LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A STRATEGY FOR EVALUATING THE LIBERTY UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION PROGRAM

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

A Thesis Project Submitted to
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By

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LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THESIS PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

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ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY FOR EVALUATING THE LIBERTY UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION PROGRAM

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997
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A review of the current literature demonstrates that virtually no material is available that assists accredited Christian universities and colleges in evaluating their convocation/chapel programs. The purpose of this project is to develop a strategy for evaluating the Liberty University Convocation Program with a view towards helping others with the same process. This project accomplishes the purpose by examining the particular audience that we are currently ministering to in convocation (Generation X), along with strategies for reaching them, and analyzing data from internal and external convocation surveys with the goal of improving convocation.

Abstract length: 94 words
DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my wife, the best friend and soul mate anyone could ever have. Tami, thank you for keeping the grass so green on my side of the fence that I have never even contemplated the other side. You are loved more than you will ever know (but I sure have fun trying to tell you and show you).
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Christian colleges and universities have historically had a chapel program as part of their overall plan for producing the student they desired. One of the major goals during their chapels was to help the student become more pleasing to Jesus Christ by becoming more like Christ. Another goal was to make sure that the entire student body was moving in the same direction together. Still another very important goal was to provide a forum where the goals and visions of the university could be articulated on a consistent basis to everyone.¹

The first goal mentioned above could be accomplished without a chapel program; however, it could be effectively argued that a chapel program would enhance the ability of meeting this goal of becoming more pleasing to Jesus Christ.

For example, the Bible says that "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Scripture also says that "without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11:6). Chapel provides a forum for hearing the Word of God, which should produce faith in the hearer, and in turn please God, helping to meet this first goal.

The second and third goals mentioned above are much easier to accomplish with a chapel program. Corporate worship and learning have obvious distinct advantages when you are meeting to move people in one direction together, and impart goals and vision on a consistent basis to everyone.

The Bible gives numerous Old Testament and New Testament examples of corporate

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¹A.P. Guillermín, interview held in Lynchburg, Virginia, September 1996.
learning and worship, and also a New Testament command for corporate learning and worship. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). The historical Christian college chapel/convocation program falls under this Biblical example and mandate.

Virtually all the Christian colleges and universities (within the Coalition of Christian Colleges) who responded to a survey affirm that convocation is still a very important part of their program. The vast majority have mandatory attendance, as does Liberty University. Every institution surveyed is investing time and resources into their convocation program.

Dr. Jerry Falwell, the founder and chancellor of Liberty University, has said on many occasions that the convocation program is the single most important gathering during the academic week. In a recent interview, Dr. Falwell and Dr. Guillermin (Liberty University's President Emeritus) said that the convocation program will continue to grow in importance.²

However, in spite of all this, not one institution identified has a consistent model or strategy for evaluating their convocation program (including Liberty University).

The Spiritual Life Department of Liberty University is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating the various spiritual programs of the university. An extensive survey of the overall program has been conducted for the past three years. In the overall strategy for evaluating the spiritual life program however, the convocation program is the area that needs the greatest amount of attention at this time. There are a number of reasons for this:

(1) The weakest data received for the past three years in the student evaluation of the spiritual life program at Liberty University is the section on the convocation program. One of the
inherent problems of the evaluation was that every speaker and topic for the entire year was listed. As a result, most of the students could not remember the vast majority of the specifics of that convocation in order to respond to how it affected them.

(2) In interviews done with Dr. Falwell, Dr. Guillermin, and Dr. Towns, (a co-founder of Liberty University, and the other major personality involved in the founding of the convocation program) they all feel that the convocation program is more important now than it ever was at Liberty University. All three of them also believe it is a vital part of who we are and what we will continue to be.\(^2\)

Therefore, although some evaluation of the convocation has been done through the general survey given for the past three years, there is a need to produce a model which will yield more useable statistics and continue to improve what Dr. Falwell calls "the most important gathering at Liberty University during the academic week."\(^4\) Dr. Guillermin adds that convocation is extremely important because "it reinforces what the University stands for, its philosophy, and its beliefs."\(^5\)

(3) The third reason is because the Spiritual Life department of Liberty University has had less time to implement some of the changes that have been made in other areas because they have not been responsible for convocation for as long a period of time. Technically, the responsibility

\(^2\)Jerry Falwell, A.P. Guillermin, interview held in Lynchburg, Virginia, September 1996.

\(^3\) Jerry Falwell, A. P. Guillermin, interview held in Lynchburg, Virginia, September 1996. Elmer Towns, interview held in Lynchburg, Virginia, September 1996.

\(^4\) Ibid., Jerry Falwell.

\(^5\) Ibid., A. Pierre Guillermin.
of the convocation program is under the President's office, but the entire program was delegated by the President to the Spiritual Life department a few years ago.

(4) This is a mandatory part of Liberty University education program and will continue to be mandatory according to the Chancellor and President. The mandatory element adds a whole new perspective to the equation and makes it more difficult to meet individual needs than it does in the voluntary Sunday and Wednesday night services.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Therefore, because of the significance of convocation to University life, there is a great need for developing an effective strategy for evaluating the Liberty University Convocation Program. This is also important with regards to other Christian colleges and universities within the Coalition of Christian Colleges.

In a survey conducted of those schools, 97 percent of those who responded said that chapel was a very important part of their program. Eighty six percent of these same schools have mandatory chapel attendance. The majority of these institutions of higher learning do rely on some type of internal evaluation of their own chapel program. The means and methods by which their programs were evaluated varied from written surveys, to drop-boxes for suggestions, to student committees, to word of mouth. Some of the schools however do very little to nothing.

Of all of the schools who do administer surveys, it is rare to find any type of survey being given on a regular basis. In fact, in the external convocation surveys, there was not even one academic institution that had a consistent surveying system, let alone a model or strategy for such

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6 Ibid., Jerry Falwell and A. Pierre Guillermin.
a survey.

The purpose of this thesis project is to develop a strategy for evaluating the Liberty University Convocation Program. In developing this strategy at Liberty, it is hoped that this will be of help to other Christian colleges and universities since they also view chapel as a very important part of their program.

This project will be accomplished by looking briefly at the historical and biblical basis for the convocation program at Liberty University, examining the unique generation (Generation X) currently being ministered to in convocation along with strategies for reaching them, and analyzing the data from the internal (one internal survey was developed from strategies for reaching Xers) and external convocation surveys which will help to reveal how well Liberty is currently meeting the needs of the students and how the convocation program can be improved.

STATEMENT OF SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

In order to make this a workable thesis, narrow yet significant, several limitations will be set on the research:

(1) This thesis is not designed to be an exhaustive study of Generation X, but rather an overall view which will summarize the main characteristics and insights of this generation as well as give strategies for reaching them with the message of Jesus Christ;

(2) This thesis is not an exegesis or a demonstration from Scripture, although there will be a section on the biblical basis for the convocation program. The program will refer to Scripture as a support throughout;

(3) The intent of this thesis is not to change the number of times that we meet a week for
convocation or the issue of whether it is voluntary or mandatory. Dr. Falwell, and Dr. Guillermin, have both said in separate interviews that it is their wish and desire for it to remain mandatory and three times a week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday;

(4) One of the intents of this thesis is to make recommendations of how Liberty University can be more effective within the context of the current three day a week, (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) one hour, mandatory convocation;

(5) The intent of this thesis is not to incorporate every insight for reaching Generation X into the convocation program since Liberty University has an overall spiritual program into which they try to implement those various principles. Liberty will endeavor to implement those which they believe will reap the greatest benefits and make the most sense in the context of what they are trying to accomplish in the convocation program at Liberty University;

(6) The intent of providing a historical/biblical basis for the convocation program is not to be all inclusive but rather give a general overview of how this all fits into the purpose statement of Liberty University;

(7) This project is limited to the three main convocation services (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), and will not include other smaller convocations, whether episodic (e.g., school award convocations) or regular (e.g., ministry chapel, which is for religion majors).

The term convocation and chapel will be used interchangeably in this thesis since more people seem to call their program "chapel" rather than "convocation". Liberty University has named their program convocation at the request of the State of Virginia.  

\[7\] Ibid.

\[8\] Ibid., A. Pierre Guillermin.
The generation that is currently being ministered to is called a multitude of names by different authors. In this project, they will be called; Generation X, Xers, GenX, Baby Busters, Busters, or Twentysomethings. All of the names refer to the same generation, the generation of students currently at Liberty University (with very few exceptions).

**HISTORICAL AND BIBLICAL BASIS FOR THE PROJECT**

**Historical Basis**

The historical information that has been gathered on the convocation program at Liberty University was done primarily through interviews with Dr. Jerry Falwell, Dr. A. Pierre Guillermin, and Dr. Elmer Towns. These interviews also provided a lot of data in regards to the biblical basis for the convocation program.

This is a very unique and wonderful opportunity for documenting, in an accurate way, the history of the Liberty University Convocation Program because of the following facts:

1. The Founder and Chancellor of Liberty University, Dr. Jerry Falwell, is still very active in leading the institution;
2. The founding President has just recently retired but is still very active at the institution serving as President Emeritus;
3. Dr. Elmer Towns, the present Dean of the School of Religion, still has a large sphere of

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10 The information that comes from Dr. Falwell, Dr. Guillermin, and Dr. Towns in this section (Historical and Biblical Basis for the Project) was obtained through personal interviews on 9/19/96, 9/17/96, 9/19/96, respectively. These interviews have been cited previously in the paper and will be included in the Appendix A of the thesis.
influence at Liberty University and is still a leader in the ministry.

These three men were the primary people who started and ran the convocation program at Liberty University. Dr. Towns was designated the person in charge of the program for the first few years. The responsibility then shifted to the President's office where it is still technically today. However, the president delegated the entire responsibility of this program to the Spiritual Life department a few years ago.

Dr. Falwell said that it was his intent from the beginning, that convocation be held three times a week and that it be mandatory as long as Liberty University exists. In the beginning, Dr. Towns was acting as Executive Vice-President and Academic Dean of the school with the responsibility of the chapel program under Dr. Falwell.

Dr. Towns began the chapel program with two guiding principles:

(1) "Keep the platform hot." Dr. Towns explained that what he meant by this statement was that the speaker in chapel should be someone that is currently being used by God in a significant way and has the ability to communicate effectively. Dr. Town's believed if that happened it would keep all the academics in line. Under this premise, he said that no faculty member should ever preach in chapel because the faculty would be teaching the practical in the classes and they wanted people to come in who would have one shot; people who would pour out their whole life and soul in that one chapel.

(2) Secondly, and in line with the first principle, he said he wanted the people who were out in successful ministry to come in and be an example to the students who were in school.

Dr. Falwell and Dr. Towns made the decision together during the first year of school to require convocation three times a week. Dr. Towns and Dr. Falwell both said that they felt it was
a good compromise between some Bible schools that had their convocation five times a week and some that had it one.

Dr. Towns added further that on Monday they wanted to hear from students who had served God on Sunday. They would have a time of testimonies where they would hear what God had done and also a time for Dr. Falwell to come in and share what God did at Thomas Road Baptist Church (the church that started Liberty University) on Sunday. On Friday they wanted to prepare students for ministry on the weekend. Dr. Towns did not feel that Wednesday was as important in those early days, but said that it has become the most important convocation of the week, because it is now when Dr. Falwell addresses the entire Liberty University family.

Dr. Towns, Dr. Falwell, and Dr. Guillermin all feel that convocation is more important now, than it was in the beginning years of the school. Dr. Falwell gave two reasons to justify this statement. It is more important now because it is much more difficult to keep a larger school on track in reaching it's stated purpose of changing the world with the gospel of Jesus. Secondly, it is more difficult to keep an academically excellent school on track in reaching its statement purpose than a "Bible school."

Dr. Guillermin added that the larger the institution becomes, the more important the convocation will be because there is nothing else that brings the campus together in such a cohesive way. Dr. Falwell said that

Liberty was born in the fall of 1971. It is intended to be forever and ever a distinctively evangelical Christian school. It is unthinkable that a Christian school could function and maintain its commitments to a cardinal doctrine without regular gatherings without everyone involved; students, faculty, and staff. Early on it was decided that the three convocations must be a mandatory part of Liberty University (then Lynchburg Baptist College). We have not changed our theme.
Dr. Guillermin said historically that the Liberty University's Convocation Program actually follows the precedents set by previous Christian colleges and universities in which a chapel service or convocation was held on many campuses everyday. Then over a period of time it was rescheduled to be sometimes three times a week and sometimes two times a week. Liberty simply picked up on that perspective and decided they would have a convocation program three times a week.

An external survey was developed and sent to the 87 colleges and universities of the Coalition of Christian Colleges in order to find out information on their current convocation program. Thirty-seven out of the 87 schools (43 percent) graciously participated in the survey. These statistics will be included in chapter three of this project. One of the purposes of the survey was to find out the relative importance that other institutions place on their convocation program. This particular group was chosen because they represent the group that is the most like Liberty University with regards to Christian accredited education.

**Biblical Basis**

Both Dr. Falwell and Dr. Guillermin said that the biblical basis for the convocation program at Liberty came from the principle found in Hebrews 10:25, which says, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." Dr. Falwell said that it was "essential that a Christian faculty and a Christian student body meet together on a regular basis for the purpose of growing spiritually, maintaining unified vision, and staying on course in reaching its stated purpose of changing the world." This is the outgrowth of the principle in Hebrews.

Dr. Towns added that in his opinion, the guiding statement from the very beginning was
that the college (in those days Lynchburg Baptist College) was an extension of the local church and therefore, the purpose of the college was the purpose of the church. In essence, he agrees with the principle in Hebrews 10 as the biblical basis for chapel.

In Matthew 28:19-20a, Jesus left His instructions for His disciples to carry out after His departure. Evangelicals typically refer to this as the "Great Commission" meaning the job Jesus left for the believers to do in His bodily absence. These verses say, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you."

Jesus told his followers that their purpose in life was to make disciples of all nations by teaching them to obey all of His principles. The convocation program gives Liberty University the avenue to consistently teach Biblical principles to their students.

Furthermore, Hebrews 11:6 says, "but without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Therefore, if students are going to grow spiritually at Liberty University and become more pleasing to God by being people of faith, the way this is accomplished is through learning the principles of the word of God. The convocation program is one of the avenues Liberty chooses to use to accomplish this goal. Dr. Guillermin said that he believed convocation always had to be Christ centered and "biblically based no matter what you do, what activity or what music may be involved or who may be invited to participate."

THE STATEMENT OF METHODOLOGY

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The proposed design for the project is as follows:

(1) The first chapter will be the introduction to the project. The introduction will include the background and the rationale for the project, a statement of the problem, a definition of the terms and a statement of limitations for the project, the project's design and methodology, and a brief historical and biblical basis for the project. A much more detailed historical and biblical basis for the Convocation program will be included in the appendix through providing the entire interviews with Dr. Jerry Falwell, Dr. Pierre Guillermin, and Dr. Elmer Towns.

(2) The second chapter will consist of a review of the literature with regards to Generation X. Jesus challenged his followers to understand the times and if Liberty University is going to be able to meet the needs of this generation in convocation (which their leaders have said is more important than ever), then it is imperative that Liberty understands the generation to which they are currently ministering.

(3) Chapter 3 will be a substantial discussion on Generation X. The reader will be introduced to the demographics of Generation X, the who and what of Generation X, the shaping forces and some corresponding implications for ministry with regards to Generation X; and some principles and strategies that can be used successfully to reach Generation X.

(4) Chapter 4 will assess the effectiveness of the convocation program by using the data from the internal convocation surveys taken from students involved in the convocation program. The data obtained from the external surveys of the Coalition of Christian Colleges will also be included. This sampling of colleges was chosen because they are closest to the goals and purposes of Liberty University.

There is a good deal of information and general principles that do exist with regards to
Generation X. However, one of the recurring themes in literature is that Generation X tends to be more over generalized, is very diverse, and is a unique generation of people. Therefore there is a need for a specific survey tool to evaluate the Liberty University Convocation Program through the eyes of the Liberty University students. One of the problems with the current method of evaluation is that students are only surveyed on chapel speakers once a year. This requires too much information for the student to recall and therefore the data obtained is not very helpful.

An internal survey was developed and then administered every 4-6 weeks with regards to specific convocation speakers and the feelings of the Liberty University students toward them. The surveys were given October 3, 1996, December 5, 1996, February 20, 1997, and April 9, 1997.

The surveys were administered in a way in which a very large sample of the people at Liberty University's convocation services participated.

Another internal survey was developed and then administered only once, on February 20, 1997. This survey was developed, in a large extent, from the foundational strategies for reaching Generation X which will be discussed at the end of chapter three.

The general principles that are seen in the GenX culture at large and the specific data drawn from the particular Liberty University survey data will be used to draw conclusions and make recommendations towards the improvement of the Liberty University Convocation Program. This strategy should be useful in helping other Christian colleges and universities evaluate and improve their chapel program.

(5) Chapter five will be the conclusion where the observations from the evaluated data will be listed. Recommendations will be made with regards to areas of further study as well as
recommendations with regards to adjustments that should be made to more effectively minister to the students in the convocation program at Liberty University.

Per the previous discussion, chapter four of this project will discuss data gathered from both internal and external convocation surveys. The project could hypothetically use quantitative research (which typically uses surveys or experiments of some kind) and/or qualitative research (which uses participant observation, unstructured interviewing, or the life history method to name some specific methods) to gather the needed information.

"Quantitative research is typically taken to be exemplified by the social survey and/or by experimental investigations. Qualitative research [which has the intellectual underpinnings of phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, verstehen, naturalism, and ethogenics] tends to be associated with participant observation, and unstructured, in-depth interviewing."11

Quantitative research provides hard, reliable data and the research strategy is structured. The nature of qualitative data is rich and deep, and the research strategy is unstructured.12

The internal surveys (the general convocation survey, and the four speaker convocation surveys) that are used in this thesis project will use quantitative research (phone and written surveys, rather than in depth interviews) because it is the best way to study the problem.

Because there are thousands of people that attend each convocation at Liberty University, a large sample of Xers are desired to get as reliable of data as possible. The nature of quantitative data (hard, reliable data versus rich and deep data) and the research strategy for quantitative data (structured versus unstructured) make it the correct choice.

12 Ibid., p. 94.
Although data obtained from participant observation, unstructured interviewing, or the life history method would surely be valuable, (all three being examples of qualitative research) the type of information needed from such a large sample with "hard numbers" rules out qualitative research for the internal survey. Qualitative research would be impractical and time prohibitive, and not produce the "hard numbers" that are needed.

Undoubtedly, there will be areas of further study that result from this project that could be best served by using qualitative research methods (e.g., if Liberty is "missing the boat" in chapel with small groups of specific, identifiable students). However, this scenario was not the case with regards to any of the internal surveys.

The external convocation survey administered for use in this project will also use quantitative research (phone survey) because it is easily the best way to study the issue at hand.

The external convocation survey will be sent to 87 different universities and colleges all over the United States. Because of the nature and strategy of qualitative research explained above, this study would have been both time and cost prohibitive if this method was used.

"The positive learnings of quantitative research strongly reveal themselves in the insistence . . . that they [the results] have to be rendered observable, i.e., measured."\textsuperscript{13} The inherent problem of interpretation of data in qualitative research\textsuperscript{14} coupled with the need for measurable hard data in this project, made the choice of quantitative research obvious and easy.

As mentioned previously, chapter two, the upcoming chapter, will consist of a review of the literature for this thesis project.

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 22.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Ibid., pp. 72-73.
\end{itemize}}
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of current literature demonstrates that there is little material available to assist a Christian university in evaluating its chapel program. There were no such tools in a review of all the literature. There is, however, information that is available with regards to Generation X, the generation of students who currently make up the audience of the Liberty University convocation program. This is not an overwhelming amount of material.

There is significantly less information on this generation than there is on the previous generation which scholars call the "Boomers." In comparison with the Boomers, this relative lack of information and attention given to Generation X is not only confined to secular literature but is evident in the Christian world as well. Although there is a relatively small amount of material on Generation X, (other than articles in popular periodicals, articles, and magazines and newspapers) there are several important works available.

CHRISTIAN BOOKS REGARDING GENERATION X

The information available on Generation X in the Christian realm is written mainly for the purpose of ministering to and reaching this generation for Christ. The most prolific writer on Generation X in the Christian realm and arguably in the entire realm, from a scholarly and methodically researched perspective, is George Barna.

Barna has five different books which give incredible insight into Generation X from without and within. The books are as follows: America 2000: What The Trends Mean For Christianity, written in 1988; Todays Teens: A Generation In Transition written in 1991; The
Invisible Generation: Baby Busters written in 1992; Baby Busters: The Disillusioned Generation written in 1992; and finally a book that deals with the generation that is currently at and shortly coming to Liberty University, Generation Next: What You Need To Know About Today's Youth written in 1995.

One of the issues that help people come to a greater understanding of Generation X is to understand the differences between the Busters and Boomers. In Barna's book, The Invisible Generation (1992), he gives a chart showing these differences on a subjective level. A few examples from this chart are listed below:

1. Arsenio Hall
   Busters - Sensitive; hip; politically correct; relational
   Boomers - is he literate?! needs a haircut; poor interviewer

2. The Simpsons
   Busters - sharp cultural insights; very current; just like my family
   Boomers - gets old quick, Bart needs a lickin'; trite commentary

3. Howard Stern
   Busters - irrelevant; ill-mannered; sophomoric; get a real job
   Boomers - courageous; underscores cultural prudishness; social critic; funny

4. MTV Sports
   Busters - hip; global; adventurous; great balance of music, video, and sport
   Boomers - pure fluff; these are not real sports; hire a professional cameraman

Gary Zustiak, in his book, The Next Generation: Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Generation X (1996) also adds to the understanding of these important differences in a tangible, practical chart that highlights the Buster, Boomer differences (this book will be mentioned later in this review). A few examples are as follows:

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15 George Barna, The Invisible Generation, (Glendale, CA: The Barna Research Group, 1992),
(1) Sexual Disease
   Boomer - herpes
   Buster - aids

(2) Movie Villain
   Boomer - Norman Bates
   Buster - Freddy Krueger

(3) Popular Street Drug
   Boomer - pot
   Buster - crack

(4) Dance Craze
   Boomer - the twist
   Buster - slam dancing

(5) Musical Instrument
   Boomer - transistor radio
   Buster - portable CD player

(6) Political Cause
   Boomer - Civil Rights
   Buster - Gay Rights

(7) Information Source
   Boomer - newspaper
   Buster - internet

(8) Father
   Boomer - "Father Knows Best"
   Buster - absent father

(9) Music Medium
   Boomer - 45's and American Bandstand
   Buster - CD's, MTV, and VH1

Zander and Celek's book, Inside the Soul of a New Generation (to be reviewed later), also

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gives a helpful chart contrasting five areas of difference between Boomers and Busters. Other authors point out the same differences, although they do not use the same exact words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boomers</th>
<th>Busters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>conquest</td>
<td>community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>product</td>
<td>process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live to work</td>
<td>work to live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individual</td>
<td>team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active</td>
<td>reactive 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These practical easy to understand comparisons in all of these books give the reader a clearer understanding of the real differences between the Boomer and Buster, and hence give a greater understanding of Generation X.

Another area that Barna points out in *The Invisible Generation* that is unique to the Xer generation is their redefinition of the family. Because they have seen such a breakdown of the biblical family, Busters have redefined the family to mean many different types or forms of relationships. The distinction between family and friends becomes very blurred. In Barna's extensive surveys, Busters describe the family in the following ways:

- People with whom you have close relationships or deep emotional bonds ................................................................. 28 %
- Those individuals with whom you have a mutual personal commitment or love relationship ......................................................... 25 %
- Your good friends, those whom you are compatible and those with whom there is mutual caring ................................................................. 24 %
- The people who are there for you to provide help and emotional support as needed ................................................................. 23 %
- People who are related by marriage ................................................................. 21 %

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After reviewing all of what Barna has written, although there is insight to be gained from all the different authors works that will be mentioned, he is by far the most helpful author for the purpose of this study and also for anyone who wants to know what Generation X is all about, particularly from a Christian point of view. All five of these books give insight to Generation X from without and from within. Barna not only analyzes this generation, but he analyzes it on the basis of actual surveys of Generation X and actual surveys answered by the Busters themselves.

*Generation Next* is particularly relevant for this study since this deals with the fourteen to nineteen year-old in America today. These are students who are now presently at Liberty University and those who will be coming very shortly.

In *Generation Next*, Barna lists six characteristics which have come about because of the shaping forces of this generation. Many other authors write about these characteristics also. These six characteristics are important for the reader to internalize in order to come to a more comprehensive understanding of Generation X.

1. They are serious about life. Xers believe that they will have to fix the bad decisions of previous generations.
2. They are stressed out. Many of the sources that write about Generation X talk about the stress and anxiety that is present from school, family, job, sexuality, finances, threat of

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18 George Barna, *The Invisible Generation*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House,
time, and even political correctness.

(3) They are self-reliant. Many of these young people raised themselves for a number of different reasons. Coupled with the fact that they believe that personal life experience is the only truth, they must help themselves.

(4) They are skeptical. Most teenagers have little faith in the reliability of people, they assume motivations behind people's actions, truth of marketing claims, the ability of institutions to provide meaningful benefits, the existence of moral absolutes, the trustworthiness of journalists and the media, and the capacity of leaders to fulfill their promises..."skepticism has become the psychological and emotional security system designed to shield them from disappointment."19

(5) They are highly spiritual. This does not mean however, that although they are deeply interested in spiritual matters that teenagers are flocking to churches. Many Xers are developing their own religious belief system and because they can have conflicting views with no problem within themselves it may be highly personal. "Make no mistake about it...'spiritual' is no longer synonymous with 'Christian.'"20

(6) The last characteristic that Barna mentions is the fact that they are survivors. Teenagers have a new set of criteria for success (less passion for excellence and superiority than Boomers; realistic, not idealistic) and hence are very misunderstood by some in the older generations who tend to see Busters as unmotivated, uncommitted, and lazy.21


20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., p. 19.
Another Christian book, which makes a significant contribution to the field, in that it was written by two authors who were pioneers in planting Buster churches, is Tim Celek's and Dieter Zander's *Inside The Soul Of A New Generation* (1996). These two authors have not only done research but have been intimately involved with ministry involving Generation X. In their four chapter book they discuss the who of Generation X, the major shaping forces behind this generation as well as strategies for reaching the Busters.

Celek and Zander say that for their purpose, the Buster generation consists of the 46 million people born in the United States between 1965-1980.22 (Barna places the birth of the Buster generation between 1965-1983, with a population of approximately 68 million in *The Invisible Generation: Baby Busters.*23)

They list the main shaping forces as postmodernism (the greatest force according to them24), the broken home and absentee parents25, the media26, and the redefining of the American dream.27 (Rather than dreaming of a good salary, a nice car and a home, the Busters dream is to live in harmony with other people and to be whole.) Although many authors point to these same

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25 Ibid., pp. 53-59.

26 Ibid., pp. 61-67.

27 Ibid., pp. 69-77.
shaping forces, these two authors help give clearer understanding of these issues by referring to many personal examples which have come through their extensive work with Xers.

