college to Apostolic students of similar demographic in a secular college. The causal comparative research design is appropriate for this study for a variety of reasons. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) defined causal comparative research as a “type of non-experimental investigation in which researchers seek to identify cause-and-effect relationships by forming groups of individuals in whom the independent variable is present or absent” (p. 306). There is minimal research on the effects of type of university attended on Apostolic Christian college students’ Christian worldview and religious commitment. This study was exploratory in its investigation (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013). Random assignment of participants to treatment or control conditions is not required; therefore, this study was not experimental (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008).

The causal-comparative research design is employed when the researcher wishes to determine differences in the dependent variable(s) across two or more groups of participants (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013). The focus of this study was to examine potential differences in Christian worldview and religious commitment across two college groups: UCPI Christian versus Apostolic students who attend a secular college. In a causal-comparative design, groups have already been manipulated, or, as in this study, occur naturally (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013). In this study, the naturally occurring groups were derived from the type of university that students attend. As such, the researcher could not employ random assignment to conditions in this study: one cannot force students to attend a specific type of university. Moreover, while the causal-comparative design can be used “to attempt to identify a causal relationship” between study variables, it does not “provide cause and affect evidence” (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013, p. 313).

When random assignment to conditions cannot be performed in a research study, one can match participants in each group on key variables so that the “observed covariate distributions are essentially the same in [each of] the groups” (Zhao, 2004, p. 92). Matching can help to reduce the selection threat to validity and minimize the influence of group non-equivalence (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013; Zhao, 2004). To ensure “covariate balance” (Zhao, 2004, p. 91), the researcher matched the two university groups on key demographic variables shown in prior research studies to be significantly associated with Christian worldview, religious commitment, or both. Both groups of students were of the Apostolic faith. Christian worldview and religious commitment tend to be more salient for women than men, and African American individuals more so than those from other racial groups (Abar, Carter, & Winsler, 2009; Bryant, 2011; Dedeoglu & Lamme, 2011; Mayhew & Bryant, 2013; Musgrave, Allen, & Allen, 2002; Woods, Badzinski, Fritz, & Yeates, 2012). Research studies have furthermore shown that college

students who were in their first or second year of university were less developed and/or more conflicted about their sense of a Christian worldview and their religious commitment as compared to juniors and seniors in college (Bryant, 2006; Rood, 2009; Scheitle, 2011).

Studies examining the influence of age on Christian worldview and religious commitment have been more equivocal. Some studies have shown a decline in Christian worldview and religious commitment in early adulthood among religiously diverse students attending non-Christian public universities (Stoppa & Lefkowitz, 2010; Uecker, Regnerus, & Vaaler, 2007). In contrast, other studies conducted with students attending Christian universities have shown that, as university students aged, their sense of a Christian worldview and religious commitment matured (Bowman & Small, 2010; Small & Bowman, 2001). Research studies have also shown that Christian worldview and religious commitment may be more prominent for students who are education, social work, psychology, or science majors, as compared to students not majoring in these subjects (Long, 2012; Scheitle, 2011; Sherr, Huff, & Curran, 2006; Wolf, 2011). In this study students at the two different types of universities were matched on age, gender, and college class status.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions guiding this study are:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant difference in biblical worldview between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant difference in students' level of religious commitment between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?



## **Hypotheses**

H1<sub>o</sub>. Christian worldview will not significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H1<sub>a</sub>. Christian worldview will significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H2<sub>o</sub>. Students' level of religious commitment will not significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H2<sub>a</sub>. Students' level of religious commitment will significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college.

## **Participants**

The sample for this study was a convenience sample. A convenience sample is used when the researcher utilizes participants that are readily available (Rovai et. al., 2013). Gall et al. (2007) gave an example of a convenience sample: College professors use college students in research because they are a convenient and accessible population. The researcher is an assistant professor at an Apostolic Christian college and knows many pastors in the geographical area where the study is taking place, therefore having access to the population under study.

Students were recruited from the Urshan College and from youth groups from Apostolic churches. An email was sent to students in the Apostolic Christian college, an announcement was made in assembly, and the researcher requested professors to promote the study in their

classes. The researcher visited youth groups of local churches and invited participants to take part in the study. Additionally, the researcher explained the rationale behind the study and the value of information that could be gleaned. Informed consent letters were sent to the Apostolic Christian college students by email. For the group not attending the Apostolic Christian college, the letters were distributed during the meetings at the churches and in packets sent to pastors and youth leaders. Emails of those volunteering to participate were collected so the links for the surveys could be sent to them. Additionally, an announcement was made on the United Pentecostal Church International Youth Website requesting volunteers. Scripts and samples of these announcements are found in Appendix A.

To determine the necessary sample size for the study to achieve adequate statistical power, a power analysis via G\*Power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) for an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. Parameters were specific for the power analysis: (a) the effect size was set at medium, Cohen's  $d = .50$ , (b) power was set at .80, and (c) the significance ( $p$ ) value was set at  $p < .05$ . Results from the power analysis showed that  $N = 102$ , or  $n = 51$  participants per group, was required to achieve adequate statistical power for a one-tailed independent samples *t*-test. Thus, the sample size for this study will be  $N = 102$ , or  $n = 51$  participants per group. The primary criteria for participation in the study were that study participants must be (a) of the Apostolic faith and (b) have been enrolled in their present college for at least three semesters, and (c) have successfully completed a minimum of 48 credit hours. This age bracket is the critical time for forming lasting worldviews, values, and commitments (Erickson, 1968; Fowler, 1981). Students were matched on age, gender, and college class status.

## **Setting**

The study took place in a mid-western area of the United States. Urshan College (UC), the primary Apostolic Christian college chosen for the research has been in operation for over 40 years, first as a Bible college (Gateway College of Evangelism founded in 1968) and now as a Christian college offering both biblical and liberal arts tracks. The college was renamed Urshan College in 2012 when it transitioned from a Bible college to a Christian college, and incorporated liberal arts degrees in its program. It is owned and operated by the United Pentecostal Church International. The United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI) was founded in 1945 as the result of a merger between two Apostolic organizations, Pentecostal Church Incorporated and Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus Christ. UPCI has churches in North America as well as around the world (Clanton & Clanton, 1995).

Permission was granted by the president of UC for this study to be done at the school and the permission letter is in Appendix B. The mission of Urshan College is to educate, equip, and empower students of Apostolic faith for life and servant leadership in the church and the world. Biblical worldview is the founding principal of this mission as demonstrated by the first objective listed in the General Education Objectives, “Demonstrate a biblical worldview” (Urshan College Catalog, 2013, p. 47).

UC accepts students of the Apostolic faith. All applicants must obtain their pastor’s recommendation, a recommendation from a teacher or school guidance counselor, and a personal recommendation from one other person of their choice (such as an employer, mentor, or coach). Additionally, to be accepted, the applicant must demonstrate the ability to meet the financial costs of attending the college (Urshan College, 2013).

Students at UC can choose from several academic programs. Associate of Arts is offered with general education courses and electives for a total requirement of 64 credit hours. The Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministry (BACM) and Bachelor of Science in Christian Ministry (BSCM) programs have various ministry-related concentrations that can be taken. The BACM requires 123 credits and the BSCM requires 127. Bachelor of Organizational Leadership also requires a minimum of 123 credit hours, and offers concentrations in ministry, business, psychology, music, and missions. Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts in Music have vocal, piano, and other instrument concentrations; both programs require a minimum of 126 credit hours.

Participants in the control group were chosen from Apostolic students attending secular colleges, both public and private. These colleges were from various locations around the United States. University A was one of the secular colleges selected. This university, a local private university, accepts students with a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5 as well as minimum ACT of 20 or SAT (verbal plus math) of 940. According to the University A's Catalog (2013), a college preparatory high school curriculum is preferred. Four years of English; two or three years of natural science, mathematics, and social studies; two years of foreign language study; and some study in the performing arts is recommended. University A offers programs in American studies, business, communications, education, fine and performing arts, human services, humanities, nursing, sciences, and sports.

Students of the Apostolic faith who were studying at a number of other universities, both public and private took part in this study. Entrance for these colleges is generally standard, which includes a high school diploma or GED and evidence of solid academic performance (Saint Louis University, 2014). ACT and SAT scores, as well as high school transcripts are

evaluated to determine admission. Larger colleges and universities have a broader range of programs offered. St. Louis also has several community colleges where students can earn two year degrees or complete their general education courses. One of these, Community College A, states on the school website that admission is not based on minimum academic requirements, however, certain programs of the school do have admission requirements (Community College A, 2014).

Participants attended Apostolic churches (named Church A – Church E). Church A is a UPCI-affiliated church in Hazelwood, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. It has approximately 800 constituents with three full-time pastors: a senior pastor, a pastor, and an assistant pastor. The church is distinctly Apostolic in practice and doctrine and has regularly scheduled services throughout the week, the main services being on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday night. There are active children, youth, college career, men, and women's ministries. This church was founded in the late 1960's (Church Website, 2013).

