APPROVAL SHEET

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOWLERIAN STAGE-

DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-ASSESSED MATURITY IN CHRISTIAN

FAITHFULNESS AMONG EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS

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To Michalle Rayann Jones,

my wife, my love,

my closest friend

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FDS   Faith Development Survey

FSDS   Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey

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PREFACE

Four years ago, an editor asked me to write the article entitled "faith" for

Nelson's New Christian Dictionary. It sounded like a simple assignment—defining

"faith" in five hundred or fewer words. It wasn't. After weeks of grappling with Anselm

and the apostles, Peter the Lombard and Karl Barth, I had described the historical

development of the idea of Christian faith. A definition of faith was, however, still

lacking. In the end, although I did provide a definition, it was no clearer than the

familiar, 2,000-year-old explanation that complicates as much as it elucidates: "Faith is

the substance of the things for which we hope and the evidence of the things we cannot

see" (Heb 11:1).

The writing of that article marked the beginning of a quest to comprehend this

central act of the Christian life. What I recognized first was that I could not describe

faith in five hundred words. Or a thousand. Or even in the tens of thousands of words

that I have spilled on the pages that succeed this one. Faith cannot be defined—it can

only be lived. Yet, the fact that faith defies definition does not absolve the Christian

from seeking a deeper understanding of faith. The Christian life should be marked not

only by the possession of faith but also by a longing to understand this act that is at once

propositional and personal, objective and subjective, human and divine. This research is

the written record of one portion of one person's pilgrimage toward a deeper

understanding of how faith grows.

Often, as Geoffrey Chaucer seems to have recognized in his *Canterbury*

Tales, the fellow-travelers on a pilgrimage are more important than the journey itself.

That certainly has been the case on my pilgrimage to a fuller understanding of Christian

faith-development. Although this research bears my name, the journey that it reflects

would never have been possible without the assistance of several fellow-travelers.

The members of First Baptist Church of Rolling Hills graciously granted me a

flexible schedule and financial assistance so that I could complete this program. Dr.

Ralph Bethea and Rev. Charles Wyatt of His Holy Arm Ministries provided a research

retreat during which I completed the quantitative portion of this project. Professors

Robert Pazmiño, Hal Pettegrew, Jon Rainbow, and Mark Simpson provided invaluable

insights and guidance throughout the learning process. Gary K. Leak of Creighton

University not only allowed me to use his Faith Development Survey as an external

criterion but also provided an expanded version of his subsequent research. Rodney

Bassett and the Rosemead School of Psychology at Biola University approved a key

aspect of this study—the use of the Shepherd Scale to assess maturity in Christian

faithfulness. Twelve individuals in various organizations served as research assistants,

administering the research instruments and returning the completed instruments to me.

The spiritual journeys of several students that I have had the privilege of mentoring

became bases for the integrative model for spiritual development described in Chapter 5.

Thanks to Abbi Donaho, Amy Ezell, Megan Mallory, David Nottingham, Ryan Jordan, Sierra Olmstead, Jessica Still for the part you allowed me to have in your lives.

This dissertation was written at The Delta Café on 41st Street in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and at the Burger King on Historic Route 66 in Claremore, Oklahoma. Thanks to the folk at both places for fueling this dissertation with copious quantities of Diet Coke.

Finally, my wife, Rayann, deserves more gratitude than words can express. "Blessed be the God of our ancestors! You said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make a helper for him.' Now, oh Lord, allow the two of us continue to find your mercy, and grant us the privilege of growing old together" (Tobit 8:5-7).

<div align="right">Timothy Paul Jones</div>

Catoosa, Oklahoma

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CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH CONCERN

Credo. Pisteuo. "I believe." Not only are these clauses the opening lines of the central creeds of Christianity, but they also point to the central experience around which Christianity revolves. "Without faith," the author of Hebrews claimed, "pleasing God is impossible" (Heb 11:6). It was not love or hope but "the faith" that the earliest Christians were responsible for conveying consistently to succeeding generations (Jude 1:3). Through faith, the sinner secures salvation (Eph 2:8; 3:12, 17). By faith, the Christian experiences life (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11). Perhaps most importantly for the Christian educator, "sincere faith" is a primary goal of Christian instruction (1 Tim 1:5).

Christian faith is not, however, the mere acceptance of static data. Jesus referred to "little faith" and to "great faith" (Matt 14:31; 15:28; 17:20; Luke 12:28). The earliest disciples entreated Jesus, "Increase our faith!" (Luke 17:5). It seems, then, that Christian faith is not only a *fact* but also an *event.* "[Faith] is no state or attribute," Karl Barth declared. "[It] is a history, new every morning" (Barth 1963, 103). In the words of Frederick Buechner, "faith is better understood as a verb than a noun, as a process than a possession" (Buechner 1973, 25). In short, *faith grows.*

Theologians throughout the history of Christianity have recognized faith as a process. The twelfth-century thinker Peter the Lombard contended that faith begins as assent to the truth (*assensus*) but that *assensus* alone is "incomplete faith" (*fides informis*). According to the Lombard, mature faith moves from *assensus* to *fides formata caritate,* "faith formed by love" (Lombard 1855, 3:23:4-5; Aquinas 1945, 1:22*ae*:4:4; see also Calvin 1926, 3:2:8). Before the twentieth century, most theologians were, however, more concerned with discovering the various *aspects* of Christian faith than with charting its development (e.g., Calvin 1926, 3:2:6-7, 13-16, 25; Barth 1957, 4:1:753-79).

In the twentieth century, "structural-developmental" theories of human development emerged, primarily through the work of Jean Piaget. According to Piagetian and neo-Piagetian theory, when the paradigmatic structure of an individual's psyche is unable to assimilate new experiences, the individual restructures his or her personal paradigm to fit the new experiences. This restructuring process—known as "equilibration"—moves the individual to a new stage of development (Rose 1991, 4-5).

The locus of structural-developmental theories was not the intellectual content of an individual's development. It was, instead, the way in which the individual constructed and reconstructed this content to form a workable paradigm for his or her life. The structural-developmental approach focused

> on the underlying *structures* or *operations* of human thought and belief. It [tried] to understand and define the *laws* and *patterns* the mind employs in constructing the ideas, concepts, and beliefs that constitute the *contents* of thinking and valuing. (Fowler 1976, 173)

Structural-developmental theories—such as those mapped by Piaget in the field of learning and by Lawrence Kohlberg in moral development—outlined stages of human perception that are, according to their proponents, universal, sequential, and invariant (Ivy 1985, 9). The structural-developmental stages are sequential and invariant because each stage emerges from the previous stage's equilibration process. It was from this structural-developmental background that "faith-development theory" emerged in the 1970s and 1980s.

Faith-development theory, pioneered by James W. Fowler, envisions the development of faith as a series of stages and seeks to understand the unique characteristics of each stage. According to James W. Fowler, six stages typically characterize the growth of an individual's faith:

1. *Intuitive-projective stage (The Innocent).* Young children up to approximately age seven assimilate the visible faith of their parents. They describe God in vague, non-anthropomorphic images and treat symbols as having power in themselves.

2. *Mythic-literal stage (The Literalist).* The achievement of concrete operations (Piaget) is necessary for the child to move into the mythic-literal stage. Concrete operations allow the child to begin to differentiate between what is real and what is not. This leads the child into disequilibrium and toward a shift to the mythic-literal level of development. In mythic-literal children, the collective "myths" or "sagas" of their families or religious groups become central; they view these sagas literally and uncritically. Anthropomorphic images for God are present. The images are, however, "prepersonal"—i.e., God is distant and, although he is understood as a personal being, he is not one to whom an individual relates. In this stage, cause-and-effect sequences and logical reasoning are important tools for understanding the life of faith. Some adults never progress past the mythic-literal stage.

3. *Synthetic-conventional stage (The Loyalist).* Persons in this stage begin to synthesize life's increasing complexity by conforming to the ideals of a meaningful group. Synthetic-conventional individuals have typically attained formal operations

(Piaget), allowing them to distinguish their beliefs from the beliefs of others. The synthetic-conventional stage is a conformist stage in which beliefs come from outside authorities. While remaining non-analytical, the individual now has a logically structured belief-system. Many adults whose values are strongly peer-influenced do not move beyond the synthetic-conventional stage.

4. *Individuative-reflective stage (The Critic).* At this point, the focus turns toward responsibility for one's own commitments and beliefs—toward questioning and even rejecting familiar assumptions, then molding one's beliefs into a coherent system. Symbols are important only as they convey meanings that are meaningful within the coherence of the individual's belief-system. Fowler termed this arrival of individualized values and beliefs as the emergence of the "executive ego."

5. *Paradoxical-consolidative (conjunctive) stage (The Seer).* A mature stage, seldom reached before the age of thirty, which recognizes the integrity of positions other than one's own and adopts an identity that transcends race, class, and ideological boundaries. Adults in this stage integrate traditional positions with their own doubts and with the beliefs of others to form a meaningful world-view. Conjunctive adults have arrived at a new appreciation for the power of paradox and for myths, rituals, and symbols that express approximations of ultimate reality. A new awareness of mystery leads to a "second naivete" in which persons reclaim and reintegrate many elements of strength left behind in previous stages.

6. *Universalizing stage (The Saint).* Beyond paradoxes and polarities, persons in this stage have rooted their lives in oneness with all people and in the power of being. Ultimate reality has replaced self as the centering reference point of their lives. A renewed vision of life frees persons in this stage to expend themselves for the sake of universal justice and love.

   (The researcher adapted this section from Bassett 1985, 21-23; Downing 1998, 261; Fowler 1981; Fowler 1990b, 399-401; Fowler 1991, 18; McCullough 1983; Pazmiño 1997, 208-09; and, Rose 1991, 95-97. After the publication of *Stages of Faith,* Fowler renumbered his stages, designating infantile faith—previously described as "pre-faith" and numbered as Stage 0—as Stage 1. Because *Stages of Faith* remains the central text for understanding Fowler's theory, this research has retained the original numbering.)

Introduction to the Research Problem

Fowler rooted his understanding of faith in the classical liberal and post-liberal theologies of H. Richard Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, and in the research of religious historian Wilfred Cantwell Smith. These traditions include assumptions that are often inconsonant with the vision of faith embraced by evangelical Christians—a vision that, according to these Christians, is drawn primarily from their authoritative norm for faith and practice, the Judeo-Christian Scriptures.

The difficulties in identifying Fowler's understanding of faith with the understanding of faith found in the Judeo-Christian Scriptures have led one scholar to conclude that the reality to which Fowler refers as "faith" has "little to do with the faith confessed by Christians for nearly two millennia" (Ford-Grabowsky 1986, 5; cf. Loder and Fowler 1982 and McDargh 1984). Evangelical educator Perry Downs has suggested,

> Ultimately, evangelicals must offer an amended version of [Fowler's] stage descriptions and validate them empirically to make this theory more compatible with a distinctly biblical perspective. A more biblically derived version of the ultimate stages of faith would yield a theory more useful for our purposes, one that is exclusivistic in its orientation. (Downs 1995, 84)

Merely offering "an amended version" of Fowler's descriptions, however, may not be enough. While affirming that Fowler's stage-descriptions *do* depict an authentic developmental phenomenon, this researcher has concluded that the phenomenon to which Fowler referred as "faith" is not faith in any Christian sense. What Fowler mapped was, in fact, a sequence of human responses to transcendent value and power (Fowler 1981, 9). One might identify this sequence of responses with the infinite

longing in every human heart (Eccl 3:11), with the universal awareness of the "eternal

power and divine nature" mentioned by the apostle Paul (Rom 1:20), with the *sensus

divinitatis* and the *semen religionis* in John Calvin's writings (Calvin 1926, 1:3:1;

Dowey 1995, 55), with the *mysterium fascinans et tremendum* and *das ganze Andere* in

Rudolf Otto's research (Otto 1923, 13-14), with the cultivation of "ultimate concern" in

Paul Tillich's thought (Tillich 1951, 11-14; Tillich 1957, 38-39), and especially with *das

schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeitsgefuehl* in Friedrich D.E. Schleiermacher's theology

(Schleiermacher 1843, 4:2). None of these responses is, however, Christian faith in any

biblical sense. At this point, the evangelical educator must ask, "If the reality to which

Fowler referred as 'faith' is not Christian faith, what place and function should Fowler's

stages hold in evangelical Christian education?" This research represents one response to

that question.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this descriptive-quantitative study was to analyze the

relationship between individuals' development according to Fowler's stages and their

self-assessed maturity as faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Delimitations

Because Fowler's Stages 1 and 6 are extremely rare in the age-groups that will

comprise the research sample, this research addressed only Stages 2 through 5 (Fowler

1981, 133-34, 200; cf. Rose 1991, 9).

Because this study specifically concerned an *evangelical* perspective on Fowler's work, the researcher excluded non-Christian religions from consideration. Other expressions of Christian faith—such as those found, for example, in mainstream liberal congregations—were also excluded. This study does not deny the meaningfulness or the validity of other expressions of faith, but the scope of this research was limited to evangelical Christianity.

Research Questions

Four questions served as the focus of this exploration of the relationship between individuals' development according to Fowler's stages and their Christian faithfulness:

1. What is the nature of the qualitative relationship between Fowler's faith-development theory and a biblical-orthodox understanding of faith?

2. What quantitative relationships exist between an individual's development according to Fowler's stages and his or her faithfulness as a Christian disciple?

3. What quantitative relationships exist between specified demographic characteristics and Fowlerian stage-development?

4. What quantitative relationships exist between specified demographic characteristics and an individual's self-assessed faithfulness as a Christian disciple?

Terminology

Terms having a unique or decisive function in this research included the following words and phrases:

Biblical-orthodox faith. The objective acceptance of the witness of the Christian Scriptures concerning God's historical self-revelation in Jesus Christ, coupled with a transformative, personal commitment to Jesus Christ. The researcher has labeled this understanding of faith *orthodox* because it stands in continuity with the orthodox theological legacy that—in the words of Athanasius of Alexandria—"the Lord conferred, the apostles proclaimed, and the Fathers guarded" (Athanasius 1978, 4:566). James W. Fowler has also used the adjective "orthodox" to describe this sort of faith (Fowler 1992b, 20-21). The adjective *biblical* has been added to emphasize the derivation of this understanding of faith from the Christian Scriptures. The addition of the word "biblical" also distinguishes the function of the word "orthodox" in this research from the function of the word as a descriptor of the branch of Christianity known as "the Orthodox Church" or "Eastern Orthodoxy." Biblical-orthodox faith should be distinguished from the spiritual gift—also referred to as "faith" in the Christian Scriptures—by which an individual possesses supernatural confidence in God's ability to fulfill his purposes (Matt 17:20; 1 Cor 13:2). Synonym: Christian faith.

Discipleship. The process of developing a lifestyle of faithful obedience to the example of Jesus Christ (see Bonhoeffer 1995, 58, 63-64). The authors of the Christian Scriptures expressed the concept of discipleship through the Greek words *mathema*

("following"), *manthanein* ("to follow"), and *mathetes* ("follower"). Faithfulness as a disciple of Jesus Christ is the inevitable result of authentic faith in Jesus Christ (Mark 10:52; Luke 18:35-43; John 8:31).

Evangelical. An expression of Christianity that emphasizes the preeminence of Jesus Christ as Savior and God, the unique and normative authority of the Christian Scriptures, the personal reception of salvation by grace alone through faith alone, and the need for global evangelism (Bloesch 1978, 7-8, 18-21; Jones 1999; McKim 1996, 96). This definition of "evangelical" includes a broad cross-section of ecclesial organizations, ranging from independent fundamental-conservative groups to biblically-based mainline congregations as well as some segments of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

Faith-commitment. The aspect of Christian faith which entails a transformative, personal commitment to Jesus Christ and engenders obedience to God's Word, perseverance in God's will, and love for God's people (John 3:36; Rom 5:1-5; 1 Cor 13:2; 1 John 3:10; see also Jones 2001a, 292-93). Synonym: *fiducia* (Latin).

Faith-content. The aspect of Christian faith which entails personal confidence in the conditions, promises, and events recorded in the Christian Scriptures, especially in the events relating to God's historical self-revelation in Jesus Christ (Rom 10:9; Heb 11:3-6; 1 John 5:1; see also Jones 2001a, 292-93). Synonyms: *assensus* (Latin), belief.

Other-awareness. The sense of openness to the transcendent realm and to fellow persons that is cultivated by multifarious religious and spiritual practices. Other-awareness is a developmental phenomenon that is present in many—perhaps

all—religions. In this research, "other-awareness" describes the reality to which Fowler referred as "faith." The phenomenon includes openness not only to other human beings but also to the otherness of the transcendent realm—to "the corresponding Other" of Schleiermacher's theology, the "Wholly Other" of Søren Kierkegaard's musings, the "Spiritual Presence" in Tillich's thought, and "the Decisive Other" described by James Cone (Cone 1975; Kierkegaard 1941, 207; Schleiermacher 1843, 4:1-2; Tillich 3:131-32; see also Brunner 1950, 158; Otto 1923, 25-30, 50-59). As other-awareness matures, it "generates and maintains vulnerability to the strange truths of those who are 'other.' [It is] ready for closeness to that which is different" (Fowler 1981, 198). Synonym: spiritual transcendence (Piedmont 1999).

Procedural Overview

After exploring the qualitative relationship between biblical-orthodox faith and the reality to which Fowler referred as "faith," the researcher developed and empirically validated a brief instrument to measure individuals' development according to Fowler's stages (see Appendix 1). The development and empirical validation of this instrument (referred to as the "Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey" or "FSDS") entailed six steps—(1) creation of the survey, (2) determination of content validity, (3) field-testing, (4) assessment of internal reliability, (5) assessment of test-retest reliability, and (6) establishment of criterion-related concurrent validity (see Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 248-55; Leedy and Ormrod 2001, 94-100).

After empirically validating the FSDS, the researcher and several research assistants administered the instrument alongside the Shepherd Scale, a survey which is "based on an explicit biblical operationalization of the Christian faith" and which measures an individual's faithfulness to Jesus Christ in the areas of beliefs, behaviors, values, and attitudes (Bassett et al. 1981, 335-51; Hill and Hood 1999, 67). The sample included 348 members of evangelical religious groups, primarily Baptists in the Midwestern United States.

The final step of the study entailed a detailed analysis and application of significant quantitative relationships between individuals' development according to Fowler's stages, their faithfulness as Christian disciples as measured by the Shepherd Scale, and specified demographic characteristics.

Research Assumptions

The assumptions underlying the current research were as follows:

1. Although the reality to which Fowler refers as "faith" may be incompatible with Christian faith, Fowler's stage-descriptions do accurately depict an authentic developmental phenomenon.

2. Faith itself may not be empirically verifiable or quantitatively measurable; there are, however, certain measurable attitudes and actions which comprise an inevitable, external expression—comprising at least consequential and ideological dimensions and, perhaps, the intellectual dimension (Glock 1973; Stark and Glock 1968)—of Christian faith. Measurement of these attitudes and actions can provide the necessary empirical data to assess the validity and the vitality of individuals' Christian faith.

3. Although the beliefs and practices of evangelicals in various groups or denominations may differ, certain patterns and characteristics are common to all evangelical Christians, regardless of ecclesiastical affiliation.

CHAPTER 2

PRECEDENT LITERATURE

If *fides quaerens intellectum* describes—as Clement, Augustine, and Anselm claimed—the task of the Christian theologian, *quaerens intellegere fidem* summarizes the task of the faith-development theorist. Although the two tasks are equally vital, *quaerens intellegere fidem* logically precedes *fides quaerens intellectum*. The theologian cannot, after all, adequately understand the object of her faith without some comprehension of the nature of the faith by which she seeks this understanding. The primary focus of this chapter is, therefore, *quaerens intellegere fidem*—the foundational task of understanding the essential nature of Christian faith. The secondary task of this chapter will be to examine the relationship of Christian faith to the phenomenon to which James W. Fowler refers as "faith."

A Biblical-Orthodox Understanding of Faith

Faith, as described by the authors of the Christian Scriptures and by orthodox theologians throughout church history, consists of two aspects. The first aspect involves objective assent to the verity and the validity of specific historical events. The second aspect entails a transformative, personal commitment to a divine object. These two

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aspects may be separated for the sake of comprehending the essential nature of Christian

faith. In practice, however, if an individual compromises either aspect, the result is no

longer Christian faith.

Christian Faith as Objective Assent

The author of the letter to the Hebrews assumed the presence of objective

assent within Christian faith: "By faith, we understand that the worlds were prepared by

God's word. . . . Whoever would approach [God] must believe that he exists" [literally,

"that he is"] (Heb 11:3, 6). The apostles made similar assumptions in their letters.

According to Paul, "If you . . . believe in your heart that God raised [Jesus] from the

dead, you will be saved" (Rom 10:9). John asked, "Who is it that conquers the world but

the one who believes that Jesus is God's Son?" (1 John 5:5; see also, e.g., 1 Thess 4:14;

1 John 5:1). Christian theologians have historically referred to the objective aspect of

faith as *assensus*, *fides quae creditur,* and *Erkennen* (Barth 1957, 4:63:2; Brunner 1962,

191; Erickson 1998, 953; Jones 2001a, 292-93; cf. Fowler 1974, 213). "Faith-content"

will be the term used in this research to describe the objective aspect of Christian faith.

Faith-content entails, in John Calvin's words, "a firm and certain knowledge .

. . of God's benevolence toward us" (Calvin 1926, 3:2:7, 12, 14-15; see also Barth 1963,

98; Muller 1990, 207). This "firm and certain knowledge" includes personal confidence

in the conditions, promises, and events recorded in the Christian Scriptures, especially

the events relating to God's historical self-revelation in Jesus Christ (Rom 10:9; Heb 11:3-6; 1 John 5:1; see also Barth 1957, 4:63:2; Barth 1963, 101-02; Brunner 1962, 176-78; Clement 1857, 7:10:57).

Peter the Lombard and later Scholastic theologians delineated a threefold progression within faith-content (McKelway 1990, 170). (1) Faith-content, according to the Scholastics, begins with *fides implicita,* an innate predisposition to trust a higher source of knowledge. (2) *Fides historica,* the acceptance of the historical reality of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ, follows *fides implicita*. Later theologians referred to *fides historica* as *notitia. Notitia* alone is, however, *fides informis,* "incomplete faith." (3) Authentic faith-content goes beyond *notitia* and becomes "explicit faith" (*fides explicita).*

The Reformers contended, against the Scholastics, that Christian faith cannot precede explicit, personal knowledge of God's saving work in Jesus Christ (Calvin 1926, 3:2:3; see also Barth 1957, 4:63:1; Barth 1963, 98; Hellwig 1990, 12). Consequently, according to the Reformers, true faith-content does not emerge prior to *fides explicita*.

Christian Faith as Personal Commitment

Faith-content alone is never, however, an end in itself. The goal of faith-content is transformative, personal commitment (cf. Charry 1997, 18-19, 233). In the words of John Calvin, "The Word of God is not received by faith when it flits about on top of the brain but when it roots itself in the depths of the heart" (Calvin 1926, 3:2:36). Martin Luther declared,

> When do I then have faith? . . . If I do not just believe that what God says is true, but rather put my trust in him, give myself to him, and dare to act with him, and believe without any doubt that he will be with me. . . . Such a faith which takes that risk in God . . . be it in life or death, that faith alone makes a true Christian. (Hermission and Lohse 1978, 168)

Historically, theologians have used *fiducia, fides qua creditur,* and *Bekennen* to describe faith that integrates intellectual confidence and personal commitment (Calvin 1926, 3:2:15; Brunner 1962, 191; Barth 1944, 1:1:7; Barth 1957, 4:63:2). This aspect of faith entails obedience to God's Word, perseverance in God's will, and charity toward God's people (John 3:36; Rom 5:1-5; 1 Cor 13:2; 1 John 3:10; see also Deut 9:23 LXX; Ps 78:19, 22 LXX) (Jones 2001a, 292-93). If a person's faith does not manifest itself through such a lifestyle, his or her faith is false (Jas 2:18-26).

This researcher has chosen the term "faith-commitment" to describe the transformative, personal aspect of faith. Faith-commitment embraces and implements faith-content, engendering the divine-human relationship described in this research as "biblical-orthodox faith" (cf. Erickson 1998, 953; Hodge 1988, 3:16:5; Packer 1958, 51, 115-119). In the writings of the Scholastics, faith-commitment includes three movements—(1) *fides divina* (the divine initiative that engenders faith), (2) *fides actualis* (the appropriation and actualization of saving faith in the individual), and (3) *fides caritate formata* (the fulfillment of faith through a lifestyle of love) (McKelway 1990, 170).

Because faith-content is the essential basis of faith-commitment, faith-commitment can never stand alone. According to Paul, those who have died in Christ

will partake in God's eschatological retinue *because of* their faith-content—because of

their belief "that Jesus died and rose again" (1 Thess 4:14). According to John, to

compromise any key element of Christian faith-content is to provide evidence that one's

faith-commitment is false (1 John 4:3, 15; 5:1-5; 2 John 1:7). The church father John

Chrysostom summarized the biblical relationship of faith-content to faith-commitment in

this way:

> If we have sound doctrine but fail in living, the doctrine is of no use to us. Likewise, if we take pains with life but are careless about doctrine, that will not be any good to us either. It is therefore necessary to shore up the spiritual edifice in both directions. (Chrysostom 1947, 37)

Authentic faith-commitment gives a divinely-ordained certainty to

individuals' existence, participates in the forming of the kingdom of God, provides a

tangible expression of divine power, and flourishes through communion with other

believers (Ebeling 1963, 240-46; see also Loder and Fowler 1982, 135-37). As such, it is

more a *quality* than an *entity,* more an *integrative essence* than a *developmental feature.*

"Faith" in James W. Fowler's Developmental Stages

James W. Fowler's description of faith differs radically from the biblical-

orthodox vision of faith. Biblical-orthodox faith consists of two inseparable aspects,

faith-content and faith-commitment. For Fowler, however, "faith" functions as (1) a

personal loyalty to a shared center of value and power, (2) a consequence of the process

of forming a meaningful image of one's environment, and (3) the way in which an

individual integrates the aspects of her or his existence (Fernhout 1986, 69; Fowler

1981, 33; Fowler 1992a, 4-5; Ivy 1985, 32-35). According to Fowler, the structure of

faith entails seven aspects—(1) form of logic, (2) way of selecting a perspective on life,

(3) form of moral judgment, (4) boundaries of social awareness, (5) locus of authority,

(6) means of finding coherence in the world, and (7) way of relating to symbols (Fowler

1981, 188-202, 274, 285; Fowler and Vergote 1980, 76-78). Fowler has variously

described faith as:

> a disposition of the total self to the total environment in which a trust and loyalty
> are invested in a center or centers of value and power which give order and
> coherence to the force-field of life, which support and sustain (or qualify and
> relativize) our mundane and everyday commitments and trusts, combining to give
> orientation, courage, meaning, and hope to our lives, and, to unite us into
> communities of shared interpretation, loyalty, and trust. (Fowler 1980, 137).

> the person's or group's way of responding to transcendent value and power as
> perceived and grasped through forms of the cumulative tradition. (Fowler 1981, 9;
> Fowler 1990a, 394)

> people's evolved and evolving ways of experiencing self, others, and world (as they
> construct them) as related to and affected by the ultimate conditions of existence
> (as they construct them) and of shaping their lives' purpose and meanings, trusts,
> and loyalties, in light of the character of being, value, and power determining the
> ultimate conditions of existence (as grasped in their operative images—conscious
> and unconscious—of them). (Fowler 1981, 92-93)

> *an apparently genetic* consequence of the universal burden of finding or making
> meaning. (Fowler 1981, 33, italics in original; cf. Niebuhr 1950, 222)

> the process of constitutive-knowing underlying a person's composition and
> maintenance of a comprehensive frame of meaning, generated from a person's
> attachments or commitments to centers of supraordinate value which have power to
> unify his or her experiences of the world, thereby endowing the relationships,
> contexts, and patterns of everyday life with significance. (Fowler 1986a, 25-26; see
> also Bruning and Stokes 1982, 32)

a dynamic and holistic construction of relations that include self to others, self to world, and self to self, construed as all related to an ultimate environment. (Fowler et al. 1991, 21)

In each presentation of the nature of faith, the presence of specific faith-content is, it seems, unnecessary. Faith is, for Fowler, a *way of knowing* that does not necessarily entail *assent to specific knowledge* (Fowler 1981, 11; Fowler 1992a, 11; see also Downs 1995, 76; Fowler 1986b, 278; Niebuhr 1961, 93-102).

Faith, in Fowler's research, does entail a sort of content—but it is not the objectively-centered content that this research has described as "faith-content." Fowler's faith "employs the more aesthetically oriented right hemisphere of the brain" (Simmonds 1986, 84-85). The content of this aesthetically-oriented faith includes the individual's centers of value, images of power, and the paradigmatic narrative by which one integrates the elements of one's life (Fowler 1982, 202; Fowler 1991, 100-02). The distinguishing characteristic of faith is not, therefore, doctrinal—it is the distinctive vocation by which the individual expresses her faith through the virtues and affections that are consonant with her understanding of the life of faith (Fowler 1983b, 160; Fowler 1984, 103-05; Pazmiño 2002; see also Pazmiño 2001, 51-52).