In their book, Celek and Zander give the reader four different characteristics of GenX (that are also mentioned by numerous others); the first characteristic is that of anger. Many Busters are angry over this "busted" world that they have to fix. (Hence, some would call this the fix-it generation.)

Another characteristic of the Xers is that they feel alone. Two reasons they have difficulty connecting with people is because of the propensity of broken homes and the aloneness due to society's use of technology.

The third characteristic is that they feel abandoned. This generation feels very unwanted for a number of different reasons centering around the breakdown of the family.

The final characteristic is that Generation X feels alienated. They feel estranged from family, from community, from self, and from God. Many Xers deep down trust only themselves.

Celek and Zander mention a number of different strategies and insights that are important in reaching Busters. A very helpful part of their book is the personal illustrations that are often included with these strategies and insights. They say that effective communication with these Xers should be real, rousing, relevant and relational.\textsuperscript{28} Rather than looking for inspiration like the Boomers, they are looking for identification, a rawer reality in their church services. Worship music is very important to them as they want to be engaged not entertained.

Sharing truth in story form is effective and small groups tend to be where life change takes

place. Since they have such an openness to other cultures, short term missions projects are also effective.

Gary Zustiak's, The Next Generation - Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Generation X, although not quite as "readable" as Celek and Zander's (because it is more academic and technical in language) it is more thorough and better researched than their book, and could be used as a college textbook. Zustiak, like Celek and Zander, also has experience encountering Xers in a personal manner as he has worked for the past decade as a professor of Youth Ministry and Psychology at Ozark Christian College.

One of the unique and helpful features of the book are the quotes which come from a multitude of sources at the beginning of all eleven chapters. These quotes are centered around the topic he is discussing.

For example, at the beginning of chapter 3, entitled "Dysfunction Junction", Zustiak quotes five different sources. One of the quotes comes from William Bennett and says, "Unless you have men civilizing boys, guiding and discipling them - and an idea of manhood that includes fatherhood - you are putting the foundation of your civilization at risk."29

Another helpful aspect of this book is the "Life Application and Implication for Ministry" section at the end of all eleven chapters. This is particularly useful to the person interested in ministering to Xers because of all of its suggestions and insights.

Zustiak, although taking us through the same basic journey as Celek and Zander, does an outstanding job illuminating certain elements of Xers lives.

For example, he gives a documented explanation of where the most common names (Baby Busters, 13th Gen, Generation X) evolved: Baby Busters, because in the world's eyes the generation before is the boom and they are bust; 13th Gen simply because it is America's 13th generation; and Generation X because it was thought this generation stood for nothing and believed in nothing.  

In the last chapter of his book, "Programming to Meet the Needs of Generation X," Zustiak lists very close to the same insights and strategies as do Celek and Zander, such as the use of story, process evangelism, and ministry through small groups.


The Gospel According to Generation X: The Culture of Adolescent Belief (1995), by David Lewis, Carley Dodd, and Darryl Tippins offers the readers some helpful distinctives in comparison to the books already mentioned.

Although much of the book is a restatement of what was written in Zustiak, Celek and Zander, and Ford, and the purpose is basically the same (to help Xers come to know Jesus and
grow in their faith in Him), an area of this work that was unique and revealing was chapter three.

In this chapter the author's show why GenX teens are greatly at risk and what factors have the greatest effect on teens. The chapter is entitled, "Teens at Risk: Diagnosing Spiritual Vulnerability." The key factor of teen Busters that present such a risk and make them "spiritually vulnerable" are:

- compounded stress,
- toxic music (heavy metal, rap, and grunge)
- low self-esteem (the more teens are satisfied with self, the more they are satisfied with God),
- sexual activity (66 percent of teens surveyed said Jesus made a difference in their sexual behavior)
- substance abuse (i.e., Christ makes a difference on sexuality issues for 67 percent of teens who never use drugs, but for only 14 percent of teens who use drugs weekly or daily)
- alcohol among friends (i.e., from their study, teens whose close friends drink, 80 percent drink themselves),
- adoption (presents special problems such as traumatic childhood memories, and difficult parental relationships),
- age and gender (as most adolescents age, their studies showed they submit less to Christ).\(^{32}\)

The authors' conclusion to this chapter is that it is invaluable for parents to understand what things have the greatest effect on teens and then to model a lifestyle for our children that minimizes the negative elements that detract from spiritual growth.

Reaching a New Generation: Strategies for Tomorrow's Church, by Alan J. Roxburgh is a thought provoking scholarly book concerning the tremendous challenge facing the church in this post-enlightenment period.

Roxburgh, like many others, documents the reasons and roots of this shift in worldview

but from a much more scholarly, historical standpoint than most Christian authors.

For example, he documents the rejection of the old worldview starting with the historical base from the writings of Frances Bacon (1567-1626), Rene Descartes (1596-1650), and Isaac Newton (1642-1727). He discusses the theological and philosophical thoughts of Colin Gunton, Locke, Hume, Kart, and others. This discussion helps broaden the readers understanding of the "why" behind the shift in worldview.

After explaining the "why" of the shift in worldview, the author spends the rest of the book asserting aspects of how to reach this new generation. He gives a number of different evangelical scholars, theologians, and pastors thoughts on this issue and continues to stress his own thesis concerning the individuality of each congregation. He says:

The mission strategy for each congregation must, increasingly, be shaped by the values, needs and style of its context . . . Evangelism that is effective in one context may be ineffective in another. The assumptions about evangelism in a churched monoculture need to be left behind and certain strategies will no longer work at all in our new situation.

The author concludes his work with an affirmation that although the road will be difficult for the church in the coming days only by traveling that road will we see how the Lord redeems His people and His world in these changing times.

Jesus for a New Generation: Putting the Gospel in the Language of Xers, by Kevin Ford states the main thesis for the book in the sub-title. Ford, an Xer himself, through study and in-depth interviews sheds a realistic, yet positive light on a generation he believes has been

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34 Ibid., p. 65.
misunderstood and maligned. He encourages us to believe that this generation may come to be labeled, not the no-name, GenX, nihilistic, stand for nothing generation but rather "the generation of Christ."

This book also charts for us the "who" and the "what" of this postmodern generation and the "how to" with regards to reaching them (i.e., a working faith, process evangelism, and narrative evangelism). Not much new information is contained here.

There are however two distinct areas that deserve mentioning from this book. The first area is the balance in the work between research and testimonies. The research of the book came from many of the people reviewed in this section (i.e., Zander) and others such as George Gallup, Stan Grentz, and Virginia West, among others. In other words, the book is solidly researched.

However, the thing that makes this book much more interesting and readable than it would have otherwise been is the testimonies which were the basis of the characters in this book's fictional narrative sections dispersed throughout.

The second area is the passionate, effective way the author appeals for a different apologetic in order to reach his generation throughout the work. The intense personal way he appeals makes his argument much stronger. For example, Kevin Ford writes:

But my generation demands a different apologetic-- an embodied apologetic, a flesh-and-blood apologetic, living and breathing argument for God. The old apologetics of previous generations assumed that the barrier to conversion was intellectual and the way to remove that barrier was to answer all cognitive doubts . . . The question my generation asks is not 'Can Christians prove what they believe?' but 'Can Christians live [emphasis mine] what they believe.'

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All of these books deal with the significant characteristics of Generation X although some do so in a more thorough way than others. They also give various insights and strategies for reaching Busters. There is not a unanimous consensus on everything although there is a general consensus on many major issues.

One of the major shaping forces for this generation is the issue of postmodernism. Gary Zustiak's book contains a chart making important distinctions between other generations and the postmodernists (which he calls the amoral ideology). His chart on the Buster, Boomer differences has already been mentioned. This new chart helps the reader understand the significant shift in America with regards to moral standards.

The chart lists four distinct changes in the thinking of America:

1. **Ideology - Biblical Morality**  
   **Time - 1800 - early 1900's**  
   **Belief - "Certain things are right and wrong, and I know why."**

2. **Ideology - A biblical Morality**  
   **Time - 1900s - 1950s**  
   **Belief - "Certain things are right and wrong, but I don't know why."**

3. **Ideology - Immorality**  
   **Time - 1960 - early 1970s**  
   **Belief - "Certain things are right and wrong, but I don't care."**

4. **Ideology - Amorality**  
   **Time - late 1900s**  
   **Belief - "There's no such thing as right and wrong."**

In fact, Zander and Celek say that this amoral attitude (postmodernism) is the most significant single factor that shapes this generation.

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With regard to postmodernism, Celek and Zander list seven "definite implications" that this postmodern mindset has for Christians. These seven implications are profound and will have far reaching effects on our society and reveal great opportunities for Christians to give the life giving gospel in a culturally relevant manner to a generation in desperate need of Jesus. They are as follows:

(1) There is no such thing as absolute truth in postmodernism. . . Anyone who claims to have an exclusive truth is committing an act of violence against the freedom of all.

(2) Busters have done away with the autonomous self and have elevated community to a higher value. . . Community is supposed to be one of the hallmarks of true Christians, so we have a marvelous opportunity to live out what we believe.

(3) Busters are searching for meaning and purpose.

(4) Those who don't find meaning and purpose veer toward despair. There's a lot of pain and fear within Busters because of what they've gone through.

(5) Busters have a deep-seated pessimism; they don't believe the world is, as Leibniz argued, the best of all possible worlds.

(6) Postmodernism produces a lack of coherence in Busters. An idea doesn't have to be logical for them to subscribe to it. That's the reason they can hold seemingly paradoxical viewpoints at the same time.

(7) Busters process truth relationally rather than propositionally. They do not respond well to intellectual apologetics. Logic is a loser.37

At the time of this writing there seems to be only one Christian book that deals specifically with the issue of truth in relation to Generation X. Other Christian authors deal with it in differing degrees. Josh McDowell's book entitled Right From Wrong (1994) argues that the issue of truth is a foundational issue for this generation. He is very concerned with applying truth in a way that works in the life of teenagers today.

McDowell's main thesis in his book is that postmodernism is not only greatly influencing the unregenerate Xers, but unfortunately also the Christian Xer. This fact is clearly seen in a chart

that he entitled, "What Church Kids Believe!"

**What Church Kids Believe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A person can experience a relationship with God personally.</td>
<td>84 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There really is a place of permanent suffering, which is known as Hell.</td>
<td>80 %</td>
<td>9 %</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Bible is totally accurate in all of its teachings.</td>
<td>71 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Christian faith is relevant to the way I live today.</td>
<td>70 %</td>
<td>12 %</td>
<td>19 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- I personally, have a responsibility to tell other people about my religious beliefs.</td>
<td>68 %</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>18 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Christian churches in my area are relevant to the way I live today.</td>
<td>56 %</td>
<td>19 %</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- When it comes to religion, what type of person you are is more important than what you accomplish.</td>
<td>43 %</td>
<td>27 %</td>
<td>31 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No one can really prove which religion is absolutely true.</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>34 %</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There are a lot of hypocrites in my church.</td>
<td>32 %</td>
<td>29 %</td>
<td>39 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The devil, or Satan, is not a living being, but is a symbol of evil.</td>
<td>31 %</td>
<td>49 %</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- If a person is generally good, or does enough good things for others during their life, they will earn a place in Heaven.</td>
<td>22 %</td>
<td>62 %</td>
<td>16 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Jews and all other people pray to the same god, even though they use different names for their god.</td>
<td>21 %</td>
<td>52 %</td>
<td>27 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- It does not matter what religious faith you follow because all faiths teach similar lessons.</td>
<td>21 %</td>
<td>54 %</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There are some sins or crimes which are so serious that they cannot be forgiven by God.</td>
<td>18 %</td>
<td>68 %</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Jesus sometimes made mistakes.</td>
<td>17 %</td>
<td>67 %</td>
<td>16 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- When it comes to religion, what you do in life is more important than what you believe.</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>62 %</td>
<td>23 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What I do for other people is more important than what I believe about Jesus Christ.</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td>74 %</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Josh McDowell's conclusion from his book is that many of our own youth have lost the ability to distinguish between right from wrong.

The preceding section of the literature review covers the major Christian works that are available dealing with Generation X.

**SECULAR BOOKS REGARDING GENERATION X**

The Generation X designation began with Douglas Coupland's pseudo-novel, *Generation X* (1991). In fact, the most significant contribution that Coupland made was this name designation taken from his title which is the name of choice for arguably a majority of people addressing the Xer. Since the term Generation X came from this book which was not published until 1991, it is evident that the terminology for this whole new generation has not been around for that long.

Coupland's term was quickly picked up by the media and interpreted to mean that this was a generation without anything distinctive (no distinctive voice, goals, music, or identity, an unknown factor). His book in fact, is what many scholars view as the first mainstream text that focuses upon Generation X and it set the tone for the media explosion that would follow in popular journals and newspapers.

In this book he writes of the lives and anxieties of three Americans in their twenties. This novel is a look at life through the eyes of Generation Xer's and for all intents purposes is a portrayal of himself. The very unique and educational part of this book is found in the margins.

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throughout the book. In the margins, Coupland defines Xer language he has used, and shares slogans relevant to GenX.

Two examples of definitions are:

**McJob**: A low-pay, low prestige, low dignity, low benefit, no-future job in the service sector. Frequently considered a satisfying career choice by people who never held one.\(^{39}\)

**Occupational Slumming**: Taking a job well beneath one's skill or education level as a means of retreat from adult responsibilities and/or avoiding possible failure in one's true occupation.\(^{40}\)

Two examples of slogans are

**Use Jets While You Still Can**\(^{41}\)
**REINVENT THE MIDDLE CLASS**\(^{42}\)

These numerous definitions and slogans help the reader understand in a much more concrete form the point the author is trying to make in this fictional novel, which simply describes life for Xers through three fictional Busters in their twenties.\(^{43}\) Soon after the release of Coupland's book *Generation X* (1991), there was a Generation X cover story in many of the avenues of media in America including the *Atlantic*, *The New Republic*, *Newsweek*, *US News*, and a


\(^{40}\) Ibid., p. 113.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., p. 4.

\(^{42}\) Ibid., p. 112.

\(^{43}\) Note: Coupland's two following books, *Shampoo Planet* and *Life After God* are also fictional novels which describe the life of Xers. These two books expand upon the "story line" which was begun in *GenerationX*, but do not give the helpful margin notes which made *GenerationX* so unique and educational.
number of other texts including books, news programs, and even movies.

In the secular field beyond Coupland, there have been many other serious attempts to chronicle the characteristics and the development of Generation X. Three works which are relatively comprehensive in scope and attempt to give insight to the nature and the character of Generation X are Howe and Strauss' *13th Gen: Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail?* (1993), Geoffrey Holtz's book entitled *Welcome To The Jungle: The Why Behind Generation X* (1995), and *Generation Ecch!* (1994), by Cohen and Krugman.

The main difference in these three volumes is their perspectives regarding Generation X. Howe and Strauss' book *13th Gen* is written from the outside looking in since Howe and Strauss are both Boomers. This does create somewhat of a conflict since a well chronicled fact in much of the literature is that Boomers tend to have a very negative view of Busters (another name for Generation X). On the other hand, both of the other works are written from the inside looking out. These authors are themselves part of Generation X and the entire attitude and the way in which the material is presented definitely reflects the difference.

*13th Gen: Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail?* by Neil Howe and Bill Strauss is a twenty-five chapter, four part book dealing with GenX.

The perspective of these two Boomer authors is rather bleak at times with regard to the Xer (not unlike many Boomer authors who write about Xers), and they tend to write from a perspective of comparing the Xer to the Boomer. For example, they say that "thirteeners have absorbed the modern cultural message that their work is not intrinsic, that they are only what others can see. Where Boomers viewed (and prided) themselves from the inside out, 13ers do so
from the outside in."[^44]

The book is interesting and unique in a number of ways. First of all, the margins are filled with quotes from different sources about Xers which further illustrate and illuminate the text. For example, in a section of the book on the economic woes of the Buster, the following information from a Time magazine poll of Americans under 30 in 1990 was in the margin.

Given the way things are, it will be much harder for people in my generation to live as comfortably as previous generations.

| Agree: 65 % | Disagree: 33 %[^45] |

Like the book *Generation Ecch!*, the book has rather sarcastic cartoons regarding GenX dispersed throughout. The other feature of this book that is so unique and makes it a cultural Buster book is what happened to it in its formative stages.

The authors were having a difficult time getting anyone interested in this book so they decided to "dump" it onto the internet. While they did this, an Xer who they later learned was named Ian Williams (a 23 year old Xer, from Chapel Hill, North Carolina), "crashed" their entry and began to interact with the text, and the authors.

An example of one of these numerous interactions is as follows:

```plaintext
***crasher
>honestly, guys, I hate to ruin your night, but none of us thinks about the generation stuff at all until:
   a) some dork writes a column that is so myopic, froofy and condemning that even the laziest of my friends throw the paper down in disgust...
   or,
```


[^45]: Ibid., p. 99.
b) some plastic-haired spazmoid tv reporter thrusts a mike and camera in front of our face on the way to biology class and asks us how our disenfranchised youth is going to vote. other than that, all this twentysomething angst is something we keep to ourselves. nobody likes a whiner.

***2boomers
> do you always crash bulletin boards like this just to wreak havoc?

***crasher
> only when something on the screen particularly pisses me off.

***2boomers
> so you don't like the name "13ers" either, one is to suppose?

***crasher
> I didn't say that. I don't like giving names to generations, period. it's like trying to read the song title on a record that's spinning.

***2boomers
> we're writing about it, so we have to give it a name.

***crasher
> well, do what you gotta do.

***2boomers
> who are you? where are you typing from?

***crasher
> oh and if I tell you, everyone finds out, and then I have to be like a spokesman for my generation, and do mall appearances, and it all just gets to be a big hassle...

***2boomers
> you can at least tell us how old you are.

***crasher
> I'm 23, I'm in the basement of a large house in chapel hill, and I'm sort of still in school. so how old are 2boomers?

***2boomers
> 41 and 45. hey, is there some way we can get you to behave while we're dumping this program on-line?
These interactions, although pointed and raw at times, clearly illustrate some of the deep rifts between the Busters and Boomers and give a great deal of further understanding of the Xer.


Part one of the book, entitled "The Generation That Raised Itself" is broken into seven chapters. Although there is not much information in these chapters that has not already been discussed, this book is very thorough, well researched, and well documented. This book would work as an inexpensive college text book because it is in paperback form.

Part two of this book, "The Blackboard Jungle," comprising chapters ten and eleven, offers some revealing information concerning the education of Xers.


He also documents the staggering rise in the cost of education (while at the same time the quality has gone down).

- Average cost 1977-78 private college for a year - $5,000, including room board and tuition.

46 Ibid., p. 23.

- In the 1992-93 academic year, that $5,000 cost had risen to $18,000 annually.
- Top schools such as Stanford and Harvard, during the 1992-93 academic year, cost approximately $25,000 - almost double the cost "of twenty years earlier in constant dollars."\(^{48}\)

However, the author asserts that higher education has never been more important in order to get a better job (and it also has never cost more). He quotes a speech of William Bennett from 1986 where Mr. Bennett, then the education secretary for the Reagan Administration, said that the college graduate will earn $640,000 more than the high-school graduate over his lifetime.\(^{49}\) In other words, although there are more hurdles than ever with regard to cost in obtaining a college education, it has never been more important when it comes to earning power.

Part three of Holtz's book, entitled "The Impoverished Generation," and encompassing chapters twelve and thirteen deal with two major themes.

Chapter twelve documents the fact that Xers are working more for less. Between 1987 and 1991, the wages of college graduates fell 3.1 percent.\(^{50}\) Just as disturbing is the Department of Education's estimate that only 22 percent of the jobs created in the 1980's required a college degree\(^{51}\) and the Labor Department determined in 1990 that 5.8 million people in the economy were "educationally underutilized."\(^{52}\)

Chapter thirteen shows that while incomes are shrinking, homes are becoming increasingly

\(^{48}\) Ibid., pp. 122-123.
\(^{49}\) Ibid., p. 125.
\(^{50}\) Ibid., p. 151.
\(^{51}\) Ibid.
\(^{52}\) Ibid.
more expensive. The median family net worth of those under 35 years of age is down 20 percent from 1983-1989.53 In 1988, only 5 percent of people under 25 years of age were able to afford a house in the region where they live, and only 22 percent of those 25-34 years of age.54 Between 1973 and 1991, the home ownership rates in the United States of those between age 25-29 was down 25 percent.55 Therefore, as many authors have pointed out, Xers have redefined the American dream to mean a loving, solid, family rather than a good salary, a nice car, and a home.

The fourth part of the book, "The Free Generation Today and Tomorrow," deals with the change in the attitudes and make up of "families," the new political force of the Buster, and the future of Busters. Although this part of the book is also thorough, well researched, and well documented, a number of different authors that are mentioned, both secular and Christian, have covered this material.

Two particular items in this book are particularly helpful. The author disperses charts throughout the book which help illuminate the points he is making. The note section in the back of the book, from pages 209-276, is also very well done. It is thorough, educational, and well-written. If this writer had to choose one particular secular book on the Xer, Holtz's Welcome to the Jungle would be the book.

Generation Ecch!, by Jason Cohen and Michael Krugman, is illustrated throughout with comics by Evan Dorkin. These comics tend to be sarcastic, stereotypes of the GenX culture and issues surrounding it (such as music, drugs, and media). These two Xer authors express anger

53 Ibid., p. 164.
54 Ibid., p. 168.
55 Ibid., p. 169.
and disgust at the media frenzy surrounding their peers. This phenomenon has in fact, made them so "sick" that they have chosen to call it, Generation Ecch! Their basic theme to Xers about all this hype is to "chill out." Do not worry about what everyone else is saying as it is really no big deal.

The authors spend a great deal of time talking about the power and the effect of the media on Xers. They warn that if the Xer is not careful, life itself can become a scripted media event.

A unique and creative section of this book critiques different current television shows and characters from the shows from Ecch's perspective (i.e., Melrose Place, Dynasty, 90210, The Real World). Much of the critique is filled with sexual innuendoes and obscenities and is written from a rather sarcastic viewpoint.

The changes in the music culture, the popular drug culture, and even the political culture as Xers are getting older is also discussed throughout.

The language used by the authors is raw, conversational, "street," language throughout the book. The book is not highly organized and the reader almost gets a sense that he is reading a diary of personal thoughts written out in no particular organizational pattern at times.

The basic premise throughout the book is that Boomers have overreacted in a very negative way to the Xers. They say that the characteristics ascribed to Ecch could just as easily be applied to a certain melancholy Prince of Denmark [Hamlet]. Their concluding message to the critics of Xers is that "these people are idiots."


57 Ibid.
Marketing To Generation X (1995) by Karen Ritchie is an often quoted book and the first serious introduction to Generation X for the advertisers. Ritchie, Executive Vice-President/Managing Director at General Motors Media Works, demonstrates in her work the significant statistical and demographic differences between Busters and other generations in population, income, education, and rates of marriage and divorce.

For example, she lists the population in the United States as follows: 30 percent Xers, and 26 percent Boomers.\(^{58}\) She demonstrates that the median income gains between 1980-1989 for men and women age 25-34, were 62 percent and 41 percent respectively.\(^{59}\) The percent of high school graduates that have enrolled in college has steadily risen in the Xer years, from 51.1 percent in 1981 to 57.9 percent in 1989.\(^{60}\) The percentage of degrees awarded to women has risen dramatically in selected professions such as medicine (5.5 percent, 1960; 34.0 percent, 1990) and theology (2.0 percent, 1960; 24.7 percent, 1990).\(^{61}\) The number of divorces per 10,000 women fifteen years old and older has risen from 90 in 1960 to 217 in 1985.\(^{62}\)

She also deals with the unprecedented ethnic diversity of Generation X that shapes the attitudes and expectations of the generation as a whole. "Today, the number of white non-Hispanics is less than 75 percent of all Americans . . . By that year [2020], non-Hispanic whites


\(^{59}\) Ibid., p. 47.

\(^{60}\) Ibid., p. 42.

\(^{61}\) Ibid., p. 35.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., p. 40.
will comprise about 64 percent of the total U.S. population.\(^6^3\) She explains the cultural influences which brought the Busters into adulthood, one being MTV, which is mentioned by a multitude of other sources. She then examines the buying tastes and habits of the Busters (i.e., VCR growth percent in households; 5.5 percent in 1983, 77.1 percent in 1993\(^6^4\)) quoting that they are above all, "savvy, cost-conscious, and skeptical of hype."

One of the most helpful aspects of this book is the multitude of charts that fill virtually every chapter. These charts deal with a various number of issues such as population (p. 17), fertility rates (p. 31), birthrates (p. 37), income gains (p. 47), racial/ethnic group information (p. 53), etc. These charts are a great visual aid in understanding various aspects of GenX.

Another prolific secular Buster writer that is worthy of mention is Douglas Rushkoff. He is the influential editor of the *GenX Reader* (1994).\(^6^5\) According to Rushkoff, this work is not an attempt to chronicle Generation X, but rather a "collection of GenX's most revered voices." In this eight chapter book, which covers over forty articles, with over forty authors, Rushkoff collects a plethora of Xer material dealing with a wide range of topics. For example, in chapter one there is an interview with Douglas Coupland from *Elle Magazine*,\(^6^6\) in chapter three there is a philosophical article by Douglas Rushkoff entitled, "Strength Through Apathy,"\(^6^7\) and chapter five

\(^{63}\) Ibid., p. 51.

\(^{64}\) Ibid., p. 120.

\(^{65}\) Note: Rushkoff also wrote *Media Virus! Hidden Agendas In Popular Cultures*. One of the main theses in this book is that the key to avoid being a manipulator is to seize the media. He argues that since technology is so readily available it is now possible to accomplish this large feat.


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contains an article entitled, "Seven Nights Along with MTV - Hugh Gallagher's Experiment in Terror."\textsuperscript{68}

Lawrence J. Bradford and Claire Raines wrote a book entitled \textit{Twentysomething} (1992). This book is written with the goal of teaching the reader how to manage and motivate today's work force.

The first part of the book introduces the reader to the Buster. One of the important statements the authors make in this section is that Xers "have a strong interest in the quality of life coupled with interest in a career, but a career is not their primary consideration."\textsuperscript{69} This is simply saying that Busters work to live, rather than live to work as Boomers did.

Chapter three is a particularly enlightening part of this book with regards to understanding GenX. In this chapter the authors list and discuss the eight core values of Busters as:

- they are self oriented
- they are cynical
- they are materialistic
- they are slow to commit
- their adolescence is extended
- they want quantity time
- they want to have fun
- they don't bow to authority\textsuperscript{70}

The work also discusses various aspects of the economy but Karen Ritchie's book, \textit{Marketing to Generation X} is much more thorough. One other significant element of distinction

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., pp. 99-101.

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., pp. 185-203.


\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., pp. 31-38.
is that "Twentysomething" is a term that has lasted, and is used by many people to refer to Generation X. The preceding books are the main secular sources for studying Generation X.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION REGARDING GENERATION X

There are two articles that are relevant to this thesis project that deserve special attention. The first article is Dieter Zander's article entitled, "The Gospel For Generation X" (Leadership Magazine, Spring 1995). This article is basically a synopsis of his book, Inside the Soul of a New Generation. However, what makes this article unique is the effective and efficient way Zander reduces an entire book to a few pages while retaining great content.