Church B is an Apostolic church affiliated with UPCI with a long history in the St. Louis area. It operates a Christian preschool and K-12 Christian school. It has approximately 1200 constituents with ministries serving the family, youth, and children. Staff includes a pastor, two pastoral assistants, an education administrator, and a music minister (Church Website, 2013). Services include Sunday morning and evening, mid-week, and other ministry specific services.

Church C, located in St. Louis, began its ministry in 1935 and remains a thriving church today. It is affiliated with UPCI and has ministries for the deaf, Bible quizzing, children, men, and women. Doctrine and practice of church C is distinctly Apostolic in nature. Services include Sunday School, Morning Worship, Evening Worship, Tuesday prayer, and Wednesday

Bible Study. A thriving Spanish work meets on Sunday afternoon. Constituency of Church C is approximately 500 (Church Website, 2014).

Two additional churches agreed to participate. Both are UPCI affiliated and have strong memberships and youth ministries. Church D is located in Aurora, Illinois and Church E is located in North East, Maryland. Permission letters from all churches participating can be found in Appendix B.

### **Instrumentation**

The PEERS test (Smithwick, 2003) developed by the Nehemiah Institute in 1986, was the instrument used to measure Christian worldview. PEERS is a unique biblical worldview assessment tool designed to measure an individual's worldview as it relates to Christianity in five key areas: politics, economics, education, religion, and social issues (P-E-E-R-S). Fourteen items comprise each of the five categories, with items answered using a Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The 70-item PEERS survey has a potential range of scale scores from +100 to -100, with high scores denoting stronger Christian worldview beliefs and lower scores denoting stronger secular humanist worldview beliefs (Smithwick, 2003).

The PEERS survey is most often utilized as an interval scale, with higher scores denoting stronger beliefs in a Christian worldview (Smithwick, 2003). However, it can also be utilized as a categorical scale, with scores less than 0 = socialist worldview, 0-29 = secular humanism worldview, 30-69 = moderate Christian worldview, and 70-100 = Biblical theism worldview. In this study, however, the PEERS survey was utilized in its original format as an interval scale. The 70-item test uses a scale of +100 to -100 that ranks the individual into four categories as illustrated in the table below:

Table 2

*PEERS' Four Worldview Categories*

	Biblical Theism	Moderate Christian	Secular Humanism	Socialism
Score	70-100	30-69	0-29	Less than 0

The PEERS test is a validated instrument published by the Nehemiah Institute (Smithwick, 2008). The Nehemiah Institute makes the instrument available for dissertation research at a reduced cost and offers statistical analysis assistance as well. Developing of PEERS was done over a period of two years and was completed in 1988, and according to Wood (2008), it has only changed slightly since then.

Psychometric testing of the PEERS test has confirmed its validity (Ray, 1995; Smithwick, 2008). Validity testing of the PEERS instrument was done by the Nehemiah Institute using three methods: item discrimination test, construct validity, and a professional validity and reliability study. The first method, item discrimination test, is a statistical test to determine if a test statement is in error due to poor construction (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013). The method Nehemiah used to conduct this test is as follows. Several hundred randomly selected tests were used over a set period of three years. These tests were divided into two groups; one group consisting of the top 20% of test results and the other, the lowest 20% of test results. A calculation was made for each test question in each group to determine if the lower group had a higher percentage of correct answers than the top group. In this type of test if the bottom 20% outscores the top 20% on a test question, the test statement has been constructed poorly. The PEERS instrument passed this item discrimination test with 99%. The failing test statement was discarded and replaced with a new test statement (Smithwick, n.d.).

The second method used by the Nehemiah Institute to validate the PEERS instrument was a construct validity test. Construct validity determines if an item measures what it is intended to measure (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorenson, 2006). Two groups were chosen that had strongly diverse worldviews: biblical worldview scholars and humanist, new age adherents (Smithwick, n.d.). The results of the comparison between the two groups demonstrated marked differences with the biblical scholars scoring +70 or higher on the composite score, and of the humanist group, only three scored above zero. This test result indicated a strong validity of the PEERS test (Smithwick, n.d.).

The third method was a professional validity and reliability study conducted by Ray (1995) to provide expert review and content validity. Ray's complete results are found in his 30 page paper and the following is a synopsis of his findings:

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, economic, 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 = .98). The findings of this study suggest that the PEERS test may be successfully used for individual assessment, group assessment, and research purposes (p. 7.)

Nehemiah Institute (2012) claims that PEERS is the only worldview instrument that was validated by a professional study. A letter from Smithwick of Nehemiah Institute is found in Appendix C.



In addition to these statistical tests to determine the validity of the PEERS instrument, the Nehemiah Institute obtained a Statement of Theological Review from six religious professionals testifying to the PEERS adherence to Christian views. A sampling of views mentioned in the statement are supernatural creation, inerrancy of Scripture, virgin birth, deity of Jesus Christ, and second return of Jesus Christ (Smithwick, n.d.).

Religious commitment was measured using the Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10) (Worthington et al., 2003). The RCI-10 is a 10-item scale that is a measure of an individual's faithfulness, that is, adherence to religious beliefs and values and use of religious practices in daily life. The RCI-10 assesses both intrapersonal and interpersonal religious commitment. One sample item that assesses intrapersonal commitment is "I spend time trying to grow in understanding of my faith." One sample item that assesses interpersonal commitment is "I make financial contributions to my religious organization." The Likert-type response scale for the RCI-10 ranges from 1 = not at all true of me to 5 = totally true of me. The RCI-10 scores can range from 10 to 50, with a higher score denoting higher levels of religious commitment.

The RCI-10 has demonstrated excellent inter-item reliability with Cronbach's alphas in the low to high .90s (Dik, Sargent, & Steger, 2008; Hicks & King, 2008; Worthington et al., 2003; Worthington, Hook, Davis, & McDaniel, 2011). In the initial study by Worthington et al. (2003), the three-week test-retest reliability coefficient was  $r = .83, p < .001$ , demonstrating excellent test-retest reliability (Worthington et al., 2003). Criterion-related validity of the RCI-10 has been supported with frequency of attendance of religious services,  $r = .70, p < .001$  (Worthington et al., 2003), satisfaction with life,  $r = .35, p < .05$  (Hicks & King, 2008), and spiritual striving,  $r = .59, p < .01$  (Dik et al., 2008). In this study, the inter-item reliability of the RCI-10 was determined by a Cronbach's alpha. A Cronbach's alpha that is between .70 and .79

is considered good, a Cronbach's alpha between .80 and .89 is considered very good, and a Cronbach's alpha .90 and higher is considered excellent (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013). The worldview and religious commitment scale items were analyzed for inter-item reliability via the computation of Cronbach's alphas, and scales were computed (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013).

### **Procedures**

Permission was granted by Urshan College (UC) president for UC students to participate in the study. The permission letter is in Appendix B. Local pastors were contacted to seek permission to invite college-age students from their churches to participate in the study. Copies of these letters are also in Appendix B with pastor and church names redacted. The next step in the research process was to gain the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the study. Once all required permission was obtained research began. IRB letter is in Appendix E. Emails were sent to all students at the Christian college using their college email account with a link to the two online surveys. An announcement was made in assembly asking for volunteers for the study. Accompanying the email to UC students was a letter describing the research and an informed consent form. The informed consent included the statement, "I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study."

Visits were made to local church college-career groups and area Apostolic churches inviting college students to participate in the study. The researcher asked for volunteers to submit their email addresses and the same letter and consent form was sent to them that was sent to the UC students. Additionally, an announcement was posted on the website for the United Pentecostal Church International Youth asking for volunteers for the study. Copies of the letter, consent forms, and announcement scripts are in Appendix A.

After consent forms were received data collection began. The PEERS instrument survey and RCI-10 using Survey Monkey<sup>®</sup>, an online survey tool, were used to collect the data anonymously. Follow-up emails were sent, spaced over weekly intervals to encourage participation in the survey. Anonymity of the participants was assured by using code names, rather than real names, and no physical addresses were collected. The code consisted of the first three letters of the student's mother's name and last four digits of cell phones (University of Auckland, 2013). The same code name was used for both the PEERS survey and the RCI-10 survey.

The researcher requested school professors and church pastors and/or youth pastors to encourage participation in the study. The UC Academic Dean approved the UC students to take the surveys during class in order to encourage maximum response. A concerted effort was made to obtain the highest number of participants in order to reach the required sample size of 51 per group. The anonymity of the online surveys protected the students' identity and ensured compliance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts (FERPA) as well as made students more likely to complete the survey (Granello & Wheaton, 2005; Marra & Bogue, 2006). Online surveys have increased in popularity in recent years because of their anonymity, ease of completion, lower cost, and other advantages (Albrecht & Jones, 2009).