Although influenced by H. Richard Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, Fowler's separation of objective content from the experience of faith arises primarily from his reliance on the research of religious historian Wilfred Cantwell Smith (Downing 1985, 40-41, 47; Fowler 1981, 9; Fowler 1991, 16; Moran 1982). According to Fowler,

Smith is one of the very few students in the history of religion who has the linguistic competence to study most of the major religious traditions in the languages of their primary sources. For nearly two decades he has devoted himself to, among other things, the task of researching and interpreting the contribution each of the central world religious traditions makes to our understanding of faith. As his student, and then later as his colleague at Harvard, I have been enriched and encouraged in my own investigations of faith by his work and person. (Fowler 1981, 9)

"Faith" and "Belief" in the Research of Wilfred Cantwell Smith

In *The Meaning and End of Religion* (1963) and *Faith and Belief: The Difference Between Them* (1979, 1998)*,* Wilfred Cantwell Smith has argued that *to believe* or *to have faith* was, in the pre-modern world, to regard another person with "a certain ultimate loyalty" and to set one's heart on a relationship with that person (Smith 1998, 108). The essence of this faith was a personal engagement that did not demand assent to any objective assertions (Smith 1998, 5-6).

Between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, the meaning of "believes" and "belief" (and, to a lesser extent, "faith") shifted—Smith claims—from *an expression of personal loyalty* to *the acceptance of certain facts as true.* By the late nineteenth century, only the word "faith" had retained any fragments of the pre-modern implication of ultimate, personal loyalty. According to Smith, "the modern world has to rediscover . . . what it means to have faith, to be faithful, to care, to trust, to cherish, to be loyal, to commit oneself: to rediscover what 'believe' *used to mean*" (Smith 1998, 117).

In an attempt to recover the pre-modern meaning of faith, Smith distinguishes sharply between "faith" and "belief." To the word "belief," Smith assigns the meaning

ascribed in this research to "faith-content." "Faith" is reserved to describe what Smith

takes to be the pre-modern definition of "faith" and "belief"—personal loyalty that does

not require the objective acceptance of any specific propositions (Smith 1963, 180-202;

Smith 1998, 12, 61, 77, 118; see also Fowler 1981, 11-13).

  The assertion that Christian faith may require intellectual assent to specific

assertions is, from Smith's perspective, a distinctly modern notion. In fact, according to

Smith, the terms translated "faith," "belief," and "believe" in the Judeo-Christian

Scriptures and in the early Christian creeds *could not* connote the acceptance of certain

assertions as true (Smith 1998, 247; cf. Fowler 1981, 11-12). Smith specifically argues

that, "contrary to modern impressions, the classical creeds of the Church include no

propositional statements. . . . Believing is not what in those centuries Baptism and the

Creeds were about" (Smith 1998, 77).

> [The word *credo*] is a compound from *cor, cordis,* 'heart' . . . plus *-do*, 'put, place, set,' also 'give'. . . . There would seem little question but that as a crucial term used at a crucial moment in a crucial liturgical act of personal engagement—namely Christian baptism—*credo* came close to its root meaning of 'I set my heart on'. . . . [The] concern is about passing from . . . an involvement in one order to a committed involvement in another. It is not at all a question of moving from non-belief to belief. (Smith 1998, 76)

Smith derives primary proof for these observations from *Protocatechesis,* a fourth-

century baptismal rite attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem (Smith 1998, 70-78, 247). The

crux of this baptismal rite was, Smith claims, not the cognitive acceptance of specific

truths about God. It was, instead, "authenticity of purpose: a man's genuine intent to

move from the old life to the new, his determination to turn from 'the world' to Christ"

(Smith 1998, 73).

Wilfred Cantwell Smith's understanding of faith does not deny the presence

or the necessity of belief (i.e., faith-content) within the reality to which he refers as faith.

Faith is, after all, "secondary to, derivative from, [and] answerable to, transcendent

reality and truth" (Smith 1998, 125). For Smith, however, the core belief that comprises

the content of faith is not assent to any specific, historical fact—it is, instead, allegiance

to truth as a transcendent principle (Smith 1998, 167-68). Because the content of this

faith is neither historical nor propositional, Smith can claim that

> there is no reason, in the modern world, why *in principle* an intelligent and
> informed Jew or Muslim and an intelligent and informed Christian, and indeed an
> intelligent and informed and sensitive atheistic humanist, . . . should have different
> beliefs. Yet also there is no reason why they should not continue to live in terms of
> their differing symbols. (Smith 1998, 171)

Fowler, drawing from Smith's research as well as the work of George Lindbeck, has

reached a similar conclusion, which he terms a "cultural-linguistic" understanding of

faith (Fowler 1990a, 396; Fowler 1992b, 22; cf. Tillich 1957, 87, 124). This non-

propositional understanding of faith has been succinctly described by George Lucas in a

discussion of the religious aspects of *Star Wars*:

> I see *Star Wars* as taking all the issues that religion represents and trying to
> distill them down into a more modern and easily accessible construct—that there is
> a greater mystery out there. . . . The conclusion I've come to is that all religions are
> true. . . . Religion is basically a container for faith. And faith . . . is a very important
> part of what allows us to remain stable. . . . That is what "Use the Force" is, a leap
> of faith. There are mysteries and powers larger than we are, and you have to trust
> your feelings in order to access them. (Moyers 1999, 92)

**A Biblical-Theological Critique of "Faith"
in the Research of Smith and Fowler**

The primary difference between biblical-orthodox faith and the reality to which Smith and Fowler refer as "faith" is the presence and function of faith-content. According to the Christian Scriptures and to the orthodox theologians of the church, if an individual compromised or denied certain facets of faith-content, the resultant confession was no longer Christian faith (see, e.g., 1 John 4:3, 15; 5:1-5; 2 John 1:7). According to Smith and Fowler, the necessity of specific faith-content is a modern notion that would have been alien to pre-modern Christians.

*Interpretative Oversights in Smith's
Analysis of the Nature of Faith*

At least two interpretative oversights in Smith's research mar his (and, therefore, Fowler's) understanding of "faith"—(1) selective readings of biblical and patristic documents, and, (2) an apparent assumption that the primacy of personal faith-commitment excludes the necessity of propositional faith-content.

Selective readings of biblical and patristic documents. According to Smith, whether an individual assented to objective claims was, for pre-modern people, never "a matter of final human destiny" (Smith 1998, 159). It is, therefore, "a mistranslation to render any word in the Christian scriptures by the English terms 'belief,' 'believe,' those concepts not being found in the Bible" (Smith 1998, 247). Building on Smith's claims, Fowler has written, "For the ancient Jew or Christian to have said, 'I believe there is a

God,' or 'I believe God exists,' would have been a strange circumlocution. The being or existence of God was taken for granted and therefore not an issue" (Fowler 1981, 12). (Fowler has evidently overlooked the fact that this "strange circumlocution" does, in fact, appear in Heb 11:6.)

What Smith and Fowler imply in these passages is that the terms translated "faith," "belief," and "believe" in the Judeo-Christian Scriptures denoted faith-commitment ("I believe [have faith] *in*") but not faith-content ("I believe [have faith] *that*"). Smith makes similar claims concerning the fathers of the early church and the theologians of the Middle Ages (Smith 1998, 71-91).

Such claims, however, require highly selective readings of the Scriptures and of the theologians of the early church. The key terms for "faith" in the Christian Scriptures and in the writings of the earliest church fathers—*pisteuein* and its cognates—are never fully analyzed in Smith's primary works. (Smith's analysis of Christian faith in *Faith and Belief: The Difference Between Them* begins not with the Christian Scriptures but with the writings of Cyril of Jerusalem, at least two centuries after the completion of the Christian Scriptures.)

A careful analysis of the functions of *pisteuein* in the apostolic writings reveals that the faith of the earliest Christians was not only a matter of having faith *in* a person but also a matter of believing *that* certain facts were true—believing *that* God is, *that* God created the cosmos, *that* God raised Jesus from the dead, *that* Jesus was the divine Son and Messiah (Rom 10:9; 1 Thess 4:14; Heb 11:1-6; 1 John 5:1-5). In the

Greek Septuagint, the Bible of the earliest Christians, *pisteuein* repeatedly implied the

acceptance of specific historical and ontological assertions (see, e.g., Gen 45:26; Exod

4:5, 8-9; 1 Kgs 10:7; Job 9:16; 15:22; Ps 26:13). The second-century church father

Clement of Alexandria expanded on these assumptions regarding faith: "For Clement . . .

faith [was] that which is taught by God, through Christ, in a written revelation" (Bassett

1990, 339; see also Clement 1857, 1:7:38; 1:20:98; 2:2:8; 8:3:7).

This understanding of faith is also present in the writings of the Greek fathers.

In a crucial passage from his catechetical writings, Cyril of Jerusalem—one of the

theologians from whom Smith claimed to derive primary proof for his theses—explained

what he meant when he used the word "faith." (Although Cyril originally wrote in

Greek,

his writings circulated in Greek and Latin. The researcher has, therefore,

inserted key phrases and references from both languages into the translation below.)

> The term "faith" is, according to speaking, one word, yet it has two meanings:
> One kind of faith concerns doctrine [Greek, *dogmatikon*; Latin, *dogmata*]. It
> involves the soul's rising to and accepting some particular point [Greek,
> *sungkatathesis*, "assent to something credible," Clement 1857, 2:12], and it is
> profitable for the soul. . . . For if you will have faith that [Latin, *credideris quod*]
> Jesus Christ is the Lord and that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved
> and will be transported into paradise by the same one who brought the thief into
> paradise. . . .
> The other kind of faith, . . . given by the Holy Spirit as a special favor, is not
> only doctrinal, but it also [Greek, *ou dogmatike monon estin alla kai*] produces
> effects beyond any human capacity. . . . Whenever anyone speaks in faith, having
> faith that it will come to pass [Latin, *credens ita futurum*], without doubting in his
> heart, he receives that grace. . . .
> In learning and professing faith, acquire and maintain only that which is now
> delivered to you by the church and which is built up strongly from all the
> Scriptures. Since all cannot read the Scriptures, . . . so that the soul may not perish

because of ignorance, we hand down the whole doctrine of faith in a few lines [Greek, *to pan dogmates pisteos perilambanomen*, a reference to *The Rule of Faith*]. . . . Be careful, brothers! Hold tightly to the things-that-have-been-handed-down which you now receive! (Cyril 1857, 5:10-13)

Despite Smith's claims to the contrary, Cyril's understanding of faith included assent to specific, objective claims.

Classical Greek authors—including Homer, Plato, and Xenophon—employed *pisteuein* and its cognates to describe the trustworthiness of the statements in a treaty. Later Greek authors, such as Plutarch and Plotinus, used *pisteuein* when discussing the existence or nonexistence of the pagan deities (Stuhlmueller 1990, 105). Again, *pisteuein* clearly implied assent to objective claims.

In the writings of the Latin fathers, *credere* carried much the same meaning that *pisteuein* carried in the Christian Scriptures and in the Greek literature. For Cyprian of Carthage, to believe in ("*credere en*") God was to believe that ("*credere quod*") it was God who had appointed the church's leaders (Cyprian [?], "Epistle LXVIII"). According to Origen of Alexandria, sound doctrines ("*dogmata*") were an essential aspect of Christian faith (Bassett 1990, 339).

Eusebius Hieronymus (Jerome) used forms of *credere* in his Latin Vulgate to indicate assent to objective claims. In Genesis 21:7, *credere* simultaneously suggests belief in a person and assent to an objective claim: "Who, hearing this, would have believed Abraham that [*crederet Abraham quod*] Sarah would nurse a son?" In the book of Job, the protagonist cries, "If I invoked him and he answered me, I do not believe that [*non credo quod*] he would listen to my voice" (Job 9:16). (See also, e.g., Deut 2:11; Ps

26 [27]:13; Luke 1:20; 1 Thess 4:14; and Heb 11:6.) Again, the term translated by the English terms "have faith" and "believe" could and did imply the acceptance of certain facts as true.

In the Middle Ages, *credere* still implied the acceptance of assertions concerning specific, historical events. Thomas Aquinas wrote,

Some urge: Cannot we believe different doctrines and yet hold the same underlying reality? Faith, they say, assents to a thing, not to a proposition about it. . . . Yet they are in error, for the assent of faith operates only through a judgment of reason. . . . When I profess, "I believe in the resurrection," you rightly take me to be committed to an assertion about a past historical event. (Aquinas [2000], snp3023.html#10454)

Considering the functions of *pisteuein* and *credere* in the Christian Scriptures and in the writings of orthodox theologians, Smith's claim that "it is a mistranslation to render any word in the Christian scriptures by the English terms 'belief,' 'believe'" (Smith 1998, 247) is implausible at best. Only the most selective reading of the Scriptures and of the orthodox theologians of the church could lend credence to Smith's conclusion that the Christian usages of *pisteuein* and *credere* did not imply the presence of faith-content. Perhaps James W. Fowler was hinting at this dimension of biblical-orthodox faith when he conceded the presence of "an angular, inconvenient, but tough and resiliently integral truth at the heart of orthodox Christian faith" (Fowler 1986b, 296; see also Fowler 1992b, 20-21).

Exclusion of faith-content from faith-commitment. Smith is correct that, in the pre-modern world, *pisteuein* and *credere* functioned *primarily* as descriptors of relational loyalty. Where Smith errs is in his assertion that, because "faith" primarily

described personal allegiance, to have faith was "not at all a question of moving from non-belief to belief" (Smith 1998, 76; see also Tillich 1957, 124; Tillich 1963, 131). Faith *is* personal engagement. Yet, for those who accept the biblical-orthodox understanding of faith, this act includes not only the "setting of one's heart" on a relationship with a divine person but also confident assent to certain assertions about the person.

Smith's central claim seems to be that—in the early modern era—the meaning of "believes," "belief," and "faith" shifted from personal loyalty to objective assent (Smith 1998, 117, 144-45). The evidence presented here suggests that, for pre-modern Christians, "believe," "belief," and "faith" simultaneously implied personal loyalty *and* assent to objective facts. What occurred in the early modern era was not a *shift* from personal loyalty to objective assent but a *reduction* of faith to objective assent. The primacy of *credere en—*contrary to Smith's apparent assumption—does not exclude the presence or the necessity of *credere quod* (cf. Barth 1963, 103-05; Erickson 1998, 218; Moran 1982, 26-27).

(The reduction of the meaning of faith to objective assent may be briefly outlined as follows: During the early Enlightenment, reason emerged as the predominant basis for faith, and the two aspects of Christian faith were reduced to the single aspect of faith-content. Kant and Schleiermacher recognized that faith-content alone could not sustain Christianity. Yet, instead of reclaiming the twofold nature of faith, Kant rooted faith in *der praktischen Vernunft* ["practical reason," i.e., ethics]*,* while Schleiermacher

identified the essence of Christianity as *das schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeitsgefuehl* ["awareness of absolute dependence"]. Among theological liberals, the ensuing tendency was toward a separation of Christian practice *from* faith-content. Among theological conservatives, the reaction was a view of faith that relied on Enlightenment rationalism to defend the fundamentals of Christian faith-content, in some cases reducing Christian faith *to* faith-content. See Grenz and Olson 1992, 17, 25-31, 39-51; Spickard and Cragg 1994, 232, 253; and, White 1990, 81-83.)

If contemporary Christians are to recover the pre-modern meaning of faith, it will not be by reducing faith-content to Smith's amorphous principles of "assent to truth, whatever it may be" and "the closest approximation to the truth of which one's mind is capable" (Smith 1998, 167-71). It will be by recognizing Christian faith as consisting of two inseparable aspects, faith-content and faith-commitment. Faith is *primarily* personal allegiance—on this point, Smith and Fowler are correct. The fact that personal allegiance is preeminent in faith does not, however, mean that faith is *only* personal allegiance.

The Character and Function of Fowler's "Faith"

This research does not dismiss the notion of a spiritual phenomenon, common to every human's experience, that requires no assent to specific ontological or historical claims. What this research disputes is whether faith-development theorists should identify this phenomenon with biblical-orthodox faith. Christian faith, as understood by the writers of the Christian Scriptures and by the orthodox theologians of the church,

differs at the most fundamental level from the reality to which Smith and Fowler refer as "faith." As such, evangelical educators cannot merely offer "an amended version" (Downs 1995, 84) of Fowler's stages of faith. What is necessary is a comprehensive reworking of Fowler's entire schema.

The first step toward reworking Fowler's stages from an evangelical perspective entails answering the question, "If the developmental phenomenon to which Fowler refers as 'faith' cannot be identified with biblical-orthodox faith, with what theological concept should it be identified?" In this researcher's understanding, the theological concept to which Fowler's understanding of faith corresponds most closely is Friedrich D.E. Schleiermacher's *das schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeitsgefuehl* ("the awareness of absolute dependence").

Schleiermacher's *das schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeitsgefuehl.* Often known as "the father of Protestant Liberalism," Schleiermacher defined religious experience in terms of dependence on "the Infinite." Schleiermacher's primary contribution to theology was his identification of religion with *"Anschauung und Gefuehl"* ("intuition and inner awareness") rather than with objective dogma (Cross and Livingstone 1997, 1463-64).

Das schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeitsgefuehl (hereafter referred to as "the *Gefuehl*") was, for Schleiermacher, "the core of religion." Schleiermacher described the *Gefuehl* as a sense of absolute dependence on transcendent reality, present in varying

levels of intensity in all people, which ties together all religious experiences and unites

every aspect of a person's life (Christian 1979, 83). According to Schleiermacher,

> The feeling of absolute dependence . . . is not to be explained as an awareness of
> the world's existence, but only as an awareness of the existence of God, as the
> absolute undivided Unity. . . . This feeling of absolute dependence . . . is a universal
> element of life. . . . It does not rest upon any particular modification of human
> nature but upon the absolutely general nature of humanity. (Schleiermacher 1843,
> 32:2; 33:1; 34:1.)

Through the *Gefuehl*, persons gain "a sense and taste for the Infinite," and they

experience "the universal being of all things in and through the Infinite" (Schleiermacher

1958, 79, 82; see also Redeker 1973, 42; Schleiermacher 1958, 93).

The *Gefuehl* is not distinctively Christian (Schleiermacher 1843, 93:1-4)—it

is a universal awareness of the infinite and eternal dimension in every part of life. The

Gefuehl is, however, inherently interpersonal. It is meant to be expressed in historical,

concrete communities of faith (Christian 1979, 67, 84). Hence, as the *Gefuehl* develops,

it becomes increasingly communal (Schleiermacher 1958, 208-09, 276).

Because the *Gefuehl* is logically and ontologically pre-cognitive, it can neither

entail nor demand knowledge (Christian 1965, 205-06; Schleiermacher 1843, 3:4, 15:1-

16:2). What the *Gefuehl* provides is the structure through which individuals' internal

knowledge (*Insichbleiben,* abiding-in-self) develops into a pattern of external actions

(*Aussichheraustreten,* passing-beyond-self) (Schleiermacher 1843, 3:3; Schleiermacher

1958, 82).

Schleiermacher proposed three stages through which the *Gefuehl* develops in

the individual. In the first stage, individuals possess an instinctive unity with their

contexts. The second stage begins when individuals become "self-conscious"—i.e., aware of themselves in contrast to their contexts. This recognition leads not only to increased richness and complexity in a person's relationships with others but also to tension and conflict. Those who attain the third stage have been able to synthesize their awareness of their unity with their contexts with their awareness of themselves in contrast to their contexts (Christian 1979, 83-84; Schleiermacher 1843, 5:1-3).

"Faith" and *Gefuehl*. Although their terminologies differed, Schleiermacher and Fowler devised very similar visions of the development of spiritual awareness in the individual. Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and the reality to which Fowler refers as faith are substantively identical in at least six key areas.

First, Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and Fowler's "faith" represent the individual's response to the transcendent realm. According to Schleiermacher, the *Gefuehl* is the way in which persons experience and respond to the presence of "the Infinite" in the created order (Redeker 1973, 42; Schleiermacher 1958, 79, 82, 93). For Fowler, faith is "the person's or group's way of responding to transcendent value and power" (Fowler 1981, 9). (At this point, at least two other theological concepts also seem to relate to Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and Fowler's "faith": [1] In Calvin's theology, the *sensus divinitatis* ["premonition of divinity"] exists in the human mind "by natural instinct" and provides humanity with "an awareness of God's majestic presence" [Calvin 1926, 1:3:1; 2:2:18]. The *sensus,* however, functions positively only in the lives of regenerate persons [Jones 1996]. [2] Rudolf Otto's *mysterium fascinans et tremendum*

represented an overwhelming awareness of the transcendent realm. The *mysterium* was, according to Otto, "a pure positive experienced in the inner awareness" ["*Positives wird erlebt rein in Gefuehlen*"] [Otto 1923, 14].)

Second, Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and Fowler's "faith" describe a pre-cognitive experience of the transcendent realm which does not require propositional content (Christian 1965, 205-06; Fowler 1981, 119-21). Both Schleiermacher and Fowler clearly separated faith-content—"dogmatic propositions" (Schleiermacher) and "belief" (Smith and Fowler)—from the individual's experience of the transcendent realm (Fowler 1981, 11-15; Schleiermacher 1843, 3:4, 15:1-16:2). In both cases, the result is a vision of the religious life that treats every religion as a relative apprehension of one reality (Fowler 1981, 14-15, 205-09; Christian 1979, 78).

Third, although neither Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* nor Fowler's "faith" requires knowledge, each one describes the way in which persons structure their knowledge to make sense out of their experiences. In other words, neither Fowler's "faith" nor Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* determines the content of an individual's beliefs, but "faith" and *Gefuehl* do comprise the structure within which those beliefs develop (Downs 1995, 76; Fernhout 1986, 69; Fowler 1986a, 25-26; Fowler 1992, 11-12; Schleiermacher 1843, 3:3; Schleiermacher 1958, 82). Both phenomena depict a *way of knowing* that does not require *specific knowledge* (Christian 1965, 205-06; Fowler 1981, 11; Fowler 1986b, 278; Fowler 1992a, 11).

Fourth, Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and Fowler's "faith" are universal human experiences, rooted in human nature. According to Smith and Fowler, faith is "a universal human concern," "an essential human quality, " "*an apparently genetic consequence of the universal burden of finding or making meaning,*" "a generic *human* phenomenon—a way of leaning into or meeting life" (Fowler 1981, xiii, 5, 33; Fowler and Vergote 1980, 52; Smith 1998, 129; see also Fowler 1992b, 18). According to Schleiermacher, the *Gefuehl* is "a universal element of life. . . . It does not rest upon any particular modification of human nature but upon the absolutely general nature of humanity" (Schleiermacher 1843, 33:1).

Fifth, Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and the reality to which Fowler refers as "faith" develop in stages that become increasingly open to that which is "other"—i.e., to those who are unlike oneself and to the ultimate, transcendent reality who is "Wholly Other" (see Brunner 1950, 158; Kierkegaard 1941, 207). According to Fowler, advanced development according to his stages "generates and maintains vulnerability to the strange truths of those who are 'other.' [It is] ready for closeness to that which is different" (Fowler 1981, 198; see also Allport and Ross 1967, 434-35; Black 1985, 93; Green and Hoffman 1989, 247-53). This vulnerability involves an increasing openness to ultimate, transcendent value (Fowler 1981, 9). Similarly, for Schleiermacher, an essential element of the *Gefuehl* is an awareness of one's "coexistence with the Other" which grows through increasing reciprocity between oneself and "the corresponding Other" (Schleiermacher 1843, 4:1, 2). (At this point, Tillich stands in continuity with

Schleiermacher and Fowler. Tillich referred to faith as an "ecstatic openness" and as an "awareness of the infinite to which [one] belongs, but which [one] does not own" [Tillich 1957, 9; Tillich 1963, 132].)

Finally, Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and Fowler's "faith" develop in stages that become increasingly communal. At the second stage of the development of the *Gefuehl* and at Fowler's Synthetic-Conventional Stage, the individual becomes conscious of oneself in contrast to one's context (Schleiermacher 1843, 5:1-3; Fowler 1981, 153; see also Christian 1979, 83-84). This self-awareness creates new possibilities for the individual's involvement in particular groups (Fowler 1981, 172). In later stages, Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and Fowler's "faith" enable individuals to become simultaneously aware of their places in particular faith-communities and in the universal community of humanity. As the *Gefuehl* develops, persons become increasingly communal and more aware of their places "in a universal nature-system" (Schleiermacher 1843, 34:1; see also Schleiermacher 1958, 208-09, 276; Schleiermacher 1843, 5:1-3). Likewise, at the highest stage of Fowler's developmental schema, the individual becomes keenly aware of his or her vocation within the "universal community" of humanity (Fowler 1981, 15, 23, 205).

After considering the close correspondence between Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and Fowler's "faith," this researcher has concluded that both thinkers were describing the same reality—Schleiermacher, from a theological perspective, and Fowler, from a structural-developmental perspective. If Schleiermacher's *Gefuehl* and Fowler's "faith"

do denote an identical underlying reality, the evangelical educator must ask, "What term might describe this phenomenon in a way that recognizes its importance while clearly distinguishing it from Christian faith?" Although other phrases might describe the phenomenon equally well, this researcher has selected the term "other-awareness" to denote the developmental structure described by Schleiermacher as "*Gefuehl*" and by Fowler as "faith."

Other-awareness and Christian faith. "Other-awareness" primarily characterizes the development of an individual's sense of openness to other human beings and to the otherness of ultimate reality—to "the Decisive Other" described by James Cone, to "the corresponding Other" of Schleiermacher's theology, to the "Wholly Other" of Søren Kierkegaard's musings, to *das ganz Andere* of Rudolf Otto's research, and to the "Spiritual Presence" of Tillich's thought (Cone 1975; Kierkegaard 1941, 207; Otto 1923, 25-30, 50-59; Schleiermacher 1843, 4:1-2; Tillich 1963, 131-32; cf. Brunner 1950, 158). It is related to the psychological phenomenon that William James described as "consciousness of the Presence" and as

> … a state of mind . . . in which the will to assert ourselves and hold our own has been displaced by a willingness to close our mouths and be as nothing in the floods and waterspouts of God. In this state of mind, what we most dreaded has become the habitation of our safety. . . . [It is] a sense of reality, a feeling of objective presence, a perception of what we may call "something there." (James 1902, 53, 61-62)

> … "something more," "coterminous and continuous" with one's own consciousness," a "transmarginal consciousness." *Something in me* which *makes response* when I hear utterances from that quarter made by others. (Quoted in Wilson 1999, 330-31)

This understanding of the phenomenon to which Fowler refers as "faith" is consistent with Fowler's description of faith as the relational activity by which persons orient themselves to that which is transcendent and with other theorists' contention that Fowler's entire developmental structure may be understood as a series of interactions between the Other and the Self (Clore 1997, 9-21, 36, 37; Fowler 1976, 175; Furushima 1983, 11). It is also consistent with quantitative analyses that have suggested a positive relationship between maturity according to Fowler's stages and consistent exposure to individuals from dissimilar socioeconomic strata (Gorman 1977, 491-504; cf. Allport and Ross 1967, 434-35; Black 1985, 93; Green and Hoffman 1989, 247-53). (The emphasis on relationships with that which is "other" may also explain why some individuals, such as Won Buddhists, who view the divine as radically immanent have difficulties responding to the image of God implied in Fowler's interview questions [Lee 1999, 65-70, 119-21].)

Other-awareness is not prevenient grace, but it is an effect of the prevenience of grace. It is not the exclusive domain of any culture or religion. It is a universal phenomenon that may be engendered and developed through many spiritual and religious practices. It includes the consciousness of the holy that is present in all religions (see Brunner 1950, 157; Loder 1981, 85-86; Moody 1981, 94). The development of other-awareness is not a matter of faith-content or doctrine—it may be described by the psychological construct that one researcher has referred to as *spiritual transcendence* (Piedmont 1999). According to Piedmont, spiritual transcendence is "a

fundamental capacity of the individual" that involves a "connection with a larger sacredness" (Piedmont 1999, 988). Although not to be equated with mysticism, it is certainly related to mysticism. (The sixteenth-century mystic Teresa of Avila described her spiritual ascent as a series of transitions, strikingly similar to Fowler's stages. This ascent has been described not as the growth of faith but as progress on "the mystical path," Meadow 1993, 380).