In the article Zander covers Buster characteristics (pain, postmodern mindset, fear, a new American dream, grassroots orientation), Buster communication (be real, rousing, relevant, relational), and Buster discipleship.

Although Buster discipleship is covered in the book, Zander organizes it differently in the article. With regards to discipleship he says to:

- emphasize compassion ministries
- downplay the institution
- adapt what it means to be a leader
- let Busters fail, and
- let Busters lead

The second article offers a succinct explanation of the difference between the enlightenment (or the modernist view) and the post-modernist view of thinking which is prevalent in Generation X. Andres Tapia wrote this article entitled, "Reaching The First Post-Christian Generation" (Christianity Today, September 1994). Tapia says that in the postmodern "environment, meaning depends on the perceiver. Truth is defined by each individual and the
community of which he or she is a part. . . information processing is nonlinear and fragmented.\textsuperscript{72}

Tapia also contrasts modernism (where we came from) with postmodernism (where we are) and out of this change proposes five main characteristics that Xers are looking for from their spiritual mentors and friends:

- authenticity
- community
- lack of dogmatism
- focus on the arts, and
- diversity\textsuperscript{73}

There are a number of theses and dissertations, which are helpful in understanding the complexities of Generation X. Many of them are written from a marketing basis or media based perspective, but there are a few that are written from a Christian perspective of reaching this generation with the gospel (or at least understanding them in order to get them involved in reaching their own generation with the gospel). Some of these particular theses and dissertations are cited in the suggested reading list appendix.

Most of the references to Generation X appear in popular periodicals such as \textit{Time}, \textit{US News}, \textit{Business Week}, and the occasional newspaper article "USA Weekend Feature." There are also a number of articles on Generation X in magazines such as \textit{Fortune 500}, and \textit{Forbes} which tends to center in on the marketing aspect of the generation. In fact, in the entire body of literature on Generation X there is probably more information on the subject of marketing than


\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., pp. 21-22.
any other.

In order for an effective strategy for evaluating the Liberty University Convocation program to be developed, there must be a thorough understanding of Generation X. Chapter two will aid in that understanding. Chapter three, the upcoming chapter, will further aid in the process by discussing "cultural traits of the cohort."
CHAPTER 3

CULTURAL TRAITS OF THE COHORT

INTRODUCTION TO GENERATION X

Who are the Busters? They have been defined and described in ways that cover the whole spectrum of thought, from blatantly negative to incredibly positive. They are described most often by historians, demographers, staff writers, and Christian writers who are primarily members of the "Boomer Generation."

The Boomers, in general, judge the Busters in a negative way. These negative characterizations are displayed in newspapers and periodicals across the United States and Canada.

Negative stereotypes include:

"A generation of animals" (The Washington Post)
"The Blank Generation" (The San Francisco Examiner)
"This is a generation without a soul" (A West Coast radio talk-show host)
"A generation of self-centered know-nothings" (Polster Andrew Kohut)

This generation is also known by names such as Generation X, Post-Boomers, Baby Busters, Twenty-Somethings, Slackers, and Whiners by numerous different authors. Perhaps however, "Generation X- taken from the title of Douglas Coupland's hip 1991 novel- is the moniker of choice since it signifies an unknown variable, a generation that is still in search of its identity." GenX identifies the vast majority of students that currently


75 Andres Tapia, "Reaching the First Post-Christian Generation," Christianity Today
attend Liberty University (People born between 1965 and 1983\textsuperscript{76}).

It is the goal of this chapter to give a general understanding of just who and what GenX is, the shaping forces and corresponding implications of ministry with regards to GenX, and five strategies of ministry to reach this generation with the gospel of Jesus Christ and help them grow in their relationship with Jesus.

THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF GENERATION X

Statisticians and experts disagree as to what the exact demographic of Generation X is. For example, in USA TODAY September 1996, Bruce Horovitz wrote an article entitled "GenX In a Class by Itself." In this article he sites six different "experts" on GenX, all who have a difference of opinion as to the Generation X birthdates and the number of Xers that there are.\textsuperscript{77}

George Barna places the birth of the Buster generation between 1965 to 1983, and the Buster population at approximately 68 million.\textsuperscript{78} Since Barna is one of the most prolific writers on Generation X, and since he has arguably done as much research as anyone else on this generation, these years will be used for the purpose of this project. As many authors point out


\textsuperscript{77} "GenX in a Class by Itself: Problem is, Nobody Can Agree Which Years the X Marks," USA TODAY, 9 September 1996, p. 10B.

however (e.g., Zustiak\textsuperscript{79}) the real key is not the exact dates, but rather the attitude that more correctly defines GenX.

The fact that GenX is a large number of people cannot be disputed:

The Busters are the second largest generation, numerically, America has ever borne. . . In fact, they constitute about 86 percent as many individuals as represented by the Boomer generation. . . American Busters exceed the national population of all but eleven nations on the face of the earth.\textsuperscript{80}

Before moving on, it is important to note the dating of the Busters from one other point of view. There is a belief by certain experts within the sphere of Generation X that it is much more correct to start the generation near 1961 rather than 1965. This can be found in both the secular and Christian realms of thought (e.g., Howe and Strauss\textsuperscript{81}, Holtz\textsuperscript{82}).

It must be noted that Holtz, Howe, and Strauss have some very good arguments for listing the GenX time period in the way they do. For this project however, as has been previously stated, that dating will remain consistent with George Barna's dating of Generation X since he has done such substantial analyzing and surveying of this generation.

Celek, Zander, and Zustiak as previously documented, all say that this generation is more defined by attitude than a specific set of years; therefore, there is a great possibility that the


conclusions of Barna, and the conclusions that this project will assert, as well as the general characteristics of Xers themselves, will also apply to those born between 1961 and 1964.

THE WHO AND WHAT OF GENERATION X

Who is Generation X and what are the Busters up to? Numerous writers (particularly "Boomer" writers) give a rather negative characterization of GenX. Many other writers have responded too much of the negative writing that has been done about Generation X by stating that these characteristics are over generalizations.

Some authors would assert that there are only two generalizations which can be made regarding Busters with any certainty. These are that "they are Americans and they are in their twenties." Giles contends that many of these negative myths created by writers have been created by Baby-Boomers and are unfair and untrue. In countering some of these "myths," Giles shares some interesting statistics regarding Baby Busters.

What most Xers think of the workplace may surprise you. 87 percent of them were "somewhat or completely" satisfied with the demands of their jobs, that 87 percent had a "strong sense" of "company loyalty" and that 69 percent believe that "people get ahead by their own hard work". 48 percent of those between 18 and 24 are doing volunteer work. This spirit of volunteerism somewhat flies in the face of the previously mentioned slacker characterization of many writers.

There is a general characterization concerning Busters that is factually undeniable. If Busters are anything they are incredibly diverse. They are diverse racially.

... twenty-somethings are actually the most racially diverse of any generation to date;

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84 Ibid, pp. 64-65.
they're 70 percent white, 13 percent black, 12 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Asian, and 1 percent Native American. (Baby Boomers are 77 percent white.) Xers may also be the least racist. 85

Busters are not only diverse racially, but as many authors highlight, they are also very diverse in outlook and style (e.g., Tapia86).

**CONTRASTING BOOMERS AND GENERATION X**

Zander and Celek's book entitled *Inside the Soul of a New Generation*, takes a critical look at the general differences between Boomers and Busters. 87 Barna88 and Zustiak89 also give helpful charts pointing out these differences.

These comparative charts help give the reader a greater level of understanding regarding the differences between Boomers and Busters, which helps in gaining a clearer understanding of GenX. These three charts were shown in chapter two. Boomers and Busters are radically different from one another and these major differences could help explain why Boomers tend to classify Busters in such a negative manner.

It is evident from the numerous sources that have been discussed that there is a widespread difference of opinion as to what the correct view of the Buster generation should be.

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85 Ibid., p. 66.


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Douglas Rushkoff, author of the *GenX Reader* and an Xer himself says, that for the most part Xers have been defined by people who detest them. He contends that writings by the Xers themselves will tell a different story.  

Regardless of what an author's view of the Busters is, there is a widespread consensus among the experts that this significant segment of the American population must be understood and deserves the utmost consideration. Obviously, Busters are truly a force to be reckoned with and will continue to affect every segment of the American mindset and American life.

**THE CRITICAL SHAPING FORCES AND SOME CORRESPONDING IMPLICATIONS FOR MINISTRY WITH REGARDS TO GENERATION X**

There is a great deal written about GenX dealing with the different shaping forces that make this generation so unique. Although there are numerous ways to organize the shaping forces, this project will propose four major categories. This way of organizing the major shaping forces is comprehensive and accurate. The major shaping forces of Generation X are; (1) postmodernism, (2) the breakdown of the family, (3) the media, and (4) the economy.

**POSTMODERNISM**

Celek and Zander say that, "post-modernity is, in our opinion, the single most powerful force in shaping the mindset, attitudes, and values of the Buster generation." Numerous other authors (e.g., Tapia) see postmodernism as a major shaping force that is hard to overstate.

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If the postmodern thought process were summed up into two laymen words, it would be the words, "anything goes." This represents a dramatic shift of thinking from any previous generation of Americans.

"To the typical Buster, there is no such thing as absolute truth. Statistically, 70 percent claim that absolute truth does not exist, that all truth is relative and personal. This view is supported by their belief that everything in life is negotiable."³ By rejecting the concept of absolute truth, Busters have rejected Christianity at the very foundation. This fact presents great challenges for the Christian attempting to reach Xers with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Andres Tapia does an excellent job of distinguishing modernism from postmodernism. She points out that Enlightenment reasoning (modernism) does not correspond with GenX's view of reality and that reaching Generation X is more than "addressing the needs of a generation. It means coming to terms with a major cultural shift that, for better or worse, is going to change the landscape for many generations to come."⁴

**Does Postmodernism affect Christians directly?**

Some Christians might mistakenly think that this postmodern mindset does not affect Christians that are themselves Busters. The following will posit that postmodernism does very much affect Christian Busters and secondly, give an example of how this mindset can be so dangerous.

McDowell and Hostetler's helpful book entitled *Right from Wrong: What You Need to*

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Know to Help Youth Make Right Choices (1994), is quite revealing regarding Christian youth and the postmodern mindset.

It is not difficult for many Christians to acknowledge that there is something desperately wrong with the youth culture in general. Statistical research verifies this acknowledgement. We are told that in America every day:

- 1,000 un-wed teenage girls become mothers
- 1,106 teenage girls get abortions
- 4,219 teenagers contract sexually transmitted diseases
- 500 adolescents begin using drugs
- 1,000 adolescents begin drinking alcohol
- 135,000 kids bring drugs or other weapons to school
- 3,610 teens are assaulted; 80 are raped
- 2,200 teens drop out of high school
- 6 teens commit suicide

It would be hard to find somebody who would not find such statistics disturbing. However, it is easy for Christians to comfort themselves with the supposed truth, "Our youth aren't like that." Unfortunately, the statistics do not back up some Christians' supposed beliefs.

Over 3,700 young people were "extensively and confidentially" surveyed to obtain the statistics that Josh McDowell shares in his book. The youth who participated in this survey are very involved in church activity, identify their parents as loving, their family experience as positive, and a large proportion of them say they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ. McDowell gives pages of disturbing, documented data, demonstrating that "our" children are very much affected by postmodernism. He concludes this data with this sobering warning:

95 Josh McDowell, Right from Wrong, (Dallas, TX: Word, 1994), pp. 8-9.

96 Ibid., p. 8.
I cannot stress enough the importance of the fact that these data reflect the behavior of our own youth [emphasis mine]. Two-thirds (65 percent) of these kids say they pray daily. Eighty-four percent of them attend Sunday School and youth group at least once a week, more than double the national average for teens. . . and they're in trouble . . . it is painfully apparent that many of our own youth have lost the ability to distinguish right from wrong. 97

A glaring example of this mindset affecting the thought processes of this generation which conflicts with the very core of our evangelical belief system is found in an article entitled, "Walking in Your Footsteps: Generation X's Wondering if it Fits into the Evangelical Movement" by Doug Davidson. In this article, Mr. Davidson shares why he is hesitant to call himself an evangelical anymore even though he has spent his adult life working in evangelical ministries. 98

Mr. Davidson gives an example of a young lady who has been involved with several evangelical ministries and says that her thoughts sum up what "many young evangelicals" are feeling about missions in the nineties. Here's what Christian Winch-Peterson had to say: "I am willing to try to live the gospel; love my neighbor, look out for each other, stand on the side of people who are oppressed. But I'm not willing to go into another culture and say this is the one true way, your way is not the real way to God." 99

Mr. Davidson would see this as a good thing. I would say that is denying the very essence of Christianity since Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life," (John 14:6). In fact, the reason believers are left on this earth is to share this eternal, life giving message of Jesus with a deceived and dying world. They are not left here to validate others spiritual blindness.

97 Ibid., p. 9.


99 Ibid., p. 52.
Mr. Davidson continues by stating that we need to rethink the relationship between Christianity and other faiths. He points to Clark Pinnock's book, *The Wideness of God's Mercy* which proposes that "non-Christians may also be saved through Christ on the basis of their response to the way God has been revealed to them."\(^{100}\)

If, in fact, this is true, then Christians do a disservice in going and trying to evangelize and disciple people as Christ commanded them to do (Matthew 28:18-20). Why not let them go to heaven as a non-Christian on the basis of their response "to the ways God has been revealed to them." The postmodern mindset, the principle of elevating your own personal experience to the level of "Truth," can be seen very clearly in the thinking of these "young evangelicals."

In conclusion, the postmodern mindset of Generation X presents a substantial challenge and a tremendous opportunity for Christians. If believers allow the portrayal of Christ through their personal life experiences to be seen by the world, and if they share their personal life experiences about their personal relationship with Jesus, they will be used to impact the Buster generation with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY**

The second major shaping force for Generation X is the breakdown of the family. Virtually every significant GenX author shares disturbing statistics and the devastating effects GenX has suffered because of the divorce of their parents (e.g., Ritchie\(^{101}\), Holtz\(^{102}\))

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\(^{100}\) Ibid.

\(^{101}\) "What is so Unique About Generation X?" *Current Thoughts and Trends* (11 June 1995): 30.

Generation X saw their families break up in unprecedented numbers. Previously in America (1950-1960) the divorce rate averaged about 375,000 divorces per year. This involved about a half-million children. But by 1970, the numbers had jumped to 650,000 divorcees. Just 5 years later, 1 million couples split up, effecting 1.1 million children. At least 40 percent of Generation X are children of divorce. Compare that to only 11 percent of those born in the fifties.\textsuperscript{103}

Kurt Cobain of the rock band Nirvana, was the "John Lennon" of his generation until he committed suicide with a shotgun blast to his head in 1994. One of the things Cobain said was, "I'm a product of a spoiled America ... there's so many worse things than a divorce. I've just been brooding and belly-aching about something I couldn't have, which was a family, a solid family unit."\textsuperscript{104} Ultimately however, this pain was more than Cobain could handle.

One of the disturbing things that I have too often found in ministering to this generation and performing weddings for this generation the past decade, is the complicated wedding ceremony for a Buster couple. There is often times such an incredibly tangled mess of extended family that it takes one of life's supposedly wonderful occasions and transforms it into somewhat of a nightmare for many Xers. The sad reality is that many Xers have known only blended or broken homes while they yearn for a stable, loving, home environment.

Because of this lack of stability in the home, combined with a postmodern mindset, not only Busters in general, but even Christian Busters are redefining the term "family." Many authors (e.g., Barna\textsuperscript{105}) document what family means to the Xer. The "bottom line" is that to Xers, family

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{104} Tim Celek and Dieter Zander, Inside the Soul of a New Generation, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Group, 1996), p. 25.

is anyone who genuinely cares about them; this definition can lead to some very unbiblical
situations (e.g., living together, homosexuality, etc.).

It is really difficult to overestimate the negative effect that the crumbling
family has had on Generation X. However, there is good news for Xers raised in an authentic,
loving Christian home.

... teens of parents satisfied with their marriages are almost fifteen times more likely to
take God seriously. In other words, of the kids whose parents are happily married, 73
percent report taking God seriously. By contrast, only 5 percent of the teens whose parents
are unhappily married take God seriously.106

Unfortunately, divorce is not the only significant part of the family break-up for Generation
X. Even if Busters grew up in an intact family, many of them felt very unwanted.

Numerous authors mention the overall "unwantedness" of Generation X. In 1961, with the
advent of the birth control pill, Generation X became the first generation in which people took a
very active and scientific role in trying to exclude children from entering this world. By 1980, one
fourth of women of child-bearing age were using the pill.107

The single factor of abortion has also had an enormous effect not only on Generation X but
also on America. Between the years of 1973 and 1996, at least 34,500,000 babies were aborted,
more people per year than all of the casualties of the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World Wars I
and II, Korean War, and Vietnam War combined. Without the passing of Roe vs. Wade,
Generation X would be the largest generation of Americans ever; a full one third larger than its

106 David K. Lewis, Carley Dodd, Darryl Tippens, The Gospel According to Generation X:
100.

One other GenX shaping factor that is widely mentioned is the "latch-key kid" syndrome. Busters are the first generation of Americans, that from a very early age were taking care of themselves. The tremendous amount of articles and writing that has been done on "latch-key kids" reflects the concern both within and without the church regarding this phenomenon. These various problems (e.g., divorce, latch-key children, etc.,) have produced a generation that in many ways had no time for childhood.

What implications does this have for the Christian in reaching the Busters? Again it helps explain why Busters long for meaningful relationships. If individual Christians will take the opportunity to develop a meaningful relationship with a lost Buster, at some point the Buster will hear enough of the believer's personal life experiences (truth to the Buster) to begin seeking Jesus. If the Christian not only "tells their story" but also "lives their story" this lost Buster will most likely join the family of God.

**THE MEDIA**

The third major shaping force of Generation X is the media. Bruce Tulgan, author of *Managing Generation X*, and owner of a Connecticut based strategic consulting firm, and an Xer himself writes:

> We grew up watching re-runs of *Star Trek* and *The Odd Couple*. . . We found ordinary heroes in *Hillstreet Blues*, then *L.A. Law*, and then *Law and Order*. . . and of course *The X-Files*. Our comic foils in *Saturday Night Live, In Living Color*, and most of all *David Letterman*. The music scene shifted to video and split into a million pieces that defy easy analysis. . . Now we listen to groups as diverse as Pearl Jam and Snoop Doggy Dog, Stone

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Temple Pilots, and the Cranberries. 109

This is an insightful overview of someone who grew up in the media dominated world of Generation X.

Virtually every significant author has spent a great deal of time talking about how the media has had such a dramatic effect on Xers. One of the Buster's perceptions is that they have seen and heard it all. In many ways they may be right. "By the age of five, the leading edge of the Boomers had never even seen television. But by the time a Buster hits age five, he/she has already watched more than 5,000 hours of television."

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Many significant books and numerous other articles have documented the significant ways that MTV has affected GenX. "In a typical week four out of ten Busters (38 percent) view MTV, making it one of the most widely viewed television networks among Busters and making Busters the dominant audience of that music channel." Numerous people point to MTV and their impressionistic quick cut camera videos as a reason for shortening the attention span of most Americans. MTV has also produced a number of other shows which have had a dramatic impact on the psyche of Generation X.

MTV's Unplugged, featuring low-tech, often acoustic concerts by rock's top stars, spun off a huge new market for the music business. Beavis and Butt-head started as a controversial MTV series and is poised to become a movie. [The movie has in fact happened since the penning of this thought.] The Real World put Busters together in a house for a year and

109 Bruce Tulgan, Managing Generation X, (Santa Monica, California: Merritt, 1995), pp. 36-37.


taped the real-life proceeding for a highly watched series.\textsuperscript{112}

Even politicians do not ignore the MTV viewer. In 1992, democrat Presidential hopeful Bill Clinton made a special appearance on MTV to court the Generation X vote in route to the White House. Newt Gingrich, the GOP House speaker, followed in the summer of 1995 with an appearance on MTV. "The lesson was obvious: the \textit{Sesame Street} Generation had come of age."\textsuperscript{113}

Douglas Rushkoff, a literary guru of the Buster Generation, says in \textit{The GenX Reader} that he has collected quotes of some of Generation X's most revered voices. In this book there is an entire chapter dedicated to Hugh Gallagher's "Experiment in Terror" in which Hugh shut himself up in a hotel room and spent seven days and nights watching MTV and commenting about it.\textsuperscript{114}

The media and particularly MTV culture have been a major shaping force of this generation.

As much as the media has affected this generation (including the entire computer culture which is also a new phenomenon), many authors point out that Busters have an inherent distrust with regards to the media. Andre Agassi, the Buster tennis star, has recently been seen in a popular television advertisement saying that, "Image is everything." Busters are aware that the media is incredibly image conscious. Xers ask questions such as:

- How can you trust an image on television or in the movies when everything from a crowd scene to the length of an actor's hair can be computer generated? . How can you trust broadcasting when once respected TV newscasts cover the same scandals and celebrities in


\textsuperscript{113} Bruce Tulgan, \textit{Managing Generation X}, (Santa Monica, California: Merritt, 1995), p. 37.

shows like *Hard Copy* and *A Current Affair*?\(^\text{115}\)

In Jeff Giles' often quoted article, "generalizations x", he says that, "we twenty-somethings ... grew up with television and know something of the Spin Doctor's trade ... We can decode the media and its attempts to market and manipulate."\(^\text{116}\) Xers were probably not surprised when they encountered John Warner's computer generated false advertisement against his opponent Mark Warner in the 1996 Senate race in Virginia.

Many writers also point to the numbing effect that the information overload age has had on the Buster Generation. They say that with the tremendous amount of information that is now available through the age of satellite news, and the internet, "numbness becomes an equal opportunity. And Busters, as we have seen, are just as cynical and skeptical as any grizzled, veteran reporter."\(^\text{117}\)

One other element that should be mentioned, is the fact that this generation, along with being the most media savvy generation ever, is also the most computer literate generation the world has ever known. Those who work with computers know just how addictive different aspects of the computer can be. There is a real danger of isolation with this computer fascination as computer chat rooms cannot begin to replace the human touch of a genuine relationship, one of the major felt needs of the Buster.

What implications does this major shaping force of the media have for Christians in regard


to their ministry to Generation X? My experience in working with Busters is that they very much relate to contemporary forms of media. It is wise to use those forms that are appropriate in order to help reach them (remembering that Busters do not want to be entertained but rather engaged\textsuperscript{118}).

During the 1996-97 school year we began to use "PowerPoint," a high-tech computer software package that is very useful. This computer software program works like an "automated overhead projector" in displaying our praise choruses as well as our outlines for sermons in our Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night services. This is incredibly effective and has widespread acceptance with the Busters at Liberty University. However, many people trying to reach Busters have made an understandable error by trying to use gimmicks, and hype in order to speak the Buster language. Busters desire people to be who they are; real, authentic, and relevant. They respond best to these same methods in reaching them.

Celek and Zander point this out in one of the most important statements in regards to reaching this generation with the gospel. Rather than focusing on the media (although as they have said it is important for setting), they say the following:

\textit{In fact, in this age of relativity, the value of a person's story may be the only absolute [emphasis mine]. Everyone's story is worth listening to and learning from. And here's what needs to be communicated in such a setting: 'God's story intersected with my story; now I can share it with you so that you can consider making it part of your story.'}\textsuperscript{119}

Again this is one of the reasons why personal life experiences, small group settings, and one-on-one mentoring are such important keys in reaching this generation.

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., pp. 66-67.

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
THE ECONOMY

The fourth major shaping factor of the Buster generation is that of the economy. Numerous different authors from within and without the Buster generation have pointed to this as an overall shaping factor for this generation of Americans. Laura Zinn points out in her article entitled "Move Over Boomers," that Busters are much more likely "than the previous generation to be unemployed, underemployed, and living at home with mom and dad." 120

Ann Landers was caught somewhat off guard recently when she suggested that the reason Generation X was having a hard time in the economic reality of today was because they were not willing to work hard like their elders. In response to this as Ann put it, "our mail room darn near caught fire from all the heat." 121 A reader from Seattle responded in this way:

Dear Old Battle Ax:

When did you last look for a job? How in the heck do you know what it's like out there? How dare you suggest that people between 21 and 30 miss opportunities because we are lazy. I am fed up with people of your generation who think that they are the only ones who know what hard work is. The truth is you are growing old on our backs and we're going to have to shell out for pensions and Medicare for people in your age group. This is not a pleasant prospect. 122

To be fair, many authors do point to laziness as a characteristic of this generation and hence, Generation X is called "slackers" by many. However, there has been an enormous amount of scholarship in the other direction, particularly from Xers themselves who say this is a particularly

122 Ibid.
overgeneralized myth.

A reality is however, that the national debt currently stands at 4.5 trillion dollars and the tab continues to grow. Although there has been progress recently, with regards to significantly reducing the national debt, Busters see a huge economic burden in their future.

Busters were the main losers in the recession that occurred about 1990 that many feel pushed George Bush out of office. In response to this economic plight Xers have redefined and fashioned a new "American dream."

Their new dream is:

To be whole and to live in harmony with other people in their surroundings. A career is merely the survival mechanism that allows them to pursue the deeper things in life. It's not the end in itself. . . . To be more specific Busters want to experience community and they want to make a difference.\(^{123}\)

The implications for Christians because of this new mindset is enormous. In some ways the Buster's American dream is much more biblical than previous generations. They are much more concerned about relationships than money. Since personal life experiences and relationships are extremely important to Xers, again the vital need for Christians to live out their faith is clearly seen, along with tremendous opportunities to develop personal one-on-one relationships with people without Christ, patterning the Gospel through not only their words but their lives in order to reach this generation.

The truth is the jury is still out on Generation X. Christians are called to make a difference in this world, including the 68 million Xers in our country that desperately need to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ presented in a culturally relevant way so that they can receive the life-giving

\(^{123}\) Ibid, p. 76.
message of the gospel, turn from their sin and accept Jesus. With this in mind, the last section of this chapter will deal with principles and strategies that are effective in reaching this special generation with the gospel.

**STRATEGIES AND PRINCIPLES FOR REACHING GENERATION X**

In Acts 17, when Paul went to the city of Athens, he found a culture which worshiped many different gods. In fact, they had one statue with the inscription "to the unknown God" (Acts 17:23) at the base. Paul said, "I noticed you had an inscription to an unknown god while I walked around looking carefully at your city. I've met your unknown god, and I want to introduce you to Him [my paraphrase]." Paul used a part of their culture, which they knew and understood, as a foundation for sharing the gospel. This example models the very thing that Christians must do if they are going to effectively share the gospel with this GenX culture of 68 million people.