### **Data Analysis**

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine the null hypothesis of the first research question. This null hypothesis states that there are no significant mean score differences in Christian worldview between students of the Apostolic faith who attend a UPCI Christian college and students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college. The independent variable was type of college, UPCI Christian versus secular, and the dependent variable was

Christian worldview, measured as an interval-coded variable via the PEERS survey. An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine the null hypothesis of the second research question that there are no significant mean score differences in religious commitment between students of the Apostolic faith who attend a UPCI Christian university and students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college. The independent variable was type of college, UPCI Christian versus secular, and the dependent variable was religious commitment, measured as an interval-coded variable using the RCI-10.

The independent samples *t*-test is an ideal statistical analysis to address the null hypotheses of both research questions. The independent samples *t*-test is used to examine mean differences on a dependent variable that is interval, or ratio-coded, between two (and no more than two) independent groups (Agresti, 2013). These groups can result from randomization or can occur naturally, as in this study (Agresti, 2013). The independent samples *t*-test is commonly used in studies with a between-subjects research design, such as a causal comparative research design (Agresti, 2013). The significance of an independent samples *t*-test is determined by a *t*-ratio value that is higher than the critical *t*-value (Agresti, 2013). Significance of the test denotes that one group's mean score on a dependent variable is significantly higher or lower than the other group's mean score (Agresti, 2013). In this study, significance was set at .05.

Data was entered into a data file in SPSS 22.0 to run the data analyses. Prior to data analyses for hypothesis testing, data was reviewed for missing variables and imputation procedures were conducted to adjust for missing at random (MAR) and missing not at random (MNAR) data (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). Participant descriptive statistics were reported. Specifically, the frequency/percentage of students attending a UPCI Christian college versus a secular college and data on students by age groups, gender groups, and college class status were

calculated. The worldview and religious commitment scale items were analyzed for inter-item reliability via the computation of Cronbach's alphas, and scales were computed (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). Descriptive statistics were computed on the worldview and religious commitment scales. Specifically, the mean, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum scores were reported for the scales.

Scale data was analyzed to determine whether data met the assumptions for independent samples *t*-test. The two primary assumptions are that scale score data show (a) a normal distribution and (b) homogeneity (or equality) of variance (Agresti, 2013). Normality of scale data will be tested by (a) creating a histogram for each scale, (b) calculating skewness and kurtosis values for each scale, and (c) conducting a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (as the sample size is larger than 50) (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). Normality is evident if (a) the histogram exhibits a symmetrical and bell-shaped distribution, (b) the skewness value is  $< 2.00$ , (c) the kurtosis value  $< 3.00$ , and (d) the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test emerges as non-significant at  $p > .05$ . The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested by calculating a Levene's *F* test (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). If the Levene's *F* test is not significant (i.e.,  $p > .05$ ) this assumption has been met (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). These assumptions were examined in each college student group for each independent variable. Violations that do exist were reported; however, the independent samples *t*-test is considered robust to moderate violations of these assumptions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Once all data was analyzed and the findings determined, all material collected through the research process was stored securely in the home of the researcher in a key locked file cabinet and will be held for three years. Once three years have lapsed, the researcher will then destroy all data, surveys, notes and material associated with the research. The destruction process

will entail the shredding and deletion of all material, including destroying hard or flash drives the data is digitally stored on.

Chapter four will detail the results of the research and chapter five will discuss the meaning of these results.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS**

The purpose of this chapter is to present and explain results conducted to address the two research questions. The chapter opens with a review of the research questions and hypotheses. In this study, two participant groups of students were utilized for the two research questions. The descriptive statistics of the sample will be presented, followed by the survey and results for the first research question. Sample and survey descriptive statistics with the results for the second research question will complete this chapter.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions guiding this study were:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant difference in biblical worldview between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant difference in students' level of religious commitment between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?

### **Hypotheses**

H1<sub>o</sub>. Christian worldview will not significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H1<sub>a</sub>. Christian worldview will significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H2<sub>o</sub>. Students' level of religious commitment will not significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend a secular college.

H2a. Students' level of religious commitment will significantly differ between college students of the Apostolic Faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college.

### **Descriptive Statistics: Research Question 1**

The first research question pertained to student differences in biblical worldview. The total sample size was  $N = 97$ , with  $n = 51$  students attending an Apostolic Christian college and  $n = 46$  college students of the Apostolic faith attending a secular college. There were originally 102 respondents, with 51 from the Apostolic Christian colleges and 51 from secular colleges. However, four of the students attending secular college did not meet the minimum requirement of three semesters and 48 credits at their college, thus their data was not included in the analysis. Of the 97 participants, 47 (48.5%) were male and 50 (51.5%) were female. The smallest age group of participants was age 40 – 49 ( $n=2$ , 2.1%), followed by 30 to 39 years of age ( $n = 3$ , 3.1%). The age group of 18 to 19 had a higher percentage ( $n = 16$ , 16.5%), but the majority ( $n = 76$ , 78.4%) of participants were between the ages of 20 and 29 years. With regard to school year, 0 (0.0%) participants were freshman, 21 (21.6%) were sophomores, 36 (37.1%) were juniors, and 40 (41.2%) were seniors. Fifty-five (56.7% of) participants identified as being of the Apostolic faith while 42 (43.3% of) participants identified as being of the Pentecostal faith. The United Pentecostal Church International and other Apostolic organizations use the two terms synonymously (Casselberry, 2013). The PEERS survey, however, listed them separately; thus



some students chose one while other students chose the other. For this study all were considered to be Apostolic.

Table 3 presents the demographic information by student group. A series of chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) tests of independence were conducted to assess if student groups differed on demographics. Results showed no difference between student groups with regard to gender,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.28, p = .600$ ; age group,  $\chi^2(3) = 4.40, p = .221$ ; school year,  $\chi^2(2) = 3.44, p = .179$ ; or religious faith,  $\chi^2(3) = 2.59, p = .108$ .

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics: Study Participants by Group (N=97)*

	Apostolic Christian College Students of Apostolic Faith		Secular College Students of Apostolic Faith	
	n=51		n=46	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	26	51.0	21	45.7
Female	25	49.0	25	54.3
<b>Age Group</b>				
18-19 years of age	6	11.8	10	21.7
20-29 years of age	42	84.3	33	71.7
30-39 years of age	2	3.9	1	2.3
40-49 years of age	0	0.0	2	4.3
<b>School Year</b>				
Sophomore	8	15.7	13	28.3
Junior	18	35.3	18	39.1
Senior	25	49.0	15	32.6
<b>Religion</b>				
Apostolic	25	49.0	30	65.2
Pentecostal	26	51.0	16	34.80

The dependent variable for the first research question was biblical worldview, which was measured by the PEERS test (Smithwick, 2003). The range of scores on the PEERS test is -100.00 to 100.00, with a higher score denoting a stronger affiliation with a biblical worldview (Smithwick, 2003). Preliminary statistics showed that the PEERS test violated the assumption of

normality. The skewness (which should be less than 2.00) was 5.77, and the kurtosis (which should be less than 3.00) was 4.70. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was significant,  $K-S(97) = .090, p = .050$ .

The assumption of normality is often violated due to outliers (Stevens, 2012). Using the SPSS unusual cases function, three outliers were identified. These outliers were winsorized (i.e., replaced with the next highest score (Stevens, 2012)). When an outlier is evident in a dataset, three approaches can be taken: (a) keep the outlier and use it as any other data point; (b) remove the outlier from the dataset; or (c) winsorize the data point, that is, replace it with the next highest or lowest number (Ghosh & Vogt, 2012). Keeping the outlier and using it in analysis overvalues it and it will likely cause the variable containing the outlier be skewed; therefore, it is not a recommended practice to keep it (Ghosh & Vogt, 2012). Removing the outlier undervalues the data point, and power may be reduced by its removal (Ghosh & Vogt, 2012). Winsorizing the data point is the best option to address an outlier, as the statistical estimates will be improved if the data point is winsorized (Ghosh & Vogt, 2012).