Other-awareness as context of Christian faith. Although other-awareness is not Christian faith and other-awareness alone cannot cultivate Christian faith, other-awareness may provide *the psychological context for the development of Christian faith*. It is possible that, after conversion, an individual's other-awareness is the framework within which she explores, expands, and evaluates her faithfulness to Jesus Christ. If so, other-awareness cultivates the individual's sense of God's transcendence and of one's connectedness to the transcendent realm and to fellow-believers through the Holy Spirit. As the individual's awareness of this connectedness grows, she increasingly views herself not only as a member of a localized faith-community but also as a vital part of "the holy, catholic Church" with a responsibility for the universal community of humanity. What the social-scientific aspect of this research has explored is the way in which this psychological context for biblical-orthodox faith interacts with the external signs of faith.

Biblical-Orthodox Faith and
Psychometric Measurement

Biblical-orthodox faith simultaneously enmeshes every aspect of an individual's identity, internal and external. Faith is a belief and a mystery, a lifestyle and "a history, new every morning" (Barth 1963, 103). As such, it is questionable whether any instrumentation may quantitatively measure Christian faith. What psychometric instrumentation *can* measure are consequential, intellectual, and ideological dimensions of religiosity (Stark and Glock 1968) that point to the presence and progress of an individual's Christian faith. Yet, *which* measurable aspects actually reveal the viability and the vitality of an individual's faith?

Faithfulness as a Christian Disciple as External
Expression of Biblical-Orthodox Faith

Scripturally, the primary external sign of biblical-orthodox faith is *faithfulness as a disciple of Jesus Christ*. The notion of discipleship is expressed in the Christian Scriptures through the terms *manthanein* ("to follow"), *mathetes* ("follower," "disciple"), and *mathema* ("following," "discipleship"). In its earliest usages, *manthanein* implied an internal process which engaged the will as well as the mind and which transformed an individual's external patterns of living. Among the Jewish rabbis, a *mathetes* was not simply a learner—to be a *mathetes* was to live in a relationship with one's teacher (Rengstorf 1967, 390-461).

For the earliest Christians, faith in Jesus Christ and faithfulness as a Christian disciple were inseparable (Hunt 1985, 52). In the Synoptic Gospels, after Bartimaeus exercised faith in Jesus, the blind beggar immediately "followed him on his way" (Mark 10:52; see also Luke 18:35-43). In the Gospel of John, Jesus declared to those who professed faith in him, "If you abide in my word, then you are truly my disciples" (John 8:31). In Acts, to be a disciple was to "remain in the faith" (Acts 14:22). Luke placed an increase in "the number of the disciples" in synthetic parallelism with persons becoming "obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). In the post-apostolic era, *mathema* and *pistis* ("faith") even functioned as synonyms in ancient baptismal rites (Rengstorf 1967, 390-461). Jon Sobrino accurately summarized the relationship of biblical-orthodox faith and faithfulness as a disciple when he declared,

> Faith in Jesus attains its maximum radicality when we accept his path as normative and traverse it. The most radical and orthodox affirmation of *faith in Jesus* is affirming that the *faith of Jesus* is the correct way to draw nearer to God and realize his kingdom, and then acting accordingly. (Sobrino 1978, 108)

The Dimensions of Faithfulness

Faithfulness as a disciple of Jesus Christ, as presented in the Christian Scriptures, affects no fewer than three measurable dimensions in an individual's life—(1) attitudes, (2) behaviors, and (3) beliefs. Taken together, these three consequential aspects of Christian faith provide a biblical model of faithfulness to Jesus Christ. Two of the dimensions (attitudes and behaviors) relate directly to facets of the individual's faith-commitment (see, e.g., Rom 5:1-2; 1 Cor 13:1-7; 1 John 3:10). The

remaining dimension (beliefs) reflects the foundational element of biblical-orthodox faith-content (see, e.g., Rom 10:9; 1 Thess 4:14; Heb 11:1-6; 1 John 5:1-5). Because the sentiments and characteristics associated with each of these dimensions are measurable and because they comprise specific dimensions of Christian faith, this model provides a potential framework for measuring the validity, vitality, and development of biblical-orthodox faith.

(This researcher would also suggest that the three dimensions of attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs are respectively analogous to the affective, relational, and cognitive domains of human development and to the ideological, consequential, and intellectual dimensions of religiosity. Further research would be necessary, however, to substantiate this suggestion.)

Qualitative Relationship Between Fowlerian "Faith" and Biblical-Orthodox Faith

Biblical-orthodox faith and the reality to which James W. Fowler referred as "faith" cannot be the same phenomenon. Biblical-orthodox faith entails two inseparable dimensions, faith-content and faith-commitment. Fowler's understanding of faith more closely relates to the phenomenon described in the writings of Friedrich D.E. Schleiermacher as *das schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeitsgefuehl*. This universal phenomenon—described here as "other-awareness"—is not Christian faith. It is, nevertheless, possible that the growth of other-awareness and the development of biblical-orthodox faith may affect each other.

Profile of the Current Study

The intent of this study is to explore the nature of the relationship between biblical-orthodox faith and development according to Fowler's stages among evangelical Christians. The following chapter analyzes this relationship through quantitative assessments of individuals' Fowlerian stage-development and of their self-assessed faithfulness in the areas of beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Four research questions served as the focus of this analysis of the relationship

between individuals' development according to Fowler's stages and their self-assessed

maturity in faithfulness to Jesus Christ.

Research Question Synopsis

The four questions were as follows:

1. What is the nature of the qualitative relationship between Fowler's faith-
    development theory and a biblical-orthodox understanding of faith?

2. What quantitative relationships exist between an individual's development
    according to Fowler's stages and his or her faithfulness as a Christian disciple?

3. What quantitative relationships exist between specified demographic
    characteristics and Fowlerian stage-development?

4. What quantitative relationships exist between specified demographic
    characteristics and an individual's self-assessed faithfulness as a Christian
    disciple?

The first research question was addressed under the heading of precedent literature. The

remainder of the research addresses the second, third, and fourth questions.

Design Overview

Data gathering consisted of administering two survey instruments—the

Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey and the Shepherd Scale—to individuals in the

research sample. The data analysis involved comparing individuals' development

according to Fowler's stages with their faithfulness as disciples of Christ, as measured

by the Shepherd Scale (Bassett et al. 1981, 335-51), and with relevant demographic data.

Administration of the FSDS
and the Shepherd Scale

The researcher enlisted twelve research assistants to assist in administering

the FSDS and the Shepherd Scale to the research sample. The researcher and the

research assistants administered the surveys to the research sample according to the

guidelines presented in the Administration Protocols for Research Assistants (Appendix

3).

Population

The population for the present study included all evangelical Christian adults

in the United States. The nonprobabilistic sampling procedure used in this research

precludes making statistical inferences to the larger population from which the sample

was drawn.

Sample

The researcher drew the sample through purposive sampling from adult Bible

study programs within groups or organizations that identified themselves as

"evangelical" as defined in this research. The researcher provided 633 surveys to fifteen

groups and organizations, selected on the basis of convenience of access with the

intention of encompassing a broad range of evangelical perspectives.

The groups and organizations that agreed to participate in the research were as

follows:

1. A smaller rural Baptist congregation, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, in southern Missouri (30 instruments provided, no instruments returned).

2. A Bible study for college students in a smaller Baptist congregation, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, in southern Missouri (25 instruments provided, no instruments returned).

3. Three adult Discipleship Training classes in a middle-sized suburban Baptist congregation, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, in northeastern Oklahoma (30 instruments provided, 16 usable instruments returned).

4. The adult Sunday School department in a middle-sized Baptist congregation, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, in central Kentucky (50 instruments provided, 30 usable instruments returned).

5. A larger Baptist congregation, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, in western Texas (75 instruments provided, 59 usable instruments returned).

6. A senior adult Sunday School class in larger Baptist congregation, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, in a small city in southern Missouri (30 instruments provided, 23 usable instruments returned).

7. An urban Baptist Collegiate Ministries Bible study in west central Missouri (60 instruments provided, 34 usable instruments returned).

8. Three Bible classes and two ministry classes in a seminary, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, in the Midwestern United States (75 instruments provided, 68 usable instruments returned).

9. Two Bible studies in a middle-sized Presbyterian congregation, affiliated with the PCUSA, in southern Mississippi (25 instruments provided, 12 usable instruments returned).

10. Two ministry classes in a multi-denominational undergraduate institution, affiliated with the independent Christian churches, in the Midwestern United States (50 instruments provided, 38 usable instruments returned).

11. A Bible study in a middle-sized non-instrumental Church of Christ in northwestern Washington (30 instruments provided, 27 usable instruments returned).

12. A multi-denominational ministers' Bible study in a small city in central Missouri (20 instruments provided, no instruments returned).

13. A larger urban congregation, affiliated with The Wesleyan Church, in southern California (85 instruments provided, no instruments returned).

14. The multi-denominational ministerial staff of an urban rescue mission in northern California (30 instruments provided, 23 usable instruments returned).

15. A group associated with a professor of Christian education at a Reformed seminary in the southeastern United States (18 instruments provided, 18 usable instruments returned).

Delimitations

The researcher delimited the sample to include only individuals eighteen years of age or older who were, at the time of the study, participating in regularly-scheduled Bible studies. The rationale underlying the sample delimitations were as follows:

1. The researcher delimited the sample to exclude individuals younger than eighteen years of age to reduce the possibility of intra-sample differences based on cognitive development.

2. The researcher delimited the sample to include only individuals participating in a regularly-scheduled Bible study based on the assumption that individuals participating in Bible studies would possess an interest in Christian growth and, therefore, would provide the most useful data for this research.

Limitations of Generalizations

The data from the samples may not necessarily generalize to all evangelical Christian adults in the United States. Furthermore, the data drawn from organizations associated with specific denominations or faith-traditions may not necessarily generalize

to all organizations within those denominations or faith-traditions. Data also may not generalize to individuals younger than 18 years of age or to individuals not participating in regularly-scheduled Bible studies.

Instrumentation

The researcher utilized three research instruments in this study. Two instruments—the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey and the Shepherd Scale—were used to gather the research data. One instrument—the Faith Development Survey (Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999) (Appendix 2)—was used to assess the concurrent validity of the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey.

The Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey

To assess the Fowlerian stage-development of persons in larger research samples, a brief, self-report instrument was a necessity. Such an instrument was necessary because the researcher wished to conduct this research

> without the time-consuming personal interview [used by Fowler] . . . . Such a measure would have the advantage of efficiency and brevity when examining the contribution of [Fowlerian stage-development] to the prediction of important personality, social, or religious variables. Finally, a brief measure would be useful as a dependent variable, for example, for use by educators testing the effectiveness of religious programs or other interventions. (Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999, 107)

> It has been argued that a major reason there is so little empirical evidence regarding Fowler's ideas is that the cost of using the present methods of measurement is prohibitive. Research in faith development has been limited by the lack of an efficient, reliable, and valid measurement instrument (Rose 1991, 8).

> Brief, self-report instruments are a relatively recent phenomenon, dating to

Robert Woodworth's procedure for processing candidates for military service during

World War I (Woodworth 1918). By 1929, self-report instruments had been utilized, with mixed results, to measure religious attitudes (Thurstone and Chave 1929; Wulff 1991). Such instruments are occasionally incapable of accurately revealing subjective feelings, especially when persons are suffering psychological distress (Moran and Lambert 1983, 266). When appropriately validated and administered to a sufficiently sizable population, however, self-report instruments have consistently proven to provide adequate information for research purposes.

Analysis of Current Instruments

Since the publication of *Stages of Faith,* no fewer than seven brief instruments have been developed specifically for the purpose of measuring individuals' development according to Fowler's stages—(1) the Faith Development Scale, (2) the Faith Scale, (3) the Self Report of Faith Development Group, (4) the Developing Faith Questionnaire, (5) the Faith Development Survey, (6) the Values Questionnaire, and (7) the Fowler Religious Attitudes Scale (Barnes, Doyle, and Johnson 1989; Clore 1997; Hammond 1993, 86-87; Hiebert 1993; Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999; Leak 2000; Rose 1991). An eighth survey was developed as part of a larger study, examining the link between Fowlerian stage-development and perceptions of dissimilar others (Green and Hoffman 1989, 249-50). Five of these instruments—the Faith Scale, the Faith Development Survey, the Fowler Religious Attitudes Scale, the Developing Faith Questionnaire, and the Values Questionnaire—have undergone substantive analyses of validity and reliability (Clore 1997; Hiebert 1993; Jugel 1993; Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999, 107-10).

If—as Fowler insists—advanced development according to his stages "implies no lack of commitment to one's own truth tradition" (Fowler 1981, 186), none of these instruments should call for evangelical Christians to compromise any essential facets of their truth tradition. Four of the surveys, however, appear to embrace the assumption that advanced development according to Fowler's stages entails a denial of the universally normative authority of the Christian Scriptures and of the ultimacy of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ.

For example, according to the Faith Development Scale, an individual who has moved from the Individuative-Reflective Stage to the Conjunctive Stage should affirm "the tentativeness of all standards" and agree that "no set of religious beliefs is the whole and final truth for everyone" (Barnes, Doyle, and Johnson 1989, 415, 420; see also Hill and Hood 1999, 168-70). According to the survey developed to determine the relationship of Fowler's stages to perceptions of dissimilar others, individuals who turn to the Christian Scriptures when they have "a personal concern that [has] any religious implications" have not progressed past Stage 2 (Green and Hoffman 1989, 249-50). According to the Self Report of Faith Development Group instrument, persons who believe that their religious faith is "best" have not moved beyond Stage 3 (Hammond 1993, 87). In the Fowler Religious Attitudes Scale, subjects who have advanced to Stage 5 are expected to agree that "all deeply religious people and traditions seek the same 'Absolute' or 'Ultimate' or 'Being' that is at the heart of the universe." An individual who "generally [accepts] the bible as literally true" is exhibiting a characteristic of Stage 2 (Leak 2000).

The Faith Development Survey (hereafter referred to as "FDS"), the Developing Faith Questionnaire, the Values Questionnaire, and the Faith Scale seem less biased than the other instruments. The FDS does not, however, assess specific stage-development. This eight-item, forced-choice instrument measures only the *relative* maturity of an individual's development according to Fowler's structural schema. The FDS classifies persons as "relatively mature" if they exhibit characteristics of Stages 4 or 5 in five or more responses and as "relatively immature" when fewer than five of their responses exhibit characteristics of Stages 4 or 5.

The Developing Faith Questionnaire *does* assess specific stage-development. Unfortunately, the internal reliability of the Developing Faith Questionnaire has proven to be weak when measuring Stages 3 and 5 (Cronbach alpha coefficients were 0.1624 and 0.1888, respectively) (Rose 1991, 19). The Values Questionnaire has exhibited weak internal consistency when assessing Stage 3 and moderate internal consistency when assessing Stages 2, 4, and 5 (Hiebert 1993, 174-75).

The Faith Scale assesses specific stage-development and has proven to be moderately reliable, with alpha reliability coefficients ranging from 0.6673 to 0.6775 (Clore 1997, 87). In his pilot instrument, Clore merged the synthesizing aspects of Stage 2 with the individuating aspects of Stage 3, removed the first aspect ("Form of Logic") from Fowler's aspects of faith, and added an additional aspect ("Understanding of Death") (Clore 1997, 47, 55). In the final version of the instrument, Clore proposed a four-stage model of development—Common Sense Faith, Self Interest Faith, Communal Faith, and Integrating Faith—in place of Fowler's six-stage model (Clore 1997, 109). With these changes, the Faith Scale may accurately assess spiritual stage development;

however, the Faith Scale does not assess *Fowlerian* stage development (cf. Clore 1997,

108). Because this research specifically concerned Fowlerian stage development, the

Faith Scale was not an appropriate instrument for this study.

Due to the apparent association of advanced development according to

Fowler's stages with a denial of essential elements of evangelical faith-content, neither

the Fowler Religious Attitudes Survey, nor the Self Report of Faith Development Group

instrument, nor the Faith Development Scale, nor the Green and Hoffman instrument

was appropriate for use in this research. The Developing Faith Questionnaire and the

Values Questionnaire have exhibited weak internal consistency. Although moderately

reliable, the Faith Scale relies on a radically altered variation of Fowler's stage. None of

these three instruments was, therefore, appropriate for the purposes of this research.

Since the FDS merely measures relative maturity, it too was inappropriate for use as a

primary instrument.

Because of the inappropriateness of the available instrumentation, the

researcher developed a brief instrument, usable in evangelical contexts, for the purpose

of measuring individuals' development according to Fowler's stages. Not only was this

instrument useful for the purposes of this research, but it will also assist future

researchers—both evangelical and non-evangelical—in their assessments of Fowlerian

stage-development.

Development and Validation of the FSDS

Each statement in the researcher's "Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey"

(FSDS) typifies a specific Fowlerian stage. The initial list included twenty-four

statements (Appendix 1). In the first version of the instrument, the statements were

arranged in twelve pairs. Subjects were instructed to indicate whether they agreed more

with the first or the second statement in each pair. The twenty-four statements were

approved by the Research Ethics Committee of The Southern Baptist Theological

Seminary prior to the collection of research data.

The original instrument underwent a five-step process of revision and

validation. The steps entailed (1) assessment of content validity, (2) field testing, (3)

assessment of internal consistency reliability, (4) assessment of concurrent validity, and

(5) assessment of test-retest reliability.

Assessment of content validity. Three faculty members from a prominent

evangelical seminary reviewed the FSDS statements to determine whether the statements

reflected appropriate aspects of the relevant content domain (cf. Gall, Borg, and Gall

1996, 250-51; Leedy and Ormrod 2001, 98). All three faculty members approved the

content of the instrument. One faculty member recommended simultaneously field-

testing two versions of the instrument—a Likert response scale version, in which persons

could indicate whether they "agreed completely" or "mostly agreed" with their chosen

statement, as well as a Thurstone response scale version.

Field testing. Twenty-seven members of adult Sunday school classes in two

Baptist congregations, one rural and one suburban, participated in the first phase of field

testing. Fourteen students received the Likert response scale version of the FSDS, and

thirteen students received the Thurstone response scale version. Subjects were offered an

opportunity following the field test to record comments about the instrument or to

discuss the instrument with the researcher. Six individuals offered written comments. One individual chose to discuss the instrument verbally. Three Likert response scale versions and four Thurstone response scale versions were incorrectly completed. The researcher eliminated these data from the sample.

In the written comments and in the verbal discussion, participants seemed more comfortable with the Likert response scale version. Three individuals who received the Thurstone response scale version specifically expressed frustration with not being able to state that they "generally" or "mostly" agreed with certain statements. Although internal reliability was not the focus of this phase of the study, the researcher did assess the internal reliability of each instrument. The Spearman-Brown split-half coefficient for the Thurstone response scale version was negative (-1.2329); the coefficient for the Likert response scale version was weak but positive (0.2809).

In light of the poor performance of both initial versions of the FSDS, the researcher revised the instrument, separating the pairs of statements into twenty-four separate items. Potential responses to each item ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" on a Likert response scale. The researcher also revised the instructions in light of the surveys that were incorrectly completed in the first phase of field-testing.

In the second phase of field-testing, the researcher administered the revised FSDS to seventeen members of a young adults' Sunday school class and to eight members of an adult discipleship class in a suburban Baptist congregation. The inter-item correlations for this version were mixed but primarily positive—0.4408 when measuring Stage 2; 0.3535 when measuring Stage 3; -0.0124 when measuring Stage 4; and, 0.4343 when measuring Stage 5.

Principal component factor analysis of the responses from this phase of field-testing extracted eight dominant components, using the Kaiser criterion. The primary component (eigenvalue of 6.31, accounting for 26.303% of variance) appeared to be consonant with Fowler's structural-developmental theory. Twelve items—three of the six statements representing each Fowlerian stage—that exhibited weak or negative relationships to the primary component were eliminated from the instrument.

In the third phase of the field test, the researcher administered the twelve-item FSDS to nineteen members of a discipleship group. The inter-item correlations for the twelve-item version were promising—0.4341 when measuring Stage 2; 0.4813 when measuring Stage 3; 0.3092 when measuring Stage 4; and, 0.4410 when measuring Stage 5.

To achieve greater scale reliability, the researcher performed an item-total analysis and deleted the item exhibiting the lowest item-total correlation from the items describing each Fowlerian stage. With this adjustment, the inter-item correlations for the eight-item instrument rose to 0.5121 when assessing Stage 2, to 0.5383 when assessing Stage 3, to 0.5982 when assessing Stage 4, and to 0.8307 when assessing Stage 5. The eight remaining items related primarily to two of the seven aspects of Fowler's theory—Bounds of Social Awareness and Form of World Coherence.

Principal component analysis of the responses to the eight remaining items revealed three dominant components, using the Kaiser criterion (eigenvalues of 2.821, 1.926, and 1.156) (Table 1). A scree test confirmed this analysis. All eight statements loaded positively on the primary component. The primary component accounted for

35.258% of the variance in the responses. (See Figure 1 for the eight statements utilized

in the final instrument, with stage descriptors.)

The two Stage 5 statements loaded strongly on the second component (0.877

and 0.779) (Table 2). The remaining statements demonstrated negative or weak

relationships to the second component, with loadings ranging from -0.368 to 0.194. The

second component's strong relationship to Stage 5, coupled with the weak and negative

relationship to Stages 2 through 4, may lend empirical support to Mary Ford-

Grabowsky's contention that James W. Fowler's stages track two separate

developmental phenomena. According to Ford-Grabowsky, the characteristics of

Fowler's Stages 1 through 4 correspond to the Jungian Ego, while the characteristics of

Stages 5 and 6 are analogous to the emergence of the Jungian Self (Ford-Grabowsky

1986). If Ford-Grabowsky's theory is correct, the second component may relate to

development of the Self but not to development of the Ego. (Throughout this research,

"Ego" and "Self" are capitalized when referring to the Jungian concepts.)

Table 1. Explanation of variance in FSDS by dominant components
(Field-test sample)

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of sq. loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.821	35.258	32.258	2.821	35.258	32.258
2	1.926	24.075	59.333	1.926	24.075	59.333
3	1.156	14.454	73.786	1.156	14.454	73.786

Religious Opinions Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: After reading each statement, fill in the **ONE CIRCLE** that best describes your feelings. There are no "correct" or "incorrect" answers—the only correct answer is the one that honestly represents your opinion.

		Strongly disagree	*Somewhat disagree*	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Somewhat agree*	*Strongly agree*
1	God gives people what they deserve; everyone should accept whatever God does without asking why. [ITEM 2A]	o	o	o	o	o
2	My religion tells me all I need to know about following God. [ITEM 3A]	o	o	o	o	o
3	It is important to try to understand how God acts and why. [ITEM 4A]	o	o	o	o	o
4	Being open to other religions enriches my experiences of God. [ITEM 5B]	o	o	o	o	o
5	A good way to relate to God is to do what God wants, so that God will help you when you need him. [ITEM 2B]	o	o	o	o	o
6	My primary basis for loving others is the beliefs that we share. [ITEM 3B]	o	o	o	o	o
7	It is important to understand the reasons for a religious ritual before I participate in it. [ITEM 4B]	o	o	o	o	o
8	I can learn a lot about life and faith from other religions. [ITEM 5A]	o	o	o	o	o

Figure 1. Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey

Note: Bracketed items following statements are item designations; these designations did not appear on the surveys that were administered to participants

Table 2. Principal component factor
analysis component matrix
(Field-test sample)

Items	Component 1	Component 2
Item 2A	.348	-.326
Item 2B	.755	.148
Item 3A	.660	-.368
Item 3B	.724	.194
Item 4A	.792	-.358
Item 4B	.521	-.346
Item 5A	.236	.877
Item 5B	.463	.779

Because the tertiary component was a singlet, defined by a strong relationship to a single Stage 2 item ("A good way to relate to God is to do what God wants, so that God will help you when you need him"), it was eliminated from consideration. It appears, therefore, that the FSDS is bi-dimensional but that both the primary and the secondary components are consonant with Fowler's developmental structure.

Assessment of internal consistency reliability. Sixty members of support-group Bible studies in an urban Baptist congregation and twelve members of a discipleship group in a suburban Baptist congregation received the revised FSDS. The return rate from the support groups was lower than anticipated; the researcher received only eighteen usable surveys from the support groups. The discipleship group returned nine surveys.

The researcher and an assistant hand-scored the instruments, using the protocols presented in Appendix 4. Each individual's development according to items 1, 2, 3, and 8 was assessed separately from his or her development according to items 4, 5, 6, and 7 (see Figure 1). Using the separate assessments from each half of the FSDS, the researcher calculated the instrument's internal reliability utilizing the Spearman-Brown split-half coefficient. Despite the limited sample, the eight-item FSDS demonstrated acceptable internal consistency for research purposes (cf. Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999, 108)—the Spearman-Brown coefficient for the eight-item instrument $r_{sb} = 0.7778$. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the instrument was $a = 0.7377$.

Assessment of criterion-related (concurrent) validity. To determine the extent to which the results of the FSDS correlate with other related measures (Anastasi 1988, 156), the 18 support-group members who participated in the internal consistency reliability testing also completed the Faith Development Survey. Permission was secured from the author of the Faith Development Survey to utilize his instrument in this study (Leak 2001).

In theory, the FSDS should classify individuals identified as "relatively immature" by the FDS at Stage 2 or Stage 3; individuals identified as "relatively mature" by the FDS should be classified at Stage 4 or Stage 5 by the FSDS. The correlation between the results of the FDS and the results of the FSDS was significant and moderately strong ($r = 0.661$, $p < 0.05$). The moderate internal consistency reliability of the FDS (á = 0.71, Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999, 108-09) may have limited the strength of the correlation between the FDS and the FSDS.

Assessment of test-retest reliability. Five weeks after administering the FSDS

for the purpose of assessing the instrument's internal consistency, the researcher

administered the instrument a second time to the nine discipleship-group members who

participated in the assessment of internal consistency reliability. The correlation between

individuals' stage-development from the first and second administrations of the FSDS

was strong and significant ($r = 0.841$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that the FSDS has robust test-

retest reliability.

Table 3. Summary of statistical validity and reliability assessments
for the eight-item FSDS

Assessment	Model	Coefficient
Internal consistency reliability	Spearman-Brown split-half	.7778
	Guttman split-half	.7714
	Cronbach alpha	.7377
Criterion-related validity	Pearson correlation with FDS	.6610
Test-retest reliability	Pearson correlation with results of prior administration of FSDS	.8410

The Shepherd Scale

The instrument utilized to assess the dimensions of Christian faith was "the

Shepherd Scale" (Bassett et al. 1981, 335-51). The Shepherd Scale is "based on an

explicit biblical operationalization of the Christian faith" and is designed to measure an

individual's faithfulness to Jesus Christ in the areas of beliefs, behaviors, values, and

attitudes. The design of the instrument is based on the assumption that "there is, to some

degree, an observable and measurable life pattern which is distinctively Christian"

(Bassett et al. 1981, 342). "The scale is one of the most frequently cited scales from

1985 to 1994 in the *Journal of Psychology and Theology* and the *Journal of Psychology*

and Christianity, two journals that are explicit in their purpose of integrating psychology

with the claims of the Christian faith" (Hill and Hood 1999, 67).

The Shepherd Scale consists of 38 items presented in a four-point Likert

response scale format, with potential responses ranging from "true" to "not true."

Potential total scores range from 38 to 152. Two subscales are present in the

instrument—the Christian Belief subscale (which measures a phenomenon similar to the

one entitled "faith-content" in this research) and the Christian Walk subscale (which

measures a phenomenon similar to the one described in this research as "faith-

commitment").

**Internal Reliability of the
Shepherd Scale**

After administering the instrument to 62 Christian college students, the

authors of the Shepherd Scale reported a split-half reliability coefficient of 0.82; the

Cronbach alpha coefficient for the sample was 0.86. The test-retest reliability coefficient

was reported as 0.82. The mean score was 136.00 with a standard deviation of 8.70. In a

second sample, the authors found that self-identified Christians scored significantly

higher on the Shepherd Scale than non-Christians (t [28] = 6.29, $p < .001$). A later study

discovered that the scale correlated 0.71 with self-reported importance of religious

beliefs and 0.43 with self-reported frequency of participation in religious activities (Hill

and Hood 1999, 68; Bassett et al. 1981).

The primary author of the Shepherd Scale as well as a representative of the copyright holder granted the researcher permission to utilize the instrument in this research (Atkinson 2002; Bassett 2002). The Research Ethics Committee of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary approved the researcher's usage of the Shepherd Scale prior to the distribution of the instrument in the research sample.

**The Shepherd Scale and Other
Similar Instruments**

Other instruments—most notably the Faith Maturity Scale and the Discipleship Inventory—have also attempted to measure the dimensions of Christian faith. The design of the Faith Maturity Scale, however, focuses on characteristics of faith "as these have been understood in 'mainline' Protestant traditions" (Benson, Donahue, and Erickson 1993, 3). The Faith Maturity Scale's mainline Protestant orientation could have diminished its effectiveness in evangelical congregations. In one administration of the Faith Maturity Scale, researchers were compelled to eliminate data from the Southern Baptist sample because the Southern Baptist data differed so sharply from the data derived from mainline denominations (Benson, Donahue, and Erickson 1993, 10). The Faith Maturity Scale, furthermore, appears to blend items related to Christian faith-development with items related to the construct described in this research as "other-awareness." For example, the Faith Maturity Scale asks whether subjects "accept people whose religious beliefs are different from mine" and whether they are "spiritually moved by the beauty of God's creation enough to help the poor" (Hill and Hood 1999, 173-74).