The final section of this chapter will organize and further explain principles and/or strategies that can be used successfully to reach GenX. The principles and strategies will be organized under five main headings: (1) The Importance of Personal Life Experiences, (2) The Yearning for Community/Family, (3) The Importance of Being Real and Authentic, (4) The Importance of Music, and (5) The Understanding and Commitment to Time in Reaching Xers. (These five principles were used as a foundation to help develop one of the internal surveys administered to Liberty students concerning the convocation program.)

**The Importance of Personal Life Experiences**

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of starting with the foundation of personal life experiences when ministering to Busters. In fact, in my opinion, the most effective way to gain an interest of hearing into this generation is through **personal life experiences**. That is true with the
unsaved and the saved. I have found this to be true in preaching as well as counseling.

**Why is personal life experience so important?**

One of the most foundational things to remember is that "to the typical Buster, there is no such thing as absolute truth. Statistically, 70 percent claim that absolute truth does not exist, that all truth is relative and personal."\(^{124}\) In other words, what the typical Buster sees as truth is their own personal experience. You cannot start to share the gospel effectively with the beginning point being logic as you could with previous generations. Kevin Ford writes:

But my generation demands a different apologetic--an embodied apologetic, a flesh-and-blood apologetic, living and breathing argument for God. The old apologetics of previous generations assumed that the barrier to conversion was intellectual and the way to remove that barrier was to answer all cognitive doubts. But Xers live in an age of intellectual ambiguity, when cognitive answers carry considerably less weight. The question my generation asks is not 'Can Christians prove what they believe?' but 'Can Christians live what they believe?'\(^{125}\)

My wife and I have more people that we can handle that would like to sit down and talk to us about our marriage, in part because I share so many personal stories about our marriage while speaking. These personal life experiences "connect" with Xers and communicate to them the reality of the love that exists between the two of us. Busters long for family; Busters want real love; Busters listen to personal life experiences; sharing biblically-centered truth about an important area in their life (and modeling that truth) gains you a hearing.

Akin to personal life experience is the strategy of storytelling. Numerous authors point out

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that Busters are story listeners and storytellers (e.g., Celek and Zander\textsuperscript{126}). They love to listen to others personal stories and to tell their own. "Thirteeners are very open to the Christian story right now-- if it is presented in an effective and appropriate way. They may be closed to old, outmoded evangelistic methods, but not to the story itself."\textsuperscript{127}

Since personal life experience equals truth to the Buster, the sharing of one's personal testimony is also an invaluable ministry tool. It is important that Christians incorporate testimonies into the ministry opportunities that they have. Saved and unsaved Xers alike will listen to them, relate directly to them, and be challenged and encouraged by them.

**The Yearning for Community/Family**

As previously shown, Busters yearn for a sense of community/family. The preponderance of authors assert that the restoration of community/family is a primary need for GenX. Because there are so many Xers that are children of broken and dysfunctional families, they are incredibly committed to restoring a healthy family needed for their own children. This primary need is seen in many ways. For example, Busters will choose relationships over career or pay raises (unlike the Boomers).\textsuperscript{128}

This is a much more biblical attitude as Scripture says in many places not to exploit people for personal profit. Amos 2:6 says, "Thus says the Lord: 'For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they sell the righteous for silver, and the


\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p. 179.
poor for a pair of sandals." In fact, as documented earlier, their friends become the "family" many Xers never had. They love to just enjoy each others company and see this as being what life is really all about.

Because of this deep felt need for community/family, another strategy that works incredibly well in ministry to Generation X is the small group setting. Small groups give GenX an opportunity to be connected to their peers in an intimate relationship. These intimate relationships fit in with the Xers desire to be a part of a team. "Even for Busters who are still processing Christianity, involvement in small group fills some of their relational needs in a real and relevant way."129

One of the most transforming elements that the Spiritual Life Office has been involved in at Liberty is the continual development of the Spiritual Life Director and Prayer Leader program. Through this program the campus is broken down into a 1:5 or 1:6 ratio. In the last eight years, many of the most significant decisions that have taken place happened in this small group setting.

In the 1995-1996 school year, Liberty documented an 85 percent attendance rate through the entire program. The prayer groups take place on a voluntary basis on Thursday nights from approximately 10:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Small groups fit in with the Busters need for relationships, friendships, and produce a feeling of community/family. It is difficult to overestimate the effectiveness of this strategy.

Since Busters so much desire to be part of a community, they very much want to be part of

some vital team. They are very receptive to the truth that as Christians we are all part of Christ's body with a specific function to fulfill. Therefore, another strategy for effective ministry with Busters involves teaching them how to recognize and how to use their spiritual gifts. "Motivation for involvement flows when a Buster begins to understand how and why God made them. We need to help them understand their identity on every level, including a theological one."  

For a number of years now I have been teaching a spiritual gifts seminar to various groups of students on campus. In the 1994-1995 school year, I taught this whole seminar to the LIGHT team, our missions outreach team at Liberty University. In the 1995-1996 school year, before school even started, I taught the entire spiritual gifts seminar to approximately 500 Spiritual Life Directors and Prayer Leaders who came in early. A colleague of mine reported in the Chancellor's meeting at Liberty University that he had heard comments of students raving about the helpfulness of this information.

This is not only scriptural for everyone, but since the Busters view of changing the world is doing it one person at a time, it very much motivates them to see how they can be involved in a personal way in people's lives through using their spiritual gifts.

The next strategy that is incredibly important is that of mentoring. It is important to realize that "Busters aren't looking for power as they get into leadership. For Busters the payback is not taking the hill or accomplishing a project. The payback for being involved at a high level of

\[130\] Ibid., p. 136.

\[131\] Note: 1 Peter 4:10 states, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (NKJV). In addition, based on 1 Corinthians 12:1, the discovery, development, and exercise of our spiritual gifts is not an option but a command of the Lord. It states, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (NKJV).
commitment is that Busters benefit relationally. They desire to be part of the team with someone willing to be committed to them relationally. Since community/family is such a missing part of their lives they crave these close team relationships in an intense way. This one-on-one-mentoring is very effective and supported strongly from Scripture. For example, Paul continually patterned the mentoring of people and the personal training for them in the ministry.

Another principle which is of importance is to recognize that Busters want to be personally involved in the services they are coming to. They don't want to be entertained but rather engaged as previously documented. Any way that you can engage them through breaking them up into prayer groups or taking a break in the message for a small group discussion time, etc., is very helpful in making the message meaningful to them. Small discussion groups, prayer groups, etc. directly meet the need for community (and sharing personal life experiences also).

Busters so much yearn for community that they disdain divisive elements in life. This presents a real challenge to Christianity since "Busters see Christianity as divisive faith." Many of the other religions say "we are all one." Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). It is important, however, to point out that Jesus invited everyone to come to him. He didn't want anyone to be left out. His goal was not to divide, but rather to bring all people into the family of God. The all inclusiveness of Christ's payment of sin, the family of God concept, the meaning of redemption and reconciliation are all great ways to illustrate the inclusive nature of Christianity. In the initial presentation of

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133 Ibid., p. 89.
Jesus, it is important not to put down other religions but rather exalt Jesus Christ. Jesus says that, "and I, if I am lifted up from the earth will draw all peoples to myself" (John 12:32).

Celek and Zander say that "fellowship" with a small f, is also important. In the traditional way of thinking, once you trust Christ as your Savior you begin to come to church and get involved. "But with Busters, we need to move the boundary lines so that fellowship is offered to people before they've figured out what to make of this person named Jesus and these people who are following Him. We think this will be an important part of their process."134 Believers need to get Xers involved in some way in the church with other Christians so they can see these Christian's life experiences in order to come to Christ.

Another important principle to recognize is that Busters enjoy "pot-luck participation" in their services.

A Boomer service is like a five-course meal at a fine French restaurant. Each course is meticulously prepared. . . But Busters like rawer reality in their service. It's like a potluck meal. Someone may bring a pasta salad, another may bring Chinese food, another may serve up some cornbread. None of it necessarily goes together but the Busters usually don't mind. What matters is that they contributed, their role, however large or small, had value and what was most important was the conversation not the cuisine.135

This is so true from our experience. In fact, from the group meetings that we had with Busters, one of the things they said they desperately wanted was transparency from their pastors; they want us to share our failures as well as our successes. To Xers, that process is just as important as the solutions that you give for the problems.


135 Ibid.
In the 1995-1996 school year, there was an unusually powerful and anointed Convocation service at Liberty University. It happened to be on a Friday when college for a weekenders were visiting Liberty University. The ministry students were out in their own chapel at the time. Per Dr. Falwell's request, chapel started with a fifteen minute pep rally for the football game that would take place that weekend. The service immediately moved from there (pot-luck style) into testimonies and songs from the LIGHT group who had just returned from India with Wes Tuttle and me.

The chapel combined a number of different elements that are important to Busters;

1) It spoke of personal experiences that Busters had encountered,

2) Personal testimonies were interspersed with music (music is incredibly important to this culture which will be documented later in this section),

3) The openness of Busters to other cultures does not present near the resistance it did in former generations,

4) Most importantly, the presence of the Lord was evident; God was there. In this "potluck service" God moved in such a powerful way that Dr. Falwell held the invitation until well after 11:30, 30 minutes after the time chapel was supposed to end, and the "full-time" ministry students were not even present.

The Importance of Music

The third principle is incredibly important to internalize. Dr. Falwell has said multitudes of times that one of the universal languages for youth is music. A truer statement cannot be made with regards to the Buster generation. "Their lives revolve around music and visuals; they account for half the tickets sold at movie theaters and spend more on music via concerts, CD's
and tapes than all the other age groups combined [emphasis mine].” 136 The importance of music is hard to overstate when talking about the Busters.

The Busters’ love for music is one reason that the praise and worship segment of the Wednesday night service at Liberty has been so well received. It combines Xers love for music, their need for community (there are over a thousand young people worshiping together), and their receptiveness to experiences shared in a relational manner.

It is an entire group affirming a particular foundational truth, many times singing about characteristics of Jesus that have great meaning for the Busters; truths like God is our refuge and strength, and a stronghold in time of trouble. I personally believe that this part of our Wednesday night service is one of the primary reasons so many people come, in comparison to the 300 students that we used to draw before we began this format.

**The Importance of Being Authentic**

All of the different strategies and principles will only work if they are being done by authentic people. The Christian’s words must match their actions. The principle to remember is that Busters are watching you, a general concept which is true of every single person and generation. But in many ways, Busters have a unique mindset and in an even greater way, "are not going to listen to your words as much as they are going to observe your life." 137 For that reason, it becomes very important to develop meaningful relationships with them, since it is only then that they can truly see how you really live.

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137 Ibid., p. 92.
Busters want people to be transparent and real. Professionalism will turn them off if it comes across as canned and showy. They would much rather see you "split your britches" and be real, than do everything perfect but (from their perspective) be putting on a show. They do not want to be entertained, but rather be engaged.

**The Understanding and Commitment to Time in Reaching Xers**

Four main principles/strategies for reaching Busters have been discussed up to this point. Three of these principles, (1) The Importance of Personal Life Experiences, (2) The Yearning for Community/Family, (3) The Importance of Being Authentic, all have one important factor involved in them. In order to implement the strategies and principles under each of these main headings it takes real and sustained **time**.

Busters need time to process their thoughts and emotions as it relates to a genuine Christian community. They need to see that Christians are real and that although believers have come to Christ and embraced this free gift of salvation they are a long way from perfect. They need to see that Christians don't have all the answers and they don't have it all together. This process takes time, arguably every person's most valuable commodity. Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ." He called people to look at his life and see if he was living what he preached. There is real time commitment involved in effectively reaching Generation X.

The last strategy that will be mentioned is the importance of short-term missions in Buster ministry. Short-term missions could fall under all five of the main principles/strategies that have been discussed.

LIGHT Ministries, the student missions teams at Liberty, which is also a part of the Spiritual Life Office, has continued to be a growing part of our University. During the 1995-96 school
year, Liberty had almost 600 people that have committed their lives to go to the mission field as full-time missionaries.

Every year through LIGHT Ministries, Liberty takes numerous students from all academic majors to the mission field to participate in short-term missions overseas. There is not one activity that I know of from a pragmatic sense that more dramatically changes people in a shorter period of time than short-term missions work. "There is perhaps no greater means to the hands-on involvement that we are talking about than in missions work. Busters are the leaders and missionaries of tomorrow, and short-term missions is a means of involving Busters that has immense ramifications."\(^{138}\)

This should not be surprising since missions is God's heartbeat. There are five different Great Commission passages in Scripture each stressing a different element of the great Commission. Each passage however, presents the Great Commission as a disciple of Christ's responsibility. Luke 19:10 says that "the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." If in fact Christians are called to be like Christ, and if the Great Commission is true, then that is the believer's mission in life. Busters are very well suited to going overseas and experiencing other cultures because of their view of life. They very much like other cultures, and their particular generation is as culturally diverse as any that has ever lived in America, as previously mentioned.

These five principles and strategies are in no way a comprehensive list of effective ministry principles with regards to the Buster generation. However, they do point out major effective

strategies of importance with regards to making disciples of GenX.

As has already been mentioned however, it is very difficult to generalize and stereotype this generation. There are undoubtedly exceptions to every one of the generalizations we have made. (These five general strategies were used as foundations in the development of one of the specific internal surveys we gave to Liberty University students. This data will be discussed in Chapter 4.) Therefore, if Liberty is going to become more effective in their Convocation program, and in creating a helpful model for others, it is important that they survey the particular Buster generation to which they are ministering. A number of internal surveys have been given which will be discussed in the following chapter of this thesis. The data from the external convocation surveys will also be discussed.
CHAPTER 4

EXTERNAL CONVOCATION SURVEY DATA

The review of current literature demonstrates that there is little material available to assist a Christian university in evaluating its chapel program. No such tools were found in the review of all the literature. A survey was sent to the 87 colleges of the Coalition of Christian Colleges, in order to find out information from their current convocation/chapel program. According to various academicians this is the most appropriate audience to survey. Thirty-seven out of the 87 academic institutions (43 percent) graciously participated in the survey. The other colleges and universities were contacted at least two times but chose not to participate in the survey. The results of this survey made it even more clear that there is a need to develop a model for evaluating Christian university convocation programs.

Ninety-seven percent of those colleges and universities who responded said that chapel was a very important part of their program. Eighty-six percent of these same schools had mandatory chapel attendance. Although a majority of these institutions do rely on some type of internal evaluation (78 percent) of their own program, the means and methods by which their programs were evaluated varied. Some of the schools did little to nothing. Of all the schools that did administer surveys however, it was rare to find any type of survey given on a regular basis. In fact, of all the schools that were surveyed, the survey that the Spiritual Life department of Liberty University administered at Liberty University for the past three years was by far the most extensive and consistent.

The results and some comments concerning the external survey are as follows:
1. Your institution is located in the:
   19% of the schools were located in the Southwest.
   14% of the schools were located in the Northwest.
   22% of the schools were located in the Southeast.
   11% of the schools were located in the Northeast.
   35% of the schools were located in the middle of the U.S.

2. Your institution's student population at present is:
   8% of the schools had a population less than 500.
   59% of the schools had a population between 500-1000.
   30% of the schools had a population between 1500-3000.
   3% of the schools had a population between 3001-5000.

3. Your institution is:
   3% of the schools are less than 20 years old.
   24% of the schools are between 20-50 years old.
   16% of the schools are between 51-75 years old.
   27% of the schools are between 76-100 years old.
   30% of the schools are older than 100 years old.

4. Your institution operates on the:
   97% of the schools operate on the Semester System.
   3% of the schools operate in the Quarter System.

5. Your institution identifies most closely with the:
   17% of the schools that responded were affiliated with the Reformed Tradition.
   37% of the schools that responded were affiliated with the Wesleyan Methodist Tradition.
   20% of the schools that responded were affiliated with the Baptist Tradition.
   17% of the schools that responded were affiliated with a Non-Denominational Tradition.
   9% of the schools that responded were affiliated with some other Tradition.

6. I consider chapel to be a very important part of our institution:
   97% of the schools strongly agreed that chapel is a very important part of their institution.
   3% of the schools simply agreed with this statement.

7. Is your chapel mandatory?:
   86% of the schools surveyed had mandatory chapel attendance.
   14% of the schools do not require mandatory chapel attendance.

8. If your chapel is mandatory do the students have a certain number of excused
9. If your chapel is mandatory, are non-resident students required to attend chapel?:
   77 % of the schools whose chapel is mandatory require their non-resident students to attend.
   23 % of these same schools require some attendance from their non-resident students.

10. If your chapel is not mandatory, has it ever been mandatory?:
    40 % of the schools whose chapel is not mandatory have at one time or another had mandatory chapel.
    60 % of these schools have never had mandatory chapel.

11. If your chapels are not mandatory, approximately what percentage of your student body participates?:
    Of these schools surveyed whose chapel is not mandatory,
    83 % have between 21-40 % of their student body participating in their chapels.
    17 % have between 60-80 % of their student body participating in their chapels.

12. How many times per week does your chapel meet?:
    8 % of the schools' chapels meet one time a week.
    35 % of the schools' chapels meet two times a week.
    41 % of the schools' chapels meet three times a week.
    5 % of the schools' chapels meet four times a week.
    11 % of the schools' chapels meet five time a week.

13. How long is your typical chapel program?:
    13 % of the schools' chapel programs are one hour in length.
    84 % of the schools' chapel programs are less than an hour.
    3 % of the schools' chapel programs are more than an hour.

14. Do you bring in preachers for chapel or do you do other things, i.e. drama, concerts, etc.?:
    5 % of the schools bring in mostly preachers for their chapel program.
    5 % of the schools bring in mostly non-preachers for their chapel program.
    3 % of the schools only bring in preachers for their chapel program.
    86 % of the schools use a variety of preaching, drama, concerts, etc., for their chapel program.
15. Do you have mostly internal speakers, (i.e., professors, administrators, etc.) or are most of your speakers from outside your institution?
   - 16% of the schools use mostly internal speakers for their chapel program.
   - 24% of the schools use mostly external speakers for their chapel program.
   - 59% of them use a mixture of internal and external speakers for their chapel program.

16. Do you choose the speaker's topic or do you leave it totally up to them?
   - 31% of the schools who responded choose the topic for their speakers.
   - 36% of the schools who responded allow the speakers to choose their own topic.
   - 33% of the schools who responded vary between choosing their speaker's topic and allowing them to choose it.

17. Who is responsible for scheduling the speakers for your chapel program?
   - 86% of the schools have the Chaplain/Pastor schedule the speaker for chapel.
   - The rest of the schools have a mixture of students, faculty and administration scheduling their speakers.

18. Please choose the one area of criteria that is used most often in selecting your chapel speakers.
   When asked to choose the criteria most often used in selecting chapel speakers according to: National Prominence, Prominence within their denomination, Expertise in one area of interest at the institution, Close affiliation with the institution, and other means, colleges and universities found it difficult to target one criteria. As a result, many chose two or more. The schools that could limit their choice to one criteria are as follows:
   - 11% chose National Prominence.
   - 16% chose Prominence within the schools denomination.
   - 49% chose expertise in one area of interest at their institution.
   - 14% chose a close affiliation with their institution.
   The rest have a mixture of the above or other means in choosing speakers.

19. How do you provide financially for your speakers?
   - 62% of the schools pay expenses and an honorarium.
   - 24% of the schools vary in providing financially for speakers.
   - 16% of the schools have other means of providing financially for speakers.

20. Is your chapel run by the students or the administration?
   - 5% of the schools have all student run chapel.
   - 22% of the schools have administration run chapel.
   - 62% of the schools have a mixture of the students and administration running chapel.
   None of the schools have faculty run chapel.

21. What do you feel is the most effective way of reaching young people in your chapel
program?

The choices that were given are as follows: music, biblical preaching, drama, student testimonies, and other. Many of the colleges had a difficult time narrowing it down to one choice. Those that could, responded in the following manner:
30% of these schools felt music was a powerful tool for reaching young people.
26% rely mostly on biblical preaching to reach their students.
40% use drama in their programs.
51% of the schools felt student testimonies could be used effectively to reach their student body.
7% elicit another means for ministering during their chapel program.

22. What do you feel are the most important topics that should be addressed to collegiate young people of today in your school chapel services?

Along the same lines as question #21, a list of topics to be addressed in chapel were given to schools. Again, many of them had a difficult time preferring one over another. The results are as follows:
20% prefer doctrinal issues.
22% prefer morality.
30% prefer relationships.
15% prefer self-image.
13% chose "other". Many of these used "other" to mean "all" of the topics.

23. Choose what you consider to be the most important purpose for maintaining your chapel program.

35% prefer encouragement.
24% prefer teaching.
27% prefer vision.
32% prefer unity.
(27% of the schools also preferred other purposes combined with a mixture of the above purposes. In other words, many schools have a difficult time limiting their choice to one most important purpose.)

24. Do you feel that your chapel program accomplishes its intended purpose?:

89% replied most of the time.
11% replied sometimes.
None of the schools replied rarely.

25. Do you do any type of internal evaluation on your chapel program?:

78% of the schools surveyed said yes.
22% of the schools surveyed said no.

26. Do you have a written philosophy and any other policies regarding the chapel program?

78% of the schools said yes.
22 % of the schools said no.

27. Do you have any policies which guide chapel exemptions?
   86 % of the schools said yes.
   8 % of the schools said no.
   3 % of the schools said sometimes.
   3 % of the schools said they were unsure.

28. I would like to receive a copy of the results from this survey:
   100 % of the schools said yes.
   None of the schools said no.

   Although 97 percent of these academic institutions consider chapel to be a very important
   part of their program, not even one institution that participated had a consistent surveying system,
   let alone a model for such a survey in any systematic pattern. Therefore, the strategy given in the
   project could be very helpful to other Christian institutions of higher learning.

   **INTERNAL CONVOCATION SURVEY DATA**

   During the 1993-94 school year, the Spiritual Life Office did their first extensive student
evaluation of the entire spiritual life program at Liberty University. This evaluation has also been
done for the 1994-95 school year and 1995-96 school year. Some very helpful information has
been gathered by this survey and the department is continually implementing different things that
have been learned to try and be more effective in what is done at Liberty University.

   After the compilation of the statistics of the 1993-94 school year, adjustments began to be
made within the convocation program at Liberty University.

   The person who led the music was changed (from staff to student) and the overall style of
the music was adjusted from an almost entire repertoire of old choruses and hymns to a more
contemporary style of worship with scripture choruses and a live praise band. There was also a
greater emphasis placed on getting more student participation. On the platform, students shared more personal testimonies. In the audience, worship music in which students clapped their hands, and participated with freedom of expression was encouraged.

Two different internal convocation surveys were developed which were given during the 1996-1997 school year. One of the surveys was given only once, on February 20, 1997. This survey was developed out of the foundation of the information learned from the study on Generation X (chapter three).

Many of the questions were developed from the five foundational principles and strategies that we concluded our discussion on Generation X with: (1) the importance of personal life experience; (2) the yearning for community/family; (3) the importance of being real and authentic; (4) the importance of music, and; (5) the understanding and commitment to time in reaching Xers.

Most of the other questions in this survey were developed out of other issues discussed in the GenX section of this project. Some questions were developed through experience or felt need.

This internal survey was given to a large sample of Liberty University students, 1208, (99.75 percent belong to Generation X) 363 male and 842 female. 37.1 percent were freshman, 30.53 percent were sophomores, 20.38 percent were juniors, 11.56 percent were seniors, and .42 percent were graduate students. 3.38 percent of the students classified themselves as American Indian or Native Alaskan, 4.48 percent as Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino. 8.19 percent as Black or African American, 3.29 percent as Hispanic, Chicano or Spanish-speaking Americans, and 80.66 percent as Caucasian or white.

The questions on the one internal survey given on February 20, 1997 were listed as

84
follows. The responses to these questions will also be given, plus a few examples of how those questions were developed out of the information on Generation X in parentheses by the question.

Questions 28-49: Please rate the following statements according to the scale below:
A Strongly agree
B Agree
C Neutral
D Disagree
E Strongly Disagree

28. I would like to do more singing than we presently do in Convocation: (This question comes from the importance of music to Xers)
   A 34.69 %
   B 20.36 %
   C 26.08 %
   D 13.00 %
   E  5.88 %

29. I like to sing more praise songs than hymns in Convocation: (The importance of music to Xers)
   A 37.66 %
   B 21.95 %
   C 28.18 %
   D  7.23 %
   E  4.99 %

30. I would like to sing more traditional hymns and less praise songs in Convocation. (The importance of music to Xers)
   A  8.24 %
   B 11.73 %
   C 31.20 %
   D 25.87 %
   E 22.96 %

31. I like the mixture of songs that we typically sing in Convocation. (The importance of music to Xers)
   A 22.86 %
   B 36.24 %
   C 29.68 %
   D  6.73 %
   E  4.49 %
32. I would like less special music in Convocation. (The importance of music to Xers)
   A  7.39 %
   B  11.29 %
   C  30.79 %
   D  29.05 %
   E  21.49 %

33. I would like more staff, administration, and faculty testimonies in Convocation. (This deals with the strategy of reaching Xers by being real and authentic, and also sharing personal life experiences.)
   A  14.49 %
   B  25.13 %
   C  39.61 %
   D  12.81 %
   E  7.96 %

34. I would like more student testimonies in Convocation. (The importance of personal life experiences, importance of being real and authentic)
   A  17.53 %
   B  32.39 %
   C  36.56 %
   D  8.18 %
   E  5.34 %

35. I would like some of my professors to be able to be the main speakers in Convocation.
   A  21.37 %
   B  29.34 %
   C  36.38 %
   D  7.88 %
   E  5.03 %

36. I tend to enjoy Liberty's internal speakers more than special guest speakers.
   A  6.45 %
   B  10.98 %
   C  50.04 %
   D  23.30 %
   E  9.22 %

37. I like speakers who use a lot of illustrations in their messages. (This question also deals with the need to be authentic, relevant, and real with Xers, also the importance of personal life experiences.)
   A  32.61 %
   B  37.96 %
C 25.75 %
D 2.59 %
E 1.09 %

38. I believe that speakers generally address relevant areas of my life. (Addresses the issue of relevance which is very important to Xers)
   A 15.26 %
   B 46.94 %
   C 26.74 %
   D 8.30 %
   E 2.77 %

39. I wish we had more student-led Convocations. (The importance of being real and authentic)
   A 12.72 %
   B 20.56 %
   C 34.54 %
   D 19.63 %
   E 12.55 %

40. I like SGA Convocations.
   A 8.40 %
   B 11.59 %
   C 27.20 %
   D 17.88 %
   E 34.93 %

41. I wish chapel was longer.
   A 4.33 %
   B 6.50 %
   C 19.17 %
   D 24.92 %
   E 45.08 %

42. I would like Convocation to be later in the day.
   A 6.45 %
   B 7.71 %
   C 22.97 %
   D 24.31 %
   E 38.56 %

43. I think Convocation is at the right time of the day.
   A 30.03 %
   B 35.07 %
44. The ideal time length for a sermon is: A) 20 minutes  B) Approximately 25-30 minutes  C) Approximately 30-35 minutes  D) Approximately 34-40 minutes  E) Other
   A 33.36 %
   B 36.63 %
   C 19.70 %
   D 4.69 %
   E 5.62 %

45. If the Lord is really speaking to me, I find that I do not care how long the sermon is.
   A 44.33 %
   B 30.56 %
   C 17.80 %
   D 4.20 %
   E 3.11 %

46. I like it when we have something different in Convocation, like concerts, drama, comedians, etc.
   A 53.88 %
   B 28.24 %
   C 13.87 %
   D 2.34 %
   E 1.67 %

47. I would like to see more drama used in Convocation.
   A 38.99 %
   B 30.50 %
   C 22.94 %
   D 3.78 %
   E 3.78 %

48. God has used Convocation in a significant way in my life.
   A 18.49 %
   B 35.13 %
   C 35.71 %
   D 6.72 %
   E 3.95 %

49. I have difficulty focusing on the Lord the way I would like in Convocation.
   A 13.01 %
For questions 50-76: Would you like more messages on the following subjects?