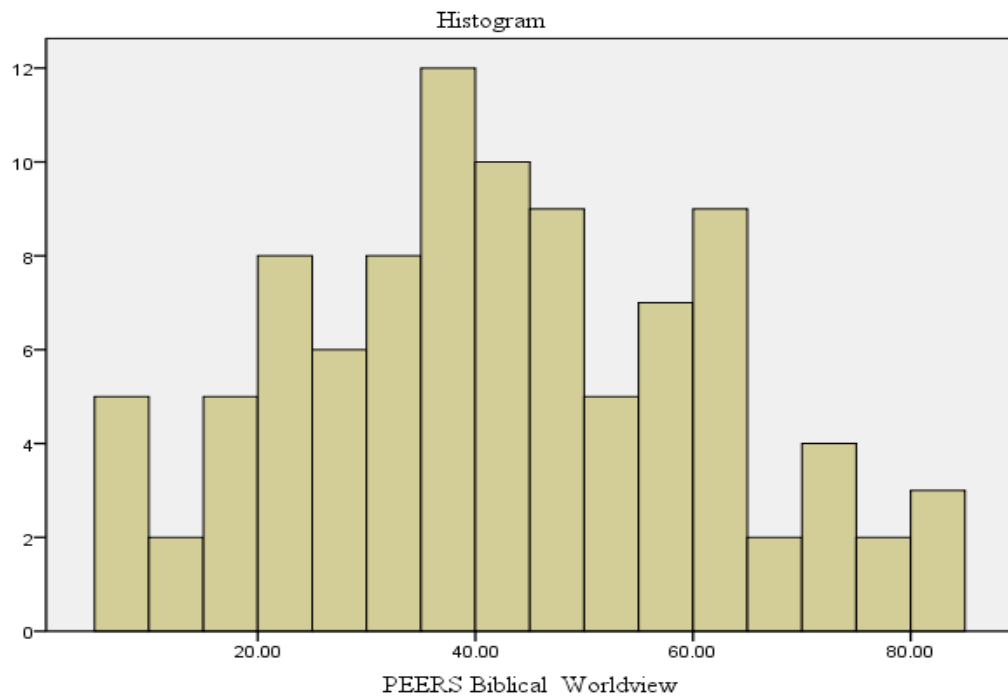
Once the outliers were winsorized, the PEERS test met the assumption of normality, with a skewness value of 0.51, a kurtosis value of -0.58, and a non-significant Kolmogorov-Smirnov test,  $K-S(97) = 0.43, p = .200$ . Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for the PEERS test, inclusive of the Cronbach's alpha as a measure of inter-item reliability. The Cronbach's alpha was .76, indicating good inter-item reliability (Stevens, 2012).

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics: PEERS Test (N = 97)*

	M	SD	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Cronbach's Alpha
PEERS Test	42.09	19.11	6.00	84.50	.76

Figure 1 presents the distribution of scores for the PEERS test. As seen in Figure 1, scores on the PEERS test were normally distributed. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was met, as evidenced by a non-significant Levene's test for equality of variances,  $F(95) = 0.03, p = .865$ .



*Figure 1.* PEERS Biblical Worldview distribution of scores.

### Results: Research Question 1

The first research question was, “Is there a statistically significant difference in biblical worldview between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?” An independent samples t-test was conducted to address this question and results are presented in Table 5. Results showed that while college students of Apostolic faith who attend Apostolic Christian colleges had a slightly higher mean PEERS test score ( $M = 42.74$ ,  $SD = 19.57$ ) than did college students of Apostolic faith who attend secular colleges ( $M = 42.37$ ,  $SD = 18.76$ ), this difference was not significant,  $t(95) = 0.35$ ,  $p = .727$ . Based on this result, the null hypothesis could not be rejected for the first research question.

Table 5

*Independent Samples T-test: Student Group Differences on PEERS Test of Biblical Worldview (N = 97)*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>p</i>
			0.35	95	.727
Apostolic Christian College Student	42.74	19.57			
Secular College Students	42.37	18.76			

### Descriptive Statistics: Research Question 2

The second research question pertained to student differences in religious commitment, as measured by the RCI-10 (Worthington et al., 2003). The total sample size was  $N = 122$ . Of the 122 participants, 57 (46.7%) were male and 65 (53.3%) were female. The mean age of participants was 22.78 years ( $SD = 6.40$ ), with ages ranging from 18 to 54 years of age.

Table 6 presents the demographic information by student group. One chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of independence was conducted to assess if student groups differed across gender categories. Results showed no difference between student groups with regard to gender,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.30, p = .586$ . An independent samples t-test was conducted to assess if student groups differed on age, and results showed that they did not,  $t(120) = -0.07, p = .946$ .

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics: Study Participants by Group (N = 122)*

	Apostolic Christian College Students of Apostolic Faith		Secular College Students of Apostolic Faith	
	N=61		N=61	
	<i>Frequency</i>	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	30	49.2	27	44.3
Female	31	50.8	34	55.7
<b>Age</b>	22.05	4.13	23.51	8.03

The dependent variable for the second research question was religious commitment, as measured by the Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10) (Worthington et al., 2003). Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics for the RCI-10, including its Cronbach's alpha, which was excellent at .94. The range of scores on the RCI-10 is 10 to 50, with a higher score denoting a stronger degree of religious commitment. Preliminary statistics showed that the RCI-10 violated the assumption of normality. The skewness was 3.10; however, the kurtosis was acceptable at -0.29. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was significant,  $K-S(97) = .181, p < .01$ .

Table 7

*Descriptive Statistics: RCI-10 (N = 122)*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>
RCI-10	39.50	9.00	19.00	50.00	.94

Data were examined for outliers, but none were found via the SPSS unusual cases function. The RCI-10 variable was transformed first via a square root transformation and then using a log linear transformation. In both transformation cases, the variable remained skewed and scores retained their non-normal distribution. When a variable continues to violate the assumption of normality despite transformation efforts, it is recommended that the variable be dichotomized using a median split (MacCallum, Zhang, Preacher, & Rucker, 2002; Streiner, 2013).

The RCI-10 variable was thus transformed into a dichotomous variable using a median split, which was  $Md = 42.50$  for the RCI-10 in this study. The median split resulted in two groups: the low religious commitment group ( $n = 61, 50.0\%$ ) and the high religious commitment group ( $n = 61, 50.0\%$ ). The RCI-10 variable was transformed first via a square root transformation and then using a log linear transformation. In both transformation cases, the variable remained skewed and scores retained their non-normal distribution.

### **Results: Research Question 2**

The second research question was, “Is there a statistically significant difference in religious commitment between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?” Due

to the transformation of the RCI-10 variable, a chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of independence was conducted, as both the independent and dependent variables were dichotomous (Stevens, 2012). Results from the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of independence are presented in Table 8. Results showed that there were significantly more college students of Apostolic faith who attended Apostolic Christian Colleges who had high religious commitment ( $n = 44, 72.1\%$ ) than there were college students of Apostolic faith who attended secular colleges who had high religious commitment ( $n = 17, 29.1\%$ ). Based on this significant finding, the null hypothesis was rejected for the second research question.

Table 8

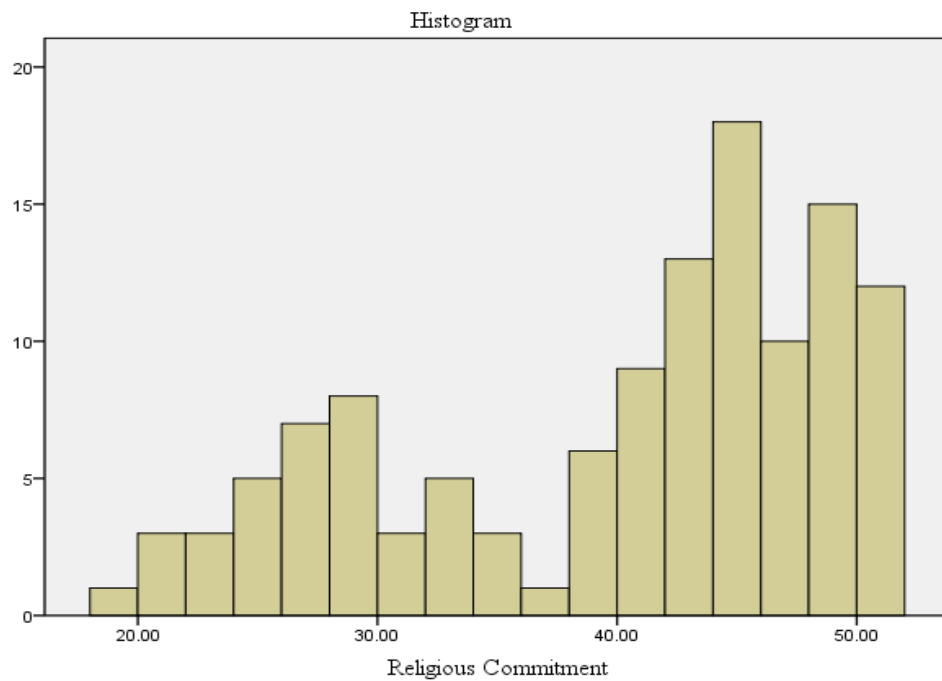
*Chi-square Test of Independence: Student Group and RCI-10 Religious Commitment Differences*  
( $N = 97$ )

			$X^2$	$Df$	$p$
	Religious Commitment		23.90	1	<.001
	Low	High			
Apostolic Christian College Students	17 (27.9%)	44 (72.1%)			
Secular College Students	44 (72.1%)	17 (27.9%)			

To validate results from the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of independence, an independent samples  $t$ -test was conducted. The Levene's test was significant,  $F(120) = 42.63, p < .001$ , indicating a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances. The independent samples  $t$ -test was significant,  $t(120) = 8.05, p < .001$ , with Apostolic students attending Apostolic Christian colleges having significantly higher levels of religious commitment ( $M = 44.80, SD = 4.95$ ) as



compared to Apostolic students attending secular colleges ( $M = 34.20$ ,  $SD = 9.03$ ). The histogram of the RCI-10 scores showed a bi-modal distribution of scores (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* RCI-10 Religious Commitment distribution of scores

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION**

Christian colleges and universities have a mandate or mission to develop men and women to be mature Christians and to be prepared to impact their world (Holmes, 1987; Ryken, 2013). Developing a clear worldview based upon biblical principles is part of this mandate and mission. Urshan, a Christian liberal arts college and theological graduate school, owned and operated by the United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI), states in their mission statement, “The mission of Urshan is to prepare Apostolic men and women through higher education for service in the church and to the world. The mission of Urshan College is to educate, empower, and equip Apostolics for life and servant leadership in the church and the world” (Urshan College Catalog, 2014, p. 11).