The Discipleship Inventory is evangelical in its orientation and focuses specifically on individuals' faithfulness as Christian disciples (Waggoner 1991). The

Discipleship Inventory was, however, inappropriate for use in this research for two reasons. (1) With more than 150 responses required, usage of the Discipleship Inventory would have forced Bible study facilitators to allot their entire class time to the surveys. This time-commitment could have decreased the number of organizations willing to participate in the study. (2) The Discipleship Inventory was developed specifically for use in congregations associated with the Southern Baptist Convention; so, many items reflect distinctly Baptist theology and polity. For example, one positively-scored item states, "Once a person is saved, he cannot lose his salvation." Other items assert that "baptism and the Lord's Supper are local church ordinances" and that new believers "should follow in [believers'] baptism by immersion prior to acceptance by a local church as a member." The sample for this study included not only evangelical Baptists but also evangelicals from Pentecostal, Reformed, Restoration Movement, and non-denominational backgrounds. Such a distinctly Baptist instrument could have skewed the results of the research. Because the authors of the Shepherd Scale wrote their instrument to be both "biblical" and "nonsectarian" (Hill and Hood 1999, 67), their instrument was more appropriate for this research.

The Shepherd Scale does share several common elements with the Discipleship Inventory. Characteristics specifically explored in both instruments include all three essential dimensions of biblical-orthodox faith identified in the review of precedent literature (beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes). To this list, the Discipleship

Inventory adds relationships and a commitment to ministry—dimensions that the

Shepherd Scale explores under the categories of personal values, behaviors, and attitudes

(see, e.g., items 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, and 28 of the Shepherd Scale [Hill and Hood

1999, 69, 70]).

Procedures

Prior to the collection of data, permission to conduct the research study was

secured from leaders in each group or organization. Organizational leaders were

informed that neither their names nor the names of their groups or organizations would

appear with the data collected from their organizations. As a courtesy to the participating

organizations, the researcher agreed to provide each organization with an expanded

abstract of the completed study. Educational institutions received the opportunity to

obtain a copy of the completed dissertation for their libraries.

Twelve research assistants were enlisted to facilitate the gathering of data in

organizations that were inaccessible to the researcher. Each research assistant was a

pastor or other minister who had engaged in graduate-level theological study.

Subsequent to making initial contact with the potential research assistant either verbally

or electronically, the researcher provided each prospective research assistant with a copy

of the administration protocols (Appendix 3) and of the survey packet (Appendix 4).

After agreeing to participate in the study, each research assistant received a

letter (Appendix 5), a second copy of the administration protocols, copies of the survey

packet for his or her group, and a postage-paid envelope for returning the survey packets

to the researcher. After administering the surveys to the agreed-upon groups, the research

assistants returned the survey packets to the researcher. The researcher examined each

survey packet to determine the usability of the data, based on the compilation protocols

described in Chapter 4. The researcher and an assistant hand-scored the usable survey

packets and entered the data into the computer program SPSS 11.0.1 for analysis.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between

Fowlerian stage-development and maturity in Christian faithfulness, as assessed by the

Shepherd Scale, among evangelical Christians. To achieve a better understanding of the

dynamics of Fowlerian stage-development and of Christian faithfulness, this study also

analyzed the relationships between Fowlerian stage-development, self-assessed maturity

in Christian faithfulness, and four demographic characteristics.

This analysis of findings is presented in three sections. The first section

describes the process by which the researcher acquired and analyzed the research data.

The second section details the demographic characteristics of the research sample and

the relationships between the demographic characteristics, Fowlerian stage-development,

and individuals' scores on the Shepherd Scale. The final section evaluates the strengths

and weaknesses of the research design, focusing on possibilities for improving the

internal consistency of the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey.

Compilation Protocols

The survey packet administered to subjects consisted of (1) a cover page

requesting (a) pertinent personal data and (b) information regarding the individual's

theological orientation, (2) the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey, and (3) the

Shepherd Scale survey, with (4) a paragraph at the end requesting the participant's

initials, attesting to her or his informed consent to participate in the study (Appendix 4).

Instructions for completing each portion of the survey packet appeared at the top of the

first page of each portion of the survey packet.

Nearly every individual in the research sample received the instrumentation in

the context of a regularly-scheduled Bible study, class session, or other church meeting.

Before and after verbally reviewing the instructions for the instrumentation, the

researcher or research assistant offered persons the opportunity to decline to participate

in the study. Persons choosing to participate in the study were allotted approximately

twenty minutes to fill out the survey packet. The researcher or research assistants

collected the completed survey packets and, in the case of the research assistants,

returned them to the researcher for compilation. (The only exceptions to this pattern

pertained to eighteen Bible-study participants who received their instructions and

instruments electronically and mailed their completed instruments directly to the

researcher.)

Scoring Protocols and Inclusion Criteria

The researcher provided 633 surveys to fifteen groups and organizations. Of

these 633 surveys, 387 were returned, resulting in a return rate of 61.14%. The following

protocols determined whether the researcher included the data from a subject's survey

instrument in this study: (1) The subject must have clearly indicated one response to

every statement on the cover page, on the FSDS, and on the Shepherd Scale. (2) Because

this research represents a specifically evangelical perspective, subject could not disagree

with any statement of evangelical belief on the cover page of the survey packet. (3) Some variation must have existed in the subject's responses to the FSDS.

Based on these protocols, surveys from thirty-nine individuals were eliminated. Thirteen individuals disagreed with one or more statements of evangelical belief. Twenty-six individuals incorrectly completed their surveys. In twenty-two of these cases, the subjects filled in multiple responses to one or more statements. In the remaining four cases, the subjects strongly agreed or strongly disagreed with every statement in the FSDS, rendering impossible any assessment of their Fowlerian stage-development by means of the FSDS. The statistics presented in this chapter are drawn from the 348 remaining survey instruments, comprising 54.98% of the 633 instruments provided by the researcher.

The researcher and an assistant hand-scored the usable instruments, utilizing the protocols presented in Appendix 4. The data were entered into the computer program SPSS for Windows 11.0.1 for statistical analysis.

**Quantitative Characteristics and Relationships
within the Research Sample**

After a description of the general demographic characteristics of the research sample, the researcher will individually examine each of the three quantitatively oriented research questions.

Demographic Characteristics

Of the 348 surveys used in this research, 192 were from males (55.2%), and 156 were from females (44.8%). Nearly one-fourth of the individuals participating in the study were between the ages of 18 and 24; age range percentages for the remainder of the sample ranged from 13.2% to 18.4% (see Figure 2 and Table 4). Pearson's coefficient of skew was 0.130, indicating a well-balanced sample.

Because the researcher had greater access to Baptist organizations, the majority of participants in the study came from Baptist backgrounds (see Figure 3 and Table 5).
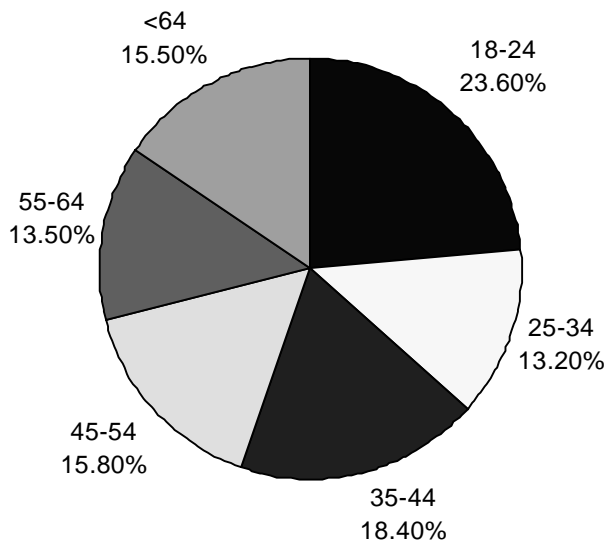
Figure 2. Distribution of age groupings
in research sample

Table 4. Age range frequencies and percentages

Age range	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
18-24	82	23.6	23.6
25-34	46	13.2	36.8
35-44	64	18.4	55.2
45-54	55	15.8	71.0
55-64	47	13.5	84.5
65 or older	54	15.5	100.0
TOTALS	348	100.0	100.0

Table 5. Church affiliation frequencies and percentages

Church affiliation	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Anabaptist	4	1.1	1.1
Baptist	216	62.1	63.2
Evangelical	2	0.6	63.8
Pentecostal	8	2.3	66.1
Reformed	31	8.9	75.0
Restoration Movement	37	10.6	85.6
Roman Catholic	1	0.3	85.9
Wesleyan	2	0.6	86.5
Non-denominational	39	11.2	97.7
No church affiliation	8	2.3	100.0
Totals	348	100.0	100.0
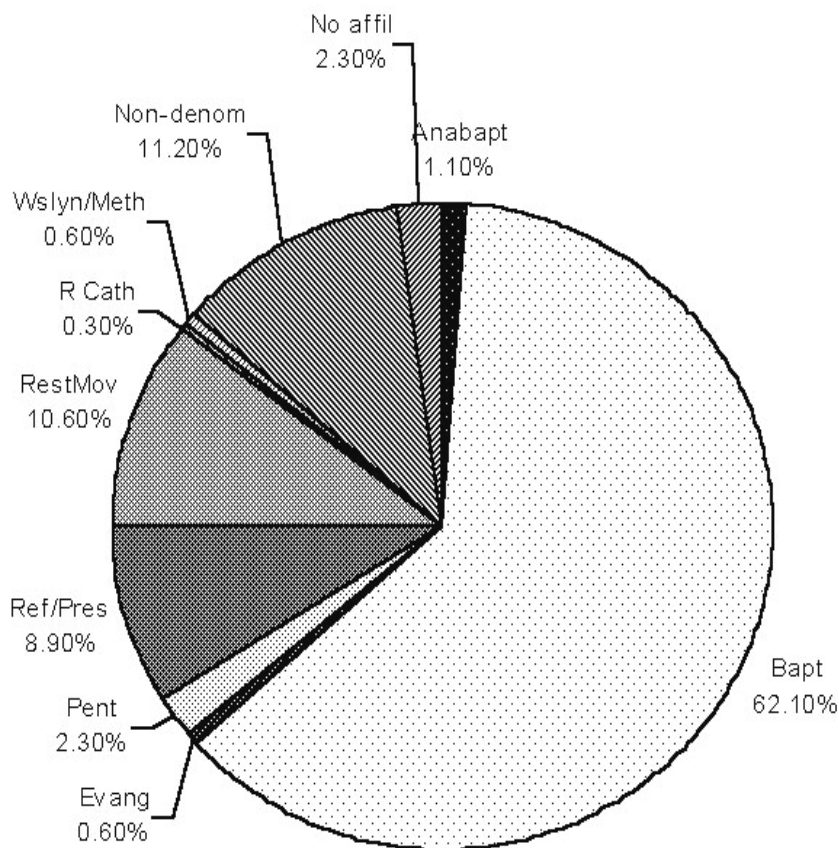
Figure 3. Distribution of church affiliations
in research sample

Nearly three-fourths of the participants considered themselves to have been

Christians for more than a decade (see Table 6 and Figure 4), resulting in a strong

negative skew in this aspect of the sample (Pearson's coefficient of skew = -2.241).

Given that most evangelical church members first profess Christ as children, this skew

may have been unavoidable in a sample comprised completely of evangelical adults.

Table 6. Years as Christian frequencies and percentages

Years as Christian	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Less than one year	6	1.7	1.7
1-2 years	9	2.6	4.3
3-5 years	26	7.5	11.8
6-10 years	48	13.8	25.6
More than 10 years	259	74.4	100.0
Totals	348	100.0	100.0
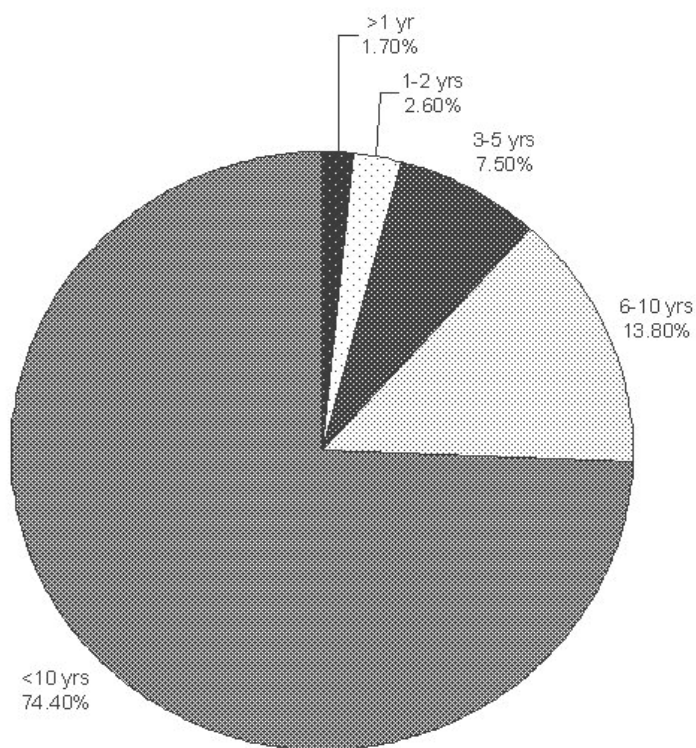
Figure 4. Distribution of years as Christian in sample

The Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey categorized 80.2% of the

participants as exhibiting characteristics of Stage 4 Fowlerian stage-development; 3.2%

primarily exhibited characteristics of Stage 3. Slightly more than 10% of the sample was

classified at Stage 2, while 6.6% of participants were identified as exhibiting

characteristics of Stage 5 (see Table 7 and Figure 5).

Table 7. Fowlerian stage-development frequencies and percentages

Stage	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Stage 2	35	10.1	10.1
Stage 3	11	3.2	13.3
Stage 4	279	80.2	93.4
Stage 5	23	6.6	100.0
Totals	348	100.0	100.0
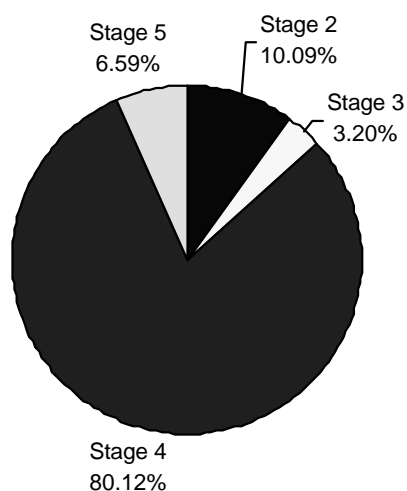
Figure 5. Distribution of Fowlerian stage-development
in research sample

Scores on the Christian Belief sub-scale of the Shepherd Scale ranged from 35 to 52, with a mean score of 49.6 and a standard deviation of 2.94 (see Table 8). The relatively low standard deviation, coupled with a substantive negative skew (Pearson coefficient of skew = -1.817), may indicate the presence of a ceiling effect in this sub-scale (cf. Bufford et al. 1991).

Scores on the Christian Walk sub-scale ranged from 64 to 100, with a mean score of 90.7. Although the results from the Christian Walk sub-scale were somewhat skewed (-0.840), the higher standard deviation (6.90) would seem to indicate that the sub-scale was able to differentiate between various degrees of Christian maturity.

Total scores on the Shepherd Scale ranged from 99 to 152 with a mean score of 140.20 and a standard deviation of 8.43 (Table 8). These scores are not inconsistent with the Shepherd Scale scores reported from a sample of Christian college students in which scores ranged from 111 to 152 with a mean score of 136.00 and a standard deviation of 8.70 (Bassett et al, 1981). A significant relationship existed between subjects' scores on the Christian Belief and the Christian Walk sub-scales (see Table 9).

Table 8. Shepherd Scale means and standard deviations

	N	*Mean score*	*Std. dev.*
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	348	49.6	2.94
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	348	90.7	6.90
Shepherd Scale (Total)	348	140.2	8.43

Table 9. Correlation between Shepherd Scale sub-scales

		Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.376 .000

Quantitative Relationships between Fowlerian Stage-Development and Demographic Characteristics

This subsection deals with the third research question: "What quantitative relationships exist between specified demographic characteristics and Fowlerian stage-development?"

For the initial analysis of these data, the researcher applied the Pearson Chi-square to Fowlerian stage-development and to each demographic characteristic (Table 10). Because Fowlerian stage-development, age ranges, and ranges of years as a Christian were all numerically-ordered categories, the researcher also applied the contingency coefficient to the relationship between Fowlerian stage-development and age and years as a Christian (Table 10).

Table 10. Relationship between Fowlerian Stage-Development
and Demographic Characteristics

		Value	*df*	*Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)*	*Contingency Coefficient*
Gender	Pearson Chi-square	11.098	3	.011	---
Age	Pearson Chi-square	10.225	15	.805	.169
Church Affiliation	Pearson Chi-square	28.250	27	.398	---
Years as Christian	Pearson Chi-square	7.970	12	.787	.150

Fowlerian Stage-Development and Gender

The Pearson Chi-square applied to Fowlerian stage-development and gender

supported the existence of a significant relationship within the sample. The significance

value was 0.011, a value less than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, rejected. In

this sample, subjects' gender did affect their Fowlerian stage-development. Specifically,

women were more likely than men to exhibit primarily Stage 3 or Stage 5 characteristics

(Figures 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10). Even though fewer women than men participated in the

study, more than twice as many women as men were classified at Stage 3 and Stage 5

(Table 11). Women were significantly more likely to exhibit characteristics of Stage 3 or

Stage 5. The higher concentration of females in Stage 3 is consistent with James W.

Fowler's research in *Stages of Faith* (Fowler 1981, 321). In Fowler's sample, Stage 5 did

not clearly relate to gender.
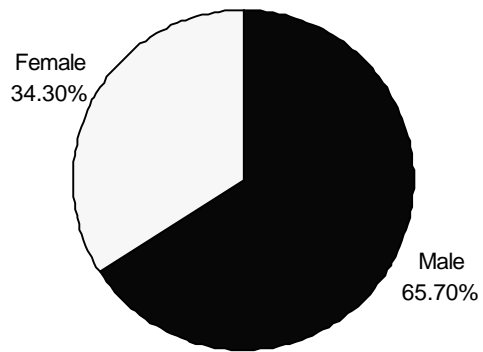
Figure 6. Gender distribution in Stage 2
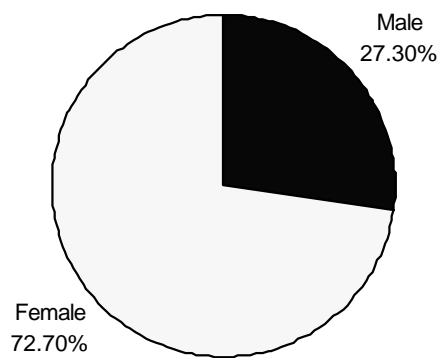
Figure 7. Gender distribution in Stage 3
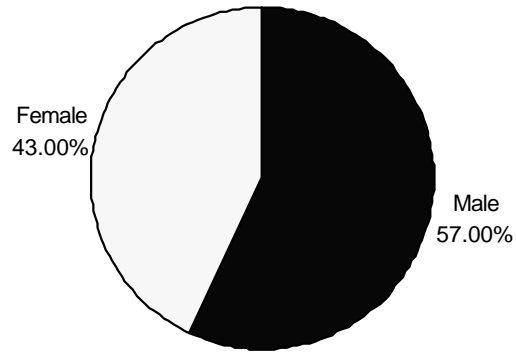
Figure 8. Gender distribution in Stage 4
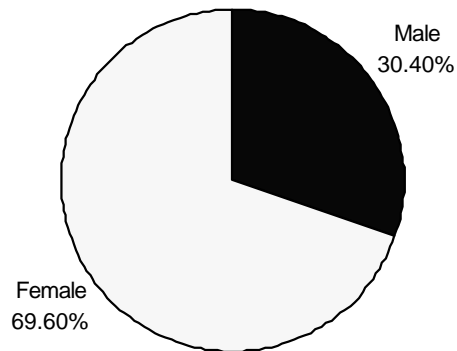
Figure 9. Gender distribution in Stage 5
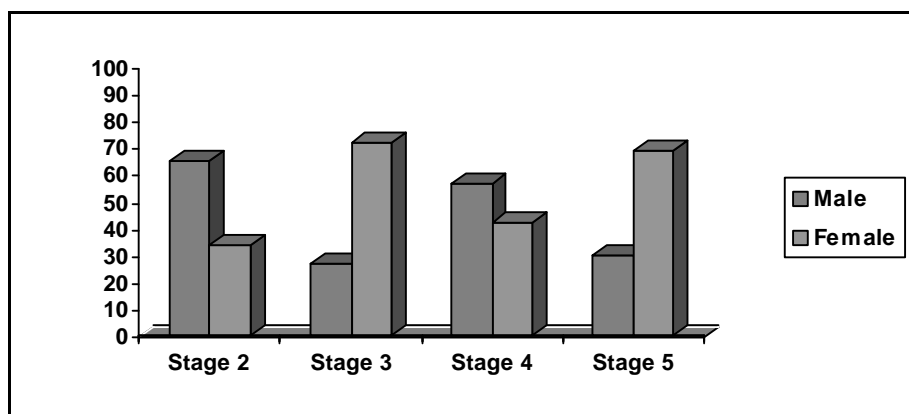
Figure 10. Gender distribution percentages compared
according to Fowlerian stage

Table 11. Fowlerian stage-development frequencies and
percentages organized by gender

		Stage 2	*Stage 3*	*Stage 4*	*Stage 5*	*Totals*
Male	Count	23.0	3.0	159.0	7.0	192.0
	Expected Count	19.3	6.1	153.9	12.7	192.0
	% within Gender	12.0	1.6	82.8	3.6	100.0
	% within Fowlerian Stage	65.7	27.3	57.0	30.4	55.2
	% of Total	6.6	0.9	45.7	2.0	55.2
Female	Count	12.0	8.0	120.0	16.0	156.0
	Expected Count	15.7	4.9	125.1	10.3	156.0
	% within Gender	7.7	5.1	76.9	10.3	100.0
	% within Fowlerian Stage	34.3	72.7	43.0	69.6	44.8
	% of Total	3.4	2.3	34.5	4.6	44.8
Totals	Count	35.0	11.0	279.0	23.0	348.0
	Expected Count	35.0	11.0	279.0	23.0	348.0
	% within Gender	10.1	3.2	80.2	6.6	100.0
	% within Fowlerian Stage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	% of Total	10.1	3.2	80.2	6.6	100.0

Fowlerian Stage-Development and Age

The Pearson Chi-square applied to Fowlerian stage-development and to age groupings did not support the existence of a significant relationship in the sample. The significance value was 0.805 (see Table 10), a value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, accepted. In this sample, subjects' ages did not affect their Fowlerian stage-development. (See Table 12 for the distribution of Fowlerian stages by age ranges.)

Table 12. Distribution of Fowlerian stages by age ranges

	18-24 (%)	*25-34 (%)*	*35-44 (%)*	*45-54 (%)*	*55-64 (%)*	*65 or older (%)*	*% of total sample in each stage*
Stage 2	9.8	10.8	9.4	10.9	8.5	11.1	10.1
Stage 3	2.4	0.0	1.6	5.5	4.3	5.6	3.2
Stage 4	79.3	87.0	85.9	76.3	80.8	72.2	80.2
Stage 5	8.5	2.2	3.1	7.3	6.4	11.1	6.6
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

James W. Fowler posited a loose relationship between chronological age and development according to his stages. "Development through the stages requires both time and physical maturation, though it is not inexorably tied to either. Biological maturation, time, and experience are *necessary* for the emergence of the sequence of stages, but not *sufficient*" (Fowler 1991, 17). The statistical support offered for this relationship, however, related primarily to children and teenagers (see Fowler 1981, 317-

19). According to Fowler, the relation between age and stage for this sample was "tighter in the younger years and in the earliest stages. For later ages and stages the pattern is more spread out" (Fowler 1981, 319).

Other research has, however, called this postulate into question (see, e.g., Rose 1991, 22-23, 111). Without a scientifically-drawn sample, it is uncertain whether Fowler's hypothesized relationship between age and Fowlerian stage-development actually exists.

**Fowlerian Stage-Development and
Church Affiliation**

The Pearson Chi-square applied to Fowlerian stage-development and to church affiliation did not support the existence of a significant relationship. The significance value was 0.398 (see Table 10), a value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, accepted. In this sample, subjects' church affiliation and Fowlerian stage-development did not affect each other. This finding was consistent with Fowler's assertion that church involvement or affiliation should not affect Fowlerian stage-development (Rose 1991, 9).

**Fowlerian Stage-Development and
Years as Christian**

The Pearson Chi-square applied to Fowlerian stage-development and to the number of years individuals considered themselves to have been Christians did not support the existence of a significant relationship. The significance value was 0.787 (see Table 10), a value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, accepted. In this

sample, years as a Christian and Fowlerian stage-development did not affect each other.

Quantitative Relationships between Shepherd Scale Scores and Demographic Characteristics

This subsection deals with the fourth research question: "What quantitative relationships exist between specified demographic characteristics and an individual's self-assessed faithfulness as a Christian disciple?" Shepherd Scale scores and demographic data were compared using the analysis of variance (ANOVA). To determine the strength and direction of significant relationships between Shepherd Scale scores and ordinal data, the researcher also applied the Pearson correlation.

Shepherd Scale Scores and Gender

Females tended to score higher than males on the Shepherd Scale (see Table 13). ANOVA applied to gender and to Shepherd Scale scores did not, however, support the existence of a significant relationship. The significance values for the Christian Belief sub-scale scores, the Christian Walk sub-scale scores, and the total scores were 0.488, 0.400, and 0.353 respectively (Table 14), all values greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, accepted. In this sample, subjects' gender did not affect their self-assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness as measured by the Shepherd Scale.

Table 13. Shepherd Scale means categorized by gender

Gender		Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale) means	Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale) means	Shepherd Scale (Total) means
Male	Mean	49.45	90.40	139.85
	N	192	192	192
	Std. Dev.	3.12	6.96	8.66
Female	Mean	49.67	91.03	140.70
	N	156	156	156
	Std. Dev.	2.71	6.78	8.15
Totals	Mean	49.55	90.68	140.23
	N	348	348	348
	Std. Dev.	2.94	6.87	8.43

Table 14. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores and gender

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups	4.164	1	4.164	.481	.488
	Within Groups	2995.905	346	8.659		
	Total	3000.069	347			
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups	33.578	1	33.578	.710	.400
	Within Groups	16360.017	346	47.283		
	Total	16393.595	347			
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups	61.390	1	61.390	.863	.353
	Within Groups	24600.756	346	71.100		
	Total	24662.147	347			

Shepherd Scale Scores and Age

ANOVA applied to age groupings and to the Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale scores did not support the existence of a significant relationship within the sample. The significance value for the Christian Belief sub-scale scores was 0.083 (see Table 15), a value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, accepted. Subjects' ages did not influence their responses to items in the Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale.

A test for linearity and the Pearson correlation were also applied to subjects' ages and the Christian Belief sub-scale (Tables 15 and 16). According to these formulae, a significant relationship did exist between Christian Belief sub-scale scores and subjects' ages. In light of the ceiling effect observed in subjects' scores on the Christian Belief sub-scale and of the significance values indicated by ANOVA, however, the significance of these tests may be negligible.

Table 15. Correlation between age groupings and
Shepherd Scale scores

		Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	*Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)*	*Shepherd Scale (Total)*
Age group	Pearson Correlation	.147	.247	.253
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.000	.000

Table 16. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores
and age groupings

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups	83.865	5	16.773	1.967	.083
	Linearity	64.557	1	64.557	7.571	.006
	Dev. from linearity	19.308	4	4.827	.566	.687
	Within Groups	2916.204	342	8.527		
	Total	3000.069	347			
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups	1096.888	5	219.378	4.905	.000
	Linearity	1000.052	1	1000.052	22.359	.000
	Dev. from linearity	96.836	4	24.209	.541	.706
	Within Groups	15296.707	342	44.727		
	Total	16393.595	347			
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups	1765.517	5	353.103	5.274	.000
	Linearity	1572.784	1	1572.784	22.492	.000
	Dev. from linearity	192.733	4	48.183	.720	.579
	Within Groups	22896.629	342	66.949		
	Total	24662.147	347			

ANOVA applied to age groupings and to the Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale scores supported the existence of a significant relationship within the sample. The significance value for the relationship between age groupings and Christian Walk sub-scale scores was less than 0.001 (Table 15). The null hypothesis was, therefore, rejected. Subjects' ages did significantly relate their responses to items in the Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale. The test for linearity indicated that the linearity of the relationship between subjects' ages and the Christian Walk sub-scale was also significant (Table 15). The Pearson correlation applied to the age groupings and to the Christian Walk sub-scale scores assessed the strength of the relationship as $r = 0.247$ (Table 16).