A  Yes, definitely
B  Somewhat interested
C  Neutral
D  Somewhat uninterested
E  Not interested at all

50. Relationships- getting along with people (The yearning for community/family)
   A  39.58 %
   B  30.51 %
   C  21.78 %
   D  4.32 %
   E  3.81 %

51. Personal walk with God (Importance of personal life experiences, being real and authentic)
   A  51.21 %
   B  28.54 %
   C  17.32 %
   D  1.67 %
   E  1.26 %

52. Integrity (Importance of being real and authentic)
   A  36.95 %
   B  32.53 %
   C  26.19 %
   D  2.42 %
   E  1.92 %

53. Singleness with a Purpose (Importance of personal life experiences)
   A  27.08 %
   B  27.08 %
   C  32.17 %
   D  6.25 %
   E  7.42 %

54. Managing Stress and Anxiety (Importance of personal life experiences)
   A  33.00 %
   B  32.50 %
C 25.98 %
D 6.10 %
E 2.42 %

55. Prayer and Praise Services (Importance of personal life experiences)
   A 35.17 %
   B 30.74 %
   C 25.98 %
   D 5.01 %
   E 3.09 %

56. Marriage and Family (Yearning for community/family)
   A 35.78 %
   B 28.27 %
   C 24.19 %
   D 6.59 %
   E 5.17 %

57. Prayer
   A 34.97 %
   B 33.72 %
   C 25.63 %
   D 4.01 %
   E 1.67 %

58. Evangelism
   A 27.89 %
   B 30.82 %
   C 31.07 %
   D 7.29 %
   E 2.93 %

59. Worship
   A 32.22 %
   B 31.97 %
   C 29.55 %
   D 4.34 %
   E 1.92 %

60. Victory over habits (Importance of being real and authentic)
   A 35.64 %
   B 34.31 %
   C 23.71 %
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<td>61. Cultural awareness (GenX openness to other cultures)</td>
<td>A 18.35 %</td>
<td>B 22.85 %</td>
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<td>62. Missions (GenX openness to other cultures)</td>
<td>A 24.02 %</td>
<td>B 29.69 %</td>
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<td>63. Moral integrity</td>
<td>A 35.51 %</td>
<td>B 33.08 %</td>
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<td>64. The needs of the world</td>
<td>A 22.95 %</td>
<td>B 29.97 %</td>
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<td>65. Social responsibility</td>
<td>A 24.04 %</td>
<td>B 32.39 %</td>
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<td>66. How to heal a wounded spirit</td>
<td>A 33.75 %</td>
<td>B 34.42 %</td>
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67. Witnessing through sports
   A 21.64 %
   B 23.22 %
   C 34.25 %
   D 11.86 %
   E 9.02 %

68. Music principles (Importance of music)
   A 17.63 %
   B 22.72 %
   C 36.42 %
   D 14.20 %
   E 9.02 %

69. Youth emphasis (Understanding and commitment to time in reaching Xers)
   A 25.81 %
   B 31.83 %
   C 32.33 %
   D 5.60 %
   E 4.43 %

70. Broken homes (Yearning for community/family)
   A 24.50 %
   B 29.43 %
   C 34.78 %
   D 7.02 %
   E 4.26 %

71. Faith
   A 39.28 %
   B 33.53 %
   C 22.69 %
   D 2.67 %
   E 1.83 %

72. How to reach Baby Busters/Generation X (All five strategies)
   A 28.80 %
   B 31.22 %
   C 30.22 %
   D 5.43 %
   E 4.34 %
The second internal survey, the convocation speaker survey, looked specifically at the different convocation speakers and how what they spoke on was received by the Liberty students. One of the inherent problems in the past with the once a year survey was that students could not remember the various speakers and their topics well enough to rate them.

Therefore, this survey was given four different times; October 3, 1996, December 5, 1996, February 20, 1997, and April 9, 1997, approximately every four to six schools weeks in order to alleviate this problem.
The first of the four internal convocation speaker surveys was given October 3, 1996 to a large sample of Liberty students. 1925 students, 683 male and 1177 females, made up of 99.62 percent Xers participated. 44.44 percent were freshman, 27.88 percent were sophomores, 16.88 percent were juniors, 10.26 percent were seniors and .53 percent were graduate students. 1.65 percent of the students classified themselves as American Indians or Native Alaskan, 3.62 percent as Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino, 9.65 percent as Black or African American, 2.36 percent as Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanish-speaking Americans, and 82.72 percent as Caucasians or White.

The survey was introduced with the following copy.

FOR FOCUS GROUPS ON 10/3/96: In an attempt to make Convocation a more enjoyable, uplifting, and spiritually challenging experience, this survey has been designed to seek your opinions on the Convocation speakers and messages which have been delivered in Convocation during the past month. Thank you for taking the time to consider these questions.

The speakers, their topics, and the data are listed below:

Please rate the following Convocation speakers and topics accordingly as you respond to this statement: *The following Convocation was a blessing to me and helped my grow spiritually.*

- A Strongly agree
- B Agree
- C Was not there/Do not remember
- D Disagree
- E Strongly disagree

29. 8/23/96 Friday 10 a.m. Dr. Falwell/Freshman only chapel
   Galatians 6:1-5: "How to Keep Your Head Above The Water."
   
   A 10.19 %
   B 25.99 %
   C 54.63 %
   D 5.18 %
   E 4.02 %

30. 8/28/96 Wednesday 10 a.m. Dr. Falwell/Opening Fall Convocation
   II Corinthians 12:7-10: "Don't Quit."
   
   A 19.30 %
   B 43.20 %
C 22.2 %  
D 10.31 %  
E 4.99 %

31. 8/30/96 Friday 10 a.m.  
A 17.43 %  
B 42.17 %  
C 31.67 %  
D 6.71 %  
E 2.03 %

32. 9/2/96 Monday 10 a.m.  
A 21.60 %  
B 39.75 %  
C 30.73 %  
D 5.30 %  
E 2.62 %

33. 9/4/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.  
A 8.73 %  
B 31.12 %  
C 29.53 %  
D 18.39 %  
E 12.24 %

34. 9/9/96 Monday 10 a.m.  
A 30.09 %  
B 35.12 %  
C 15.86 %  
D 10.61 %  
E 8.32 %

35. 9/11/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.  
A 32.95 %  
B 32.30 %  
C 13.15 %  
D 12.49 %  
E 9.11 %

Dr. Guillermi/Main Chapel  
I Corinthians 9:24-27: "Four Things to Make You A Champion For Christ."

Rob Jackson/Main Chapel  
Mark 2:1-5: "Where Do I fit in God's Plan to Evangelize the World- The 10/40 Window."

Dr. Falwell and Dr. Guillermi/Opening Academic Convocation in full Regalia.

Randy Hogue/Spiritual Emphasis Week  
II Corinthians 5:17: "New Creatures in Christ."

Randy Hogue/Spiritual Emphasis Week  
II Corinthians 1:9-10: "Soul Suicide."
36. 9/13/96 Friday 10 a.m.

Dr. Falwell/Main Chapel
John 15:16: "Leaving Behind Fruit that Remains."

A 11.14 %  
B 30.40 %  
C 47.83 %  
D 6.35 %  
E 4.29 %

37. 9/16/96 Monday 10 a.m.

Dr. Grant Jeffrey/Main Chapel
"Bible Prophecy: Issues Relating to an Inerrant Bible."

A 25.18 %  
B 31.68 %  
C 32.62 %  
D 6.83 %  
E 3.69 %

38. 9/18/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.

Rob Jackson
John 20: "Mary Magdalene, How to Stay Close to Jesus."

A 23.75 %  
B 35.38 %  
C 34.88 %  
D 3.82 %  
E 2.16 %

39. 9/20/96 Friday 10 a.m.

Dr. Larry Thompson/Main Chapel
Hebrews 12:1-2: "Fix Your Eyes on Jesus."

A 15.02 %  
B 29.48 %  
C 51.98 %  
D 2.01 %  
E 1.51 %

40. 9/23/96 Monday 10 a.m.

Al Larson/World Impact Conference
Philippians 1:12ff: "Cross Bearing-Submitting to Hardships in Order to Live for Christ."

A 23.13 %  
B 38.60 %  
C 31.00 %  
D 4.57 %  
E 2.70 %

41. 9/25/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.

Mike McIntosh/World Impact Conference
Mark 5: "Personal Testimony- How God
A 45.71 %  Healed His Mind and Marriage."
B 30.00 %
C 19.29 %
D 2.75 %
E 2.25 %

42. 9/27/96 Friday 10 a.m.  Mike McIntosh/World Impact Conference  
Selected Scripture Passages: "A Challenge Sacrifice."
A 41.49 %
B 31.88 %
C 22.10 %
D 2.60 %
E 1.93 %

The second internal convocation speaker survey was given to a large sample of Liberty University students on December 5, 1996. 1474 students, 531 males and 873 females, made up of 99.79 percent Xers, participated. 39 percent were freshman, 29.41 percent were sophomores, 19.04 percent were juniors, 11.92 percent were seniors, and 63 percent were graduate students. 3.97 percent of these students classified themselves as American Indians or Native Alaskan, 4.55 percent as Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino, 8.38 percent as Black or African American, 2.96 percent as Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanish-speaking Americans, and 80.13 percent Caucasian or White.

A survey was introduced with the same copy as the first convocation speaker survey. The speakers, their topics, and the data are listed below.

Please rate the following Convocation speakers and topics accordingly as you respond to this statement: The following Convocation was a blessing to me and helped me to grow spiritually.

A  Strongly agree
B  Agree
C  Was not there/Do not remember
D  Disagree
E  Strongly Disagree
28. 9/30/96 Monday 10 a.m.

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Dr. Bob Reccord
Romans 12:1,2: "The Difference Between Involvement and Commitment."

29. 10/2/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.

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Dr. Jerry Falwell
I Samuel 17:9
"The Power of One Life."

30. 10/4/96 Friday 10 a.m.

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SGA Convocation
Group Discussion/Town Meeting

32. 10/7/96 to 10/9/96 6 p.m.

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Super Conference

33. 10/11/96 Friday 10 a.m.

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Dr. Falwell
Romans 12:1,2: "What is Your Destiny?"

34. 10/14/96 Monday 10 a.m.

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Dr. Ed Hindson
"The Entire Book Of Revelation."
A 18.88 %
B 29.45 %
C 36.88 %
D 10.64 %
E 4.15 %

35. 10/16/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.

Dwayne Carson
Exodus 20:7
"Taking God's Name in Vain."

A 21.09 %
B 31.68 %
C 38.10 %
D 5.62 %
E 3.50 %

36. 10/21/96 Monday 10 a.m.

Ed Gomes
II Corinthians 5:17
"Will The Real Christian Please Stand Up?"

A 27.60 %
B 29.06 %
C 38.89 %
D 2.33 %
E 2.11 %

37. 10/23/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.

Pat Robertson
"The Conditions of America and Making a Difference in it."

A 36.18 %
B 30.10 %
C 25.40 %
D 5.28 %
E 3.04 %

38. 10/25/96 Friday 10 a.m.

Dr. Jerry Falwell
Homecoming

A 10.99 %
B 18.58 %
C 59.88 %
D 5.83 %
E 4.72 %

40. 10/28/96 Monday 10 a.m.

Dennis Cochrane
Wycliffe Bible Translators
"The Power of the Word of God in the Duna Tribe in Papua, New Guinea."
D 6.26%
E 2.40%

41. 10/30/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.
   A 28.99 %
   B 29.79 %
   C 30.95 %
   D 6.94 %
   E 3.33 %

42. 11/1/96 Monday 10 a.m.
   A 14.19 %
   B 22.49 %
   C 58.46 %
   D 2.57 %
   E 1.84 %

45. 11/6/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.
   A 31.38 %
   B 31.09 %
   C 31.45 %
   D 3.59 %
   E 2.49 %

46. 11/8/96 Friday 10 a.m.
   A 13.94 %
   B 25.29 %
   C 51.77 %
   D 4.79 %
   E 4.20 %

48. 11/11/96 Monday 10 a.m.
   A 29.40 %
   B 30.29 %
   C 35.67 %
   D 2.43 %
   E 2.21 %

Jamie Parsons
John 15:1,2
"How to Run a Business God's Way."

Buddy McCord
John 2
"Rising Above."

Dr. Bobby Welch
"Personal Testimony on Vietnam."

Dr. Jerry Falwell
Psalms 100
"Thanksgiving and Challenges."

Matt Willmington
Genesis 32
"Wrestling with God."
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>Dexter Yager</td>
<td>&quot;Personal Testimony.&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A 18.77 %</td>
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<td>B 26.31 %</td>
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<td>E 5.47 %</td>
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<td>SGA Chapel</td>
<td>&quot;American History&quot;</td>
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<td>David Barton</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A 19.91 %</td>
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<td>B 19.54 %</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C 48.63 %</td>
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<td>D 6.37 %</td>
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<td>E 5.55 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/20/96</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stuart Epperson</td>
<td>&quot;Challenge to use Radio and T.V. for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spreading the Gospel.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A 18.33 %</td>
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<td>B 31.89 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/22/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Ron Phillips</td>
<td>&quot;Four Works of First Love.&quot;</td>
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<td>10 a.m.</td>
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<td>A 17.93 %</td>
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<td>E 1.62 %</td>
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<td>11/25/96</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Griffin Jones</td>
<td>&quot;Four Anecdotes to the Fear of Failure.&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
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<td>A 20.13 %</td>
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<td>B 25.42 %</td>
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<td>C 48.71 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27/96</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eric Lovett/Rob Jackson</td>
<td>&quot;Praise and Prayer Service&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A 30.34 %</td>
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The third internal convocation speaker survey was given to a large sample of Liberty University students on February 20, 1997. 1235 students, 363 males and 842 females made up of 99.75 percent Xers, participated. 37.10 percent were freshman, 30.53 percent were sophomores, 20.38 percent were juniors, 11.56 percent were seniors, and .42 percent were graduate students. 3.38 percent of these students classified themselves as American Indian or Native Alaskan, 4.48 percent as Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino, 8.19 percent as Black or African American, 3.29 percent as Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanish-speaking Americans, and 80.66 percent as Caucasian or White.

The survey was introduced with the same copy as the first and second convocation speaker surveys. The speaker, their topics, and all of the data are listed below.

Please rate the following Convocation speakers and messages accordingly as you respond to this statement: *The following Convocation was a blessing to me and helped me spiritually.*

A Strongly Agree
B Agree
C Was not there/Do not remember
D Disagree
E Strongly Disagree

77. 12/2/96 Monday 10 a.m.

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<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>9.87 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>19.92 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>63.09 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>4.08 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>3.04 %</td>
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Dr. A. Pierre Guillermin
"Three Principles to Travel in Today's World"
John 14:6

78. 12/4/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>9.87 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>19.92 %</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>63.09 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>4.08 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>3.04 %</td>
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</table>

Dr. Jerry Falwell
A 10.45 %
B 21.18 %
C 59.07 %
D 5.51 %
E 3.80 %

79. 12/6/96 Friday 10 a.m.
A 12.54 %
B 21.94 %
C 62.96 %
D 1.52 %
E 1.04 %

81. 12/9/96 Monday 10 a.m.
A 14.79 %
B 29.29 %
C 52.96 %
D 1.91 %
E 1.05 %

82. 12/11/96 Wednesday 10 a.m.
A 13.04 %
B 26.83 %
C 52.24 %
D 4.38 %
E 3.52 %

83. 1/15/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.
A 14.07 %
B 30.32 %
C 48.00 %
D 4.37 %
E 3.23 %

84. 1/17/97 Friday 10 a.m.
A 14.07 %
B 26.07 %

"Things We Must Surely Believe."
Luke 1:1-4

Chris Williamson
"Trading Guilt For Grace."
II Samuel 12

Andre Sims
"God Knows."
Psalms 51

Dr. Jerry Falwell
"I Must Tell Jesus."
John 15:14-15

Dr. Jerry Falwell
"Four Truths About Spiritual Gifts."
I Corinthians 12:27-28

Dr. A. Pierre Guillermin
"Three Principles for Living the Life Faith."
Galatians 2:20
C  54.33 %
D  3.43 %
E  2.09 %

85. 1/20/97 Monday 10 a.m.
A  13.05 %
B  27.43 %
C  54.29 %
D  3.81 %
E  1.43 %

Bill Glaze
"Power In Unity"
Psalms 133

86. 1/22/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.
A  15.77 %
B  27.44 %
C  49.62 %
D  3.82 %
E  3.35 %

Dr. Falwell
"Prayer"
Selected Scripture

87. 1/24/97 Friday 10 a.m.
A  6.76 %
B  12.95 %
C  51.33 %
D  10.10 %
E  18.86 %

SGA Chapel

89. 1/27/97 Monday 10 a.m.
A  38.33 %
B  26.76 %
C  30.65 %
D  2.94 %
E  1.33 %

David Burton
"Do The Dot"
The Importance of Witnessing

90. 1/29/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.
A  25.21 %
B  28.64 %
C  42.91 %
D  2.09 %
E  1.14 %

George Sweet
"Parable of the Rich Fool"
Luke 12: 16-20
91. 1/31/97 Friday 10 a.m.  

Dr. Falwell  
"The Importance of Covenants in America"  
Genesis 17:1-9

90. 2/2-2/5/97  

Jay Strack/Spiritual Emphasis Week

94. 2/7/97 Friday 10 a.m.  

Dr. McFarland  
"If it's Love it will Last, if it's Lust it will Pass."

96. 2/10/97 Monday 10 a.m.  

Steve Forbes  
"The Importance of Political Change in America."

97. 2/12/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.  

Harry Walls  
"Subject: Pride, Goal: Humility"  
Daniel 4

The fourth internal convocation speaker survey was given to a larger sample of Liberty
University students on April 19, 1997 (Assessment Day). 2031 students, 826 males and 1123 females made up of 98.98 percent Xers, participated. 44.88 percent were freshman, 16.00 percent were sophomores, 27.26 percent were juniors, 11.36 percent were seniors, and .50 percent were graduate students. 4.08 percent of these students classified themselves as American Indian or Native Alaskan, 5.17 percent as Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino, 9.04 percent as Black or African American, 4.60 percent as Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanish-speaking Americans, and 77.11 percent Caucasian or White. The speakers, their topics, and all the data are listed below.

Please rate the following Convocation speakers and messages accordingly as you respond to this statement: The following Convocation was a blessing to me and helped me spiritually.

A  Strongly Agree
B  Agree
C  Was not there/Do not remember
D  Disagree
E  Strongly Disagree

77. 2/14/97 Friday 10 a.m.  Dr. Falwell
College for a Weekend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
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<tr>
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<td>7.53%</td>
<td>14.40%</td>
<td>62.37%</td>
<td>7.97%</td>
<td>7.74%</td>
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79. 2/17/97 Monday 10 a.m.  Dr. A. Pierre Guillermin
"The Ten Danger Signals of Dating."
I Corinthians 13: 4-6

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<td>21.08%</td>
<td>31.76%</td>
<td>38.05%</td>
<td>5.31%</td>
<td>3.79%</td>
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80. 2/19/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.  Dr. John Hull
"The Importance of Worldviews."
Matthew 16:13-16

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>8.05%</td>
<td>21.42%</td>
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</table>
C  62.70 %  
D  4.95 %  
E  2.88 %  

81.  2/21/97 Friday 10 a.m.  
A  6.35 %  
B  13.36 %  
C  59.36 %  
D  8.00 %  
E  12.92 %  

83.  2/24/97 Monday 10 a.m.  
A  28.98 %  
B  22.69 %  
C  43.47 %  
D  2.35 %  
E  2.52 %  

85.  3/3/97 Monday 10 a.m.  
A  13.89 %  
B  23.46 %  
C  56.70 %  
D  3.06 %  
E  2.90 %  

86.  3/5/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.  
A  8.54 %  
B  20.43 %  
C  64.68 %  
D  3.94 %  
E  2.41 %  

87.  3/7/97 Friday 10 a.m.  
A  13.74 %  
B  23.37 %  
C  57.85 %  
D  2.90 %  
E  2.13 %  

SGA Chapel/Austin DeLoach  

Dr. Dennis Swanberg  
"The Medicine of Laughter"

Rick Amato  
"Second Coming of Christ"  
Luke 21:24  

Dr. Foster Freiss  
Personal Testimony  

Dick Purnell  
How To Live With Yourself and Like It."
89. 3/10/97 Monday 10 a.m.

A 35.38 %
B 22.60 %
C 38.12 %
D 2.14 %
E 1.76 %

Congressman J.C Watts
"Child-Like Faith: Seeing the Possible in the Present."
Matthew 18

90. 3/12/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.

A 16.56 %
B 26.10 %
C 48.57 %
D 5.15 %
E 3.62 %

Rob Jackson
"Spring Break Commissioning Service"
John 12:23-25

91. 3/14/97 Friday 10 a.m.

A 19.10 %
B 23.00 %
C 53.79 %
D 1.92 %
E 2.20 %

Tom Mullins
"Run To Win."
I Corinthians 9:24-27

92. 3/24/97 Monday 10 a.m.

A 16.37 %
B 24.64 %
C 48.63 %
D 5.59 %
E 4.76 %

Dwayne Carson
"Worthy Is The Lamb"
Exodus 12

93. 3/26/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.

A 27.15 %
B 26.60 %
C 35.30 %
D 5.58 %
E 5.36 %

Kings Players
Passion Play

94. 3/28/97 Friday 10 a.m.

Dr. Jerry Falwell
"The People God Uses"
A 11.00 %  
B 19.85 %  
C 60.42 %  
D 4.51 %  
E 4.23 %  

96. 3/31/97 Monday 10 a.m.  
A 11.31 %  
B 22.39 %  
C 58.73 %  
D 4.23 %  
E 3.35 %

97. 4/2/97 Wednesday 10 a.m.  
A 14.47 %  
B 25.52 %  
C 54.46 %  
D 3.47 %  
E 2.09 %

The data in the preceding pages contains a great deal of helpful information with respect to the Liberty University Convocation Program. Chapter five will discuss the conclusions from the data of the external and internal surveys. Implementation recommendations will be made for the convocation program, as well as recommendations for further study.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS DRAWN FROM
DATA FROM EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL SURVEYS

External Convocation Surveys

The results from the external convocation surveys led to one major conclusion. The conclusion is that the Christian academic institutions of higher learning need a strategy for evaluating their convocation program. 97 percent of the institutions surveyed say that chapel is a very important part of their program. 86 percent of these same schools have mandatory chapel attendance. All of the schools that responded to the survey are investing time and resources into their chapel program. However, not one institution was found that had a model strategy for evaluating their chapel program (although the majority did do some type of internal surveying, but mostly in a random, inconsistent way).

Therefore, this project could potentially be a substantial help to others that are trying to give quality Christian college education to the future leaders of this country. A few other items worthy of attention that were observed from the internal convocation surveys are listed below:

- 24 percent of the schools surveyed are between 20-50 years old. In other words, one out of four Christian institutions of higher learning from this survey are relatively young.

- 77 percent of the schools whose chapel is mandatory require their non-residents to attend.

- 23 percent of those same schools require some attendance from their non-resident students. It is recommend that Liberty revisit the issue as I do not personally believe a lot of our non-resident students get as much out of their Liberty experience as they could. I believe one of the major reasons is because of their absence from chapel.
- The largest percentage of these schools (41 percent) have chapel three times a week as Liberty does.

- Most chapels are shorter than Liberty's. 84 percent are less than one hour.

- Most Christian colleges and universities found it difficult to state the one most important purpose for maintaining their chapel program although virtually all of them surveyed felt it was very important. Many had two or more main purposes and could not say that one of these purposes was of greater significance than the others.

**Internal Convocation Surveys**

The results from the internal convocation surveys led to a number of conclusions and recommendations.

The information gathered from the one internal convocation survey that was developed from the five major strategies for reaching Generation X (the end of chapter 3) was given on February 20, 1997.

The **conclusions** drawn from this study are as follows:

**Music**
- Students would prefer to sing more; (55 percent strongly agree or agree, only 19 percent negative response)

- Students definitely prefer praise songs to hymns (60 percent strongly agree or agree, only 12 percent have a negative response)

- Students like the mixture of songs they typically sing in convocation (59 percent strongly agree or agree, only 11 percent have a negative response)

- Students do not want less special music in chapel (50 percent responded negatively to less special music while only 18 percent responded favorably to that statement)

**Testimonies**
- Students seem to be comfortable with the amount and kind of testimonies that are currently being done in convocation. (40 percent would like more staff, administration and faculty testimonies in chapel, 40 percent are neutral, 20
percent do not want more; 50 percent would like more student testimonies, 37 percent are neutral, 13 percent are negative).

Convocation Speakers
- Students tend to enjoy Liberty's guest speakers more than our internal speakers although a full half of these are neutral on the issue (33 percent agree or strongly agree, 50 percent are neutral, and 18 percent disagree).

- Students definitely like speakers who use a lot of illustrations in their sermons (73 percent agree, only 4 percent disagree). This points to the way authenticity and personal life experiences connect with Busters.

- Students generally agree that convocation speakers address relevant areas of their life (55 percent agree, 11 percent disagree).

Student led chapels
- Liberty is currently giving the students the right amount of student led chapels (33 percent want more, 35 percent are neutral, 32 percent want less).

- Students do not like Student Government chapels at the present time (only 20 percent like them, 54 percent don't like them, and 35 percent strongly dislike them out of this 54 percent).

Time of chapel
- Students definitely do not want a longer chapel (70 percent agree, only 11 percent disagree).

- Students like the time of day of chapel (66 percent agree, only 9 percent disagree)

Sermon length in chapel
- Students prefer a sermon to be 25-30 minutes long (37 percent); 20 minute sermons were a close second (33 percent); 35-40 minute sermons went down to 20 percent. Liberty is typically in the 30 minute range at their convocations which seems appropriate.

Variety in chapel
- The students strongly prefer variety in convocations; i.e., concerts, drama, comedy etc., (82 percent agree or strongly agree, and out of this 82 percent, 54 percent strongly agree with this statement.)

- Students would like more drama in convocation (70 percent agree or strongly agree, only 8 percent disagree).
General questions about chapel
- Students believe God has used chapel in a significant way in their lives (54 percent agree, 11 percent disagree).