Ryken (2013) admonished, for a society to survive as a Christian culture, based upon biblical standards, its youth must embrace a biblical worldview. Scholars in the field of education and educational psychology stressed that the college-career years, ages 18-25, are critical to forming a worldview (Erikson, 1968; Rindfuss, 1991). College-level education can be more influential upon religious identity and worldview than either the church or previous parental training (Kanitz, 2005; Mayhew, 2012). The task facing Christian educators today is supplying the guidance young people need in forming a biblical, Christian worldview (Bryant, 2011a, 2011b; Rockenbach, Walker, & Luzader, 2012).

Another important element in the preparation for Christian servant leadership is religious commitment. Because religious commitment involves a lifestyle it is reasonable to deduce that worldview and religious commitment are indivisibly linked. A study of the literature demonstrated the impact religious commitment has upon lives (Adegoke et al., 2011; 1; Helseth & Huffman, 2011; Layton et al., 2011; Tix et al., 2013).

This study compared Christian worldview and religious commitment of students attending an Apostolic Christian college to Apostolic students attending a secular college. Independent *t*-tests and a chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of independence were conducted to statistically analyze worldview and religious commitment survey results. This chapter will review the findings and discuss the results of the study. Limitations and practical implications will be described and future research recommendations will be given.

### **Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative, causal-comparative study was to determine if students of the Apostolic faith who attend a UPCI-endorsed Apostolic Christian college have significantly higher levels of religious commitment and a stronger Christian worldview as compared to students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college. The participants of the study were 122 Apostolic college students, with 61 being from Urshan College (UC), a Christian liberal arts college, and 61 being from secular colleges. Fifty-one UC participants responded to the PEERS survey and 51 Apostolic students attending secular colleges or universities responded to this survey. Of the 51 students attending secular schools, four responses were discarded because they did not meet the minimum requirements for participation in the survey. This minimum was three semesters and 48 credits at their particular college. Sixty-one students from UC and sixty-one students from secular colleges responded to the Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10) survey. It is assumed that there were more responses to the RCI-10 than to the PEERS due to the RCI-10 having only 10 questions and the PEERS having 70 questions.

The sample was a convenience sample since the researcher is on the faculty at UC and knows many pastors of UPCI and other Apostolic churches. Both surveys were submitted on line

and were completely anonymous. The Nehemiah Institute administered the PEERS instrument and Survey Monkey® was used for the RCI-10 instrument.

The researcher conducted an extensive literature review concerning Christian and secular colleges, worldview, and religious commitment. The review on religious commitment and Christian worldview, as it pertains to college students of the Apostolic faith, gleaned little or no information. Layton (2011), Morales (2013), and Sire (2009) expounded on philosophy, the fall of man, and religious commitment anchors, but literature pertaining particularly to Apostolic faith is scarce. It is hoped that this study will add to the scarce literature available.

## **Discussion of Findings**

### **Research Question 1**

According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) (2007) there are some 4,146 private, nonprofit institutions of higher learning in the United States. Zigarelli (2012) used the following parable to describe these institutions:

Once upon a time God created a nation and seeded it with 4,146 institutions of higher learning...to teach His children truth and how to apply it rightly. But some of these institutional seeds fell on a path and were stolen by birds before they could ever take root. Some of these seeds fell on rock and sprang up, but then withered for lack of moisture. Other seeds grew among thorns and were choked to death before they could flourish. Some of God's seeds, though, fell on good soil and took root and grew strong, yielding a harvest 100 times what was planted (Zigarelli, 2012, p. 63).

In an effort to fill a void in the literature on Apostolic higher education, the first research question posed for this study was, “Is there a statistically significant difference in biblical worldview between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?” To address this question a samples *t*-test was conducted. The results of this analysis was Christian college students had only a slightly higher mean PEERS test score ( $M = 42.74$ ,  $SD = 19.57$ ) than students of the Apostolic faith attending secular colleges ( $M = 42.37$ ,  $SD = 18.76$ ). This difference,  $t(95) = 0.35$ ,  $p = .727$ , did not meet the level of significance required, thus the null hypothesis could not be rejected for the first research question.

The assumption going into the study was that Urshan college students would have a stronger Christian worldview than Apostolic students attending secular colleges. It was also assumed that Urshan students would have a solid Christian worldview. The research did not prove this; rather the results indicated that both groups had a similar level of Christian worldview and their level of worldview was still in Fowler’s (1981) Individuative-Reflective faith stage four and can be easily swayed from one level to another with their beliefs still not solidly formed.

These findings, however, can be weighed against several facts. Questions on the PEERS survey are weighted as correct or incorrect and some experts who have examined the test found the correct or incorrect answers were too polemic, and did not fully represent typical mainstream liberals or conservatives (Lynn & Lynn, 1997). Sire (2004) cited bias as a potential limitation in quantifying worldview since the definition of worldview depends upon who is defining it. In illustration, though the researcher considers herself to be conservative, her composite score on the test fell within the Moderate Christian Worldview range. According to the publisher, more than 90% of youth from Christian homes who have participated in the survey are ranked in the

Secular Humanism category (Smithwick, 2008). This strongly suggests a problem with the scoring of the instrument. The authors of the survey clearly advocate an extremely conservative political and social orientation that is not necessarily a function of a Christian or biblical worldview, but more a result of a traditionalist Western viewpoint (R. Crownover, Ph.D. personal communication, January 21, 2015).

## **Research Question 2**

Religious commitment in college students can be traced to a number of reasons. Layton et al., (2011) identified seven anchors of religious commitment. These included a commitment or personal relationship with God, faith tradition or denomination affiliation, a sense of community, and a commitment to parents. The family has significant influence on whether a young person will remain committed to the church and to God into adulthood (Dortch, 2014). The strongest anchor, however, is a scriptural anchor; being able to back up what one believes with scripture (Layton et al., 2011). If a Christian has a strong foundation in the Word of God, religious commitment goes beyond what was learned as a child, or traditions of the family. Being able to use the Word of God to justify religious practices has the effect of strong religious commitment. When a Christian is faced with persecution, whether as severe as death or as minimal as being ridiculed, a strong knowledge of the Word of God gives reasoning to stand committed. When faced with persecution, imprisonment, and eventually death, Paul said, “For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day “ (II Timothy 1:12 [NKJV]).

While religious commitment has strong literature foundations, there was a void in the literature focusing on religious commitment among Apostolic youth. This study endeavored to

offer empirical research on religious commitment in Apostolic college students attending both a Christian college based upon Apostolic tenants and secular colleges. The second research question was, “Is there a statistically significant difference in students’ level of religious commitment between college students of the Apostolic faith who attend an Apostolic Christian college and college students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college?”

A chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of independence was conducted, as both the independent and dependent variables were dichotomous (Stevens, 2012). The results from this test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Group 1, UC students had a higher religious commitment score ( $n = 44$ , 72.1%) than Group 2, Apostolic students attending a secular college ( $n = 17$ , 29.1%). The independent samples  $t$ -test was also significant,  $t(120) = 8.05$ ,  $p < .001$ , with Group 1 results being ( $M = 44.80$ ,  $SD = 4.95$ ) and Group 2 results being ( $M = 34.20$ ,  $SD = 9.03$ ). Because the statistically significant requirement was met, the null hypothesis was rejected.

According to this research, students in the Urshan group have formed a solid religious commitment and fall within Marcia’s (1980, 1998) Achieved status. At this status students have explored and made a solid religious commitment while Apostolic students attending secular colleges are still in the Moratorium stage, exploring but have not committed. This can be attributed to the solid Scriptural foundation the Urshan students are receiving. Layton et al. (2011) identified seven anchors of religious commitment and theorized that the highest level of commitment is directly related to Scriptural foundation. Apostolic students attending secular college are exposed to a plethora of ideology and receive no Scriptural training except in their local church. Additional factors influencing college students could be relationships with college

peers and professors, as well as courses taken (Mayhew, 2012; Mayhew & Bryant, 2013; Watson, 2007; Zigarelli, 2012).