ANOVA applied to age groupings and to the Shepherd Scale total scores also supported the existence of a significant relationship within the sample. The significance value for the Shepherd Scale total scores was less than 0.001 (Table 15). The null hypothesis was, therefore, rejected. Subjects' ages did influence their self-assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness as measured by the Shepherd Scale. The test for linearity indicated that the linearity of the relationship between subjects' ages and the Christian Belief sub-scale was also significant (Table 15). The Pearson correlation applied to the age groupings and to the Shepherd Scale total scores assessed the strength of the relationship as $r = 0.253$ (Table 16).

The positive and significant linear relationships between age groupings and the Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale and total scores suggested that maturity in Christian faithfulness tended to increase with age. With the exception of a slight drop in the Christian Walk sub-scale mean scores between the 35- to 44-year-old subjects and the 45- to 54-year-old subjects, the mean scores steadily increased from 88.77 among 18- to 24-year-old persons to 93.59 among subjects who were 65 years old or older (Figure 11 and Table 17). The Shepherd Scale total mean scores also increased, with the same slight drop from the 35- to 44-year-old to the 45- to 54-year-old subjects, from 137.90 in the youngest age grouping to 144.00 in the eldest age grouping (Figure 11 and Table 17).
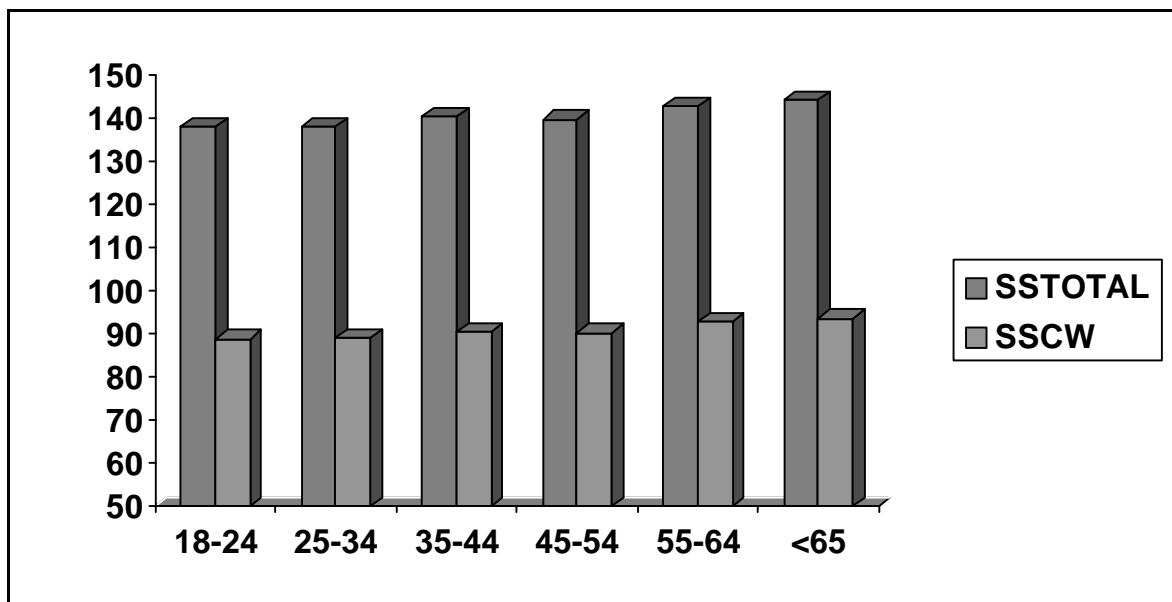
Figure 11. Shepherd Scale Christian Walk and
total means organized by age groupings

Table 17. Shepherd Scale means categorized by age groupings

Age range		Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale) means	Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale) means	Shepherd Scale (Total) means
18-24	Mean	49.13	88.77	137.90
	N	82	82	82
	Std. Dev.	2.88	7.51	9.13
25-34	Mean	48.93	89.09	138.02
	N	46	46	46
	Std. Dev.	3.40	7.33	9.47
35-44	Mean	46.69	90.61	140.30
	N	64	64	64
	Std. Dev.	3.15	5.62	7.08
45-54	Mean	49.33	90.27	139.60
	N	55	55	55
	Std. Dev.	2.63	6.25	7.42
55-64	Mean	49.98	92.81	142.79
	N	47	47	47
	Std. Dev.	3.43	7.28	8.90
65 or older	Mean	50.41	93.59	144.00
	N	54	54	54
	Std. Dev.	1.87	5.78	6.64
Totals	Mean	49.55	90.68	140.23
	N	348	348	348
	Std. Dev.	2.94	6.87	8.43

Further analysis revealed, however, that the relationships between Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale and total scores and subjects' ages were consistently significant only among persons who considered themselves to have been Christians more than ten years (see Tables 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22). (A marginally-significant relationship between age and Shepherd Scale total scores was observed among persons who had been Christians less than a year. Since age did not significantly relate to either of the Shepherd Scale sub-scales among those who had been Christians less than a year, the relationship may have been inconsequential. If the relationship was consequential, it may suggest an initial enthusiasm for Christian growth, accompanying an individual's initial expression of faith in Jesus Christ.)

Table 18. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores and age groupings
among subjects having been Christians less than one year

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	47.500 8.000 55.500	4 1 5	11.875 8.000	1.484	.542
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	486.333 4.500 490.833	4 1 5	121.583 4.500	27.019	.143
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	674.833 .500 675.333	4 1 5	168.708 .500	337.417	.041

Table 19. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores and age groupings
among subjects having been Christians one-to-two years

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	22.306 19.250 41.556	4 4 8	5.576 4.813	1.159	.445
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	570.500 317.500 888.000	4 4 8	142.625 79.375	1.797	.292
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	604.139 468.750 1072.889	4 4 8	151.035 117.188	1.289	.406

Table 20. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores and age groupings
among subjects having been Christians three-to-five years

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	6.607 358.778 365.385	4 21 25	1.652 17.085	.097	.982
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	109.017 1911.944 2020.962	4 21 25	27.254 91.045	.299	.875
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	133.487 3441.167 3574.654	4 21 25	33.372 163.865	.204	.934

Table 21. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores and age groupings
among subjects having been Christians six-to-ten years

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	36.958 329.708 366.667	5 42 47	7.392 7.850	.942	.464
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	190.492 1612.758 1803.250	5 42 47	38.098 38.399	.992	.434
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	366.867 2245.050 2611.917	5 42 47	73.373 53.454	1.373	.254

Table 22. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores and age groupings
among subjects having been Christians more than 10 years

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	51.550 2073.067 2124.618	5 253 258	10.310 8.194	1.258	.283
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	799.654 9414.933 10214.587	5 253 258	159.931 37.213	4.298	.001
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	1141.582 14182.085 15323.668	5 253 258	228.316 56.056	4.073	.001

Shepherd Scale Scores and
Church Affiliation

ANOVA applied to church affiliation and to the Shepherd Scale Christian

Belief sub-scale scores supported the existence of a significant relationship within the

sample. The significance value for the relationship between church affiliation and

Christian Belief sub-scale scores was less than 0.001 (Table 23). The null hypothesis

was, therefore, rejected. Subjects' church affiliation did influence their responses to

items in the Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale. Because of the low standard

deviations and low frequencies in some church affiliation groupings (Table 24), this

datum should, however, be treated with caution.

Table 23. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores and church affiliation

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	277.210 2722.859 3000.069	9 338 347	30.801 8.056	3.823	.000
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	2422.350 13971.245 16393.595	9 338 347	269.150 41.335	6.511	.000
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	3920.260 20741.887 24662.147	9 338 347	435.584 61.367	7.098	.000

Table 24. Shepherd Scale means categorized by church affiliation

Church affiliation		Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale) means	Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale) means	Shepherd Scale (Total) means
Anabaptist	Mean	49.00	93.25	142.25
	N	4	4	4
	Std. Dev.	2.45	3.78	5.12
Baptist	Mean	49.95	92.09	142.04
	N	216	216	216
	Std. Dev.	2.73	6.10	7.34
Evangelical	Mean	51.00	89.50	140.50
	N	2	2	2
	Std. Dev.	1.41	13.44	14.85
Pentecostal	Mean	51.13	93.13	144.25
	N	8	8	8
	Std. Dev.	1.36	6.94	6.90
Reformed	Mean	49.71	87.52	137.23
	N	31	31	31
	Std. Dev.	2.81	6.02	7.16
Restoration Movement	Mean	47.89	89.59	137.49
	N	37	37	37
	Std. Dev.	3.01	6.93	8.80
Roman Catholic	Mean	52.00	95.00	147.00
	N	1	1	1
	Std. Dev.	0.00	0.00	0.00
Wesleyan	Mean	50.00	90.00	140.00
	N	2	2	2
	Std. Dev.	2.83	2.83	5.66
Non-denominational	Mean	49.10	88.26	137.36
	N	39	39	39
	Std. Dev.	2.73	7.22	8.51
No church affiliation	Mean	46.00	77.88	123.88
	N	8	8	8
	Std. Dev.	5.83	9.37	14.28
Totals	Mean	49.55	90.68	140.23
	N	348	348	348
	Std. Dev.	2.94	6.87	8.43

ANOVA applied to church affiliation and to the Shepherd Scale Christian

Walk sub-scale and the Shepherd Scale total scores supported the existence of

significant relationships within the sample. The significance values for the Christian

Walk sub-scale and Shepherd Scale total scores were both less than 0.001 (Table 23).

The null hypothesis was, therefore, rejected. Subjects' church affiliation did influence

their responses to items in the Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale and their self-

assessed Christian faithfulness as measured by the Shepherd Scale total scores. Again,

the low frequencies in some groupings preclude making conclusive assessments

regarding the effect within the sample of specific church affiliations on individuals' self-

assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness.

It is noteworthy that individuals who indicated that they had no affiliation

with any church scored significantly lower than other groups on all components of the

Shepherd Scale. This relationship may be partly attributed to the high percentage of

younger individuals among those indicating no church preference or affiliation—62.50%

of the individuals indicating no church affiliation were 18- to 24-year-old persons. The

relationship cannot, however, be attributed completely to age. The mean age groupings

of the Evangelical, Pentecostal, Wesleyan, and non-denominational groupings were each

equal to or lower than the mean age grouping of participants indicating no church

affiliation (Table 25). Yet self-assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness was

consistently higher among Evangelical, Pentecostal, Wesleyan, and non-denominational

participants than among participants indicating no church affiliation (Table 24).

Table 25. Mean age groupings categorized by church affiliation

Church affiliation		Mean age grouping
Anabaptist	Mean N Std. Dev.	3.50 4 2.89
Baptist	Mean N Std. Dev.	3.56 216 1.59
Evangelical	Mean N Std. Dev.	1.00 2 .00
Pentecostal	Mean N Std. Dev.	1.88 8 1.13
Reformed	Mean N Std. Dev.	4.58 31 1.29
Restoration Movement	Mean N Std. Dev.	3.38 37 1.96
Roman Catholic	Mean N Std. Dev.	2.00 1 .00
Wesleyan	Mean N Std. Dev.	1.00 2 .00
Non-denominational	Mean N Std. Dev.	1.51 39 1.17
No church affiliation	Mean N Std. Dev.	1.88 8 1.36
Totals	Mean N Std. Dev.	3.29 348 1.75

Shepherd Scale Scores and
Years as Christian

ANOVA applied to the number of years individuals considered themselves to have been Christians and to the Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale scores did not support the existence of a significant relationship within the sample. The significance value for the Christian Belief sub-scale scores was 0.253 (see Table 26), a value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, accepted. Subjects' number of years as Christians did not influence their responses to items in the Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale. A test for linearity and the Pearson correlation were also applied to subjects' years as Christians and their scores on the Christian Belief sub-scale (Tables 26 and 27); however, in light of the ceiling effect observed in subjects' scores on the Christian Belief sub-scale and of the significance values indicated by ANOVA, the significance of these tests is probably negligible.

ANOVA applied to the number of years individuals considered themselves to have been Christians and to the Christian Walk sub-scale scores supported the existence of a significant relationship within the sample. The significance value for the Christian Walk sub-scale scores was less than 0.001 (Table 26). The null hypothesis was, therefore, rejected. Subjects' number of years as Christians did influence their responses to the Christian Walk sub-scale of the Shepherd Scale. The test for linearity indicated that the linearity of the relationship between subjects' years as Christians and the Christian Walk sub-scale was also significant (Table 26). The Pearson correlation applied to the number of years individuals considered themselves to have been Christians and to the Shepherd

Scale Christian Walk sub-scale scores assessed the strength of the relationship

as $r = 0.223$ (Table 27)

Table 26. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores and years as Christian

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups	46.344	4	11.586	1.345	.253
	Linearity	44.524	1	44.524	5.170	.024
	Dev. from linearity	1.821	3	.607	.070	.976
	Within Groups	2953.725	343	8.611		
	Total	3000.069	347			
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups	975.963	4	243.991	5.428	.000
	Linearity	813.031	1	813.031	18.088	.000
	Dev. from linearity	162.932	3	54.311	1.208	.307
	Within Groups	15417.632	343	44.949		
	Total	16393.595	347			
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups	1403.686	4	350.921	5.175	.000
	Linearity	1238.077	1	1238.077	18.258	.000
	Dev. from linearity	165.609	3	55.203	.814	.487
	Within Groups	23258.461	343	67.809		
	Total	24662.147	347			

Table 27. Correlation between years as Christian and Shepherd Scale scores

		Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	*Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)*	*Shepherd Scale (Total)*
Years as Christian	Pearson Correlation	.122	.223	.224
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.000	.000

ANOVA applied to the number of years individuals considered themselves to

have been Christians and to the Shepherd Scale total scores also supported the existence

of a significant relationship within the sample. The significance value for the Shepherd

Scale total scores was less than 0.001 (Table 26). The null hypothesis was, therefore,

rejected. Subjects' number of years as Christians did influence their self-assessed

faithfulness in Christian maturity, as measured by the Shepherd Scale. The test for

linearity indicated that the linearity of the relationship between subjects' years as

Christians and Shepherd Scale total scores was also significant (Table 26). The Pearson

correlation applied to the number of years individuals considered themselves to have

been Christians and the Shepherd Scale total scores assessed the strength of the

relationship as $r = 0.224$ (Table 27).

The positive linear relationships between the number of years individuals

considered themselves to have been Christians and the Shepherd Scale Christian Walk

sub-scale and total scores were not strong, but they were significant, indicating that

individuals who had been Christians longer tended to exhibit more advanced maturity in

Christian faithfulness (Figure 12 and Table 28). With the exception of one slight drop,

the Christian Walk sub-scale mean scores steadily increased from 85.83 among

individuals who had been Christians less than a year to 91.53 among subjects who had

been Christians for more than a decade. The Shepherd Scale total mean scores also

increased, from 134.33 among the newest Christians to 141.26 among those who

considered themselves to have been Christians for more than ten years (Figure 13 and
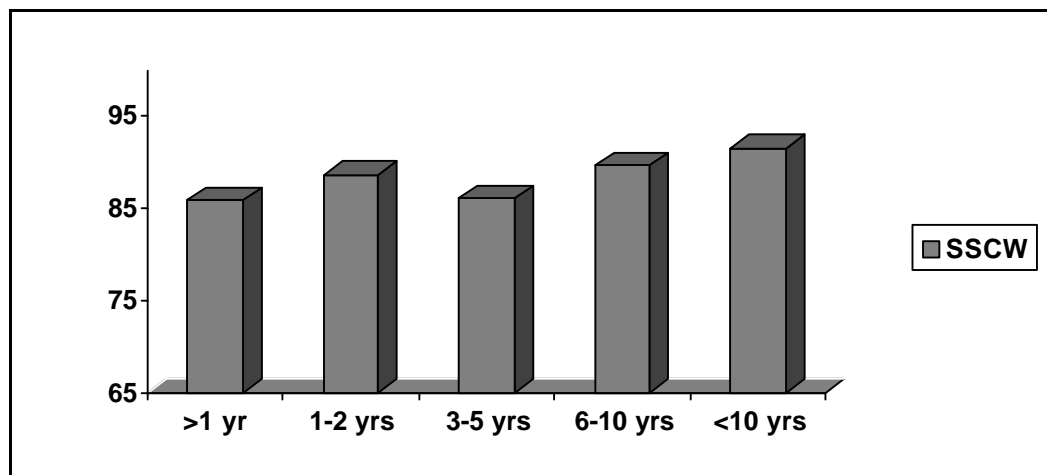
Table 28).

Figure 12. Shepherd Scale Christian Walk means
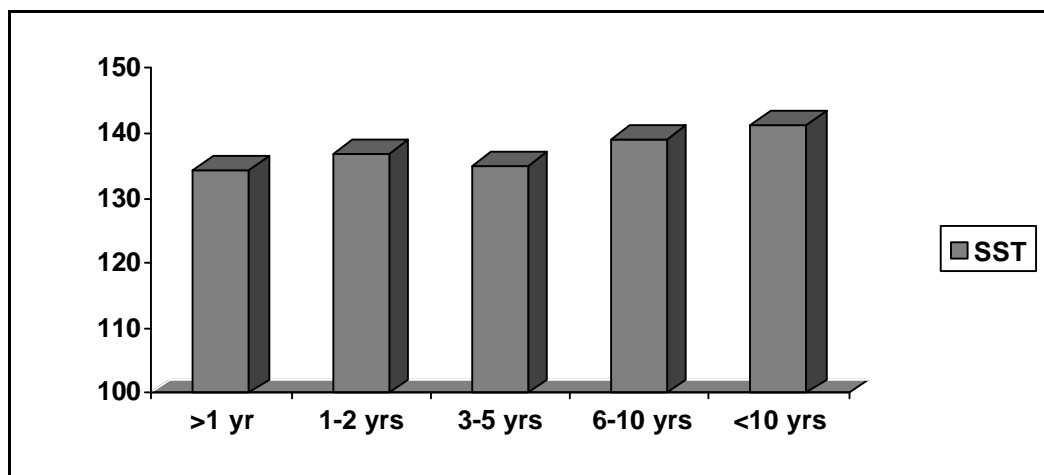organized by years as Christian

Figure 13. Shepherd Scale total means
organized by years as Christian

Table 28. Shepherd Scale means categorized by years as Christian

Years as Christian		*Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale) means*	*Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale) means*	*Shepherd Scale (Total) means*
One year or less	Mean	48.50	85.83	134.33
	N	6	6	6
	Std. Dev.	3.33	9.91	11.62
1-2 years	Mean	48.22	88.67	136.89
	N	9	9	9
	Std. Dev.	2.28	10.54	11.58
3-5 years	Mean	48.85	86.04	134.88
	N	26	26	26
	Std. Dev.	3.82	8.99	11.96
6-10 years	Mean	49.33	89.63	138.96
	N	48	48	48
	Std. Dev.	2.79	6.19	7.46
> 10 years	Mean	49.73	91.53	141.26
	N	259	259	259
	Std. Dev.	2.87	6.30	7.71
Totals	Mean	49.55	90.68	140.23
	N	348	348	348
	Std. Dev.	2.94	6.87	8.43

Quantitative Relationships between Fowlerian Stage-Development and Shepherd Scale Scores

This subsection deals with the central research question: "What quantitative relationship exists between an individual's development according to Fowler's stages and his or her self-assessed faithfulness as a Christian disciple?" Shepherd Scale scores and Fowlerian stage-development were compared using ANOVA. To determine the

strength and direction of the relationships between Shepherd Scale scores and Fowlerian

stage-development, the researcher also applied the Pearson correlation.

ANOVA applied to Fowlerian stage-development and to the Shepherd Scale

Christian Belief sub-scale scores did not support the existence of a significant

relationship within the sample. The significance value for this analysis was 0.172 (Table

29), a value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, accepted. Individuals'

Fowlerian stage-development did not significantly influence their responses to items in

the Christian Belief sub-scale. A test for linearity and the Pearson correlation were also

applied to Fowlerian stage-development and scores from the Christian Belief sub-scale

(Tables 29 and 30). Although persons at Fowlerian Stage 5 tended to score slightly lower

than other subjects on the Christian Belief sub-scale (see Table 31, Figure 14, and Figure

15), the significance values of these tests confirmed that no significant relationship

between Fowlerian stage-development and the Christian Belief sub-scale existed in the

sample.

ANOVA applied to Fowlerian stage-development and to the Shepherd Scale

Christian Walk sub-scale scores did not support the existence of a significant

relationship within the sample. The significance value for this analysis was 0.079 (Table

29), a value greater than 0.05. A test for linearity resulted in a significance value of

0.026 (Table 28), a value less than 0.05. The Pearson correlation applied to Fowlerian

stage-development and to the Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale scores provided

slight support for the existence of a significant relationship within the sample (Table 30).

The correlation coefficient was -0.119 ($p < 0.05$), indicating the possibility of a

significant (albeit weak) negative correlation between Fowlerian stage-development and

Christian Walk sub-scale scores.

Table 29. Relationship between Shepherd Scale scores
and Fowlerian stage-development

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Between Groups	43.15	3	14.38	1.673	.172
	Linearity	.02	1	.02	.003	.958
	Dev. from linearity	43.13	2	21.56	2.509	.083
	Within Groups	2956.92	344	8.60		
	Total	3000.07	347			
Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Between Groups	320.32	3	106.77	2.285	.079
	Linearity	232.58	1	232.58	4.978	.026
	Dev. from linearity	87.75	2	43.87	.939	.392
	Within Groups	16073.27	344	46.73		
	Total	16393.60	347			
Shepherd Scale (Total)	Between Groups	488.41	3	162.80	2.317	.075
	Linearity	237.36	1	237.36	3.378	.067
	Dev. from linearity	251.05	2	125.53	1.786	.169
	Within Groups	24173.74	344	70.27		
	Total	24662.15	347			

Table 30. Correlation between Fowlerian stage-development
and Shepherd Scale scores

		Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	*Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)*	*Shepherd Scale (Total)*
Fowlerian stage	Pearson Correlation	-.003	-.119	-.098
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.958	.026	.068

Table 31. Shepherd Scale means categorized by Fowlerian stage-development

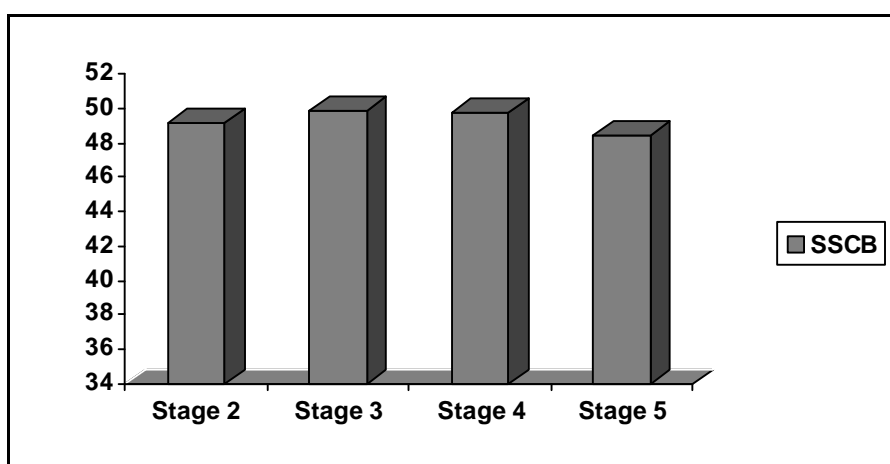|		Shepherd Scale (Christian Belief sub-scale)	Shepherd Scale (Christian Walk sub-scale)	Shepherd Scale (Total)
Stage 2	Mean	49.14	92.20	141.43
	N	35	35	35
	Std. Dev.	3.39	6.49	8.43
Stage 3	Mean	49.91	92.73	142.64
	N	11	11	11
	Std. Dev.	2.47	5.31	7.05
Stage 4	Mean	49.68	90.65	140.33
	N	279	279	279
	Std. Dev.	2.79	6.69	8.00
Stage 5	Mean	48.39	87.78	136.17
	N	23	23	23
	Std. Dev.	3.92	9.30	12.63

Figure 14. Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale means categorized by
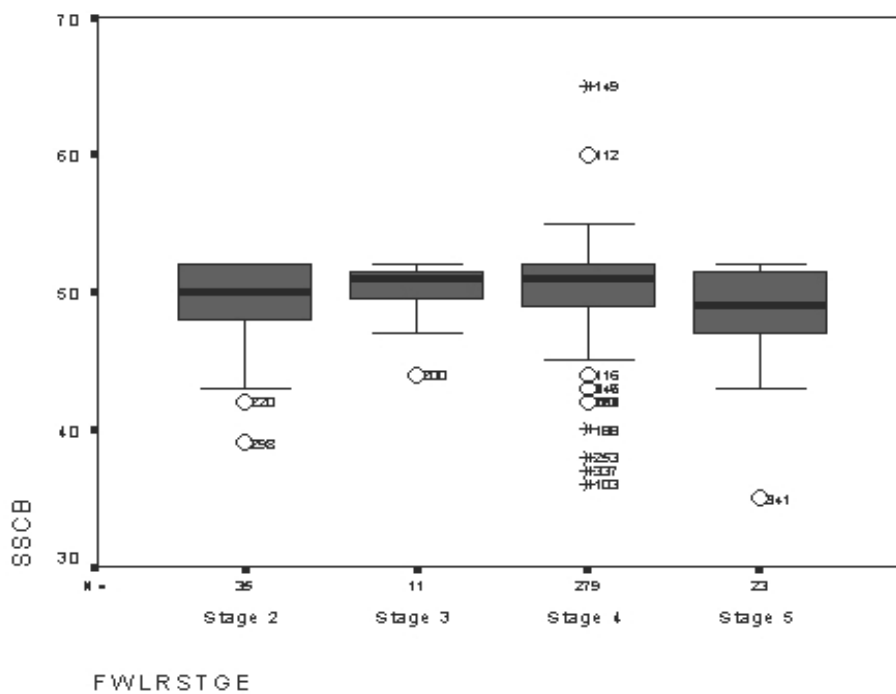Fowlerian stage-development

Figure 15. Boxplot comparing mean scores of Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale according to Fowlerian stage-development

The mean score for the Christian Walk sub-scale rose slightly from Stage 2 to Stage 3, then declined among Stage 4 and Stage 5 subjects. (See Table 30, Figure 16, and Figure 17.)
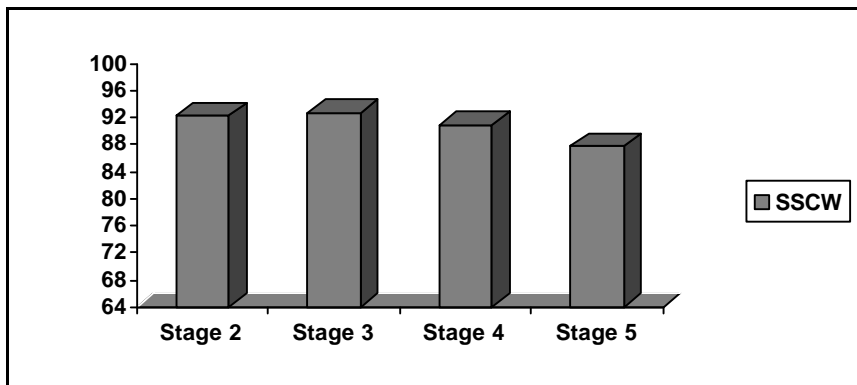
Figure 16. Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale means categorized by
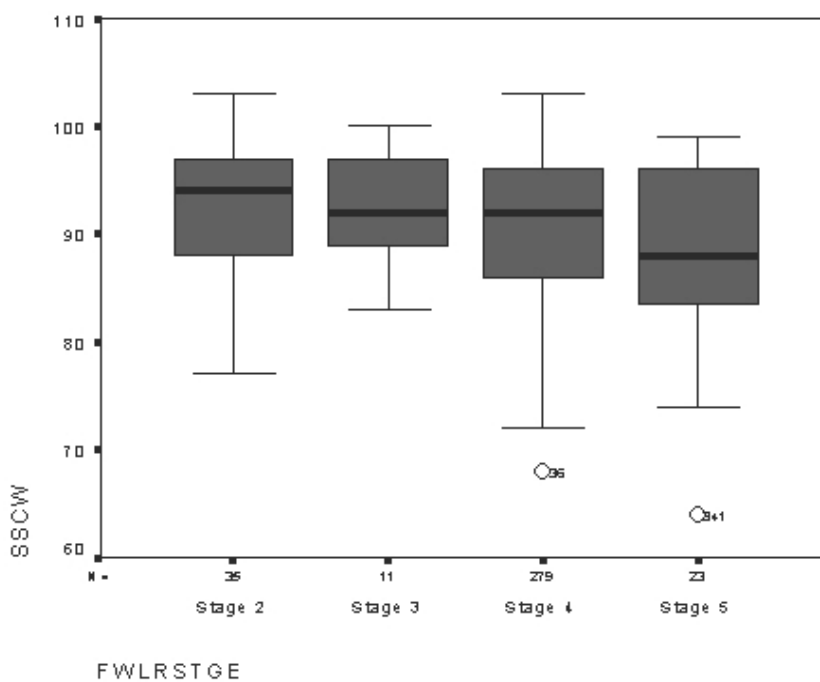Fowlerian stage-development