- Many students have difficulty focusing on the Lord the way they would like to in convocation (43 percent agree or strongly agree).

The corresponding recommendations drawn from this study are as follows:

Music
- It is recommended that Liberty University sing slightly more in convocation (55 percent strongly agree or agree, only 19 percent negative response). The same mixture of songs should be maintained (59 percent strongly agree or agree only 11 percent negative) along with the same amount of special music (50 percent responded negatively to less special music while only 18 percent responded favorably)

Testimonies
- It is recommended that Liberty add in a few more student testimonies each semester. (40 percent would like more staff, administration and faculty testimonies in chapel, 40 percent neutral, 20 percent do not want more; 50 percent would like more student testimonies, 37 percent are neutral, 13 percent are negative.)

Convocation Speakers
- It is recommended that Liberty consider expanding their use of internal speakers per the students responses (50 percent agree or strongly agree, only 13 percent are negative). This will also save a great deal of money.

- It is recommended that Liberty tries to find quality speakers that use a lot of illustrations in their sermons (73 percent agree, only 4 percent disagree).

Student led chapels
- It is recommended that Liberty continue allotting the same number of student led chapels (33 percent want more, 35 percent are neutral, 32 percent want less).

- It is recommended that more study be done to try and improve the Student Government chapels (only 20 percent like them, 54 percent don't like them, and 35 percent strongly dislike them out of this 54 percent)

Time of chapel
- It is recommended that Liberty does not lengthen chapel (70 percent agree, only 11 percent disagree) and that they keep chapel at the same time in the day (66
percent agree, only 9 percent disagree).

Variety in chapel
- It is recommended that further study be done on how to bring more variety to chapels, and yet maintain the same purpose (82 percent agree or strongly agree that they prefer variety in chapels, and out of this 82 percent, 54 percent strongly agree with this statement.)

General questions about chapel
- Although a majority of people (54 percent) agree that God has used chapel in a significant way in their lives, further study is recommended to find out why 36 percent of students responded neutrally to this question.

- It is recommended that further study be done on why 43 percent of the students have difficulty focusing on the Lord the way they would like to in convocation.

Overall, the survey demonstrates that students are pleased with the convocation program at Liberty. However, there are a number of areas already mentioned that need further study which will undoubtedly lead to some adjustments.

The second half of this first internal survey dealt with topics students were asked to rate as to whether or not they would like to hear messages on them. The students did not rate even one topic more negative than positive. Although many of these topics were chosen out of research on Generation X, many were also chosen because they are foundational issues in a Christian's life in any generation (i.e., prayer, evangelism, personal walk with God). In fact, the top rated two topics, personal walk with God (80 percent positive) and faith (73 percent positive) are foundational critical issues for all Christians. The topics rated in order of greatest positive response are as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>% POSITIVE</th>
<th>%NEUTRAL</th>
<th>%NEGATIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal Walk with God</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Faith</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Relationship - How to Get Along with People
4. Integrity
5. Victory Over Habits
6a. Prayer
6b. Moral Integrity
6c. How To Heal A Wounded Spirit
7. Music Concert
8a. Managing Stress and Anxiety
8b. Prayer and Praise Service
9. Worship
10. Marriage and Family
11. Why I Believe What I Believe Emphasis
12. Dating/Engagement/Marriage
13. How To Reach Busters
14. Evangelism
15. Youth Emphasis
16. Social Responsibility
17. Broken Homes
18. Missions
19. Singleness With A Purpose
20. The Needs Of The World
21. Witnessing Through Sports
22. Cultural Awareness
23. Music Principles

One other question that was asked in this section was whether or not students were interested in split female/male convocations. Only 37 percent were positive, 22 percent neutral, while 41 percent were negative toward this. Liberty only does one or two of these a year. It is recommended that Liberty consider doing away totally with them as it is a logistical difficulty, much more expensive, and received very poorly by the students.

Three topics rated much lower than all the others in this survey; witnessing through sports (45 percent positive, 21 percent negative), cultural awareness (41 percent positive, 20 percent negative), and music principles (41 percent positive, 23 percent negative). It is recommended that
Liberty tries to ascertain why this is so, particularly since Xers like other cultures and music as
demonstrated previously.

It is recommended that Liberty continues assigning topics to certain speakers in chapel, in
order to make certain that areas of the greatest need and interest are adequately covered. Gifted
and anointed speakers must continue to be chosen so that they can present topics that our
students need to hear even if they respond negatively to the topic in a survey or in their mind
beforehand.

**Speaker Convocation Survey**

In the four different speaker convocation surveys, the students responded to the
statement, "The following Convocation was a blessing to me and helped me grow spiritually."
The students had a choice from A- strongly agree, B- agree, C- was not there/do not remember,
D- disagree, E- strongly disagree.

Students are generally pleased with the convocation speakers. The negative responses to
these individual convocations never outweighed the positive results in any convocation in the four
surveys (with the exception of the SGA chapel on 1/24/97). Observations and also some
corresponding recommendations with regards to the speaker convocation surveys are as follows:

- The, "was not there/do not remember" category of the survey was relatively high
throughout. The ministry chapel on Friday makes the percentage of "was not there" (in
main convocation) on that day understandable, but this category is approximately 30
percent in numerous other situations. Liberty needs to find out why. If the students
cannot remember, the surveys need to be given with less time in between. If students are
not there Liberty needs to fix the problem.

- One of the most negative convocations is the academic convocation in full regalia
(31 percent negative). More study of this issue is recommended. Since students
responded to the statement, "The following convocation was a blessing to me and helped
me grow spiritually" a higher negative rate than usual would be expected. Respect and
tradition, and pride in one's school are good things even if students do not see them as being primarily a spiritual growth time. However, maybe some more study on this issue will reveal a way to improve the negative rating while still preserving this very important tradition.

- The SGA chapels were by far the most consistent negative rated convocations throughout the year. More study of this issue is recommended.

- The speakers who have more than a "one-time shot" at the students tend to rate noticeably higher. These speakers are much different from one another. More study needs to be done to see if this is coincidence or not.

- There were some chapels that had an unusually high negative rating (anything over 15 percent) (Of the four SGA chapels, three had negative ratings of over 20 percent.) More study needs to be done to figure out why these chapels were rated so negatively, and make an appropriate response.

Recommendations For Further Study

Many recommendations for further study were made in the preceding section. However, there are some areas of importance for further study that are of a more general nature that should be mentioned.

- It is recommended that individual groups of students be studied to see how Liberty is meeting their needs in convocation (i.e. athletes, different races, different G.P.A's, full-time ministry students, Christian school kids, public school kids, students from Christian homes, students from non-Christian homes, etc.) As was documented earlier in the project, Xers make most life changing decisions in small groups. If some groups are found that Liberty is "missing the boat" with, Liberty needs to respond appropriately. This may mean breaking up into various small groups of chapels all over campus at times.

- It is recommended that further study be done on ways in which to break the large convocation into smaller groups during part of the Convocation to see if this is effective.

- It is recommended that study is done on how to bring in as much variety into convocation as possible without losing the focus of making disciples for Jesus Christ.

- It is recommended that further study be done on how to evaluate what types and level of spiritual growth is taking place in the convocation program.
One of the foundational issues that must be addressed in the convocation services deals with the issue of truth. It is apparent that many of the buster generation, even those involved in solid evangelical churches, have lost the ability to distinguish between right and wrong.\textsuperscript{139} Coupled with the postmodern mindset of elevating their own personal experience to the level of “Truth,” and it becomes apparent that this issue presents a substantial challenge to Christianity.

Some “evangelical” writers are actually applauding the idea that some people are no longer willing to go into another culture and say that Jesus is the one true way to God, although Jesus is their personal way to God.\textsuperscript{140} There are even those that would propose that “non-Christians may also be saved through Christ on the basis of their response to the way God has been revealed to them.”\textsuperscript{141} This nullifies the need for the gospel which strikes at the very core of Christianity.

It is recommended that more study be done on this issue and then a plan must be developed and implemented, attacking this “truth crisis,” not just in convocation, but in the seminary, local church, and Christian home.

\textbf{Synoptic Conclusion}

Although virtually all of the Christian colleges and universities that were surveyed consider chapel to be a very important part of their program (97 percent), along with most of them having mandatory attendance at convocation (86 percent), and all of them investing time and

\textsuperscript{139} Josh McDowell, \textit{Right and Wrong}, (Dallas, TX: Word, 1994), p. 9.

\textsuperscript{140} Doug Davidson, \textit{Walking in Your Footsteps: Generation X’s Wondering if it Fits into the Evangelical Movement},” \textit{The Other Side} (March/April 1994): 52.

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.
resources into the program, not one has a strategy or model for consistently evaluating their convocation/chapel program.

This thesis project has developed a model which could be used by these various institutions by developing a strategy for evaluating the Liberty University convocation program.

This project was accomplished by:

1. looking briefly at the historical and biblical basis for the convocation program at Liberty University,

2. examining the unique generation (GenX) currently being ministered in convocation along with principles/strategies for reaching them, and

3. analyzing the data from the internal surveys (one internal survey was developed from the strategies for reaching Xers) and external convocation surveys, with a view towards improving the convocation program.

The Critical shaping forces for the Busters are:

1. postmodernism - This is the belief that everything is relative, and that there are no absolutes. This factor has tremendous ramifications for Christians trying to reach Xers.

2. the breakdown of the family - This factor is seen in numerous heartbreaking ways such as the skyrocketing divorce rate, the onslaught of latch key children, the rise in abortion, "alternative" lifestyles, the birth control pill, the overall "unwantedness" of GenX, etc. On the positive side, Xers want a stable loving family. This Biblical goal has become part of their rewritten "American dream."

3. the media - Xers are dominated by the media more than any generation ever. They are media savvy, media conscious, and generally distrustful of the media.

4. the economy - One of the designations of Xers is the "fix-it" generation. They believe they will have to fix this problem of a huge national debt. They do not believe they will be better off than their parents (the first generation of Americans to hold this view) and over half do not believe they will ever own their own home. This has led to a recrafting of their "American dream," as mentioned earlier.
The shaping forces which have so impacted Xers have also helped create effective strategies for reaching them. The major strategies that were considered were:

1. The importance of personal life experience - Since this equals truth to the Buster, this is a great place to start a conversation.

2. The yearning for Community/Family - Xers can be reached by making them part of your family (loving them) which the desperately want.

3. The importance of music - They spend more money on music than all the other generations combined. You cannot overestimate its importance and music should be a significant part of a strategy for reaching Xers.

4. The importance of being authentic - Xers want raw reality, successes and failures, taking off the masks much more than Boomers. The process is as important as the end product to GenX.

5. The understanding and commitment to time - If this generation is going to be reached with the gospel, it will take consistent, quality time, arguably man's greatest resource. Sitting around talking, "hanging out," developing relationships with others is what life is all about to the Buster.

One of the internal surveys administered at Liberty University was developed out of the five strategies discussed above. Data was also gathered from four internal speaker convocation survey (given every 4-6 weeks to help students better remember the speaker, rather that just once) and an external convocation survey sent to the 87 colleges of the Coalition of Christian Colleges (37 participated in the survey).

The bottom line is, since convocation is such an important part of the educational process at Liberty University, they must continually be evaluating the program and making the needed adjustments within correct parameters in order to make convocation as effective as possible. The strategy presented in this thesis gives a workable model for doing just that.

At the present time, no major overhaul of convocation is needed. The preceding chapter
has presented a number of areas for further study and a few minor adjustments (e.g., more student testimonies, more variety, more internal speakers) which will be made.

My prayer is that God will continue to use convocation, "the most important gathering at Liberty University during the academic week,"142 to produce young adults that will revolutionize this world through fulfilling the great commission of Jesus Christ. I count it a great honor and privilege to have a small part in this process.

142 Jerry Falwell, interview held in Lynchburg, Va., September 1996.
APPENDICES
Interview with Dr. Jerry Falwell
Concerning the Liberty University Convocation Program
9/19/96

Q.1: **Would you please give a historical perspective in regards to the start of Liberty University's Convocation program?**

A.1: When Liberty was born in the fall of 1971, it was intended to be forever and ever a distinctively evangelical Christian school. It is unthinkable that a Christian school could function and maintain its commitment to a cardinal doctrine without regular gatherings of everyone involved; students, faculty and staff. Early on it was decided that three convocations must be a mandatory part of Liberty University (then Lynchburg Baptist College). We have not changed our theme.

Q.2: **In your opinion, what is the biblical basis of the convocation program at Liberty University?**

A.2: Our Lord established His church, he also gave requirements for attendance. The biblical record shows that the saints came together on every Lord's day and then on a regular basis as they studied the Bible and prayed. Liberty University is not a church, but the same principles rule in our decision to bring the students, faculty, and staff together on a regular basis. The book of Hebrews reminds the Christians to forsake not the assembling of themselves together. It goes on to explain that when such a fault occurs, the hearts of the Christians are hardened and the spiritual warmth of the assembly diminishes. This also happens in the secular and the educational world. It is essential that a Christian faculty and a Christian student body meet together on a regular basis for the purpose of growing spiritually, maintaining a unified vision, and staying on course in reaching its stated purpose of changing the world.

Q.3: **Although there are times that we do other things, the sharing of biblical principles and specifically preaching, has always been a vital part of the convocation program. Is this intentional and should it continue to remain this way?**

A.3: This is intentional. In our convocation program we try very hard to have a cross section of Christian leaders and even non-Christian leaders who can tell our students how they achieved their success. We are, nevertheless, a distinctively Christian university and that is why pastors and missionaries seem to be in greater participation than any other one segment. We are a liberal arts university and obviously through the years in the various disciplines that we teach, our students are catching their vision. Sharing biblical principles and preaching the Word of God is the way Christian young people are kept on focus spiritually. We hope that it will continue this way.
forever at Liberty.

Q.4: In your opinion, what is the correct philosophy for convocation program?

A.4: Philosophy for the convocation program is based on the need or an espirit decor which keeps our hearts, convictions, and vision unified. When families do not meet together families eventually fall apart. When convocation becomes optional as in many Christian schools, it becomes extinct. It is not because people are bad, it is because there are certain things that must be mandated. The Bible talks specifically about things we should and should not do. And that is what pastors, leaders, chancellors, educators, and deans are all about; to give young people the leadership in doing the right thing, the right way, every time.

Q.5: In the overall scheme of Liberty University, in your opinion what is the convocation program's level of importance?

A.5: I am very convinced that the convocation, with required attendance, is the most important gathering at Liberty University during the academic week.

Q.6: What specific goals do you want to see accomplished through convocation services?

A.6: I have always wanted the convocation services to be fun times. The students are always under great pressure with the academic and scheduling demands that are on them. I want it to be a worship and praise time so that their spirits can be released and so that it can become something they look forward to, not endure. I also want convocation to always be a place where young people get answers to the problems that are bothering them. They are struggling with psychological, family, financial, and even moral problems. These are young people and they need godly leadership from every segment of society telling them the way.

Q.7: Could you give a historical perspective regarding the internal battles we have fought to keep convocation a priority?

A.7: There is always the challenge even in your own family, your own school family, to make convocation mandatory. There are sincere people who feel strongly the need for more time to study, for teaching and many good things, but as important as their views are, the good things must not be replaced by the best things. Convocation is one of those best things. We also have had legal challenges to require attendance at convocation. We are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Convocation is important to us and for all these years there have been certain persons who have asked why we feel it necessary to have such required attendance at convocation. We have done our best to explain our philosophy to the accrediting
agency and so far they have not attempted to fight us over this. However, the Virginia Council of Higher Education has challenged our right to have required attendance at convocation, and our students still receive the tuition assistance grants which the state of Virginia provides to its residents. We have been attacked constantly by the American groups, like the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for Church and State. Fortunately, we have been able to convince people in high places that convocation is a part of what Liberty really is.

Q.8: Could you give a historical perspective regarding the external battles we have fought to keep the convocation mandatory?

A.8: (Given in answer #7)

Q.9: In your recollection, what was the first convocation message? Who preached it?

A.9: I believe I brought the first convocation message. Dr. Elmer Towns and I pretty much rotated that first year as he helped me start this school. We would occasionally bring in a pastor from the central Virginia area to speak, but we didn't have many friends, and no one thought we were going to amount to anything, so we actually did it ourselves.

Q.10: Has the convocation program always had required attendance, and why? Should it continue to remain this way?

A.10: There has always been required attendance for convocation. I feel that Liberty would cease to be what it is without our convocation programs. We are constantly writing and rewriting the vision, affirming and re-affirming what we believe and why we believe it, and dealing with current affairs and issues that are important to our existence as a Christian University. It should continue to remain this way.

Q.11: Who and what determined that convocation would occur three times per week?

A.11: I think Dr. Towns and I made that during the first year of school here. We did not have a reason for it. Some Bible schools have five convocations a week, some have one. I think ours was a compromise that Monday, Wednesday and Friday would be a good schedule.

Q.12: In your opinion, what are some of the top convocation services that stick out to you?

A.12: It would be difficult to list the most important convocations. Some of the most memorable
ones would include Vice President George Bush. At the conclusion of his address he took off his Yale University tie and allowed me to put a Liberty University neck tie around his collar. Dr. Francis Schaeffer with his messages was tremendous in the lives of our students. In the early days B.R. Lakin was a very popular convocation speaker. John R. Rice just before his death, spoke to our students in a powerful convocation. Probably one of the most memorable convocations took place in 1980 on the Wednesday morning following the Tuesday election of Ronald Reagan to the Presidency and the defeat of twelve liberal senators. I had just formed the Moral Majority in June of '79, registered millions of voters, and brought the evangelical in tight involvement in politics. The press had named us the Religious Right. Our first challenge was to elect Ronald Reagan and then a conservative senate. That morning, that 10:00 a.m. convocation, following that Tuesday in November, 1980, there was an electrical atmosphere in the convocation. We didn't get to bring a message. It was a one hour celebration of praise and worship.

Q.13: Is convocation, in your opinion, as important now, more important, or less important than it was in the first few years of Liberty's existence?

A.13: Required attendance at three weekly convocations is more important in 1996 than in the beginning years because the school has become so large. It's a lot easier to keep a small school on track than a large one. We have also become so academically excellent. It is more difficult to keep an academically excellent school on track than a "Bible school type".

Q.14: What are some of your specific hopes and desires for the future of Liberty's convocation program?

A.14: It is my hope that Liberty's Convocation program will always be given very special attention by the Chancellor, the President, and various Deans and Vice-Presidents who run the University. It must never become some dead, boring, and necessary happening. When it does, I think the whole school will suffer. People today are in far greater need of spiritual help then they were when the school started in 1971. The drug epidemic, the sexual revolution, New Age, Hollywood, the television industry, the sexual activity of children today, the abortion problem, the fact that nearly half of the children born in the country are born illegitimately with no father and in many cases no mother- convocation must be given more attention, be more prayed over than it was in the past, and must include speakers who know and understand the students they are talking to.

Q.15: What changes have you seen in the service throughout the history of Liberty University?

A.15: Obviously the major increase in enrollment at Liberty University means that convocation is a big deal. I have watched the music of the convocations through the past 25 years become far
more committed to worship and praise. I've seen more informality in a very positive way, creep into the convocation services. I have seen more student participation on the platform not just as singers, but as persons giving testimonials. I have seen more audience participation in response to the music and the message. Basically, the convocation service really is a celebration three times a week with believers in Christ and of the faith. The spiritual life that exists on this campus is more than very positive.

Q.16: What criteria should be used to choose convocation speakers?

A.16: We should always be sure that the persons we are bringing in understand who Liberty is and what we are trying to achieve. Not every speaker will be a born again Christian. We have brought political business leaders in who probably would not pass the New Birth test, but philosophically they understand Liberty University and agree with the things we are trying to do. We don't want to invite the speakers to our platform who espouse an anti-Christ philosophy. We need to be very careful not to expose impressionable young people to persons who have a perverted value system. I know of one Baptist college in the north, where the Dean of Religion brings in what he calls "gay evangelicals" to speak from time to time to make his students become more tolerant. That is the kind of thing that I would hope Liberty never does.

Q.17: Are there records of the speakers which have spoken in convocation over the years?

A.17: I would hope that Russ File or the President's office would have somewhere a breakdown of all the convocation speakers. I do not in the Chancellor's office.

Q.18: Dr. Falwell, have you always spoken for the Wednesday convocations?

A.18: In the early years, I spoke more than once a week. But in the last fifteen years it has been Wednesday convocations almost exclusively.
Interview with Dr. A.P. Guillermin  
Concerning the Liberty University Convocation Program  
9/17/96

Q.1: Would you please give a historical perspective in regards to the start of Liberty University's Convocation program?

A.1: Well, historically the University's convocation program actually goes back into the history of the previous Christian colleges and universities where it was a practice of having a chapel service or a convocation service on many campuses everyday. Then over a period of time, it was rescheduled to be sometimes three times a week, sometimes two times a week. Liberty simply picked up on that perspective and decided they would have a convocation program at least three times a week.

Q.2: In your opinion, what is the biblical basis for the convocation program at Liberty University?

A.2: Well, it goes back to the assembling of yourselves together for fellowship and inspiration and encouragement and motivation and unity of the body of Christ; Although normally we attribute that to a church, this Christian University convocation program is a natural outgrowth of that concept.

Q.3a: Although there are times that we do other things, the sharing of biblical principles and specifically preaching, has always been a vital part of the convocation program. Is this intentional?

A.3a: Yes, very definitely. I think it is not so much the fact that you might have a preaching service or a specifically spiritual focused service. There is the fact that whatever you do in the convocation will provide you and the students the opportunity of promoting the philosophy and principle from the precepts of the Christian faith.

Q.3b: Should this remain the focus of the convocation program?

A.3b: Very definitely, and I think the convocation program has to have a balance. This is about the only way that you can derive a balance. If you have preaching all of the time
then perhaps you are lacking in perspective.

Q.4a: In your opinion what is the correct philosophy, if there is an underlying philosophy, for a successful convocation program?

A.4a: I think it always has to be Christ-centered and biblically based regardless what you do or what activity or music may be involved or who may be invited to participate. Even if that person is a businessman or someone who is perhaps not of your religious belief the framework and the basis and the concept of the entire Convocation program has to be so strong that no one will question the fact that you are honoring Christ and you are believing and standing firm on the biblical principles of the Word of God.

Q.4b: Would you agree that although we have that basic concept we need to continually evaluate who our constituency is and use different methods to meet their needs most effectively?

A.4b: It is not the message that should change. It is the methodology, the means by which you communicate that message. It might be a cultural aspect of the program, it could be of some other nature, but if the message basically remains the same the methodology should change. This is necessary in order to reach the people that you're trying to contact within the years of their lives.

Q.5: In the overall scheme of Liberty University, in your opinion what is the convocation program's level of importance?

A.5: Well, for Liberty it is extremely important. It is the one time in the University life where all of the students or the majority of the students assemble together. This brings about a family atmosphere and it also allows us to communicate widely to the entire student body. It brings focus to what is happening on the campus and it gives a sense of direction and understanding as to what the university is all about. It reinforces what the University stands for, its philosophy, and its belief.

Q.6: What specific goals do you personally want to see accomplished through convocation?

A.6: I think that my primary goal is to see that convocation would try to reach the individual needs of the students and to those who are attending the convocation services.
Sometimes we take a shotgun approach. We just shoot at everybody and hopefully we will hit someone. I think there needs to be a more intimate relationship between the speaker, those who participate in the program, and those who are attending the convocation.

**Q.7a:** Could you give a historical perspective regarding the internal battles we have fought to keep the convocation mandatory?

A.7a: I think that the primary battle that we always face is the scheduling of time.

**Q.8a:** Could you give a historical perspective regarding the external battles we have fought to keep convocation mandatory?

A.8a: Well, the one that comes to mind immediately is the feeling of the State, a counsel of higher education, that convocation should be a convocation, and a chapel service should be a chapel service. Chapel services are religious in nature therefore it should not be mandatory in the student's life. A convocation can, in a broad interpretation, allow for other things, including the instructional aspect of University life. Therefore, they were willing to become more open and negotiate simply by changing the word but not changing the method or the content of the program.

**Q.8b:** What year was that and what process did we go through?

A.8b: If I recall correctly it was 1989, I may be mistaken on the year, but we were questioned as to what we did by the State Council of Higher Education and the State Board of Education in Virginia in our chapel services. When we sat down and talked with them and told them we were not going to change but we would be willing to change the terminology if it would be more conducive to what their thinking was and give them a comfort level that we would be willing to do so, so long as they understood that we were not going to change what we were going to do in convocation.

**Q.8c:** Did that have to go through the court system at all?

A.8c: If I recall correctly, I don't believe so. I may be mistaken, but I think it just came to a general consensus of opinion over a period of time.
Q.9: In your recollection, what year was the first convocation service, what was it and who preached it?

A.9: Well, I am assuming the first one was in 1971 when the school was established and I have no doubt that was probably Dr. Falwell who preached it, although I don't know.

Q.10a: Has the convocation program always had required attendance? Why?

A.10a: To the best of my knowledge it has been required. The thinking was that it was of such importance and the university was willing to set aside the class schedule and all other activities to have the convocation or the chapel service, that it was part of the educational and spiritual life and development of the students and we felt that it was necessary to have it required. Now there has always been some discussion whether it is right to have it required, and if it were strictly a chapel service I don't think the law would allow it to be required. But the very fact that it is a convocation, an assembly of students, and in that convocation we have a variety of programs and a variety of speaker and purposes involved, it is part of the educational process so it is not a problem.

Q.10b: Are you comfortable with the way it is right now and do you believe that it should continue in this manner?

A.10b: I am. I think that I am comfortable with it. I think that one thing that disturbs me a little bit is when you try to set a mood and then something is injected into that mood and it disrupts the continuity of what is happening. For example, if you have the announcements being made and that type of thing, I think there is a place and a time for that and comments about sports and so on, but once you get into the music and once you get into the main message of the hour, I like to see more of a continuity where it's not disrupted by the thoughts of other things happening on the campus.

Q.11: Who and what determined that convocation would occur three times per week?

A.11: Well, there is a general consensus of opinion. I think among the leadership three times a week was reasonable, but there again it was based upon the previous experience of the three individuals who were involved: Dr. Falwell, Dr. Towns and myself, but Dr. Falwell is the one who has in fact determined that it should always be and will always be
that. If it is not written in the constitution bylaws, I am sure at one time or another it will be.

Q.12: In your opinion, what have been the top ten convocation services?

A.12: Apart from the convocation service that might have had businessmen and so on in the service, probably services with Dr. W.A. Criswell, Dr. Stanley from Atlanta, Georgia, those who had very strong biblically based messages or were very practical in their approach. I think these are probably highlights for the students and for everyone else.

Q.13: Is convocation as important now as it was in the first few years of Liberty University's existence?

A.13: I think it is more important now then it was then. It was regimented in previous times. Now it almost has become voluntary even though it is required. I think the students enjoy it more, I think the messages are more applicable to their lives. I think that the larger that the institution becomes, the more important convocation becomes because there again it brings a cohesiveness on the campus that doesn't exist in anything else. There is no other one time that all of the student body, on all levels, in all the graduate programs and institutes and individual programs, can actually come together along with the faculty and administration.