It would be expected that the Apostolic students attending secular colleges would have a more liberal outlook since secular colleges tend to be more liberal in philosophy (Jaschik, 2012). The University of California at Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute does a survey of faculty members nationwide every three years. The results of the 2010-11 survey as compared to the 2007-08 survey is illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9

*Increasing Liberal Leaning in American Universities*

	2010-2011	2007-2008
Far left	12.4%	8.8%
Liberal	50.3%	47%
Middle of the road	25%	28.4%
Conservative	11.5%	15.2%
Far right	0.4%	0.7%

*Note:* Table constructed from information found in Jaschik (2012).

## Conclusion

If Apostolic youth are to impact the world for Christ, a strong biblical Christian worldview and dedicated religious commitment is needed. Without these two factors, the effect that the Apostolic movement has made on the world will be diminished in future generations. Leaders in the Apostolic movement recognize that Christian Education is critical to developing a solid biblical Christian worldview and commitment to Apostolic identity (Goheen & Bartholomew, 2008). The solid religious commitment of Apostolic college students shown in this research gives assurance that the future of the Church is in good hands.



The five conditions, given by Zigarelli (2012), that exist in a Christian institution of higher learning for the transformation of students to a strong Christian biblical worldview and religious commitment were (a) a critical mission statement that names the central goal of transforming the student; (b) a Christian-based and driven curriculum; (c) qualified and intentionally transformational faculty; (d) the coordination of spiritual formation activities throughout the institution; and (e) both an institutional and student culture of being God-centered. Urshan College, according to its catalog, meets these five conditions (Urshan College Catalog, 2013). Therefore, it can be theorized that UC college students have a solid Christian worldview and religious commitment.

Proverbs 23:23 admonishes, “Buy the truth, and sell it not; but also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding” (KJV). Urshan College students have decided to hold on to the tenants of their faith. The significant difference in religious commitment between the UC students and the Apostolic students attending secular colleges or universities can theoretically be attributed to the Scriptural foundation they are receiving at Urshan College.

### **Implications**

The implications of the results of this research are far reaching and are both positive and negative. The first research question examined the differences in Christian biblical worldview between Apostolic Christian college students and students of the Apostolic faith attending a secular college. Assumptions going into the study were that both groups would have a fundamental knowledge of basic Apostolic teaching and that their higher education would have had some effect on them after a minimum of three semesters and 48 credit hours. Because there was no pretest there is no way of determining if there was a change in the students’ worldview attributable to their time spent in college. The comparison was between the two groups. The

PEERS survey measured participants' Christian biblical worldview after being in school for several semesters.

The statistical results from the independent factors *t*-test indicated that there was little difference in the worldview of the two groups of students. Student group PEERS mean scores were 42.74 (for the Apostolic Christian college student group) and 42.37 (for the secular college students of Apostolic faith group), which placed both student groups in the Moderate Christian Worldview category (Smithwick, 2008). These scores are suggestive that the college students are likely in the Individuative-Reflective faith stage (Fowler, 1981). At this stage, the students are exploring and examining their faith system and religious worldview, but have yet to commit to and fully embrace a solid Christian worldview (Fowler, 1981). In other words, these college students have yet to obtain an unwavering commitment to their biblical worldview.

Another implication of the results of the PEERS survey is that both Urshan College students and Apostolic college students need to be better informed in political, economic, educational, social, and government issues. The researcher has observed students at the college where she teaches over the past three years. She has noticed that the students spend more time on social media than following current events and informing themselves on critical issues facing America and the world today. In a recent Ethics and Leadership class students were asked how they felt about the persecution of Christians in the middle-east that was taking place that week. Only one student out of 25 in the class knew anything about it. Other current events questions have been responded to with blank stares. "The implications from the analysis of this data could prove valuable to Urshan in considering changes to the general education curriculum. Further, the data potentially will motivate professors to become more intentional in helping students to

understand how Christian principles apply to the otherwise secular aspects of their lives” (T. O’Daniel, personal communication, January 21, 2015).

It may also be possible that other demographic factors, such as gender and ethnicity, interact with type of college student to influence biblical worldview (Mayhew & Bryant, 2013). Biblical worldview tends to be more salient for women than men, and African American individuals more so than other racial groups (Abar, Carter, & Winsler, 2009; Bryant, 2011; Dedeoglu & Lamme, 2011; Mayhew & Bryant, 2013; Musgrave, Allen, & Allen, 2002; Woods, Badzinski, Fritz, & Yeates, 2012). Alternatively, it may not be the specific college type but instead specific college factors, such as relationships with college peers and professors, courses taken, and religious-based extra-curricular activities that play more of a role in developing and enhancing students’ biblical worldviews (Mayhew, 2012; Mayhew & Bryant, 2013; Watson, 2007; Zigarelli, 2012).

The implications of the worldview survey, while in some ways could be considered negative, they could also be considered positive due to the higher score in religious commitment. The RCI-10 scores of UC students indicated a strong religious commitment. This was expected and understandable because UC is a Christian college based upon Apostolic doctrine and its mission “to educate, equip, and empower its students for ministry service” (Urshan College Catalog, 2013, p. 47). Students attending Urshan are more likely to have ministry involvement in their future, while students attending secular colleges are more likely to have secular careers as a goal. On the RCI-10 survey Urshan students scored highest on the statement (question 11), “My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life” with a mean of 4.77 out of 5.00. Apostolic students attending secular universities scored 3.90 out of 5.0 on this question.

## **Limitations**

The study has some limitations. One limitation is the small sample from the Apostolic Christian college, which has a student body of less than 500, limiting the diversity and size of the sample. Gall et al. (2007) stated, “statistical power increases automatically with sample size” (p. 143), and “the larger the sample, the more likely the research participants’ scores on the measured variables will be representative of population scores” (p. 176). Gall et al. (2007) recommended a minimum sample size of 15 per group, but Rovai, Baker, and Ponton (2013) recommended at least 30 per group. After running a power analysis for the *t*-test, it was determined that the least number for each group should be 51. Participants from Urshan College exceeded the minimum of 51 with a total of 61. From secular colleges and universities, 61 students participated, thus exceeding the specified minimum.

Another limitation of the study was the use of a convenience sample. A selection-bias could occur because of pre-existing differences between the participants selected for the study. This threat was compensated for by comparing demographics of gender, age, and class level. Additionally, the convenience sample was made up of volunteers; therefore, there is the possibility that the sample will not consistently reflect the population.

A final limitation is the possibility that individuals in both groups would know and/or communicate with one another. The Apostolic population in the chosen geographical area is not large and the participants in both groups would have likely met one another at church camps or conferences. This was compensated for by asking the participants to complete the survey anonymously, not discussing it with anyone before completing it.

The study has possible external and internal threats to validity. Rovai et al. (2013) referred to internal validity as the theoretical accuracy of the theory expressing the causal

relationships between variables. External validity refers to how the study's findings "can be applied to individuals and settings beyond those that were studied" (Gall et al., 2007, p. 388). Transferability of the study, or external threats, includes reactivity, or what is known as the Hawthorne effect (Rovai et al., 2013). The Hawthorne effect refers to the possibility that students will answer what they believe the researcher wants to hear, rather than what they feel (Rovai et al. (2013). The researcher used Survey Monkey<sup>®</sup> and the PEERS survey to generate two anonymous online surveys, and this anonymity should have encouraged the participants to answer frankly.

An additional limitation was the potential bias of the researcher who entered the study with a Christian worldview. According to Sire (2004) the definition of worldview depends upon who is defining it. "Different people often see and interpret similar things differently" (Rovai et al., 2013, p. 26). By allowing the data to tell the story, this possible limitation was reduced.

The research design chosen, the causal-comparative design, limited the research in that it is intrinsically weak due to the inability to manipulate the independent variables (Gall et al., 2007). There is the possibility of selection threat, but this was controlled by matching participants according to age, gender, and college class status. Matching is a method to reduce the selection threat to validity (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 2013; Zhao, 2004). Additionally, the response rate could limit the strength of the data. Rovai et al. (2013) recommended no less than a 50% response rate.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

There is an intellectual battle taking place in scholarly journals, professional societies, and in universities and colleges in America (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Philosophies of enlightenment naturalism and postmodern anti-realism ideology are challenging a biblical

worldview. According to Moreland and Craig (2003), because philosophy is the foundation of worldview, it is strategically important to be influenced by a biblical, Christ-centered worldview. Philosophers of all ages from Confucius to Martin Luther King, Jr. have had a mission to define the meaning of truth. John 14:6 answered this great philosophical question: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (NKJV). John 17:17 states that God’s Word is truth. “The Person of Truth is Jesus Christ; the expression of Truth is this Word” (Graham, 2013).

Elite universities that have their foundations in Christianity have gone down the slippery slope to secular humanism. No longer can vestiges of basic biblical worldview be found in their missions. As an example, consider this part of the original charter for Yale University:

“wherein Youth may be instructed in the Arts and Sciences [and] through the blessing of Almighty God may be fitted for Publick [sic] employment both in Church and Civil State” (Yale University, 2013a).