Figure 17. Boxplot comparing mean scores of Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale
according to Fowlerian stage-development

ANOVA applied to Fowlerian stage-development and to the Shepherd Scale total scores did not support the existence of a significant relationship within the sample. The significance value for this analysis was 0.075 (Table 26), a value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis was, therefore, accepted. Individuals' Fowlerian stage-development did not significantly influence their self-assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness as measured by the Shepherd Scake. A test for linearity and the Pearson correlation were also applied to Fowlerian stage-development and to scores from the Christian Belief sub-scale (Tables 29 and 30). Although persons at Fowlerian Stage 5 tended to score somewhat lower than other subjects on the Shepherd Scale (Table 28, Figure 18, and Figure 19), the significance values of these tests confirmed that no significant relationship between Fowlerian stage-development and Shepherd Scale scores existed in the sample.
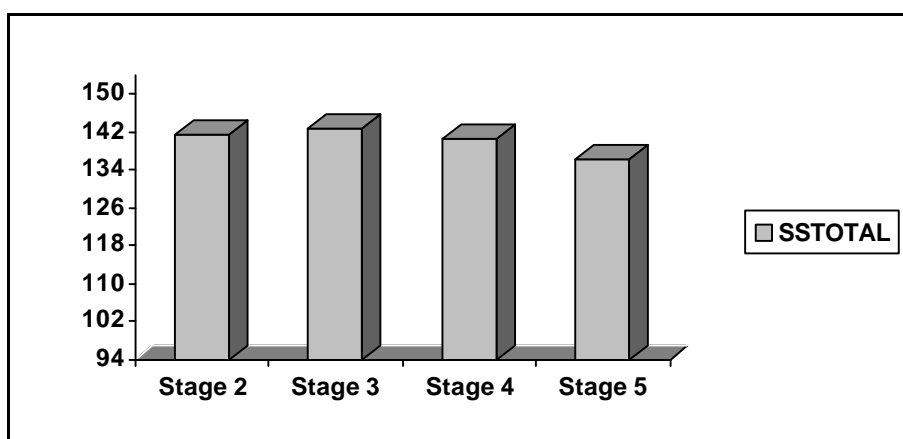

Figure 18. Shepherd Scale total means categorized by
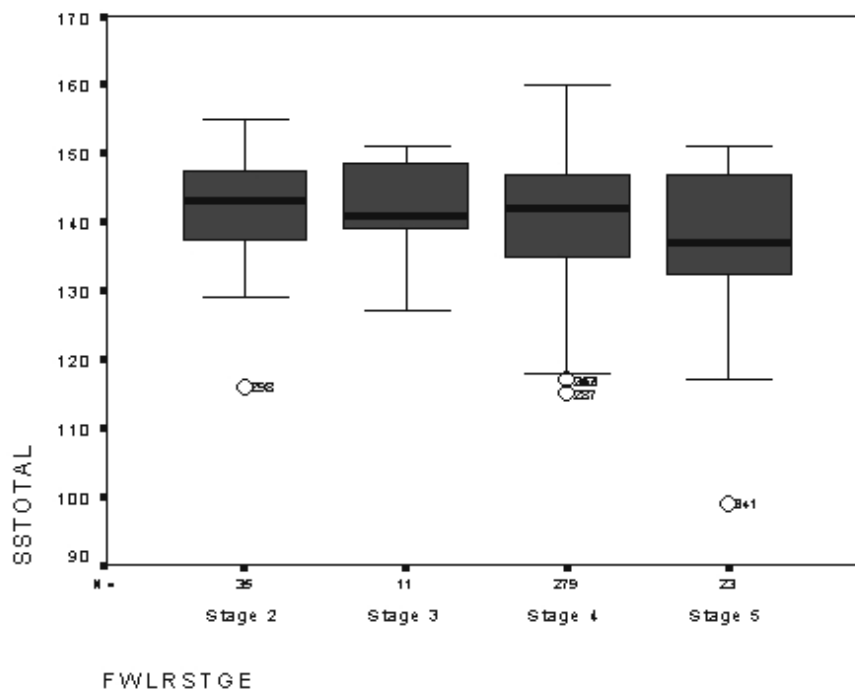Fowlerian stage-development

Figure 19. Boxplot comparing mean scores of Shepherd Scale total
scores according to Fowlerian stage-development

Summary of Findings

Significant relationships were detected in the sample between Shepherd Scale

Christian Walk sub-scale score and age, church affiliation, and the number of years

individuals considered themselves to have been Christians. Significant relationships

were also detected between Shepherd Scale total scores and age, church affiliation, and

the number of years individuals considered themselves to have been Christians.

Although an analysis of variance detected a significant relationship in the sample

between Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale scores and church affiliation, the

ceiling effect observed in the Christian Belief sub-scale suggests that this datum should

be treated with caution.

An analysis of variance also detected a significant relationship between gender and Fowlerian stage-development. Specifically, women were more likely than men to exhibit Stage 3 or Stage 5 Fowlerian stage-development. The Pearson correlation applied to Fowlerian stage-development and to Shepherd Scale scores discerned a significant but weak negative relationship between Fowlerian stage-development and Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale scores.

Evaluation of the Research Design

The purpose of this section is to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the research design, focusing on the reliability and factorial structure of the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey.

Evaluation of Design for the Collection
of Demographic Data

The cover page requesting individuals' gender, age, church affiliation, and number of years as a Christian functioned as an adequate tool for the collection of these data. Two additional items might have provided the researcher with significant information regarding the research sample—(1) a request for information concerning individuals' highest completed level and type of education, and, (2) a request for information concerning whether the participant is training for or employed in vocational ministry.

At least three studies have found significant relationships between Fowlerian stage-development and level of education (Bruning and Stokes 1982; Hiebert 1993; Religious Education Association, Princeton Research Center, and Gallup Organization

1985, xiii). It would have been worthwhile to have discovered whether this research replicated the findings of previous research projects.

This researcher is unaware of any studies regarding the Fowlerian stage-development of vocational ministers. Had this datum been requested, the researcher could have provided a basis for further research into Fowlerian stage-development and maturity in Christian faithfulness among evangelical ministers and ministers in training.

Evaluation of Design for the Measurement of Self-Assessed Maturity in Christian Faithfulness

The instrument utilized to measure self-assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness was the Shepherd Scale. The ceiling effect in the Christian Belief sub-scale may have been unavoidable in a sample consisting completely of individuals who share a common commitment to biblical-orthodox faith and to evangelical theological principles.

The other aspects of the instrument seem to have performed adequately. The Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale was able to distinguish between younger and older individuals, between individuals who had been Christians for shorter and longer time-periods, and between individuals who were and were not affiliated with a church.

Although possibly affected by the Christian Belief sub-scale ceiling effect, the Shepherd Scale total scores also distinguished key factors in the sample. The total scores in this research were similar to scores from a study in which 62 evangelical college students comprised the primary sample (Bassett et al. 1981), indicating that the performance of the Shepherd Scale in this research sample was not atypical.

Evaluation of Design for the Assessment
of Fowlerian Stage-Development

The performance of the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey (FSDS) was

satisfactory for the purposes of this research. The instrument will, however, require

further modifications and testing to achieve the internal consistency reliability levels of a

standardized instrument.

Projected Revisions to the FSDS

The internal consistency reliability coefficients for the FSDS in this sample of

348 evangelical adults ranged from 0.6493 to 0.6941 (Table 32), somewhat lower than

the coefficients from the internal consistency sample that preceded the collection of

research data.

Table 32. Summary of FSDS internal
consistency reliability coefficients
(Research sample)

Model	*Coefficient*
Guttman split-half	.6493
Spearman-Brown split-half	.6559
Cronbach alpha	.6941

Revisions Based on Inter-Item Analysis

Although significant and moderately strong relationships existed between

each of the four item-pairs (Table 33), an inter-item analysis of responses to the FSDS

revealed two factors that may have lowered the internal consistency coefficients: (1)

Item 3B related more strongly to Item 2A (coefficient *phi* = 0.618, *p* < .001) than to its

corresponding item, Item 3A (coefficient *phi* = 0.407, *p* < .001). (2) Item 4A related

more strongly to Item 5A (coefficient *phi* = 0.372, *p* < .001) than to its corresponding

item, Item 4B (coefficient *phi* = 0.349, *p* < .001). All other items related most strongly to

their corresponding items. (See Table 34 for FSDS items with stage designations.)

Table 33. FSDS inter-item relationships

Items	*Coefficient* phi	*Approx sig.*
2A * 2B	.632	.000
3A * 3B	.407	.000
4A * 4B	.349	.000
5A * 5B	.697	.000

It is possible that revising or changing Items 3B and 4A in a future version of

the FSDS would raise the internal consistency of the instrument above the desired

threshold of 0.70. The researcher has drafted two alternative Stage 3 items and two

alternative Stage 4 items to test this possibility in future research. The alternative items

read as follows:

1. "It is vital that I follow the leaders of my religious organization." (Stage 3)

2. "I would change my beliefs if a leader in my religious organization showed me that those beliefs were incorrect." (Stage 3)

3. "Everything in my religious beliefs can be harmonized and reconciled—there are no paradoxes or inconsistencies in my beliefs." (Stage 4)

4. "Religious leaders shouldn't tell people what to believe—they should encourage people to seek out the truth for themselves." (Stage 4)

Table 34. FSDS items, categorized by stage

Item 2A *Stage 2*	God gives people what they deserve; everyone should accept whatever God does without asking why.
Item 2B *Stage 2*	A good way to relate to God is to do what God wants, so that God will help you when you need him.
Item 3A *Stage 3*	My religion tells me all I need to know about following God.
Item 3B *Stage 3*	My primary basis for loving others is the beliefs that we share.
Item 4A *Stage 4*	It is important to try to understand how God acts and why.
Item 4B *Stage 4*	It is important to understand the reasons for a religious ritual before I participate in it.
Item 5A *Stage 5*	I can learn a lot about life and faith from other religions.
Item 5B *Stage 5*	Being open to other religions enriches my experiences of God.

Revisions Based on Possible Effect of Transitional Fowlerian Stage-Development

If a significant number of persons in the sample were in transition between two stages, it is also possible that the responses of these transitional individuals affected the internal consistency reliability coefficients. Of the 123 surveys that exhibited a different dominant Fowlerian stage on each half, ninety-three (75.61%) exhibited consecutive Fowlerian stages. If these individuals were in transition between two stages,

their responses could account for part of the deficiency in the internal consistency reliability coefficients. For example, an individual best described as "Stage 3 Transitional" would have been classified at Stage 3 on one half of the instrument and at Stage 4 on the other half. Both classifications would have been correct, but the difference between the two halves would have lowered the split-half reliability coefficients. When the surveys from these individuals were placed in a separate "transitional" category, the Spearman-Brown split-half reliability coefficient for the FSDS rose from 0.6559 to 0.7268. Perhaps the possibility of transitional classifications between Stages 2 and 3, Stages 3 and 4, and Stages 4 and 5 should be added to a future version of the instrument. It is also possible that the use of a six-point scale, rather than a five-point scale, might distinguish more clearly between the stages.

Finally, it should be noted that, while achieving higher internal consistency reliability coefficients remains a desirable goal for the FSDS, the coefficients achieved by the instrument are similar to the coefficients reported for other related instruments, such as the Faith Scale and the Faith Development Survey; the highest alpha coefficients reported for these instruments ranged from 0.6775 to 0.71 (Clore 1997, 87; Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999, 108-09). Perhaps the lack of internal consistency in brief measures of Fowlerian stage-development relates as much to the fluidity of Fowler's theory as to the design of the instrumentation.

FSDS Primary and Secondary Factors

Principal component factor analysis of the responses from 348 evangelical adults to the FSDS extracted three dominant components, using the Kaiser criterion

(Table 35). The tertiary component was eliminated by a scree test, leaving two dominant components. All eight FSDS statements loaded positively on the primary component, which accounted for 32.597% of the variance in the responses. Together, the primary and secondary components accounted for nearly half of the variance in the responses.

The two statements with the strongest loadings on the secondary component reflected Stage 5 characteristics (see Table 36). The two Stage 4 statements exhibited positive but weak relationships to the secondary component. The remaining statements exhibited negative relationships to this component. Loadings ranged from -.138 to -.440. The second component's strong relationship to Stage 5, with the accompanying weak relationship to Stage 4 and negative relationships to Stages 2 and 3, may provide additional empirical support for the contention that Fowler's Stages 1 through 4 describe the development of the Ego, while Stages 5 and 6 characterize the development of the Self (Ford-Grabowsky 1986, 6-7).

Based on the earlier analysis of the field-test sample and on this analysis of the research sample, evidence of two developmental processes appears to be present in the FSDS. Perhaps the primary component relates to development of the Ego while the secondary component relates to development of the Self.

Table 35. Explanation of variance in FSDS by dominant components
(Research sample)

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of sq. loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.608	32.597	32.597	2.608	32.597	32.597
2	1.298	16.224	48.821	1.298	16.224	48.821
3	1.093	13.659	62.480	1.093	13.659	62.480

Table 36. Principal component factor
analysis component matrix
(Research sample)

Items	Component 1	Component 2
Item 2A	.639	-.373
Item 2B	.739	-.138
Item 3A	.511	-.440
Item 3B	.729	-.281
Item 4A	.480	.208
Item 4B	.177	.121
Item 5A	.413	.724
Item 5B	.656	.533

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Following a reiteration of the research purpose and the research questions, this chapter suggests possible responses to each research question and analyzes the implications of these responses. The chapter also explores two additional questions that emerged from the research data. Following the responses to the research questions, the researcher articulates an integrative paradigm for Christian growth that incorporates the research of James W. Fowler with the findings of this study. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this descriptive-quantitative study was to analyze the relationship between individuals' development according to Fowler's stages and their self-assessed maturity as faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Research Questions

Four questions served as the focus of this exploration of the relationship between individuals' development according to Fowler's stages and their Christian faithfulness:

1. What is the nature of the qualitative relationship between Fowler's faith-development theory and a biblical-orthodox understanding of faith?

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2.   What quantitative relationships exist between an individual's development according to Fowler's stages and his or her self-assessed faithfulness as a Christian disciple?

3.   What quantitative relationships exist between specified demographic characteristics and Fowlerian stage-development?

4.   What quantitative relationships exist between specified demographic characteristics and an individual's self-assessed faithfulness as a Christian disciple?

The following additional questions emerged from the research data:

1.   What factors could account for the high percentage of participants classified at the Individuative-Reflective Stage (Stage 4)?

2.   What relationships may exist between Mary Ford-Grabowsky's contention that Fowler's stages map two separate developmental tracks and the two distinct principal components in the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey?

Research Implications

        This section presents a summary of findings and implications relating to each

research question.

Research Question 1: Fowler's Faith-Development
Theory and Biblical-Orthodox Faith

        Based on an analysis of texts from Scripture and church history and on the

writings of individuals from whom James W. Fowler derived his understanding of faith,

this researcher concluded that biblical-orthodox faith and the reality to which James W.

Fowler referred as "faith" are not the same phenomenon. Biblical-orthodox faith entails

two inseparable dimensions, faith-content and faith-commitment. Although faith itself

may not be measurable, external signs of biblical-orthodox faith are measurable. The

primary external sign of biblical-orthodox faith is *faithfulness as a disciple of Jesus*

Christ. Faithfulness as a disciple of Jesus Christ affects no fewer than three measurable dimensions in an individual's life—attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs. Fowler's non-propositional understanding of faith—referred to here as "other-awareness"—more closely relates to the phenomenon described in the writings of Friedrich D.E. Schleiermacher as *das schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeitsgefuehl.*

Research Question 2: Fowlerian Stage-Development and Self-Assessed Maturity in Christian Faithfulness

Fowlerian stage-development and self-assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness did not significantly affect each other in the research sample. A weak negative correlation was observed between Fowlerian stage-development and maturity in Christian faithfulness. ANOVA, however, found no significant relationship between the two variables. If the weak negative correlation is of any consequence, the researcher would suggest that it indicates persons who have attained higher Fowlerian stage-development are more acutely aware of their spiritual shortcomings. If so, the negative correlation was an effect of self-assessment, not of lower maturity in Christian faithfulness.

Further research will be necessary to determine the precise nature of the relationship between Fowlerian stage-development and maturity in Christian faithfulness. (See Suggestions for Future Research in Chapter 5 for specific proposals.) These data suggest, however, that—if maturity in Christian faithfulness is, as Scripture seems to affirm, an external sign of the validity and vitality of Christian faith—biblical-orthodox faith and the reality to which Fowler referred as "faith" are two separate phenomena. At the same time, Fowlerian stage-development does appear to be an actual

phenomenon. So, on the one hand, Fowler's research cannot be ignored by evangelical educators. On the other hand, it cannot be adapted to describe Christian faith. What is needed is an integrative model for spiritual development that simultaneously recognizes the validity of Fowler's research and distinguishes Fowlerian stage-development from the development of biblical-orthodox faith. This primary implication of the results from this research question is explored below, under the heading "Application of Research Findings."

Research Question 3: Fowlerian Stage-Development and Demographic Characteristics

The sole significant relationship in the sample between demographic characteristics and Fowlerian stage-development was in the area of gender. Women were more likely to exhibit Synthetic-Conventional (Stage 3) or Conjunctive (Stage 5) characteristics. The higher concentration of females in the Synthetic-Conventional stage is consistent with James W. Fowler's research in *Stages of Faith* (Fowler 1981, 321). In Fowler's sample, the Conjunctive stage related to gender only in the 41-50 and 51-60 age groupings (Fowler 1981, 321).

It is noteworthy that the Mythic-Literal stage (Stage 2) and Individuative-Reflective stage (Stage 4) are more individualistically oriented, while the Synthetic-Conventional stage (Stage 3) and Conjunctive stage (Stage 5) are more communally oriented. In the Mythic-Literal stage, individuals personalize the collective stories—the "myths"—that define their beliefs. This appropriation is marked by the potential for "cognitive conceit" (Fowler 1981, 149-50). In the Individuative-Reflective Stage, "an interruption of reliance on external sources of authority" occurs. The potential cognitive

conceit of the Mythic-Literal stage reemerges as "an excessive confidence in the

conscious mind and in critical thought" (Fowler 1981, 182).

> While others and their judgments will remain important to the Individuative-Reflective person, their expectations, advice, and counsel will be submitted to an internal panel of experts who reserve the right to choose and who are prepared to take responsibility for their choices. . . . No longer constructing social relations as merely the extension of interpersonal relations, Stage 4 thinks in terms of the impersonal imperatives of law, rules, and the standards that govern social roles. (Fowler 1981, 179-80)

The Synthetic-Conventional Stage, conversely, de-emphasizes impersonal

imperatives and focuses on individuals' relationships to a significant group or

community (Fowler 1981, 172-73). At the Conjunctive Stage, persons have moved

toward an awareness of their responsibility to the universal community of humankind.

They are willing "to spend and to be spent for the cause of conserving and cultivating the

possibility of others' generating identity and meaning" (Fowler 1981, 198). The

predominance of females in the Synthetic-Conventional and Conjunctive stages may

suggest that females tended to be more relationally-oriented than males. Perhaps, in the

words of Carol Gilligan, "Men feel secure alone at the top of a hierarchy, securely

separate from the challenge of others. Women feel secure in the middle of a web of

relationships" (Gilligan 1982, 42). A 1985 study from the Princeton Religious Research

Center has provided quantitative corroboration for this hypothesis, finding that "when

faced with a problem women are more likely than men to turn to others for support. Men

are more likely to prefer to work things out on their own" (Religious Education

Association, Princeton Research Center, and Gallup Organization 1985, xi).

The researcher detected no significant relationship between Fowlerian stage-

development and church affiliation or years as a Christian. This finding was consistent

with Fowler's assertion that, because his trans-religious construct is not inherently related to conversion or to affiliation with a specific religious group, religious affiliation should not affect Fowlerian stage-development (Fowler 1981, 281-85; cf. Rose 1991, 9).

Fowler did posit the presence of a relationship between age and stage-development—a finding that was not reproduced in this research (Fowler 1981, 317-19). The quantitative evidence offered by Fowler to support the relationship, however, related almost entirely to children and teenagers. The findings presented in this research replicated the findings of a previous dissertation, in which no significant relationship was observed between age and Fowlerian stage-development among adults (Rose 1991, 22-23, 111; cf. Green and Hoffman 1989, 253). In light of these findings, perhaps the pattern posited by Fowler should be reevaluated.

Research Question 4: Self-Assessed Maturity in Christian Faithfulness and Demographic Characteristics

In this sample, gender did not significantly affect self-assessed faithfulness in Christian maturity. The researcher did observe significant relationships between maturity in Christian faithfulness and age, church affiliation, and the number of years individuals considered themselves to have been Christians.

The relationship between age and self-assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness was positive, as was the relationship between years as a Christian and self-assessed maturity in Christian faithfulness. This relationship suggests that increased maturity as a Christian accompanies an increase in chronological age and in the number of years since persons became Christians. The relationship between age and maturity in Christian faithfulness was consistently significant, however, only among individuals

who had been Christians more than a decade. This relationship suggests that, although age does positively affect Christian maturity, length of time as a Christian is a more decisive factor in Christian maturity than chronological age. Further research will be necessary to determine the precise nature of the relationship between age, years as a Christian, and maturity in Christian faithfulness.

The low frequencies in some church affiliation groupings precluded attributing levels of Christian maturity to specific groups. It is, however, noteworthy that the lowest scores on all aspects of the Shepherd Scale came from individuals who identified themselves as having no church preference or affiliation. These data suggest that church involvement may significantly affect an individual's maturity in Christian faithfulness. Replication of these findings using a scientifically-selected sample would be necessary before postulating the presence of any causative relationship. If—as these data suggest—church involvement and years as a Christian do positively affect maturity in Christian faithfulness, this study has provided a quantitative basis for emphasizing the importance of consistent fellowship with a localized group of fellow-Christians. This finding replicates an earlier quantitative study in which researchers found that "faith development is positively related to one's involvement in organized religion" (Religious Education Association, Princeton Research Center, and Gallup Organization 1985, xii). In the researcher's integrative model, presented below under the heading "Application of Research Findings," the qualitative implications of this finding are articulated in terms of Christian *koinonia,* one of the five strands of Christian formation.

Additional Question 1: High Frequencies
in the Individuative-Reflective Stage

The Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey (FSDS) placed a

disproportionately high number of participants at Fowler's Individuative-Reflective

stage (Stage 4). According to the FSDS, 80.2% of the sample exhibited primarily

Individuative-Reflective characteristics. The FSDS classified slightly more than 10% of

the sample as Mythic-Literal (Stage 2), while only 3.2% were Synthetic-Conventional

(Stage 3) and 6.6% were Conjunctive (Stage 5). Three possible explanations might

account for this phenomenon.

Complications with the FSDS

The FSDS may have incorrectly placed a significant number of persons in the

Individuative-Reflective stage. With an alpha reliability coefficient of 0.6941—slightly

below the desired threshold of 0.70—it is possible that the FSDS placed some non-

Individuative-Reflective persons in the Individuative-Reflective group. The instrument

was not, however, sufficiently inconsistent to explain the classification of more than

three-fourths of the sample at Fowler's Individuative-Reflective stage.

Overlap between Fowlerian Stages

It is possible that the Individuative-Reflective stage in Fowler's theory

overlaps substantially with other stages. Fowler has admitted that an individual may

simultaneously exhibit characteristics of multiple consecutive stages: For example, one

subject in his sample exhibited "some elements of Stage 1's magical thinking" as well as

"hints of the interpersonal constructions . . . of Stage 3. One the whole, however, the

modes of her faith [were] best described as Stage 2" (Fowler 1981, 148).

Perhaps Synthetic-Conventional (Stage 3) and Conjunctive (Stage 5) individuals whose dominant tendencies were only partially Individuative-Reflective still gravitated toward the Individuative-Reflective items in the FSDS. If so, the difficulty may be as much with the fluidity Fowler's underlying theory as with the research instrument. If this were the explanation, however, the question would still remain: "Why would partially Individuative-Reflective persons have selected Individuative-Reflective statements with such consistency?"

**Equilibration of High proportion
of Christians at Stage 4**

Perhaps the most plausible explanation is that the Individuative-Reflective stage actually reflected the dominant Fowlerian stage of a high percentage of participants. The identification of a disproportionately high percentage of individuals as Individuative-Reflective is not unique to this study. Two previous studies have also assigned a high proportion of participants to the Individuative-Reflective stage and a lower-than-expected number to the Synthetic-Conventional stage (Leavitt 1982; Mischey 1981). Although their samples included non-evangelicals, these findings suggest that a high proportion of contemporary Christians might have equilibrated at the Individuative-Reflective stage. One researcher has gone so far as to argue that, due to excessive self-reliance and self-centeredness, Western culture has locked itself as a *culture* at the Individuative-Reflective stage (Leean 1988).

Two emphases in contemporary evangelicalism would seem to corroborate the hypothesis that a high percentage of American evangelicals have equilibrated at the

Individuative-Reflective stage—(1) individualized adaptation of the Christian message,

and, (2) the capacity for separating the unchangeable aspects of the Christian message

from the external means of communication.

Individualized Adaptation of
the Christian Message

In an attempt to demonstrate the personal relevance of the Christian faith,

evangelicals have emphasized the adaptability of the Christian message to the needs of

individual hearers. George Barna, for example, has written, "The audience, not the

message, is sovereign. . . . Our message has to be adapted to the needs of the audience"

(Barna 1988, 145). In the words of Rick Warren,

> Whenever Jesus encountered a person he'd begin with their [*sic*] hurts, needs,
> and interests. . . . [This] generation expects to be offered options in every area. . . .
> It's not pandering to consumerism to offer multiple services or even multiple styles
> of worship. It is strategic and unselfish. . . . To penetrate any culture you must be
> willing to make small concessions in matters of style. (Warren 1995, 196-202)

This tendency fits with the inclination toward individual adaptation that

characterizes Fowler's Individuative-Reflective stage. In the Synthetic-Conventional

stage (Stage 3), the individual accepts certain beliefs because they represent the

dominant paradigm of his faith-community; the faith-community or a significant leader

is the primary locus of authority. With the dawn of the Individuative-Reflective stage

(Stage 4), the individual begins to adapt beliefs and practices to fit her own needs; this

individualized paradigm becomes her primary locus of authority (cf. Fowler 1981, 182-

83).

Enculturation of the
Christian Message

In an attempt to translate the Christian faith into terms that are understandable within contemporary culture, evangelicals have emphasized the capacity to separate the unchangeable aspects of Christian faith ("the message") from the external means of communication ("the methods"). The first slogan of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association was, "Geared to the times, anchored to the Rock" (Sweet 1999, 73). The father of the contemporary church growth movement, Donald McGavran, has stated:

> We devise mission methods and policies in the light of what God has blessed—and what he has obviously not blessed. Industry calls this 'modifying operation in light of feedback.' . . . We teach men to be ruthless in regard to [this] method. If it does not work to the glory of God and to the extension of Christ's church, throw it away and get something which does. As to methods, we are fiercely pragmatic. (Wagner 1973, 147)

These statements reflect a tendency in evangelicalism to separate the meaning underlying a method from the method itself—a central feature of the Individuative-Reflective stage. According to Fowler,

> Symbols and rituals, previously taken as mediating the sacred in direct ways and therefore as sacred themselves, are interrogated by Stage 4's critical questioning. In its critical reflection Stage 4 regards meanings as separable from the symbolic media that express them. In face of a liturgical ritual or religious symbol the Individuative-Reflective person asks, "But what does it *mean*?" If the symbol or symbolic act is truly meaningful, Stage 4 believes, its meanings can be translated into propositions, definitions, and/or conceptual foundations. (Fowler 1981, 180)

This comparison of Fowler's Individuative-Reflective stage with tendencies within contemporary evangelicalism is not intended as a critique or even a criticism of the tendencies—such a critique stands beyond the scope of this study. (The researcher's perspective on these tendencies is, in fact, largely positive. See Wells 1993 for a

thorough, though occasionally unbalanced, critique of the drift toward privatization and pragmatization in evangelical theology.) The researcher has simply offered this comparison to corroborate one possible explanation of the high percentage of Individuative-Reflective persons within this sampling of evangelical Christians.