Q.14: What are some of your specific hopes and desires for the future of Liberty's Convocation program?

A.14: There again I think it falls back on the fact that I hope that we would be able to provide more insight and understanding to the students and for the faculty. It is very hard to provide a program and message that will reach all levels of the audience. I think that is a challenge everyone has. I think that Convocation ought to be not only inspirational but also be educational, and I think that sometimes we get into the rut where we do the same thing over and over again and we play the same music and we sing the same songs. I think we need to expand the horizons. For example, some of the songs that I memorized, hymns and otherwise, I have learned actually in the convocation services, not in a classroom and it stuck with me all these years. I think that is something we need to look at perhaps more then we have in our past. That is difficult to do knowing that our founder and chancellor who really has very specific focus on the program.
Q.15: What changes have you seen throughout the years in the convocation program as far as the way the service is done? (more student lead, less student lead, methodology)

A.15: I think the student body involvement where they are leading more and participating more has been a plus for the convocation services. I think that the fact we are bringing in better and more outstanding and "educated" speakers mean a great deal to the student body. The music of course we have developed and grown, and I think that the program has matured over a period of years as we have matured. Some of the music is very contemporary and it may not reach the liking of everyone, but I think there is enough balance there that it will serve its purpose.

Q.16: What criteria should be used to choose the convocation speakers?

A.16: I think that depends on the nature of a convocation. If you are going to have a convocation service which is not primarily spiritual in nature or inspirational from a religious direction, then I think that you need to bring speakers into the campus that will go along with the philosophy of the university but not necessarily be in total agreement with it. On the other hand, if you're going to bring in speakers and musicians or others that are going to be there primarily for spiritual purposes, I think they need to be very solid in their philosophies and their beliefs. They need to be able to reflect that in everything they say.

Q.17: Are there records of the speakers which have spoken in the convocations over the years?

A.17: I know that we have some records, but I think it will be well for someone to go back into the history and try to come up with a master list. I think that would be a real plus. Often times for example in Convocation when we have the commencement services, we have to go back and check who was there, who spoke, and what they spoke about, and we have such a list from the last fifteen years or so, but none of the chapel services. I think that would be an excellent idea.

Q.18: In conclusion, as an overview is there anything you would like to say with regard to the program and what you would like to see in the immediate future, things we could work on to be more effective?
A.18: First of all I think that the convocation programs have done extremely well over the past several years. I think the current leadership has done a lot to do that. It tied it in together with what is happening on campus (the Spiritual Life Directors, the prayer meetings, the special emphasis in missions), and this is important. Themes have been carrying a lot more emphasis across the campus so long as you don't do it for long periods of time to the students, and not just having someone pop in and speak and that's it, and then they turn around and walk away.

Q.19a: One of the things we have struggled with in the last couple of years is split chapels. In other words, teachers would like to meet at their own time for their own convocation, and various elements of students would like their own "own" convocation. Ministry students currently have their own chapel on Friday. What is your feeling on the balance in that way?

A.19a: I think we all need to come together on a regular basis sometime during the week. I also think there needs to be a strategy whereby we can meet the needs in each of the individual groups that are represented on campus. I know convocation service is general. It does not meet the specific needs of the faculty or perhaps the women students on occasion, or the men students, sometimes the athletes, or the business students. Somehow we have got to reach them on the level in which their primary interest is. I don't think the convocation service should become a church service. The formal academic convocation when we begin school is good and that type of thing. The university is not a church and the church is not a university.

Q.19b: Is this something that we will never be able to set in stone but will continually evaluate on the basis of what we have at the time?

A.19b: I think that the three convocations are going to be set in stone as I said until the founder dies. I suspect he's going to put it into the charter and bylaws of Liberty University. Therefore, the only other possibility that you will have is you will have to schedule some type of convocation on Tuesday and Thursday. Focusing on particular situations, be sure that the other convocations do not encroach into that time, there is always that tendency. If you don't do that you will have to find other ways to meet the needs of these groups of people...special services, church services, and that type of thing, and that is the problem because so much is going on. Look, what happens around here is that people use the convocation services as a substitute for church service and church services for convocation services and that's just something you're going to have to find a balance on.
Q.1: Would you please give a historical perspective in regards to the start of the Liberty University Convocation program?

A.1: At the very beginning, I was acting as Executive Vice President and Academic Dean and the scheduling of all the classes was my responsibility. Technically, at the very beginning, having been called a co-founder with Jerry Falwell, I was responsible for the academics. The only thing that Dr. Falwell had said to me was "Let's involve many of the pastors of the church".

We originally had courses such as "Church Aflame" and therefore each course was called "Church Aflame". One was a busing course and Jim Gilliam, our pastor, did a course on busing. We had a soul winning course by J. O. Grooms. We had a Bible memory course by J. O. Grooms. We had a prison ministry led by Ed Martin. And so every pastor had a course under "Church Aflame" of his own specialty. Calvin Colmes, who ran the computer for us, taught the use of computers in the local church. With that in mind, we knew that the practical aspect would not necessarily be required in chapel. So I began with the perspective of one of two things: Keep the platform hot! That was one of my first things. I said that if you keep the platform hot, it will keep all of the academics in line. And so we began with the idea of one premise: number one, no faculty member should ever preach in chapel because they would have their classes. We wanted people to come in who would have one shot. People who would pour out their whole soul, their whole life, into it. Now obviously, later on we began to use faculty. And so, no faculty. And second of all, we wanted the people who were doing it to come and be an example to the students who were here. Now the first chapel we had as we organized the people, I put myself in. I preached on Matthew 28:19-20, The Great Commission. "Go ye into all the world" and do three things: Number one, "make disciples of all nations." My outline was evangelism. Number two, "baptize people in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit". And so number two had the idea of churcharing people. So number one was evangelism, number two was churcharing. Number three, "teaching them to observe all people". And so number three was Christian education. And I preached on local church evangelism. In the very first chapel, the very beginning premise I gave was that this college is an extension of the local church at the collegiate level. And I remember that the chapel was in the main auditorium of Thomas Road. That first year we later moved chapel up into what is now called the Pate Chapel, or the old people call it the chapel with the trees, having all of the pillars in it. But
anyway, the first chapel was down at Thomas Road and I remember preaching to the
people and saying to them (waving my hands around), "This local church is giving the
foundation for this college and this college is the extension of the local church and I
really think two or three things: College rules will be church rules, college purposes will
be church purposes, college soul winning will be church soul winning. I went right down
the line saying that we are an extension. We are different from Bob Jones. Bob Jones
had great respect for their commitment to streamline and excellence in dress and music.
That's what we want to be, excellent like Bob Jones. And then I said as Springfield
Baptist Bible College is great in soul winning, evangelism and the local church, we want
to be as outstanding as they are, but we are going to be a little different. I talked in that
first chapel about commitment and soul winning (like Springfield) as well as commitment
to excellence (like Bob Jones). I talked about academic excellence. I said, "Wheaton we
call liberal." Whether it was or not, we called it liberal. We want the academic
excellence of a Wheaton and we can combine the three. People understood that. So, this
was the beginning of the Convocation program. We wanted to keep it hot and we wanted
the chapel program to bring students to a commitment. An invitation was given. An
invitation of commitment. We knew that every student in that first year was saved, and
so we assumed that every student was saved. But that was not true. We vowed that even
in that first year as students got into the Bible, they came here. They came to know Jesus
Christ and different ones then, came to know Christ throughout that year and chapel had a
lot to do with that.

Q.2: In your opinion, what is the biblical basis of the convocation program at
Liberty University?

A.2: In my opinion the biblical basis of the convocation program is the biblical basis of
the University. Now, go back to that guiding statement from the very beginning and the
guiding statement was that the college, those days Lynchburg Baptist College, was an
extension of the local church and therefore, the purposes of the church were the purposes
of the college and that's important when you talk about academic purposes. The
academic purposes of the college were the purposes of the church carried out at the
college level. And I said, "One day there will be a seminary here and the seminary will
be the extension of the local church at the graduate level.

Q.3: Although there are times that we do other things, the sharing of biblical
principles and specifically preaching, has always been a vital part of the convocation
program.
Is this intentional? Should it continue to remain this way?
A.3: Yes, our intention from the very beginning was preaching, teaching, testifying, and role modeling from a biblical perspective. I have used a phrase, "Keep the platform hot." Dr. Falwell has used the statement that the chapel is the rudder that steers the whole ship, and a ship without a rudder is purposeless and directionless and therefore it needs a rudder. It needs the chapel to give real direction. And should it continue? Yes. I believe that when we do away with chapel, we lose our focus and our direction and this implies when we do away with required attendance at chapel. Now, other Christian schools have said, "The students don't come, so let's do away with it." I think that is pondering to the students and their needs. They need chapel desperately. The school, corporately, needs chapel desperately, and therefore, to do away with it is really denying the purpose that God used in raising up Liberty.

Q.4: In your opinion, what is the correct philosophy for the convocation program?

A.4: The correct philosophy is probably three or four things. First of all, it should be there with a strong intent to persuade the purpose of the institution and its Christian principle, and therefore, I don't see chapel as a place to debate Christianity. Now, at times we have debated. We have had debates in our chapel such as the Kennedy - Jack Kemp debate and that was an attempt to expose students. Now, we've had other people in chapel. It was not necessarily a chapel convocation. Back, way back, we would call non-preaching days of convocation. I remember we had a secretary of education who was a woman and she did a very good job addressing the educational needs of a nation. And therefore, we need, from time to time to use convocation as a platform to address these issues, but the guiding overall purpose is that it is a place of persuasion. Now, I see the classroom as teaching, and convocation or chapel, as preaching. Now, they have hard centers but soft edges. So sometimes teaching looks like preaching, and sometimes preaching looks like teaching.

Q.5: In the overall scheme of Liberty University, in your opinion what is the convocation program's level of importance?

A.5: At the very beginning I made a choice. I put the schedule together and when I went to Dallas Theological Seminary we had chapel five days a week. When I went to Columbia Bible college chapel was five days a week. At Northwestern school, where Billy Graham was president, it was five days a week. And I thought, "that's too much." It's an overdue of a good thing, and so originally we had three days a week. I arbitrarily one day decided, five is too much. One day a week is not enough and I thought about Tuesday/Thursday and I said, "No, let's go with Monday." The reason we went with Monday is because that would be a time when students could get up and give testimonies.
of what God did through them at Christian service on Sunday. Then, we wanted Friday because we wanted to give them one last challenge before they went out for a weekend of ministry. Therefore, it fit our schedule to go Monday, Wednesday, and Friday because originally we had classes unlike today. Originally, we had two hour classes on Tuesday/Thursday and we had three hour classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. That's the way it worked out.

Q.6: What specific goals do you want to see accomplished through convocation services?

A.6: I think that lifestyle goals involve the Christian character of our young people. Out of our doctrine are going to come certain implications, lifestyles. And out of our purpose are going to come certain implications of lifestyles. Now, these lifestyle goals involve evangelism, holiness, church related activities, and conservative political activities. All of these come out of our goals as a university and therefore, I would like to see convocation continue to carry out such purposes to persuade students of these purposes. We persuade them by didactic instruction, by persuasive preaching, by role model testimonies, and at other times by analysis of the issues.

Q.7: Could you give a historical perspective regarding the internal battles we have fought to keep the convocation a priority?

A.7: I don't know that there were internal battles. I look at them as external pressures because from the very beginning, Dr. Falwell has said three days a week, period. He has never wavered. There have been all kinds of pressure on Dr. Falwell to do away with the three day requirement: pressure on Dr. Falwell to make the convocation academic and give credit for it and pressure internally from faculty members who aren't well advised or who don't have an overall perspective or historical perspective. Dr. Falwell, who pretty much sets the agenda for the chapel and myself say to you (the Vice President in charge of Spiritual Affairs), "You're responsible under the chancellor for that spiritual direction and therefore, you've seen those pressures in those ways to make it more academic or more community involved or to do away with requirements."

Q.8. Could you give a historical perspective regarding the external battles we have fought to keep the convocation mandatory?

A.8 Dr. Towns does not have that information.
Q.9. In your recollection, what was the first convocation message and who preached it?

A.9: The first convocation message was preached by me since I was putting the schedule together and I had planned orientation of what we were going to do. The first week I sat down and put the whole message together, and it's my recollection that Dr. Falwell preached on Sunday to all the students who were at church on Sunday morning and Sunday night; and on Monday morning I preached the first convocation on Matthew 28:19-20. That was September 8, 1971.

Q.10: Has the convocation program always had required attendance? If so, why? Should it continue to remain this way?

A.10: The convocation program has always had required attendance. That does not mean that everyone has attended on every week. As a matter of fact, probably there has never been one convocation where every student came. If you were to ask of all the convocations which one would be the best attended, it would have been some of those in the early days. We had a revival meeting with Evangelist Bob Harrington that shook the city for God. With so many people getting saved, almost every student would of been there in those early days. Why? We felt that to compromise this area would be a compromise for the university and a step towards liberalism. There was a message Dr. Falwell preached on: "Things that we would never give up." One of the things that we will never give up that he mentioned was required chapel attendance. Another thing he mentioned was every faculty member had to be a born again believer. Another thing he said we would never give up, was required Christian community service. Those were certain things that we would never give up and so, it was inbred in leadership from Dr. Falwell to Dr. Guillermin, down to every faculty. I think that most of the students who cut chapel over the years, would be first to yell if we made chapel non required. I think because some of those who cut know the benefit it had to them. I believe that if we give up on required attendance it's a strong statement that we are minimizing the influence we want to make on both our students, as far as persuasively influencing them, and the lifestyle expectations of the university objectives.

Q.11: Who and what determined that convocation would occur three times per week?

A.11: Originally when I put the schedule together for the students and the first year we had 154 students, I was the only full-time instructor. Dr. Falwell taught a church growth class and then we were co-teachers in an introductory course to the Christian life. I hired
a couple of teachers from Central Virginia Community College (CVCC), one teacher from Roanoke College, and these teachers were paid on a part-time basis. Our contention was that we would put together a first year curriculum only and the second year we would teach a first and second year curriculum. The third year we would teach a first, second, and third year. And the fourth year, etc. Our contention was that we might have some students who wanted to transfer in but they had to adapt to us, we could not adapt to them due to the lack of money in those early days. So we put our whole classes together. It was based on a one, two, and three hour course offering, meaning some courses were one hour and those were the "Church Aflame" courses. Some with two hours and some with three hours. Two hours met Tuesday/Thursday only. Three hours met Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. We decided to go with the Monday, Wednesday, Friday chapel at 10:00 a.m. and it's always been at 10:00 a.m. at the very middle of the day, before the students who come early leave, and for those who come late. We wanted to require all students to be there. It's always been Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and as I said earlier, on Monday we wanted to have testimonies from those who served God on Sunday to come back and tell and so; also for Dr. Falwell to come in and share what God did at Thomas Road on Sunday. And then, we wanted also to have Friday to prepare people for working on the weekend. Wednesday was not that important in those early days but it's become, lately, the most important day of the week, because that's the week now when Dr. Falwell does the preaching.

Q.12a: In your opinion, what are you most memorable convocation services throughout the years?

A.12a: OOHNNNNNNNNNNNNN - The most memorable. As they say on television, "In random order". Bob Harrington preaching, talking about winning the city for Jesus Christ. He preached on Paul and Silas in jail. Funny, a lot of jokes, high degree of motivation, high degree of laughter, and at the end he said, "If you get your people to come, I will preach that sermon again." And so, we had this revival meeting and the first night he preached this sermon.

Q.12b: Did you like it?

A.12b: Yes! Everybody knows this, he preached the same sermon five nights in a row. But he preached it in chapel first. So he would say to the people who got saved, "Did you like the sermon"? (yes) He said, Well you watch reruns on television, and you always go back and watch the movies you like, I'm going to preach the same sermon tomorrow night. Now, if you have an unsaved bring him, tell him how funny it is, and they'll get saved." And they came back the next night. He preached the same sermon five
nights in a row. Now the funny thing is, each night the crowd got larger and each night there were more people unsaved at the altar. After the last Friday night rally, Dr. Falwell said, "Now I want everyone to come back Sunday, I'm going to get Paul and Silas out of jail." So, that's one sermon that would be memorable.

After the liberal Ted Kennedy had been here, Jack Kemp came back and did a good job at answering. (Ted Kennedy's speech on liberalism) I didn't realize how articulate Jack Kemp was. He did a good job of answering. I think of "Payday Sunday" preached by R.G. Lee. He preached that sermon twice in chapel. I think in terms of "God's Three Deadlines" preached by J. Harold Smith in 1983/84. And coming to chapel, he stopped at the "Day's Inn". There was a young man there and this young man was used by "Day's Inn" to open up "Days Inn" all over the country, that was his job. He invited this young man, spoke to him, invited him to come and he came and heard the message and was saved. I think in terms of Bailey Smith. He preached a sermon on "Sheep and Goats". He said, "I am called to preach to unsaved Southern Baptists and to get church members who think they are sheep but really aren't saved. And I remember a powerful sermon he preached. This is at the old multi-purpose center and on this particular day I remember 126 people, students, praying to receive Christ. I remember Jack Van Impe predicting that Jesus would come on the feast of Rosh Hashanah in 1974. Now, Jesus didn't come, and we all heard him say that and Jack was wrong and anyway, you said most memorable and I'm telling you why, a man sticks his foot in his mouth you've got to say that's a memorable chapel. I remember the tent, the heaters and it was so hot in the middle of the tent, and so cold on the edge of the tent, and there was something there, we were pioneers, we were future oriented. We were building a university and we were going to capture the world for Christ. Students came to chapel, we probably had some of the highest attended days at chapel and Dr. Falwell didn't show up one day and I preached in the tent. Not knowing what to preach, and all of the sudden, I've often said that when people ask me to preach on the spot, preach the first thing that comes to your head. And he said, "Elmer, you need to preach for me today". And I said, "Okay". The first thing that came to mind was Malachi 3:10; the sermon on tithing. So I preached a sermon on tithing but as I remember preaching it, it was a sermon on dedication. There were two or three kids who decided to go to the mission field because of that sermon. So, those are sermons that I remember. I remember commissioning services. In the old days SMITE teams, and later LIGHT teams, were commissioned in those services to go out and "do something" for God. Other chapels that would be noteworthy. I remember the chapel service when we marched around the mountain. That was around 1984/85. It was 11 miles around and I remember that because we were all told to get people to sponsor us $1 a mile to give us $11. I really worked hard. I had a mailing list of friends and I really worked hard on that. I think that Dr. Falwell said that more people sponsored me because I think I had about $2500 that day and I was determined to make it around that mountain, so I walked around the mountain. Then I remember the day we all walked out of the Vines Center. We decided to walk down to the Reber Thomas Building to dedicate and
to ask God. Here we have all these students walking down, this massive group of students going out to make a statement. And then, let's go back to the early days, each year we had a big student body picture. In the first days this would be half way through chapel. We would all go out and get in front of Thomas Road or in front of the campus or somewhere, and we would all get a big picture taken by the sign man in the church. He has a big forklift and he would come and get on the top of the forklift and we'd put Jimmy Whipple, a local photographer on the top of the forklift or Les Shoefleer. We would shoot down and get all the students and that was always a big deal of course. Well those were great chapels.

Q.12c: Do you remember anything in particular about chapels with Dr. B.R. Lakin or Dr. Francis Schaeffer, whom Dr. Falwell refers to often as mentors?

A.12c: B.R. Lakin spoke in chapel probably as much as any man other than Dr. Falwell. He would come and preach all of his sermons in chapel. His sermons were very meaningful. We sometimes heard them later again at church. They were great literary masterpieces. That's all I can say. When you heard him in his prime, he was great. Francis Schaeffer came and I don't think he came that many times. He was only here, probably a total of maybe five times in his life. But the fact that he came, as an evangelical to a fundamental school, but of course he started out as a fundamentalist, he wasn't that fundamentalist controversy in the Presbyterian church, so he was one of us and he came. I remember the first time he spoke in chapel. He had on knickers. And of course he would wear that outfit from Switzerland and he looked like that part some Swiss climber. He came to chapel and two or three people were trying to decide whether Dr. Frances Schaeffer was going to be allowed to speak in chapel. They were trying to decide how they were going to respond to him. Falwell sweeps in the room, shakes his hand, glad to meet him, walks him out, and his voice. We are concerned, we don't even know that Dr. Falwell saw the knickers. He saw the man and what he stood for, and the friendship and what he could mean to us. Now, there was another great man who spoke here in chapel, (I've got about three more to talk about). A great Jewish Evangelist, Hyman Appleman. He came before he died. He was here about the second week we had the school open and talked and I remember the day that he spoke in chapel. It was up in what we call the old Pate Building today. The sound system went out. Iman Appleman had been 80 years old at that time and didn't have a strong voice, so we all gathered on the west wall. Gathered in as tight as we could. He came down and had a little lectern set up. The students wanted to hear him and they were just packed in, tight to tight, hip to hip, waiting on every word. They hung on every word and his voice, he spoke because, the electricity on the campus went out, there was no electricity anywhere. So he spoke that day. It was a dark room and it was more of a testimony sermon, it was the only time I heard Hyman Appleman. Then John Rice came several times and I use to tell
the students the story. I said, "Now students, let me tell you about Dr. Rice. He doesn't have any sermons on file. They come out of his head and his heart. He takes a piece of paper, writes it down, and the first student to get to him after chapel is over, and asks him for a copy of his sermon, he'll just take it out of Bible and give to you." Obviously, you get your students primed and so as soon as the "Amen", you can see them run for the platform. So, it was about the second year of the school. I knew what had happened the last time so I said to Dr. Rice, "I want you to give me your sermon afterwards." I stood up and announced, "Dr. Rice has given me his sermon", and I held it up for everyone to see. Now I'm going to give it to a student. And I forget what we did. We gave it to this student who passed out the most tracts, or had the most on their bus route, something like that. That was a memorable sermon because everybody wanted that hand written copy of Dr. John Rice's sermon. So, that was a memorable day. Now the last time right before he died, Dr. Falwell was out of town, and I was in charge of chapel that day. I picked him up at the airport. We had sent the ministry airplane to pick up Dr. Rice in Tennessee and bring him here. I'm at the airplane, put him in my car, and Mrs. Rice was with him. We were riding over to the school. That day it was the first half of the multipurpose building, not the total. As we were riding over, he said, "Now I stake my claim on Liberty mountain. Lets drive by, I want to see that one foot plot, one square foot of Liberty mountain, I want to see my one square foot." I said, "Dr. Rice, now wait a minute." And I knew there was no one square foot. I knew it was a symbolic thing that Jerry said, but he wanted to see it. I said, "I don't know if I can find it but I do know that I can find your brick here." Now to build a university people gave a $500 brick. I don't know where it is now, but there used to be an index where all of the names were alphabetically and it would tell you where to go. We found the index, we found the name, John R. Rice, we went and found this brick and that seemed to satisfy him. He preached in chapel and I still remember the sermon he preached, "Our God Breathed Book". He preached on dictation theory. We happened to believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of scripture that God didn't use people like us a dictaphone. God used the humanity of people to write. He's preaching this sermon, and I had written a review on Dr. Rice's book that was complimentary for the whole book except I just point out the fact that most of us do not agree with his dictation theory. It must of been a burr in his saddle because right in the middle of the sermon, he walks over to me and looks me right in the eye and says, "Dr. Towns, do you believe that every word in the Bible is inspired? Well, I do." I said, "Amen Dr. Rice, every word in the Bible. And I say that without any qualifications." I remember Dr. Rice's sermon.

Now I think that one of the most memorable days ever was Dr. B.R. Lakin's funeral. And it was a chapel service. It was held at Thomas Road Baptist Church. Because it was there, I was one of the pall bearers. I was the dean of the B.R. Lakin School of Religion. Dr. Falwell preached, several people spoke, we put the coffin in the hearse and when we got to the burial site which is right there at the prayer chapel, some security guard officers were right there and I heard them talking. The funeral was so long it stretched from the
campus, all the way back to the church and the parking lot was not empty yet. They had
gone all the way up Fort Ave., they'd gone all the way up to the express way and back
down so it was an extra long way. They were stretching it out as long as possible. They
did not come the short way. When we got to the campus, of course we took the casket out
when the family got there and this was like in another set under the tent and we stood by,
Dr. Falwell stood by, we waited 45 minutes. It took that long for all of the students and
all of the members and everyone to get on campus to park. There was a massive crowd.
Sometimes you look back and you wonder why we don't have certain pictures. We
should of had some aerial shot of the funeral of Dr. Lakin. I'm not going to talk about
when chapel was on the mountain, Robbie sang "I Want That Mountain". I was not here
for that chapel so I'll let that one pass for Dr. Falwell to talk about.

Q.13: In your opinion, is convocation as important now, less important now, or more
important now than it was in the first few years of Liberty University's existence?

A.13: I say it's more important than ever before. There was one time during the first
semester of Liberty, convocation was cancelled for a week. All classes were cancelled
for a week. All students were instructed to spend their time on the phone, knocking on
doors, getting people into the revival meeting. They were meeting with Bob Harrington
that was there. So school was cancelled for that week and we all invested, immersed our
lives in winning people for Christ. That was the extension of what Liberty was all about
so I'd say now it's more important than ever. It's more important than ever and if we
compromise convocation, we compromise the objectives and the philosophical basis of
who we are.

Q.14: What are some of your specific hopes and desire for the future of the
convocation program?

A.14: Well, I hope that we will get stronger in getting great preachers. I like for us to
keep the rule of keeping it hot. I like for us to keep the rule, keeping the faculty off,
because faculty tend to be analytical and this is not taking from them the strong solid
contributions they make. But bring in the people who will stretch students, who will give
students a dream, who will show students that they can be Champions for Christ and
change the world. And so my dream is we will keep it. I have a dream that every student
would have a seat, assigned seating, when they're not there they'd be absent. But I would
like to see us be even tighter, under control in the future, instead of letting up on it. It
takes money, energy, and it's money and energy well spent.
Q.15: What changes and I don't mean biblical changes, I'm talking about the specific such as more student involvement, differences in music, etc., What changes have you seen in the convocation service throughout history of Liberty University?

A.15: The place we've gone, from the church, to the tent, to the Multi-Purpose Building, to the Vines Center, and I hope I can see another change to Thomas Road here on campus. I've seen change in music. We've gone from singing gospel songs to praise music that the kids like to sing. I thing we've become more involved in pastor's preaching more than ever before. I think that's a good move. I've seen more student involvement. In the original days it was always faculty led. Everything was faculty led except the special music. So, really we've changed but we haven't changed at all we're almost the same as what we've been.

Q.16: What criteria do you believe should be used to choose convocation speakers?

A.16: I think we should choose people who are in spirit and harmony with our doctrinal statement, with our institutional purpose and objectives, both academic and lifestyle objectives, and those who can further our purposes. They can make a great contribution. There are many, many in agreement, but they can't further it, they don't have the ability to preach. See, when you talk of 5000 people there are not many people who can speak to young people let alone 5000 young people. Now there are some preachers who can speak to 5000 adults, but not to 5000 young people, therefore, we could choose those who can further the institutional objective.