On Yale’s president’s page no mention is made of God or Christian concepts; rather humanistic values of community and man’s achievements are representative of what Yale is today (Yale University, 2013b). The Yale of today has the following mission statement (Yale University, 2013c):

The mission of Yale College is to seek exceptionally promising students of all backgrounds from across the nation and around the world and to educate them, through mental discipline and social experience, to develop their intellectual, moral, civic, and creative capacities to the fullest. The aim of this education is the cultivation of citizens with a rich awareness of our heritage to lead and serve in every sphere of human activity.

Again, no mention is made of the original charter's mission; rather a clearly humanistic mission has evolved.

Apostolic churches, schools, and colleges should heed these historical warnings. Further research is needed to broaden the literature base on Apostolic biblical worldview. One obvious implication for further research is for Urshan College and Urshan Graduate School to do a longitudinal worldview and religious commitment study that follows a student from their first year through graduation. By comparing the evolution of a student's worldview from the first year of college through to graduation, the institution could document the long-term effect it is making on its students. This would enable the institution to adapt the general education curriculum in the undergraduate program and motivate professors both in the undergraduate and graduate programs to assist students in applying their Christian education to the world around them.

Another implication for further research is in Apostolic youth organizations. Studies on worldview and religious commitment among Apostolic young people would not only add to the literature on Apostolic worldview, but would enable the organization to improve curriculum addressed to its youth. Further research in church youth groups is also needed to determine the efficacy of youth programs and to assist in building local church youth curriculum that addresses a biblical Christian worldview.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Sample of Informed Consent and Invitational Letter**

#### **CONSENT FORM**

#### **A COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF WORLDVIEW DEVELOPMENT AND RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT IN APOSTOLIC COLLEGE STUDENTS ATTENDING CHRISTIAN AND SECULAR COLLEGES**

Carolyn Potts Simoneaux  
Liberty University  
School of Education

You are invited to be in a research study doing a comparative analysis of worldview development and religious commitment in Apostolic college students attending Apostolic Christian and secular colleges. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a student at Urshan College or you attend an Apostolic church and are enrolled in a secular college. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

*Carolyn Simoneaux*, doctoral candidate in the *School of Education* at Liberty University is conducting this study.

#### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to determine if students of the Apostolic faith who attend a UPCI-endorsed Apostolic Christian college have significantly higher levels of religious commitment and a stronger Christian worldview as compared to students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college that is similar in student demographics and geographical location to the Apostolic Christian college.

#### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

- After signing this agreement, complete the online Political, Economic, Education, Religion, and Social Issues (PEERS) survey consisting of 70 questions.
- Complete Religious Commitment Ten (RC-10) online survey consisting of 10 questions relating to religious Commitment, and
- Complete a short online survey relative to you age, gender, class level, and subject major.
- These surveys are completely anonymous. (Your identity will not be revealed by your participation.)

#### **Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:**

The study has several risks: These risks are minimal and no more than you would encounter in everyday life. The surveys and results generated by the study are anonymous and your identity will not be revealed to the researcher or anyone reading the study.

The benefits to participation are:

- This study is significant to the research pertaining to Christian education and Christian worldview.
- Christian schools and colleges have a mission to prepare students to be committed Christians in a non-Christian world.
- Your participation will provide Apostolic Christian colleges with a better understanding of the effect they have on the worldview and religious commitment of their students.

Liberty University will not provide medical treatment or financial compensation if you are injured or become ill as a result of participating in this research project. This does not waive any of your legal rights nor release any claim you might have based on negligence.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records.

Once all data has been analyzed and the findings determined, all material collected through the research process will be stored, securely in the home of the researcher in a key locked file cabinet and held for five years. Once five years have lapsed, the researcher will then destroy all data, surveys, notes and material associated with the research. The destruction process will entail the shredding and deletion of all material.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or Urshan College. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is *Carolyn Simoneaux*. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact *her* at [csimoneaux@ugst.edu](mailto:csimoneaux@ugst.edu) or by telephone at 936-443-0088. My advisor of Liberty University is Dr. S. Battige, [slbattige@liberty.edu](mailto:slbattige@liberty.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1837, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

*Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study. I have completed a minimum of 48 credit hours of study and attended at least three semesters at the college in which I am enrolled.

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION  
WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Dear Student,

I am conducting a study entitled A COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF WORLDVIEW DEVELOPMENT AND RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT IN APOSTOLIC COLLEGE STUDENTS ATTENDING APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN AND SECULAR COLLEGES in order to compare Worldview and religious commitment in Apostolic college students attending Urshan College and Apostolic students attending secular college. Your participation in this study will be a great help to me in completing my dissertation research for my Doctorate in Education (Ed.D.), but it will also benefit Apostolic higher education and Apostolic college students.

You are invited to participate in the study by completing two anonymous surveys, one with 70 questions and one with 15 questions. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. If you agree to participate, please sign the informed consent form and return it to me via email [csimoneaux47@gmail.com](mailto:csimoneaux47@gmail.com), or via mail at C. Simoneaux, 700 Howdershell Road, Florissant, MO 63031. Alternatively, you can return it to me by hand.

Once I have received your signed consent form I will send links for the two surveys to you via email. In order for your responses to be completely anonymous you will use a code name consisting of the first three letters of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your cell phone. Example: FRA0088.

Thank you for considering participating in this study. May God bless you as you pursue higher education and His perfect will for your life.

Sincerely,

Carolyn P. Simoneaux, Ed.D. (Cand.)  
Liberty University

## **Script for Participant Recruitment**

### **For Urshan College students:**

Many of you know me, but for those of you who do not, I am Assistant Professor Carolyn Simoneaux and I work in the Department of Assessment and Strategic Planning here at Urshan. I am currently working on completing my doctoral dissertation at Liberty University. As part of this process I am conducting research on Christian worldview and religious commitment in Apostolic college students who attend Urshan College and students of the Apostolic faith who attend secular colleges or universities. If you have been at Urshan College for three semesters and have earned at least 48 credits I need your help in participating in this study. It would only require about 30 minutes of your time to answer two anonymous surveys. I will be sending emails within this next week to all of you that qualify and I sincerely hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to be involved in the first Apostolic research project of this type. If you choose to participate you will be given time in class to complete the surveys. I reiterate that your information and responses to the surveys are completely anonymous.

Thank you in advance for considering this opportunity to add to Apostolic research and help us as Apostolic educators to understand better how to help you grow your Christian worldview and religious commitment. I will be available after this assembly to answer any questions you may have.

### **For Apostolic Church Youth Groups:**

I am Assistant Professor Carolyn Simoneaux and I work in the department of Assessment and Strategic Planning at Urshan College and Urshan Graduate School of Theology. I am currently working on completing my doctoral dissertation at Liberty University. As part of this process I am conducting research on Christian worldview and religious commitment in Apostolic

college students who attend Urshan College and students of the Apostolic faith who attend secular colleges or universities. If you have been at your current college or university for three semesters and have earned at least 48 credits, I need your help in participating in this study. It would only require about 30 minutes of your time to answer two anonymous surveys.

I sincerely hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to be involved in the first Apostolic research project of this type. If you are willing to participate, I have here with me a letter of invitation and an informed consent form that you would need to sign. Once that is done I will ask that you give me your first name and email address. I will then send you an email with the links to the anonymous surveys. I reiterate that your information and responses to the surveys are completely anonymous.

Thank you in advance for considering this opportunity to add to Apostolic research and help us, as Apostolic educators, to understand better how to help you grow your Christian worldview and religious commitment. I will be available after this assembly to answer any questions you may have.

## APPENDIX B



May 7, 2014

Mrs. Carolyn Simoneaux  
Doctor of Education Candidate  
700 Howdershell Road  
Florissant, MO 63031

Dear Mrs. Simoneaux:

We have reviewed your proposal entitled "A Comparison Study of Worldview Development and Religious Commitment in College Students Attending Christian and Secular Colleges." We are pleased to inform you that Urshan College has agreed to allow the use of our school and students as part of your research.

We look forward to the results of your study.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular box used to redact the signature of David K. Bernard.

David K. Bernard, J.D., M.Th., D.Th (Candidate)  
President



August 4, 2014

Mrs. Carolyn Simonsen  
380 Houndshell Rd.  
Florissant, Missouri 63043

Dear Mrs. Simonsen,

Thank you for contacting me relative to approaching college age students in our church who attend a secular college or university. It is our pleasure to extend an invitation to you to visit our college age group in order to invite students from our church to participate in your study. We look forward to the results of your study.