If future research does detect the equilibration of a high percentage of evangelicals at Fowler's Individuative-Reflective stage, it would be worthwhile to consider the positive and negative aspects of the stage. Positively, the capacities for rational reflection and for understanding the underlying meanings of symbols are at their peak. Negatively, these capacities can lead to a denial of the individual's need for the broader faith-community; to an over-assimilation of prevailing cultural concepts into one's own world-view (Fowler's "second narcissism"); to the abandonment of important traditional symbols (a potential effect of Fowler's "demythologizing"); and, to excessive confidence in the capacity of human reason to comprehend and to communicate ultimate truth (Fowler 1981, 179-83).

Additional Question 2: Ford-Grabowsky's Developmental Tracks

According to Mary Ford-Grabowsky, three distinct "tracks" comprise human development—the development of the Ego, the development of the Self, and Christian formation. Only the third track, Christian formation, relates directly to Christian faith. Following Carl G. Jung, Ford-Grabowsky understands the first two tracks—"Ego" and "Self"—as the two primary levels of human personality. Her understanding of these constructs is as follows:

Basic to Jung's psychology is a distinction between the Ego and the Self: "By Ego I understand a complex of ideas which constitutes the center of my field of consciousness and appears to possess a high degree of continuity and identity. . . . Inasmuch as the Ego is only the center of my field of consciousness, it is not identical with the totality of my psyche, being merely one complex among other complexes. I therefore distinguish between the Ego and the Self, since the Ego is only the subject of my consciousness, while the Self is the subject of my total psyche, which also includes the unconsciousness. In this sense, the Self would be an ideal entity which embraces the Ego. In unconscious fantasy the Self often appears as a supraordinate or ideal personality, having somewhat the relationship of Faust to Goethe or Zarathustra to Nietzsche."

In essence Jung sees the Ego as the center of consciousness only, [and] the Self as a totality of conscious plus unconscious elements. Jung believes in the adequacy of an Ego-centered psyche to meet the demands of life in society, like education and work, but he thinks that by mid-life, at least, one must turn inward and open the gateway to the larger Self. . . . Jung cites . . . the Self [as] a "transcendental postulate," ultimately unknowable, since a degree of its contents and operations remain unexperienced. (Ford-Grabowsky 1987b, 40)

Put another way, the Ego is the person as she or he knows and consciously perceives herself or himself. Although a necessary aspect of one's personality, the Ego is prone to self-deception and self-centeredness. The Self simultaneously includes the Ego and stands beyond the Ego, including both the conscious motivations of the Ego and unconscious compulsions to which the Ego is blind. Although the Self is ultimately incomprehensible, the individual's awareness of the Self increases as she or he matures. The Self is, in this researcher's understanding, an "interior other"—an alternative perception of reality that is present throughout an individual's development but which does not emerge at the conscious level until the individual is relatively mature.

The researcher is convinced that what he has described from a theological perspective as "other-awareness" arises from the two phenomena that Ford-Grabowsky—following Jung—has described from a psychological perspective as "Ego-development" and "Self-actualization." The close relationship between Self-

actualization and trans-religious other-awareness is especially apparent in Ford-Grabowsky's description of the Self as "a Buddha-nature, *tao, Imago Dei,* and *satori,* as well as *samadhi,* the *teleios anthropos* and *unio mystica*" (Ford-Grabowsky 1987b, 40).

Ego and Self in Fowler's Stages

According to Ford-Grabowsky, Fowler's Stages 1 through 4 map the consolidation of the Ego (Ford-Grabowsky's first developmental track) while Stages 5 and 6 describe the actualization of the Self (Ford-Grabowsky's second developmental track).

> Fowler's stages 1 through 4 detail a process of self-expansion, stages 5 and 6 a process of self-surrender, the former corresponding to Jung's idea of Ego growth, the latter to his notion of Self-actualization (spiritual growth). Apparently, Fowler has combined . . . evidence of Ego development on one hand, and of spiritual growth on the other hand, while omitting data pertaining to genuine Christian formation. If so, then his stages of "faith" do not record the consistent evolution of a single developmental structure but of two, neither of which is descriptive of Christian faith. (Ford-Grabowsky 1986, 11)

"Two such contradictory images," Ford-Grabowsky contends, "cannot logically be combined" (Ford-Grabowsky 1986, 5, 7). The result of this sequentialization of Ego-consolidation and Self-actualization in a single developmental system is, according to Ford-Grabowsky, a systemic "collapse" (Ford-Grabowsky 1986, 5).

Ford-Grabowsky's delineation of three separate tracks in human development—the third of which remains unaddressed by Fowler, except perhaps in his concept of "vocation"—has merit, as does her hypothesis that Fowler's Stages 1 through 4 relate to the Jungian Ego while Stages 5 and 6 relate to the Self. Is, however, the presence of two developmental tracks in a single system so illogical and contradictory that Fowler's system collapses?

This researcher's response to this question entails two observations: (1) In the initial stages of a descriptive structural-developmental system, Ego-centeredness may be inevitable. (2) Ego-development followed by Self-actualization in Fowler's system does not necessarily imply the sequential development of the Ego and the Self.

Inevitability of Ego-centeredness
in a Descriptive System

Ego-centeredness has been a central criticism of Fowler's system from the beginning (Downing 1985, 255-56; Nelson 1992, 71-75; cf. Hancock 1992, 106-07; Loder and Fowler 1982). Yet, *in a structural-developmental system that is descriptive rather than prescriptive, a focus on the Ego may be inevitable, especially in the less mature stages.*

This is not because development in the earlier stages entails only Ego-development. It is, rather, because the Ego is more accessible in the earlier stages. The Self is, after all, a "'transcendental postulate,' ultimately unknowable" with some contents that will always remain incomprehensible to the individual's conscious perceptions, especially in the less mature stages of development (Ford-Grabowsky 1987b, 40). Fowler's early stages are Ego-centered because, in these stages, the Self is not readily accessible to descriptive research.

The Ego and the Self Not Necessarily
Sequential in Fowler's System

According to Ford-Grabowsky, Fowler's stages suggest that Ego-development and Self-actualization occur in succession: "It must not be thought that Tracks 1 [Ego-

development] and 2 [Self-actualization] occur in succession, as Fowler's stages suggest. . . . Track 2 development relates to Track 1 . . . as its complement, not its consequence" (Ford-Grabowsky 1986, 11). Ford-Grabowsky has correctly observed that Ego-development and Self-actualization are complementary, not consecutive. Yet, *a shift from Ego-development to Self-actualization within Fowler's system does not necessarily imply a sequential formation of the Ego and the Self.*

The researcher wishes to propose an alternate explanation of the transition from Ego-development to Self-actualization in Fowler's system. Although recognizing the validity of Ford-Grabowsky's observations, the researcher will offer a reinterpretation of the implications of these observations.

An Alternate Interpretation of Ego and Self in Fowler's Stages

The researcher would assert that, in Fowler's structural-developmental system, the Self and the Ego do—in distinction to Ford-Grabowsky's claims—develop concurrently. Yet, because the individual in the earlier stages is imperceptive of the unconscious elements that comprise the Self, it is impossible to track the development of the Self prior to the Conjunctive stage (Stage 5). According to Fowler, through the Individuative-Reflective stage, the individual's awareness of "unconscious factors influencing . . . judgments and behavior" is minimal (Fowler 1981, 182). The initial Fowlerian stages, therefore, focus necessarily on conscious aspects of development.

With its inordinate confidence in the conscious mind, the Individuative-Reflective stage is the most radically Ego-centered of Fowler's stages (cf. Fowler 1981, 182). A new perspective emerges when an individual moves from the Individuative-

Reflective stage to the Conjunctive stage. The individual becomes cognizant of the

unconscious aspects of her or his world-view, of the Jungian Self. This entrance into the

Conjunctive stage

> involves the integration into self and outlook of much that was suppressed or
> unrecognized in the interest of Stage 4's self-certainty and conscious cognitive and
> affective adaptation to reality. . . . [In the Conjunctive stage,] there must be an
> opening to the voices of one's "deeper self." Importantly, this involves a critical
> recognition of one's social unconscious—the myths, ideal images, and prejudices
> built deeply into the self-system by virtue of one's nurture within a particular social
> class, religious tradition, ethnic group, or the like. (Fowler 1981, 197-98)

Following one's entrance into the Conjunctive stage, the Ego and the Self

continue to develop alongside each other. The Ego, however, has ceased to function as

the central reference-point of the individual's existence. The Ego is not *transcended,* as

Ford-Grabowsky claims (Ford-Grabowsky 1986, 6-7). The Ego is *transformed* (cf.

Hancock 1992, 42, 106-07; Loder 1981, 222). Through this transformation, *Ego-*

preoccupation is transcended, but the Ego remains and continues to develop.

In this alternate interpretation, the shift from Ego-consolidation to Self-

actualization in Fowler's stages does not imply (as Ford-Grabowsky claims) that the Ego

and the Self develop sequentially. Instead, the shift reflects a change in the central

reference-point of the individual's existence. Although significant, Mary Ford-

Grabowsky's criticisms do not bring about the collapse of Fowler's system. To the

contrary, they clarify the distinct emphases of Stages 1 through 4 and Stages 5 and 6.

Relationship of Dual Components to Ford-
Grabowsky's Developmental Tracks

Factor analysis of responses to the FSDS provided potential quantitative

corroboration and clarification of Ford-Grabowsky's qualitative claims. The primary

component in the FSDS—with its positive loadings on the statements representing

Stages 2 through 5—appears to relate to Ego-development. The secondary

component—with its negative loadings on Stages 2 and 3, weak but positive loadings on

Stage 4, and strongly positive loadings on Stage 5—appears to relate to Self-

actualization but not Ego-development.

If the researcher's suggestions are correct, Ego-development is a dominant

factor throughout Fowlerian stage-development. This observation substantiates the

consistent critique of Fowler's system as "egocentric" (see, e.g., Downing 1985, 255-56;

Hancock 1992, 106-07; Loder and Fowler 1982; Nelson 1992, 71-75). Self-actualization

is also a dominant factor in Fowlerian stage-development. Yet it is only with the

emergence of the Conjunctive stage (Stage 5) that the development of the Self impacts

Fowlerian stage-development with positive consistency.

This observation further substantiates the suggestion that a shift in the central

reference-point of an individual's existence occurs when he or she enters the

Conjunctive stage. This shift draws the individual away from Ego-centeredness, toward

an awareness of the Self.

Application of Research Findings

The research problem that prompted this research related to the following question: "If the reality to which Fowler referred as 'faith' is not Christian faith, what place and function should Fowler's stages hold in evangelical Christian education?"

The research presented here suggests that Fowlerian stage-development and biblical-orthodox faith may not significantly affect each other. Evangelical educators should not, however, dismiss Fowler's research simply because the impact of Fowlerian stage-development and biblical-orthodox faith on each other may be negligible. Evangelical education entails, in the words of Robert Pazmiño,

> the deliberate, systematic, and sustained divine and human effort to share or appropriate the knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, sensitivities, and behaviors that comprise or are consistent with the Christian faith. It fosters the change, renewal, and reformation of persons, groups, and structures by the power of the Holy Spirit to conform to the revealed will of God as expressed in the Scriptures and preeminently in the person of Jesus Christ, as well as any outcomes of that effort. (Pazmiño 1997, 87)

This understanding of Christian education encompasses not only the cultivation of biblical-orthodox faith but also the entire developmental track that Mary Ford-Grabowsky has described as "Christian formation." Although the *content* and *structure* of Christian formation differ fundamentally from the developmental tracks addressed in Fowler's research, Ego-development and Self-actualization are still the *context* of Christian formation. It is, therefore, an inadequate solution to the research problem to disregard Fowler's research.

Also inadequate is any attempt to adapt or amend Fowler's stages to describe

Christian formation. Fowler's stage-descriptions—although helpful for understanding

Ego-development, Self-actualization, and the universal awareness of ultimate

reality—do not depict Christian formation. Fowler's "faith" and biblical-orthodox

faith—the central act of Christian formation—are two separate phenomena. It is,

therefore, impossible to "offer an amended version" (Downs 1995, 84) of Fowler's

stages that accurately characterizes Christian faith-development without altering the

biblical-orthodox presentation of faith or compromising the internal validity of Fowler's

research.

An Integrative Model of Spiritual Development

An adequate response to the research problem would provide a model of

spiritual development that meets three crucial criteria: Because no aspect of human

development occurs in a psychical vacuum (Crabb 1977, 31-56; Pazmiño 1997, 190-91),

the model would (1) incorporate Christian formation and the two tracks of Fowlerian

stage-development into a unified model. While incorporating all three developmental

tracks, the model would explicitly acknowledge (2) that Christian formation and

Fowlerian stage-development occur on separate developmental tracks and (3) that,

because Fowlerian stage-development is a universal phenomenon while Christian

formation is particular to a specific faith-tradition, persons may achieve advanced

Fowlerian stage-development without embracing Christian faith.This researcher has

developed a model of spiritual development that satisfies the three criteria proposed

above. The visual representation for the model is the ancient Greco-Roman monogram

known as the "chiron," the "Christogram," or the "labarum" (Figure 20). Although

commonly connected with Emperor Constantine's famed vision of the symbol of Christ,

> The *Chi-Rho* monogram was in pagan and Greek use long before the Constantinian era and during his reign, because it was an ancient Greek symbol also used as an abbreviation for *chreston,* indicating an especially important passage [in a scroll or book]. . . . As Constantine used the symbol, *chreston* would carry the meaning "auspicious" or "of good omen." (Pitt-Rivers 1966, 28)

The fourth-century church historian Eusebius Pamphilus nevertheless described the

monogram as "two letters indicating the name of Christ by means of the initial letters,

the letter *X* [*chi*] intersecting *P* [*rho*] at the center" (Eusebius 1999, 1:26). Following

Eusebius, Christians from the fourth century onward have viewed the chiron as a

Christian symbol.

In this researcher's model of spiritual development, the *chi* characterizes the

two tracks that comprise Fowlerian stage-development while the *rho* represents

Christian formation. The sources for the researcher's descriptions of the movements

within these tracks include biblical texts, Fowler's writings, and the works of several

spiritual writers and mystics, including Henri J.M. Nouwen, Thomas Merton, Teresa of

Avila, and Hildegard of Bingen.

The *Chi*: Other-Awareness in Action

Each arm of the *chi* represents one of the two tracks addressed in Fowler's

research. Ego-development moves from the lower left to the upper right, and Self-

actualization moves from the lower right to the upper left (Figure 21). At first, Ego and

Self are unconnected. The individual's development is "dis-integrated"—or, as in James

Marcia's adaptation of Erik Erickson's research, "diffused" (Hancock 1992 95-110).

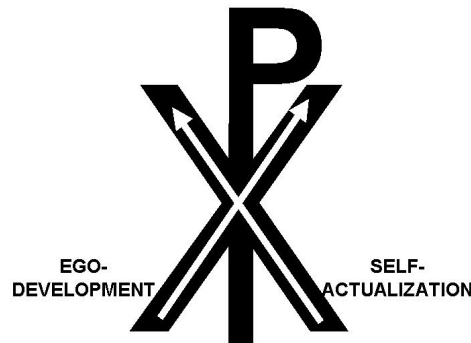Figure 20. Greco-Roman "chi-rho" monogram

Figure 21. Ego-development and self-actualization
in integrative model

The Intersection of Ego and Self

The point at which Ego-development and Self-actualization intersect is the

modulation from the Individuative-Reflective stage to the Conjunctive stage (Figure 22).

(The researcher has chosen to describe the movement from Stage 4 to Stage 5 as

"modulation" because, in the same manner that a musical piece may take on a different

character by modulating to different key, this transition engenders a fundamentally

different approach to life.) As the individual approaches this intersection, his or her

identity becomes increasingly integrated, and conscious perceptions become clearer. At

the same time, the individual's locus of authority and bounds of social awareness—like

the arms of the *chi*—gradually narrow from the collective sagas of family and faith-

community (Stages 1 and 2) to the faith-community itself (Stage 3) and, finally, to the

individual's personal cognition and categorizations of reality (Stage 4). At its

culmination, the Ego-centeredness of Stage 4 involves "excessive confidence in the
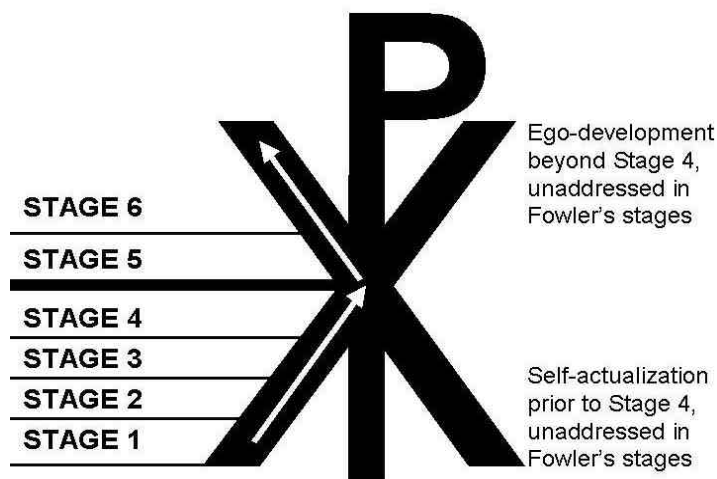
conscious mind and in critical thought" (Fowler 1981, 182-83).

Figure 22. Fowler's stages in integrative model

In the modulation from the Individuative-Reflective stage to the Conjunctive

stage, the conscious aspect of the individual becomes aware of previously unconscious

aspects of the individual's personality. Put another way, the Ego enters into dialogue

with the Self. The result is "the integration into self and outlook of much that was

suppressed or unrecognized in the interest of Stage 4's self-certainty and conscious

cognitive and affective adaptation to reality" (Fowler 1981, 197).

Ego-transformation and "the dark night of the soul." The transforming

moment that engenders the modulation from Stage 4 to Stage 5 does not come easily. It

is, in this researcher's understanding, "the dark night of the soul" described by John of

the Cross, the painful passage from the Fifth Mansion to the Sixth and Seventh

Mansions described by Teresa of Avila, the process of "vastation" described by

Swedenborg, and the dawn of Brennan Manning's "second call" and Paul Ricouer's

"second naivete" (Fowler 1981, 197; John of the Cross 1973, 1: 318: 10; Manning

2000b, 157-71; Meadow 1992, 382-83; Wilson 1999, 313-15). In this transition, "a

transcendence of ego-preoccupation" occurs, with "a concomitant reduction of

preoccupation with oneself and one's petty worries. . . . At this point 'letting go' is very

important, . . . one must give up any insistence on directing or controlling events"

(Meadow 1993, 382). "It is a death to the false self, the egocentric life. It is the

abandonment of the falseness to which our society habituates us" (Teasdall 2001, 223).

In this "vastation," "the old ego, with all its clashing appetites and demands, is drained

out, emptied out, destroyed" (Wilson 1999, 315)

The Ego-transformation and Self-actualization that accompany the modulation

from the Individuative-Reflective stage to the Conjunctive stage—again, like the arms of

the *chi*—broaden the individual's bounds of social awareness. This broadening of Ego

and Self is not a return to the dis-integrating distance of the earlier stages. It is a

broadening that leads to a new level of other-awareness, to a heightened openness to

previously-unrecognized aspects of the Self (the "interior other"), of other persons, and

of ultimate reality.

***Ego-Development: From Suspicion
to Solitude***

The spiritual development of the Ego is a movement from *suspicion* to

solitude (Figure 23). In the early stages, the collective sagas of family and faith-

community form the Ego's perceptions of others and of ultimate reality. Persons who do

not fit into the individual's paradigm for truth—whether formed by family, faith-

community, or individual intellect—tend to be viewed with *suspicion.* The bounds of

social awareness are limited to "those like us," to "groups in which one has interpersonal

relationships," and to "ideologically compatible communities with congruence to self-

chosen norms and insights" (Fowler 1981, 244).
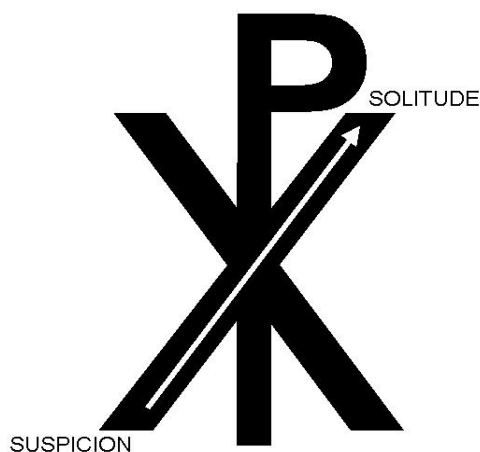
Figure 23. Ego-development in integrative model

Fowler's system does not address the development of the Ego beyond the

Individuative-Reflective stage. This researcher would suggest that the trait that emerges

through the Ego in the Conjunctive and Universalizing stages is *a capacity for solitude.*

At this point, the researcher's hypothesis is based on qualitative research and on casual

observation. Fowler does provide some basis for the researcher's hypothesis in his

concept of "vocation." When individuals find and accept their vocation (which, in this

researcher's understanding, may typically occur in the shift from Stage 4 to Stage 5),

> competition with others is reduced. We are freed from the anxiety that someone
> else may fulfil our particular callings. We rejoice in God's grace and favor in
> others, and we are not threatened by them. We are freed from the false guilt to be
> "all things to all people." We find comfort in God's plan that we each have a task
> to perform. We are released from self-vindicating thoughts and behavior. We do
> not need to prove our worth. (Pazmiño 2001, 51-52; Fowler 1984, 103-05)

Further research will be necessary to provide a quantitative basis for any hypotheses

relating to the development of the Ego beyond the Individuative-Reflective stage.

The capacity for solitude. The capacity for solitude may entail periods of

isolation. *Solitude* is not, however, the same as *seclusion.* This solitude is a "solitude of

the heart; it is an inner quality or attitude that does not depend of physical isolation"

(Nouwen 1986, 37-38). It is a movement from gratuitous impatience *with* the present

moment to patient gratefulness *in* and *for* the present moment.

What engenders the capacity for solitude is the cultivation of an awareness of

ultimate reality not only in the presence of other people but also in their absence, not

only in busy-ness but also in stillness, not only in *doing* deeds that have ultimate

significance but also simply in *being* in the presence of ultimate reality. One author

described this experience as a "second call" in which he was driven "into solitude

seeking not tongues, healing, prophecy, or a good religious experience each time I

prayed, but *understanding* and the quest for pure, passionate Presence" (Manning 2000b,

162). From a Judeo-Christian perspective, the capacity for solitude is described in the

biblical injunctions, "Be still in Yahweh's presence, and wait patiently for him. Do not worry about those who prosper in their way, doing evil deeds. . . . Be still and know that I am God" (Pss 37:7; 46:10).

Why does the capacity for solitude not commence until the modulation from the Individuative-Reflective stage to the Conjunctive stage? It is in the transforming moment between Stages 4 and 5 that the individual becomes aware that neither the sagas of family and faith-community that undergird Stages 1 through 3 nor the logical paradigms that undergird Stage 4 can completely comprehend the mystery of the Decisive Other. This new attitude recognizes that "no friend or lover, no husband or wife, no community or commune will be able to put to rest our deepest cravings for unity and wholeness" (Nouwen 1986, 30). The experience that the heart craves is to experience ultimate reality through an authentic solitude of the soul.

The capacity for solitude in Western culture. Although an emphasis on solitude has been most prevalent in the Eastern religions, every religious tradition has a place for solitude. Mystics, monks, and spiritual writers among Hindus, Jainists, Buddhists, Sufi Muslims, Jews, and Christians have all recognized the need for solitude (Teasdall 2001, 85). Considering the universality of solitude in the world religions, it is remarkable that the capacity for solitude is absent from Fowler's trans-religious system. Is this absence, perhaps, a result of the centeredness of Fowler's system in Western culture? (cf. Wuthnow 1983). According to Henri J.M. Nouwen, Western culture has virtually lost the capacity for spiritual solitude:

> Our culture has become the most sophisticated in the avoidance of pain, not
> only our physical pain but our emotional and mental pain as well. . . . We have

become so used to this state of anesthesia, that we panic when there is nothing or no one left to distract us. When we have no project to finish, no friend to visit, no book to read, no television to watch, or no record to play, and when we are left all alone by ourselves, we are brought so close to the revelation of our basic human aloneness and are so afraid of experiencing an all-pervasive sense of loneliness that we will do anything to get busy again and continue the game which makes us believe that everything is fine after all. . . . Our busy-ness, our giving to others, is often not truly a gift; it is a statement about our own incapacity to bear the thought of being alone, it is a purchase of a person's time or thankfulness so that we may avoid solitude. (Nouwen 1986, 27)

In the words of a popular song, "We are like sheep without a shepherd, we don't know how to be alone./So we wander 'round this desert, and wind up following the wrong gods home" (Henley and Lynch 1994). Perhaps, with the renewed emphasis on the spiritual disciplines that has accompanied the dawn of the twenty-first century, the capacity for spiritual solitude will emerge anew in Western culture (Manning 1996, 148-49).

Solitude and *proseuche*. The external effect of the capacity for solitude is *proseuche*—prayerfulness. *Proseuche* does not necessarily imply prayer to a specific deity. In ancient usage, not only Christians but also Jews and pagans employed the term to describe their patterns of supplication and submission to their perceptions of ultimate reality. As utilized here, *proseuche* is an attitude of consistent, patient gratefulness to a higher power for every aspect of life (see, e.g., Manning 2000a, 11-12, 37).

In the transition from Fowler's Individuative-Reflective stage, *proseuche* has the potential to move the individual through "the dark night of the soul," into a new state of spiritual sensitivity and solitude. Alan Jones and Brennan Manning summarize this potentiality from a Christian perspective:

The first sign [of the dark night of the soul] is that we no longer have any pleasure of consolation either in God or in creation. . . . The second sign is an abiding and biting sense of failure, even though the believer conscientiously tries to center her life on God. There is a sense of never having done enough and of needing to atone for something that has no name. The third sign, and the one that is most threatening today, is . . . *a matter of living from a center other than the ego.*

With the *ego purged* and the heart purified through the trials of the dark night, the interior life of an authentic disciple is a hidden, invisible affair. Today it appears that God is calling many ordinary Christians into this rhythm of loss and gain. The hunger I encounter across the land for *silence, solitude, and centering prayer* is the Spirit of Christ calling us from the shadows of the deep. (Manning 1996, 148-49, emphases added)

The patient gratefulness that flows from *proseuche* is not the false gratitude

that leads an individual to pray, "God, I thank you that I am not like other

people—thieves, worthless people, adulterers, or even like this tax collector" (Luke

18:11). To the contrary, the *proseuche* that rises from authentic solitude causes the

individual to become radically aware of and grateful for others. In the words of Thomas

Merton,

There is [following the dark night of the soul] an absolute need for the solitary, bare, dark, beyond-thought, beyond-feeling type of prayer. . . . It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brothers. . . . It is pure affection and filled with reverence for the solitude of others." (Merton 1956, 261; Merton 1985, 112)

Self-Actualization: From Hostility to Hospitality

The spiritual development of the Self is a movement from *hostility* to

hospitality (Figure 24). In the early Fowlerian stages, the individual is Ego-centered, and

the Self—although present—is not readily accessible. The individual's response to

concepts that contradict his or her perceptions of reality is typically hostile. The hostility

may be passive ("I will ignore other possibilities") or active ("I will argue against other

possibilities"). Yet, in both cases, "there is no inner space to listen, no openness to discover the gift of the other" (Nouwen 1986, 103).
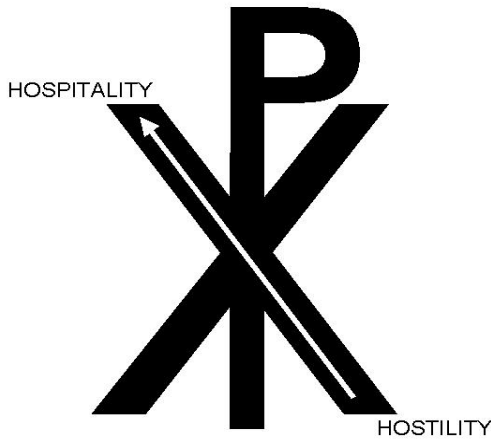

Figure 24. Self-actualization in integrative paradigm

Nevertheless, the hospitality that characterizes Self-actualization is not possible without the individuation—and accompanying potential for hostility—that Ego-development engenders. Without individuation, openness to others leads not to *hospitality* but to *uncritical conformity,* not to *Self-actualization* but to *Self-abnegation.*

> When we want to be really hospitable we not only have to receive strangers but also to confront them by an unambiguous presence, not hiding ourselves behind neutrality but showing our ideas, opinions, and lifestyle clearly and distinctly. . . . We can enter into communication with the other only when our own life choices, attitudes, and viewpoints offer the boundaries that challenge strangers to become aware of their own position and to explore it critically. (Nouwen 1986, 99)

Fowlerian stage-development and hospitality. A study conducted by C.W. Green and C.L. Hoffman corroborates the presence of a significant relationship between Fowlerian stage-development and positive perceptions of dissimilar others. In their study, Green and Hoffman discovered that subjects demonstrating more mature

Fowlerian stage-development viewed dissimilar individuals more positively than

subjects who demonstrated less mature Fowlerian stage-development (Green and

Hoffman 1989, 251-53; see also Allport and Ross 1967, 434-35; Black 1985, 93;

Gorman 1977, 491-504).