Q.17: Do you know if there are records of the speakers which we have had that have spoken in convocation throughout the years, particularly the early years?

A.17: I don't think there was a record kept. As a matter of fact, this is the first time I have ever thought about the first two years. Now the first speaker after me was Pastor Barbor, of the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Danville, and he had graduated from the Baptist Bible Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He spoke on the greatness of J. Frank Norris. He told stories of J. Frank Norris and then at the end stood up and said, "I so believe in this school, I promise you a thousand dollars." I thought a thousand dollars was just more than we could ever realistically think in terms. I had invited him and said, "We cannot pay you. Can you pay your way to come to Lynchburg?" He stood up and said, "Folks, you don't need to pay me, I need to pay you." And so he promised a thousand dollars. That was significant.
Q.18: Are there any other comments that you would like to make in regards to something you feel is important to include with the whole discussion of the convocation program?

A.18: Other than to repeat what I have said before, it should be required. I think it needs to be required of all faculty and students. I think it needs to be together. I think we all need to come together. You know I realize we have other chapel spin-offs today, such as seminary. And I think that's wise and right. (And ministry chapel and, from time to time, faculty chapel) From time to time we have had freshman chapel and sophomore chapel. Now, in the very early days where we had women's chapel and men's chapel, my wife always took the women's chapel until I hired Janey DeSaegher and Dottie Lock, who took the women's chapel. Men's chapel would always be taken by Gordon Love in the early days, and he would speak about men's problems; keep the bathroom clean, picking up paper, about little things, and about character. Character is habitually doing the right thing in the right way. And in the early days we probably stressed a lot more character training, about the little things. We taught our students about their dress, their dress at church, and where they could sit at church. We talked a lot about keeping the church clean because the college, in those days was using the church facilities, the church dining room, the church library and everything that belonged to the church. And therefore, without rent. We talked to our students quite a bit about helping. There were some early chapels, where we didn't have chapel, but we had clean-up day. We had clean-up day in the yard. I remember, after a storm. We called off chapel then and all worked in the yard. We came out and worked from 10:00 till 12:00. We picked up sticks, cleaned up, raked and all of that kind of thing. Those were memorable chapels. But chapel is a time where the family is a family and heals like a family.
APPENDIX B
SUGGESTED READING LIST FOR GENERATION X

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Newsweek. 25 April 1988, "Throwaway Kids."


Towns, Elmer. Dean of School of Religion Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia, Interview, 19 September 1993.


Wu, A. "Young Adults Are Stereotyped by the Media, Too." The Quill, p. 13.


EXTERNAL CONVOCATION SURVEY

Purpose: The purpose of this External Convocation Survey is to evaluate Liberty University's current Convocation program with the aim of making it consistent with the mission of Liberty University.

1. Your institution is located in the A) Southwest B) Northwest C) Southeast D) Northeast E) The middle of the U.S.
2. Your institution's student population at present is: A) Less than 500 B) 500-1500 C) 1501-3000 D) 3001-5000 E) Other
3. Your institution is: A) Less than 20 years old B) 20-50 years old C) 51-75 years old D) 76-100 years old E) Other
4. Your institution operates on the: A) Semester System B) Quarter System C) Other
5. Your institution identifies most closely with the: A) Reformed Tradition B) Wesleyan/Methodist Tradition C) Baptist Tradition D) Lutheran Tradition E) Non-Denominational
6. I consider chapel to be a very important part of our institution. A) Strongly Agree B) Agree C) Disagree D) Strongly Disagree
7. Is your chapel mandatory? A) Yes B) No C) Do Not Have Chapel
8. If your chapel is mandatory do the students have a certain number of excused exemptions? A) No B) Less than 3 C) 4-6 D) 7-9 E) 10+
9. If your chapel is mandatory do non-resident students have to attend chapel? A) Yes B) No C) Sometimes
10. If your chapels are not mandatory have they ever been mandatory? A) Yes B) No C) Sometimes
11. If your chapels are not mandatory, approximately what percentage of your student body participates? A) Less than 20% B) 21-40% C) 41-60% D) 61-80% E) 81-100%
12. How many times per week does your chapel meet? A) 1 B) 2 C) 3 D) 4 E) 5
13. How long is your typical chapel program? A) 1 Hour B) Less than 1 Hour C) More than 1 Hour
14. Do you bring in preachers for chapel or do you do other things, i.e. drama, concerts, etc.? A) Mostly Preachers B) Mostly Non-Preachers C) Only Preachers D) Varies
15. Do you have mostly internal speakers, (i.e. Professors, Administrators, etc.) or are most of your speakers from outside your institution? A) Mostly Internal B) Mostly External C) Mixture
16. Do you choose the speaker's topic or do you leave it totally up to them? A) We Choose the Topic B) They Choose the Topic C) It Varies
17. Who is responsible for scheduling the speakers for your chapel program? A) Chaplain/Pastor B) Student C) Faculty D) Administration E) Other
18. Please choose the one criteria that is used most often in selecting your chapel speakers: A) National Prominence B) Prominence within your Denomination C) Expertise in one area of interest at your institution D) Close affiliation with your institution
19. How do you provide financially for your speakers?  
A) Pay Expenses  
B) We Pay Expenses and Honorarium  
C) It Varies  
D) They Pay Their Own Way  
Other  

20. Is your chapel run by the students or the administration?  
A) All Student  
B) All Faculty  
C) All Administration  
D) Mixture  
Other  

21. What do you feel is the most effective way of reaching young people in your chapel program?  
A) Music  
B) Biblical Preachings  
C) Drama  
D) Student Testimonies  
E) Other  

22. What do you feel are the most important topics to address to collegiate young people today in your school chapel services?  
A) Doctrinal Issues  
B) Morality  
C) Relationships  
D) Self-Image  
E) Other  

23. Choose what you consider to be the most important purpose for maintaining your chapel program:  
A) Encouragement  
B) Teaching  
C) Vision  
D) Unity  
E) Other  

24. Do you feel that your chapel program accomplishes its intended purposes?  
A) Most of the Time  
B) Sometimes  
C) Rarely  
D) Does Not Apply  

25. Do you do any type of internal evaluation on your chapel program?  
A) Yes  
B) No  
C) Does Not Apply  

26. Do you have a written philosophy and any other policies regarding the chapel program?  
A) Yes  
B) No  

27. Do you have any policies which guide for chapel exemptions?  
A) Yes  
B) No  
C) Sometimes  

28. I would like to receive a copy of the results from this survey:  
A) Yes  
B) No  

29. Upon your return of this survey it would be greatly appreciated if you could include any copies of documents regarding your chapel program (i.e. internal surveys, policies, philosophy, schedule, etc.)
CONVOCATION SPEAKER SURVEY
FOR FOCUS GROUPS ON 10/3/96: In an attempt to make Convocation a more enjoyable, uplifting, and spiritually challenging experience, this survey has been designed to seek your opinions on the Convocation speakers and messages which have been delivered in Convocation during the past month. Thank you for taking the time to consider these questions. The Campus Pastor's Office

Please respond accordingly to the following statements:

1. I am: A) Male  B) Female
2. What is your classification? A) Freshman  B) Sophomore  C) Junior  D) Senior  E) Graduate student
3. I am: A) 17-19 years old  B) 20-22 years old  C) 23-26 years old  D) 27-29 years old  E) Other
4. I attended a: A) Private high school  B) Public high school  C) Christian high school  D) Home school  E) Other
6. My parents forced me to come to Liberty even though I did not want to come. A) True  B) False
7. My parents wanted me to come to Liberty and I also wanted to come. A) True  B) False
8. I came to Liberty even though my parents would have preferred me to go somewhere else. A) True  B) False
9. I came to Liberty mostly because of Jerry Falwell. A) Yes  B) No
10. I generally knew of Jerry Falwell before I came to Liberty. A) Yes  B) No
11. I have been at Liberty University for: A) Less than one year  B) 1-2 years  C) 2-3 years  D) 3-4 years  E) 5+ years
12. I am a transfer student. A) Yes  B) No
13. I am coming back to Liberty next year. A) Yes  B) No  C) I am not sure yet.
15. I have been saved for: A) Less than one year  B) 1-3 years  C) 3-5 years  D) 5-10 years  E) Other
16. I feel the Lord has called me to "Full-time Christian Service". A) Yes  B) No  C) Possibly
17. I am a: A) RA  B) SLD  C) PL  D) Ministry Team Member  E) None of the Above
19. My current G.P.A. is between: A) 3.5 - 4.0  B) 3.0 - 3.5  C) 2.0 - 3.0  D) Less than 2.0  E) I have not accumulated a G.P.A. yet.
20. Are you a U.S. citizen? A) Yes  B) No
21. How do you classify yourself? A) American Indian or Native Alaskan  B) Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino  C) Black or African-American  D) Hispanic Chicano or Spanish-speaking American  E) Caucasian or White
22. How often do you attend church services per week? (Not including Convocation) A) 2-3  B) Once a week  C) Sporadically  D) Never
23. How many times per week do you have personal devotions? A) 5-7  B) 2-4  C) 0-1  D) Other
24. How often do you read your Bible per week? (This is pertaining to your personal relationship with God, not for schoolwork.) A) Seven or more times  B) 5-6 times  C) 3-4 times  D) 0-2 times
25. How often do you pray per week? (This refers to fellowship with God, not just "bless this food" or "help me on this test.") A) Seven or more times  B) 5-6 times  C) 3-4 times  D) 0-2 times
26. In my opinion, there is an overemphasis on the spiritual program at Liberty. A) Strongly Agree  B) Agree  C) Neutral  D) Disagree  E) Strongly Disagree
27. I am generally satisfied with the spiritual program at Liberty. A) Strongly Agree  B) Agree  C) Neutral  D) Disagree  E) Strongly Disagree
For Questions 28-44: Please rate the following Convocation speakers and topics accordingly as you respond to this statement:

The following Convocation was a blessing to me and helped me to grow spiritually.

A Strongly Agree
B Agree
C Was Not There/Do not Remember
D Disagree
E Strongly Disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Day</th>
<th>Speaker/Description/Topic</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/21/96 Wednesday</td>
<td>Rob Jackson/Freshman Wednesday Night Philippians 4: &quot;How To Stand Fast.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/23/96 Friday</td>
<td>Dr. Falwell/Freshman only chapel Galatians 6:1-5: &quot;How to Keep Your Head Above the Water.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/28/96 Wednesday</td>
<td>Dr. Falwell/Opening Fall Convocation II Corinthians 12:7-10: &quot;Don't Quit.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/30/96 Friday</td>
<td>Dr. Guillermain/Main Chapel I Corinthians 9:24-27: &quot;Four Things to Make You a Champion for Christ.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/2/96 Monday</td>
<td>Rob Jackson/Main Chapel Mark 2:1-5: &quot;Where do I fit in God's Plan to Evangelize the World- The 10/40 Window.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/4/96 Wednesday</td>
<td>Dr. Falwell and Dr. Guillermain/Opening Academic Convocation in full Regalia.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11/96 Wednesday</td>
<td>Randy Hogue/Spiritual Emphasis Week II Corinthians 1:9-10: &quot;Soul Suicide.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/13/96 Friday</td>
<td>Dr. Falwell/Main Chapel John 15:16: &quot;Leaving Behind Fruit that Remains.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/13/96 Friday</td>
<td>Danny Lovett/Ministry Chapel Exodus 3: &quot;The Burning Bush.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/16/96 Monday</td>
<td>Dr. Grant Jeffrey/Main Chapel &quot;Bible Prophecy: Issues Relating to an Inerrant Bible.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/18/96 Wednesday</td>
<td>Rob Jackson John 20: &quot;Mary Magdalene, How to Stay Close to Jesus.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/20/96 Friday</td>
<td>Dr. Larry Thompson/Main Chapel Hebrews 12:1-2: &quot;Fix Your Eyes on Jesus.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/20/96 Friday</td>
<td>Dr. Jerry Falwell/Ministry Chapel I Chronicles 14:8-11: &quot;Getting a Spiritual Break Through.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/25/96 Wednesday</td>
<td>Mike McIntosh/World Impact Conference Mark 5: &quot;Personal Testimony- How God Healed His Mind and Marriage.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/27/96 Friday</td>
<td>Mike McIntosh/World Impact Conference Selected Scripture Passages: &quot;A Challenge Sacrifice.&quot;</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONVOCATION SPEAKER SURVEY
FOR FOCUS GROUPS ON 12/5/96: In an attempt to make Convocation a more enjoyable, uplifting, and spiritually challenging experience, this survey has been designed to seek your opinions on the Convocation speakers and messages which have been delivered in Convocation during the past month. Thank you for taking the time to consider these questions. The Campus Pastor's Office

Please respond accordingly to the following statements:
1. I am: A) Male B) Female
2. What is your classification? A) Freshman B) Sophomore C) Junior D) Senior E) Graduate student
3. I am: A) 17-19 years old B) 20-22 years old C) 23-26 years old D) 27-29 years old E) Other
4. I attended: A) Private high school B) Public high school C) Christian high school D) Home school E) Other
6. My parents forced me to come to Liberty even though I did not want to come. A) True B) False
7. My parents wanted me to come to Liberty and I also wanted to come. A) True B) False
8. I came to Liberty even though my parents would have preferred me to go somewhere else. A) True B) False
9. I attended a: A) Private high school B) Public high school C) Christian high school D) Home school E) Other
10. I generally knew of Jerry Falwell before I came to Liberty. A) Yes B) No
11. I have been at Liberty University for: A) Less than one year B) 1-2 years C) 2-3 years D) 3-4 years E) 5+ years
12. I am a transfer student. A) Yes B) No
13. I am coming back to Liberty next year. A) Yes B) No C) I am not sure yet.
15. I have been saved. A) Less than one year B) 1-3 years C) 3-5 years D) 5-10 years E) Other
16. I feel the Lord has called me to "Full-time Christian Service." A) Yes B) No C) Possibly
17. I am a: A) RA B) SLD C) PL D) Ministry Team Member E) None of the Above
19. My current G.P.A. is between: A) 3.5 - 4.0 B) 3.0 - 3.5 C) 2.0 - 3.0 D) Less than 2.0 E) I have not accumulated a G.P.A. yet.
20. Are you a U.S. citizen? A) Yes B) No
21. How do you classify yourself? A) American Indian or Native Alaskan B) Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino C) Black or African-American D) Hispanic Chicano or Spanish-speaking American E) Caucasian or White
22. How often do you attend church services per week? (Not including Convocation) A) 2-3 B) Once a week C) Sporadically D) Never
23. How many times per week do you have personal devotions? A) 5-7 B) 2-4 C) 0-1 D) Other
24. How often do you read your Bible per week? (This is pertaining to your personal relationship with God, not for schoolwork.) A) Seven or more times B) 5-6 times C) 3-4 times D) 0-2 times
25. How often do you pray per week? (This refers to fellowship with God, not just "bless this food" or "help me on this test") A) Seven or more times B) 5-6 times C) 3-4 times D) 0-2 times
26. In my opinion, there is an overemphasis on the spiritual program at Liberty. A) Strongly Agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree E) Strongly Disagree
27. I am generally satisfied with the spiritual program at Liberty. A) Strongly Agree B) Agree C) Neutral D) Disagree E) Strongly Disagree
Please rate the following Convocation speakers and topics accordingly as you respond to this statement: The following Convocation was a blessing to me and helped me to grow spiritually.

A Strongly Agree  
B Agree  
C Was Not There/Do not Remember  
D Disagree  
E Strongly Disagree

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date/Day</th>
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</table>
| 28. 9/30/96    | Dr. Bob Reccord  
Romans 12:1,2  
"The Difference Between Involvement and Commitment" | A B C D E |
| 29. 10/2/96    | Dr. Jerry Falwell  
I Samuel 17:9  
"The Power of One Life" | A B C D E |
| 30. 10/4/96    | SGA Convocation  
Group Discussion/Town Meeting | A B C D E |
| 31. 10/4/96    | Ed Gomes/Ministry Chapel  
Acts 3:1-10  
"The Unexpected Blessing" | A B C D E |
| 32. 10/7/96    | Super Conference | A B C D E |
| 33. 10/11/96   | Dr. Falwell  
Romans 12:1,2  
"What is Your Destiny?" | A B C D E |
| 34. 10/14/96   | Dr. Ed Hindson  
"The Entire book of Revelation" | A B C D E |
| 35. 10/16/96   | Dwayne Carson  
Exodus 20:7  
"Taking God's Name in Vain" | A B C D E |
| 36. 10/21/96   | Ed Gomes  
II Corinthians 5:17  
"Will the Real Christian Please Stand Up?" | A B C D E |
| 37. 10/23/96   | Pat Robertson  
"The Condition of America and Making a Difference in It" | A B C D E |
| 38. 10/25/96   | Dr. Jerry Falwell  
Homecoming | A B C D E |
| 39. 10/25/96   | Doug Randlett/Ministry Chapel  
Joshua 3  
"Seven Characteristics of a Servant" | A B C D E |
| 40. 10/28/96   | Dennis Cochrane  
Wycliffe Bible Translators  
"The Power of the Word of God in the Duna Tribe in Papua, New Guinea" | A B C D E |
| 41. 10/30/96   | Jamie Parsons  
John 15:1,2  
"How to Run a Business God's Way" | A B C D E |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/1/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Ron Bishop</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>Psalm 19:7-9 &quot;Why the Bible is More to be Desired than Gold&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/1/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Johnny Hunt/Ministry Chapel</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
<td>James 1 &quot;How to Hear from God&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/4/96</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Buddy McCord</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>John 2 &quot;Rising Above&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/6/96</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Dr. Bobby Welch</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>&quot;Personal Testimony on Vietnam&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/8/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Dr. Jerry Falwell</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>Psalm 100 &quot;Thanksgiving and Challenges&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/8/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Steven Smith/Ministry Chapel</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
<td>Mark 2:1-12 &quot;Being Forgiven but not Free&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/11/96</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Matt Willmington</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>Genesis 32 &quot;Wrestling with God&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/13/96</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Dexter Yager</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>&quot;Personal Testimony&quot;</td>
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<td>11/15/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>SGA Chapel</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>David Barton &quot;American History&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/15/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Dr. Elmer Towns/Ministry Chapel</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
<td>&quot;Stories on the Front Porch&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/20/96</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Stuart Epperson</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>&quot;Challenge to use Radio and TV for Spreading the Gospel&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/22/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Dr. Ron Phillips</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>Revelation 2:5 &quot;Four Works of First Love&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/22/96</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Marty Frisk/Ministry Chapel</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
<td>&quot;Missions and the 10/40 Window&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/25/96</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Dr. Griffon Jones</td>
<td>ABCDE</td>
<td>&quot;Four Anecdotes to the Fear of Failure&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27/96</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Eric Lovett/Rob Jackson</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
<td>&quot;Praise and Prayer Service&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In an attempt to make Convocation a more enjoyable, uplifting, and spiritually challenging experience, this survey has been designed to seek your opinions on the Convocation speakers and messages which have been delivered in Convocation during the past couple of months.

Please use the same scan sheet that you used for the Library Survey starting with number 10. Please respond accordingly to the following statements:

10. I am: A) Male  B) Female
11. What is your classification?  A) Freshman  B) Sophomore  C) Junior  D) Senior  E) Graduate student
12. I am: A) 17-19 years old  B) 20-22 years old  C) 23-26 years old  D) 27-29 years old  E) Other
13. I attended a: A) Private high school  B) Public high school  C) Christian high school  D) Home school  E) Other
15. My parents forced me to come to Liberty even though I did not want to come. A) True  B) False
16. My parents wanted me to come to Liberty and I also wanted to come. A) True  B) False
17. I came to Liberty even though my parents would have preferred me to go somewhere else. A) True  B) False
18. I have been at Liberty University for: A) Less than one year  B) One to less than two years  C) Two to less than three years  D) Three to less than four years  E) Over four years
19. I am a transfer student. A) Yes  B) No
20. I am coming back to Liberty next year. A) Yes  B) No  C) I am not sure yet.
22. I have been saved for: A) Less than one year  B) 1-2 years  C) 3-5 years  D) 6-10 years  E) 11+ years
23. I feel the Lord has called me to "Full-time Christian Service". A) Yes  B) No  C) Possibly
24. My current G.P.A. is between: A) 3.5-4.0  B) 3.0-3.4  C) 2.0-2.9  D) Less than 2.0  E) Have not accumulated a G.P.A. yet.
25. How do you classify yourself? A) American Indian or Native Alaskan  B) Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino  C) Black or African-American  D) Hispanic Chicano or Spanish-speaking American  E) Caucasian or White
26. How many times per week do you have personal devotions? A) 5-7  B) 2-4  C) 0-1  D) Other
27. How often do you read your Bible per week? (This is pertaining to your personal relationship with God, not for schoolwork.) A) Seven or more times  B) 5-6 times  C) 3-4 times  D) 0-2 times
28. How often do you pray per week? (This refers to fellowship with God, not just "bless this food" or "help me on this test.") A) Seven or more times  B) 5-6 times  C) 3-4 times  D) 0-2 times
29. In my opinion, there is an overemphasis on the spiritual program at Liberty. A) Strongly Agree  B) Agree  C) Neutral  D) Disagree  E) Strongly Disagree
30. I am generally satisfied with the spiritual program at Liberty. A) Strongly Agree  B) Agree  C) Neutral  D) Disagree  E) Strongly Disagree
For Questions 31 - 52: Please rate the following statements according to the scale below:

A Strongly Agree  
B Agree  
C Neutral  
D Disagree  
E Strongly Disagree

31. I would like to do more singing than we presently do in Convocation.  
32. I like to sing more praise songs than hymns in Convocation.  
33. I would like to sing more traditional hymns and less praise songs in Convocation.  
34. I like the mixture of songs that we typically sing in Convocation.  
35. I would like less special music in Convocation.  
36. I would like more staff, administration, and faculty testimonies in Convocation.  
37. I would like more student testimonies in Convocation.  
38. I would like some of my professors to be able to be the main speakers in Convocation.  
39. I tend to enjoy Liberty's internal speakers more than special guest speakers.  
40. I like speakers who use a lot of illustrations in their messages.  
41. I believe that speakers generally address relevant areas of my life.  
42. I wish we had more student-led Convocations.  
43. I like SGA Convocations.  
44. I wish chapel was longer.  
45. I would like Convocation to be later in the day.  
46. I think Convocation is at the right time of the day.  
47. The ideal time length for a sermon is:  
   A) 20 minutes  
   B) Approximately 25-30 minutes  
   C) Approximately 35-40 minutes  
   E) Other

48. If the Lord is really speaking to me, I find that I do not care how long the sermon is.  
49. I like it when we have something different in Convocation, like concerts, drama, comedians, etc.  
50. I would like to see more drama used in Convocation.  
51. God has used Convocation in a significant way in my life.  
52. I have difficulty focusing on the Lord the way I would like to in Convocation.

For questions 53 - 79: Would you like more messages on the following subjects?

A Yes, definitely  
B Somewhat interested  
C Neutral  
D Somewhat uninterested  
E Not interested at all

53. Relationships (How to Get Along with People)  
54. Personal Walk with God  
55. Integrity  
56. Singleness with a Purpose  
57. Managing Stress and Anxiety  
58. Prayer and Praise Service  
59. Marriage and Family  
60. Prayer  
61. Evangelism  
62. Worship  
63. Victory over Habits  
64. Cultural Awareness  
65. Missions  
66. Moral Integrity  
67. The Needs of the World  
68. Social Responsibility  
69. How to Heal a Wounded Spirit  
70. Witnessing Through Sports  
71. Music Principles  
72. Youth Emphasis  
73. Broken Homes
### Questions 80 - 100: Convocation Speakers and Messages

For Questions 80 - 100: Please rate the following Convocation speakers and messages accordingly as you respond to this statement: **The following Convocation was a blessing to me and helped me spiritually.**

**A Strongly Agree**

**B Agree**

**C Was Not There/Do not Remember**

**D Disagree**

**E Strongly Disagree**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Day</th>
<th>Speaker/Description/Topic</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/14/97</td>
<td>Dr. Jerry Falwell College for a Weekend</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/14/97</td>
<td>Ministry Chapel/Ed Gomes &quot;I'll Say Yes, Lord Yes&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/17/97</td>
<td>Dr. Pierre Guillermin &quot;The Ten Danger Signs of Dating&quot;</td>
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<td>2/17/97</td>
<td>&quot;I Corinthians 13:4-6&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/19/97</td>
<td>Dr. John Hull &quot;The Importance of Worldviews&quot;</td>
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<td>2/21/97</td>
<td>SGA Chapel/Austin Deloach &quot;The Hurdles of Life&quot;</td>
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<td>2/21/97</td>
<td>Ministry Chapel/Joe Hale &quot;We are Created for God's Glory&quot;</td>
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<td>2/24/97</td>
<td>Dr. Dennis Swanberg &quot;The Medicine of Laughter&quot;</td>
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<td>2/28/97</td>
<td>Ministry Chapel/Rick Countrymen &quot;The Dash Between the Years&quot;</td>
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<td>3/3/97</td>
<td>Rick Amato &quot;Second Coming of Christ&quot;</td>
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<td>3/5/97</td>
<td>Dr. Foster Freiss Personal Testimony</td>
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<td>3/7/97</td>
<td>Dick Purnell &quot;How to Live with Yourself and Like It&quot;</td>
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<td>3/7/97</td>
<td>Ministry Chapel/Barry St.Clair &quot;The Hurdles of Life&quot;</td>
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<td>3/10/97</td>
<td>Congressman J. C. Watts &quot;Child-like Faith: Seeing the Possible in the Present&quot;</td>
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Matthew 18

93. 3/12/97 Wednesday 10 a.m. Rob Jackson
   "Spring Break Commissioning Service"
   John 12:23-25

94. 3/14/97 Friday 10 a.m. Tom Mullins
   "Run to Win"
   I Corinthians 9:24-27

95. 3/24/97 Monday 10 a.m. Dwayne Carson
   "Worthy is the Lamb"
   Exodus 12

96. 3/26/97 Wednesday 10 a.m. King's Players
    Passion Play

97. 3/28/97 Friday 10 a.m. Dr. Jerry Falwell
    "The People God Uses"
    Acts 3:1-10

98. 3/28/97 Friday 10 a.m. Ministry Chapel/Dr. Elmer Towns
    "God Can Use You!"

99. 3/31/97 Monday 10 a.m. Annual Preaching

100. 4/2/97 Wednesday 10 a.m. Dr. Dino Pedrone
    "The Good Life"
    Joshua 23
BIBLIOGRAPHY
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Guillermin, A. Pierre, President of Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia, Interview, 17 September 1996.


Towns, Elmer. Dean of School of Religion Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia, Interview, 19 September 1993.


VITA

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PERSONAL
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EDUCATIONAL
B.S., Pastoral Studies, Liberty University, May 6, 1985.

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PROFESSIONAL
Vice-President for Spiritual Life/Senior Campus Pastor, Liberty University, 1992-present.
Associate Dean of Men, Assistant Dean of Men, Liberty University, 1987-1988.