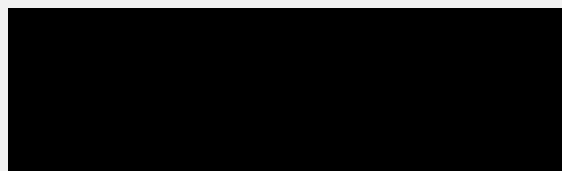
August 4, 2014

Carolyn Simoneaux  
Doctor of Education Candidate  
700 Howdershell Road  
Florissant, Missouri 63031

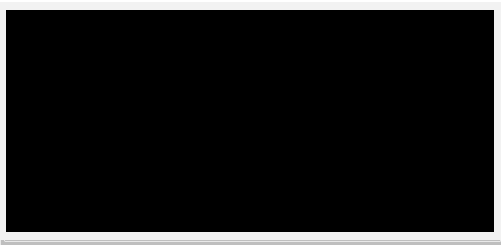
Dear Mrs. Simoneaux,

Thank you for contacting me relative to approaching college age student in our church who attend a secular college or university. It is our pleasure to extend an invitation to you to visit our college age group in order to invite students from our church to participate in your study. We look forward to the results of your study.

Sincerely



125000

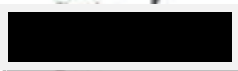


May 7, 2018

Carlyle Schwartz  
Director of Education/Candidate  
700 Broadway Hall Road  
Fairfax, Missouri 63024

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

Thank you for contacting our office to approve college age students in our church who attend a secular college or university. It is our pleasure to extend an invitation to you to visit our college age group in order to invite students from our church to participate in your study. We look forward to the results of your study.



Yours truly,





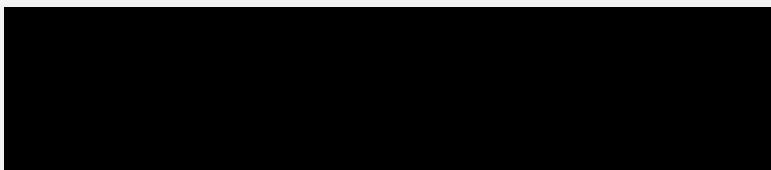
July 31, 2004

Candyn Simenauer  
Doctor of Education Candidate  
700 Howardsville Road  
Florissant, Missouri 63031

Dear Mrs. Simenauer,

Thank you for contacting me relative to approaching college age students in our church who attend a secular college or university. It is our pleasure to extend an invitation to you to visit our college age group in order to invite students from our church to participate in your study.

We look forward to the results of your study.





Aug 3 (1 day ago)



Sis. Simoneaux,

Great to hear from you. We definitely want to do anything we can to assist with your research.

Currently I am on our family vacation, I will be back in the office in a week and will speak to our Navigate coordinator to see how many we have that meet the criteria and then pass on to you the consent letter as well as their email addresses.

Looking forward to reading the results of your research.

Thank you,



----- Confidentiality Notice -----

This email, and its electronic document attachments, may contain confidential information. This information is intended solely for use by the individual or entity to whom it is addressed. If you have received this information in error, please notify the sender immediately and arrange for the prompt destruction of the material and any accompanying attachments.

## Hyphen emails

Mon, Jul 14, 2014 at 10:30 AM

Good morning. The BPC presentation at the Sabbath yesterday was excellent. Thank you to the youth department for all you do!

As you know, I am working on my doctoral dissertation in education and my topic is a comparative analysis of Apostolic Christian college students at Ushen and Apostolic students attending secular colleges. I will be comparing their worldview and their religious commitment.

I will easily be able to recruit participants for the study from Ushen, but need contacts of students attending secular colleges. The criteria are:

1. Student is Apostolic (attending an Apostolic church regularly)
2. Student has a minimum of 3 semesters and 48 credit hours at their present school.

The requirements would be for the students to complete two anonymous surveys: one assessing worldview, and one assessing religious commitment.

Would it be possible for me to obtain a list of emails of hyphen aged young people whom I could send invitations to for participation in this entirely voluntary research project? I will also be approaching pastors in various churches about this as well, but it would broaden my population if I had a larger pool to draw from.

I understand that there might be confidentiality issues, so this might not be something you could not do, but if it is possible it would help me greatly.

Carolyn Simoneaux

*In His Service*

Carolyn P. Simoneaux, Ed.D (Candidate)  
Assistant to Director of Assessment and Strategic Planning  
Assistant Professor of General Education  
Ushen College  
Ushen Graduate School of Theology  
514 632 6532 ext 2160  
csimoneaux@ushen.edu



Sat, Jul 19, 2014 at 5:14 PM

I would definitely be willing to assist with this!

Can you together a paragraph that includes all the information about the study and the person to contact? I'll post to our Campus Ministry Facebook page. I want to make sure the information I post is correct.

Oh...and if you happen to know the kind person who paid for my lunch at a local Mexican restaurant recently please thank them. ☺

General Youth Secretary

United Pentecostal Church International

8855 Dunn Rd, Hazelwood, MD 63042

P: 314.657.7300 ext. 262

Let's Connect: Twitter Facebook LinkedIn

[www.generalyouthdivision.com](http://www.generalyouthdivision.com)

**Promise Excellence. Then Overdeliver.**

*"Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence."* ~Vince Lombardi

## APPENDIX C

### Nehemiah Institute, Inc.

554 Groves End Lane  
Winter Garden, FL 34787  
t 1(800) 948-3101 1(407) – 654-8580  
e dan@nehemiahinstitute.com

Daniel J. Smithwick  
Founder & President

June 24, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: PEERS worldview assessment work for Carolyn Simoneaux

Nehemiah Institute has provided "worldview research" assistance via our PEERS Test instrument. This instrument has been submitted to a Professionally Validity and Reliability study. The study, conducted by Dr. Brian Ray, 1995, stated in conclusion,

*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.*

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

Results are available upon request.

The standard profile categories for providing worldview analysis includes the following:

Age Range	Occupation
Gender	Religious Preference (denomination)
Ethnic	Political Preference
Education Level	

The PEERS assessment program allows for a customized profile to be submitted by the doctoral candidate. Worldview results are then calculated and reported according to the additional profile selections. In addition to the standard and customized reports provided to the doctoral candidate, all raw data is provided via an Excel report. This includes answers to specific test items and "worldview scores" as established by Nehemiah Institute and all profile classifications.

Please feel free to contact us for further information if needed.

## APPENDIX D

The Liberty University Institutional  
Review Board has approved this  
document for use from  
12/16/2019 to  
12/16/2021  
Protocol # 19-017

### CONSENT FORM

#### A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WORLDVIEW DEVELOPMENT AND RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT IN APOSTOLIC COLLEGE STUDENTS ATTENDING CHRISTIAN AND SECULAR COLLEGES

Carolyn Marie Simonson  
Liberty University  
School of Education

You are invited to be in a research study doing a comparative analysis of worldview development and religious commitment in Apostolic college students attending Apostolic Christian and secular colleges. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a student at Union College or you attend an Apostolic church and are enrolled in a secular college. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Carolyn Simonson, doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University is conducting this study.

#### Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to determine if students of the Apostolic faith who attend a LUPC, secular Apostolic Christian college have significantly higher levels of religious commitment and a stronger Christian worldview as compared to students of the Apostolic faith who attend a secular college that is similar in student demographics and geographical location to the Apostolic Christian college.

#### Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

- 1. Please complete the online Political, Economic, Education, Religion, and Social Issues (PEERS) survey consisting of 30 questions.
- 2. Complete Religious Commitment Test (RCT) online survey consisting of 23 questions relating to religious commitment.
- 3. These surveys are completely anonymous. (Your identity will not be revealed by your participation.)
- 4. It should take you no longer than 30-45 minutes to complete both surveys.

#### Risks and Benefits of being in the study:

There are no minimal and no more than you would encounter in everyday life. The surveys and results generated by the study are anonymous and your identity will not be revealed to the researcher or anyone reading the study. If these surveys cause you any confusion at any time please, the campus pastor, or other religious leader, or I can refer you to the American Association of Christian Universities.

The benefits to participation are no money, but there are no direct benefits:

- 1. This study is significant to the research pertaining to Christian education and Christian worldview.
- 2. Christian schools and colleges have a mission to prepare students to be committed Christians in a non-Christian world.
- 3. Your participation will provide Apostolic Christian colleges with a better understanding of the extent they have on the worldview and religious commitment of their students.

The Liberty University Institutional  
Review Board has approved this  
document for use from  
12/16/2019 to  
12/16/2021  
Protocol # 19-017

#### Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report, I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records.

Once all data has been analyzed and the findings determined, all material collected through the research, please will be stored securely in the home of the researcher in a key locked file cabinet and held for 5 years. Once those years have passed, the researcher will destroy all data, records, notes and material associated with the research. The destruction process will entail the shredding and deletion of all material.

#### Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University, Union College, or your Apostolic church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

#### Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Carolyn Simonson. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her at [csimonson@lupc.edu](mailto:csimonson@lupc.edu) or by telephone at 534-443-0688. My address at Liberty University is Dr. S. Dooling, [sdooling@lupc.edu](mailto:sdooling@lupc.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1870 University Blvd, Suite 1107, Lynchburg, VA 24013 or email at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information to keep for your records.

#### Statement of Consent:

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study. I have completed a minimum of 48 credit hours of study and am enrolled in at least three semesters at the college in which I am enrolled.

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATA HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)