This relationship suggests that a quantitative basis exists for the researcher's

qualitative hypothesis of a movement in Fowlerian stage-development toward openness

to others. The shift in the secondary component of the FSDS between the Individuative-

Reflective and Conjunctive stages may provide quantitative corroboration for the

assertion that hospitality emerges through the Self when the individual enters the

Conjunctive stage.

The transition to hospitality. The movement from hostility to hospitality

typically begins when the individual moves from the Individuative-Reflective stage

(Stage 4) into the Conjunctive stage (Stage 5). With the emergence of the Conjunctive

stage, the individual "generates and maintains vulnerability to the strange truths of those

who are 'other'" and becomes "ready for closeness to that which is different and

threatening to self and outlook. . . . This stage is ready to spend and to be spent for the

cause of conserving and cultivating the possibility of others' generating identity and

meaning" (Fowler 1981, 198). Concomitant with this fresh openness to the voices of

other persons, an openness to the "interior other"—to the Jungian Self—emerges. This

aspect of the individual's personality was previously "suppressed or unrecognized in the

interest of Stage 4's self-certainty and conscious cognitive and affective adaptation to

reality" (Fowler 1981, 197).

(Although an openness to others and an awareness of Self do typically emerge together, it is possible for an individual to develop the capacity to appreciate other persons' otherness while remaining imperceptive of his or her own "interior other." Nouwen provides an example: "I remember a student presenting with great enthusiasm a summary of a book on Zen meditation while his own life experiences of restlessness, loneliness, and desire for solitude and quietude remained an unknown book of knowledge to him" [Nouwen 1986, 86]. Perhaps such individuals are in transition between the Individuative-Reflective and Conjunctive stages and are still over-assimilating others' perspectives into their own world-views [Fowler 1981, 183].)

The hospitality that arises from this transition does not merely recognize the differences between oneself and others; hospitality rejoices in those differences. The stranger is valued not *in spite of* but precisely *because of* her "strangeness." Her otherness is experienced not as a source of hostility or fear but as a cause for joy. When persons attain this inner hospitality, their lives become "an open and hospitable space where strangers can cast off their strangeness and become our fellow human beings" (Nouwen 1986, 65).

Hospitality and *koinonia*. The external effect of hospitality is the capacity for *koinonia*—for authentic communion not only with those who are similar to oneself but also for those who are dissimilar. In the early stages of Fowlerian development, *koinonia* is based on similar backgrounds and shared beliefs. In the later stages of Fowlerian development, a universal *koinonia* emerges, based on a shared humanness.

From a Christian perspective, the researcher would suggest that the diversity

of the church—of the "communion of the saints"—is a training-ground for the

experience of universal *koinonia.* The example of C.S. Lewis is illustrative in this

regard. According to Lewis,

> When I first became a Christian, I thought that I could do it on my own by retiring to my room and reading theology. . . . I disliked very much the hymns they sang in church, which I considered to be fifth-rate poems set to sixth-rate music. But as I went on I saw the great merit of it. I came up against different people of quite different outlooks and different education, and then gradually my conceit just began peeling off. I realized that the hymns (which truly were fifth-rate poems set to sixth-rate music) were nevertheless being sung with devotion and benefit by an old saint in elastic-side boots in the opposite pew. It's then that you realize that you aren't fit to clean those boots. It gets you out of your solitary conceit. (Smith 2000, 33)

Perhaps this movement from hostility to hospitality, toward authentic *koinonia,* is best

described, to use Lewis's term, as a movement out of "solitary conceit."

The *Rho*: A Paradigm for
Christian Formation

In this researcher's model, the *rho* represents Christian formation (Figure 25).

It is this aspect of development that remains unaddressed in Fowler's stages. Just as the

rho and the *chi* are united in the model and yet remain distinct letters, Christian

formation and Fowlerian stage-development occur simultaneously within the individual,

yet they remain distinct developmental tracks. Although Fowlerian stage-development

remains the context in which Christian formation occurs, individuals may attain

advanced Christian formation without attaining advanced Fowlerian stage-development
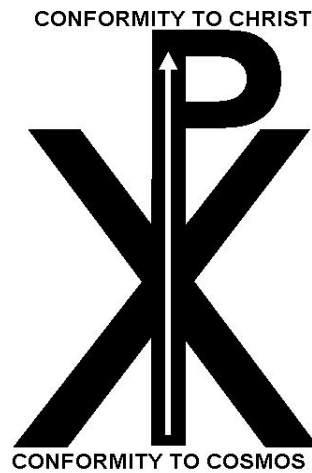
and vice-versa.

Figure 25. Christian formation in integrative model

Five strands of Christian formation. In the researcher's understanding, the *rho* includes five interconnected strands (Figure 26). These strands are based on Robert W. Pazmiño's model for the tasks of Christian education (Pazmiño 1997, 44-53). The five strands are (1) proclamation and reception of the Christian message (*kerygma*), (2) engagement in Christian fellowship (*koinonia*), (3) worship of God as he has been revealed in Jesus Christ (*leitourgia*), (4) advocacy for others (*propheteia*), (5) and service of others (*diakonia*). (Permission was granted by Robert W. Pazmiño to utilize his chart, Pazmiño 2003.)
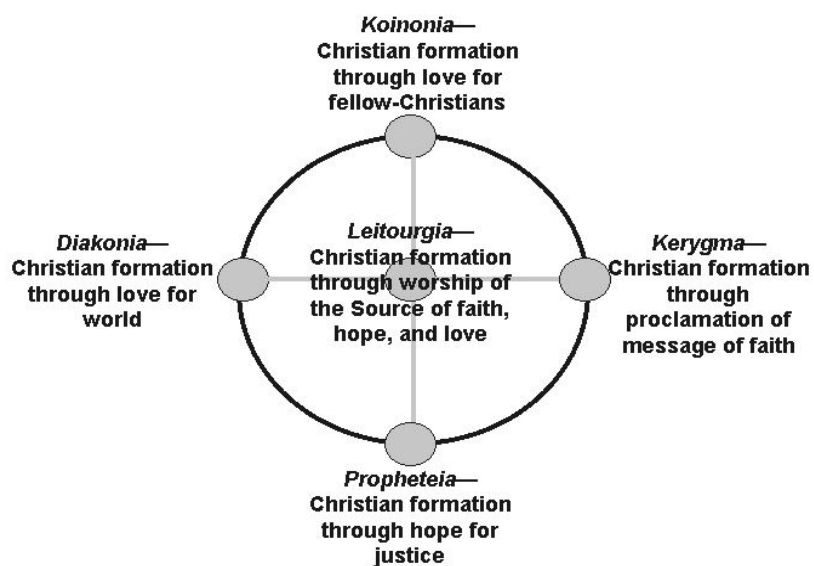
Figure 26. Five strands of Christian formation

Biblical-orthodox faith begins with *kerygma* and relates primarily to *kerygma.* Faith is, however, woven throughout all five strands of Christian formation. Through *koinonia*, faith is nurtured in the context of the believing community. (In the earlier explication of Self-actualization, *koinonia* functioned in a general sense of communion with others on the basis of shared humanness. In the context of Christian formation, *koinonia* functions in a specific sense of communion with fellow-Christians.) Through *leitourgia,* faith is celebrated in worship. Through *propheteia,* faith in the person of Christ becomes faith in the power of Christ to overcome human injustice. Through *diakonia,* the believer existentially articulates her or his faith in the context of sacrificial service. So, to speak of Christian formation is to speak of Christian faith-development, and to speak of Christian faith-development is to speak of Christian formation.

From *conformity to the cosmos* to *conformity to Christ*. In this researcher's understanding, Christian formation is a movement from *exo anthropos* or *palaios anthropos* to *eso anthropos* or *neos anthropos*—from "outer humanity" or "old humanity" to "inner humaniu" or "new humanity" (Rom 6:6; 2 Cor 4:16; Eph 3:16; 4:22-24; Col 3:9-10). It is a movement from a focus on conformity to the values and behaviors of the prevailing culture to centeredness in the transforming work of the Spirit of Christ within one's own spirit (cf. Ford-Grabowsky 1986, 9-10). It is the struggle with the *exo anthropos* to which Nouwen refers when he writes,

> Although we have learned from parents, teachers, friends, and many books, sacred as well as profane, that we are worth more than what the world makes us, we keep giving an eternal value to the things we own, the people we know, the plans we have, and the successes we "collect." (Nouwen 1986, 116)

In the researcher's integrative model, this movement is described as a shift from *conformity to the cosmos* to *conformity to Christ* (cf. Rom 8:29; 12:2; Gal 4:19; 1 Pet 1:14; 1 John 2:15-16).

Four levels of faith. The researcher would suggest that the movement from conformity to the cosmos to conformity to Christ is a process that entails four levels. The researcher has drawn the first three levels—*fides divine, fides actualis,* and *fides caritate formata*—from the writings of the medieval Scholastics (see also McKelway 1990, 170). The final level—*fides cruciatu formata*—represents the researcher's understanding of the ultimate result of Christian formation according to the Christian Scriptures.

The researcher has used "levels" instead of "stages" because the content and structure of Christian faith—unlike the content and structure of structural-developmental stages—do not change. The faith that begins in the individual as *fides divina* and *fides*

actualis is the same faith that becomes *fides caritate formata* and *fides cruciatu formata.* Furthermore, unlike structural-developmental stages, each level of faith includes all previous levels—e.g., when the individual's faith reaches the level of *fides caritate formata,* his or her faith is simultaneously *fides divina*, *fides actualis,* and *fides caritate formata*. (This pattern also characterizes the tree-rings that signify John Westerhoff's "styles" of faith, Westerhoff 1976.) What changes and develops with each level of faith is the degree to which the individual comprehends and appropriates the faith that he or she received in the initial experience of conversion. From this perspective, maturation in Christian faith is not so much a goal to be achieved as a gift to be received.

The first level of faith is *fides divina* ("divine faith")—the divine initiative that engenders Christian faith. *Fides divina* is faith as it exists in the mind of God. The primacy of *fides divina* emphasizes the biblical principle that faith flows not from human effort but from the sovereign activity of God (see, e.g., John 6:29; Eph 2:1-9). *Fides divina* is external with reference to human effort and exterior with reference to human time. Because faith begins as *fides divina,* faith is a divine gift.

The second level is *fides actualis* ("enacted faith")—the act of human response by which the individual personally appropriates the faith of Christ in his or her life. It is at this point that the individual experiences justification and the personal journey of faith begins. Through this act, the individual becomes conformed to the apostolic testimony about Jesus Christ. Because faith is *fides actualis,* faith is a personal choice.

The third level is *fides caritate formata* ("faith formed by love")—the ongoing process by which the individual expresses faith through active love for God and for others. *Fides caritate formata* is a primary aspect of the process of sanctification. Through this process, the individual is conformed to the lifestyle of Jesus Christ. If an individual's faith fails to function at this level, the authenticity of his or her profession of biblical-orthodox faith is doubtful (Jas 2:18-26; 1 John 3:17; cf. 1 Cor 13:2; 1 John 3:10). Because faith is *fides caritate formata,* faith is a process.

The fourth level, added by the researcher to the Scholastics' list, is *fides cruciatu formata* ("faith formed by the cross"). At this level, the individual becomes conformed to the sacrificial sufferings of Jesus Christ. It was this ultimate expression of faith to which Jesus called his first followers: "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt 16:24). Because faith is *fides cruciatu formata,* faith is self-sacrificial.

Faith as sacrifice. Paul described the life of *fides cruciatu formata* when he wrote to the Galatians:

> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live—Christ now lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in God's Son. . . . May I never boast in anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his cross, the world has been crucified to me, and I have been crucified to the world. (Gal 2:19-20; 6:14)

At this level of faith, the cross of Jesus Christ becomes the central orientating factor of the Christian's existence. The individual is willing not only to suffer for Jesus Christ but also to embrace suffering joyously, as an ontological participation in the sufferings of Jesus Christ. In the words of the apostles,

> Even if I am being poured out as a libation over the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad, and I rejoice. (Phil 2:17)

> I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the partnership of his sufferings by becoming like him, even to the point of death. (Phil 3:10)

> I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, even as I am completing in my flesh what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, the church. (Col 1:24)

> Loved ones, do not be surprised by the fiery ordeal that is happening among you to test you, as though something strange is happening to you. Instead, rejoice—you are sharing Christ's sufferings so that you may also share in his glory! (1 Pet 4:12-13)

The life of *kenosis*. The external effect of this level of maturity is the capacity for *kenosis* ("emptying")—for the same emptiness of self-concern that characterized Jesus Christ "who emptied [*ekenosen*] himself, taking the form of a slave, and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Phil 2:7). When a Christian lives in *kenosis*, she or he is prepared to be "poured out" for the sake of Jesus Christ (Phil 2:17; 2 Tim 4:5-8)—that is, to experience not only poverty and death but even separation from God for the sake of faithfulness to God (Matt 27:46; Rom 9:3). In the life that is marked by *kenosis*, "we surrender the need for vindication, hand over the kingdom of self to the Father, and in the sovereign freedom of loving our enemies, celebrate the luminous darkness" (Manning 1996, 158).

The levels of faith and psychometric limitations. Further research—both qualitative and quantitative—will be necessary to determine whether these four levels accurately describe the development of Christian faith. If these levels do accurately describe Christian faith-development, it will be necessary to determine to what degree it

is possible to assess the levels using psychometric instrumentation.

Fides divina concerns divine initiative rather than human response. Casual observation suggests that, due to the difficulties inherent in administering a psychometric instrument to a supreme being who exists outside the space-time continuum, attempting to measure *fides divina* would be impractical, if not impossible.

Instruments such as the Shepherd Scale, the Discipleship Inventory, and the Faith Maturity Scale appear to assess the consequential effects of *fides actualis* and *fides caritate formata.* The external sign of *fides actualis* are assent to certain assertions about God and personal appropriation of those beliefs—categories specifically explicitly assessed in all three instruments. The Shepherd Scale also seems to attempt an assessment of the consequential effects of *fides caritate formata.* For example, in addition to statements concerning the degree to which the subject's lifestyle and habits reflect the teachings of Jesus, the Shepherd Scale requests responses to statements such as, "Because of my love for God, I obey his commandments" (see also items 15, 16, and 28). The apparent intent of these items is to determine whether the subject's Christian habits arise from religious duty or from Christian love. By clustering certain items within these instruments, it might be possible to determine the degree to which an individual has moved from *fides actualis* to *fides caritate formata.*

Yet, what about *fides cruciatu formata*? Is it possible to measure the degree to which an individual is prepared to participate in the sufferings of Jesus Christ? Neither the Shepherd Scale, nor the Discipleship Inventory, nor the Faith Maturity Scale seems to attempt any assessment of the disposition to which the researcher has referred as *kenosis*.

It is possible that no self-assessment instrumentation can measure *fides cruciatu formata.* If so, perhaps other psychometric tools—e.g., interviews or instruments administered to a subject's acquaintances—could assess this level of faith. It is also possible that the only objective measure of *fides cruciatu formata* is martyrdom (cf. Manning 1996, 32). If so, the capabilities of psychometric instrumentation end with *fides caritate formata.*

Summary of the Integrative Model
of Spiritual Development

Spiritual development entails three distinct movements. Two movements, Ego-development and Self-actualization, are universal and inter-dependent. Together, these two movements comprise the psychological basis of the phenomenon described in this research as "other-awareness." In the researcher's model, the two arms of the *chi* characterize Ego-development and Self-actualization. The third movement, Christian formation, is uniquely Christian and appears to develop independent of other-awareness. The *rho* represents Christian formation. From a Christian perspective, Ego-development and Self-actualization are human responses to the universal presence of the divine, while Christian formation entails a direct experience of the divine in the particular person of Jesus Christ.

Ego-development is a movement from *suspicion* to *solitude.* The characteristic that emerges through maturity of the Ego is *proseuche*—grateful prayerfulness that does not depend on the presence or positive actions of others. Through Ego-development, persons become aware of the Self and gain peace within themselves. Fowler's four initial stages relate primarily to Ego-development.

Self-actualization is a movement from *hostility* to *hospitality.* The characteristic that emerges through maturity of the Self is *koinonia*—the capacity for fellowship with dissimilar others. Through Self-actualization, persons become aware of the humanness of others and gain peace with others. Fowler's final two stages relate primarily to Self-actualization.

Christian formation is a movement from *conformity to the cosmos* to *conformity to Christ.* The characteristic that emerges through maturity in Christian formation is *kenosis*—a willingness to participate in the self-emptying sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Through Christian formation, persons come to know the Triune God, revealed in Jesus Christ, and gain peace with God. Christian formation includes five interwoven strands—proclamation and reception of the Christian message, engagement in Christian fellowship, worship of God as he has been revealed in Jesus Christ, advocacy for others, and service of others. Although biblical-orthodox faith relates initially to the proclamation and reception of the Christian message, faith undergirds all five strands of Christian formation. The growth of biblical-orthodox faith includes four levels—*fides divina, fides actualis, fides caritate formata,* and *fides cruciatu formata.*

Wisdom and Human Development

One final task remains in this analysis of the relationship between Christian faith and Fowlerian stage-development: Because the Judeo-Christian Scriptures are the central locus of authority for evangelical education, it is essential for the evangelical educator to ask, "How do Ego-development and Self-actualization relate to the teachings of Scripture?"

"Wisdom" in the Hebrew Scriptures

The researcher would suggest that the two Fowlerian developmental tracks—Ego-development and Self-actualization—relate closely to the phenomenon described in the Hebrew Scriptures and in deuterocanonical texts as "wisdom."

Although the message of the God of Israel uniquely illuminated wisdom, wisdom was a *universal phenomenon* (Gen 41:8; Exo 7:11; Isa 19:11; Ezek 28:1-17; Dan 2:12-18; 4:6-18; Zech 9:2), embedded by God not only in the Torah but also in nature (Ps 19:7; 104:24; Prov 8:1, 22; 28:7; Jer 8:9). Wisdom was also a *developmental phenomenon.* Wisdom began in the child with the cause-and-effect reciprocity of parental discipline (Prov 29:15-17), matured with age (Job 15:8-10; cf. Luke 2:40, 52; Sirach 6:18, 34; 25:4-5), and operated at its highest level when individuals made ethical decisions based not on rules but on overarching principles (1 Kings 3:16-28). Perhaps most important, wisdom entailed *a quest to find meaning in life* (Ecc 7:25; 8:16; cf. 4 Macc 1:16; Crenshaw 1981, 190; von Rad 1972, 148). Fowler's developmental phenomenon is, in his words, an "evolved and evolving . . . universal human concern" and "a consequence . . . of the universal burden of finding or making meaning" in which the individual moves beyond cause-and-effect ethics and embraces a "principled higher law"—concepts that relate closely to human responses to wisdom in the Hebrew Scriptures (see Fowler 1981, xiii, 5, 33, 92-93, 245; Fowler 1992b, 18; Fowler and Vergote 1980, 52; Smith 1998, 129).

"Wisdom" in the Christian Scriptures

With the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, "wisdom" gained a new definition. In the words of the apostle Paul,

> The Jews demand signs and the Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim the crucified Christ—a scandal among the Jews, foolishness among the Gentiles, but among the called, both Jews and Greeks, God's power and God's wisdom. (1 Cor 1:22-29)

In the Hebrew Scriptures, "wisdom" had described the testimony of the divine in the Torah and the presence of the divine in nature. Yet the wisdom of the created order was indistinct (Rom 1:19-23), and the wisdom of the law was incomplete (Gal 2:15–4:7). In the incarnation, the presence of the divine—once indistinct and incomplete—"became flesh and pitched his tent among us" (John 1:14). The Decisive Other to which other-awareness is a response intersected human history in Jesus of Nazareth. In this way, "wisdom" gained a radically new meaning: To have wisdom was to experience the crucified Christ. This understanding of wisdom relates more closely to Christian faith-development than to Fowlerian stage-development.

The earliest Christians, however, did not discard the older understanding of wisdom simply because the divine incarnation invested "wisdom" with a new meaning. Among the Jews, Paul reasoned from the Jewish Scriptures (Acts 17:2, 11; 18:28). Among the Gentiles, Paul appealed to the presence of God in the cosmos (Acts 17:24-27). In this way, the ancient wisdom—the wisdom embedded in the Torah and in the created order—became the means by which the wisdom of the crucified Christ was proclaimed to the ends of the earth.

Wisdom Old and New

It is, perhaps, from this perspective that the relationship between Christian faith-development and Fowlerian stage-development becomes most clear: Although a structural-developmental sequence of human responses to an ambiguous awareness of the divine is far from biblical-orthodox faith, understanding this psychological sequence provides a basis for the clarification of Christian formation as well as a means for understanding the persons with whom the Gospel is shared. To adapt Christian faith-development to this sequence of human responses is to compromise the centrality of the crucified Christ. To identify this sequence as faith is to misconstrue the meaning of "faith." However, to utilize this sequence of human responses as a means for understanding the persons to whom the message of faith is proclaimed—that truly is wisdom.

Further Research

The researcher has organized possibilities for further research into four categories—(1) quantitative research related to refinement and enhancement of the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey, (2) quantitative research related to the assessment of maturity in Christian faithfulness, (3) quantitative research related to potential replication of the findings of this research, and (4) qualitative research related to the relationship of Christian faith to other-awareness. Each possibility has been phrased as a research question to assist future students in their development of dissertations and other research projects.

Refinement and Enhancement of the Fowlerian
Stage-Development Survey

Eight potential research questions emerged from the researcher's formulation

and administration of the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey (FSDS).

1. To what degree would the use of a six-point Likert response scale change the internal consistency reliability of the FSDS?

2. What quantitative relationships exist between Fowlerian stage-development as assessed by the FSDS and Fowlerian stage-development as assessed by Fowler's interview? Exploration of this question would require administering the FSDS to individuals who have recently participated in the full interview, then correlating the two assessments.

3. What quantitative relationships exist between Fowlerian stage-development, as assessed by the FSDS, and the Extrinsic-Intrinsic-Quest (EIQ) scale? If the FSDS accurately assesses Fowlerian stage-development, individuals who exhibit advanced Fowlerian stage-development should be more likely to exhibit Intrinsic-oriented and Quest-oriented religiosity (cf. Batson and Ventis 1982; Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999).

4. What quantitative relationships exist between Fowlerian stage-development, as assessed by the FSDS, and the Spiritual Transcendence Scale? It is the researcher's hypothesis that the Spiritual Transcendence Scale (Piedmont 1999) measures the phenomenon to which he has referred as "other-awareness." If this hypothesis is correct, the FSDS and the Spiritual Transcendence Scale should correlate strongly with each other.

5. To what degree is the FSDS internally consistent when administered in non-evangelical populations? Because Fowler's development theory is trans-religious, administration among non-evangelical subjects should not affect the internal consistency of the instrument.

6. To what degree is the FSDS internally consistent when administered in non-Christian populations? It is the researcher's hypothesis that the FSDS is able to assess Fowlerian stage-development in any monotheistic context.

7. To what degree is the FSDS internally consistent when administered in populations outside North America? It is possible that Fowler's theory does not function adequately in non-Western populations (Furushima 1982; Wuthnow 1983, 219).

8.   What quantitative relationships exist between education and Fowlerian stage-development as assessed by the FSDS? Although education should not significantly affect Fowlerian stage-development, advancement in Fowlerian stage-development and in education have tended to be corollaries (Hiebert 1993, 66). If education does correlate positively with Fowlerian stage-development as assessed by the FSDS, the researcher should examine whether the difficulty is with Fowler's theory or with the FSDS.

Assessing Maturity in Christian Faithfulness

Three potential research questions emerged from the researcher's measurement of maturity in Christian faithfulness.

1.   What quantitative relationships exist between individuals' scores on the Shepherd Scale, the Faith Maturity Scale, and the Discipleship Inventory? If all three instruments correlate strongly, the three instruments may measure the same developmental phenomenon. The researcher hypothesizes that the Shepherd Scale and the Discipleship Inventory would correlate strongly; however, the Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale and the Discipleship Inventory's Beliefs sub-scale would correlate strongly only among Baptists, due to the Baptistic orientation of the Discipleship Inventory. Because the Faith Maturity Scale mixes items related to Christian formation with items related to other-awareness, the correlation between the Faith Maturity Scale and the other two instruments would be weaker than the correlation between the Shepherd Scale and the Discipleship Inventory.

2.   Under what circumstances does the Shepherd Scale exhibit a ceiling effect? In this research, a ceiling effect was observed in the Shepherd Scale Christian Belief sub-scale, and the Shepherd Scale Christian Walk sub-scale exhibited a substantial negative skew. If a ceiling effect is consistently present in the Shepherd Scale, the instrument should be revised (Slater, Hall, and Edwards 2001, 10-11).

3.   To what degree does social desirability affect the Shepherd Scale? The ceiling effect may suggest that the Shepherd Scale is susceptible to subjects' desires to manage others' impressions of them. To explore this question, the Shepherd Scale should be administered alongside the Marlow Crowne Social Desirability Scale or the Greenwald and Satow scale (Greenwald and Satow 1972).

Replication of this Research

Two potential research questions emerged from the researcher's exploration

of possibilities for replication of the findings of this research.

1. What quantitative relationships exist between Fowlerian stage-development as assessed by the FSDS and maturity in Christian faithfulness as measured by the Discipleship Inventory among Southern Baptists? The researcher hypothesizes that no significant relationship would be detected between the FSDS and the Discipleship Inventory.

2. What quantitative relationships exist between Fowlerian stage-development as assessed by the FSDS and maturity in Christian faithfulness as measured by the Faith Maturity Scale among mainline church members? The researcher hypothesizes that, because the Faith Maturity Scale includes seven items that relate more closely to other-awareness than to Christian formation, a significant, albeit weak, relationship would be detected between the FSDS and the Faith Maturity Scale.

Qualitative Research into the Relationship between
Fowlerian Stage-Development and Christian Faith

Two potential research questions emerged from the researcher's exploration

of the qualitative relationships between Christian faith-development and Fowler's

structural-developmental theory.

1. What qualitative relationships exist between the concept of faith as articulated by Wilfred Cantwell Smith and the concept of faith as articulated in the Christian Scriptures and other ancient writings? This research has suggested that some aspects of Smith's research are questionable. Further research will be necessary to identify more precisely the problems in Smith's research.

2. What qualitative relationships exist between content and faith in non-Christian religions? This research has suggested that Christian faith requires a specific corpus of content. Exploration of this question would require the researcher to determine if "faith" in other religions also requires specific content or if this requirement is uniquely Christian.

APPENDIX 1

INITIAL STATEMENTS FOR FOWLERIAN
STAGE-DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

The researcher based the following statements on James W. Fowler's descriptions of each of his stages (Fowler 1981) and on statements found in other Fowlerian assessment instruments (e.g., Barnes, Doyle, and Johnson 1989; 86-87; Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999; Leak 2000). The bracketed number following each statement indicates the Fowlerian stage that the statement typifies.

In the initial version of the FSDS, the researcher arranged the statements in twelve pairs, as they are here. The section in Chapter 3 entitled "Development and Validation of the FSDS" describes the methods utilized to select eight of these statements for the FSDS.

A. Persons who follow God's rules always receive special rewards in this life. [2]
B. Persons who are faithful receive God's comfort and strength. [3]

A. Being open to other religions enriches my experiences of God. [5]
B. Thinking about God on my own enriches my experiences of God. [4]

A. God gives people what they deserve; everyone should accept whatever God does without asking why. [2]
B. It's important to try to understand how God acts and why. [4]

A. My primary basis for loving others is our shared humanness. [5]
B. My primary basis for loving others is the beliefs that we share. [3]

A. It is important to understand the reasons for a religious ritual before I participate in it. [4]
B. It is important for me to take part in the customs and rituals of my religion, even if I don't understand them.[3]

A. It is vital that I follow the leaders of my religious organization. [3]
B. Religious leaders should respect the need for people to seek out the truth for themselves. [4]

A. My religion tells me all I need to know about following God. [3]
B. I can learn a lot about life and faith from other religions.[5]

A. What's most important is to incorporate the holy writings of my religion into my life. [4]
B. What's most important is to believe that every teaching in the holy writings of my religion is literally true. [2]

A. Everything in the holy writings of my religion can be harmonized and reconciled; there are no inconsistencies in my religious beliefs. [4]
B. Some of the teachings of my religion don't make sense; I haven't been able to harmonize or reconcile them—I accept them by faith. [5]

A. I might change some of my beliefs if a leader in my religious organization showed me that those beliefs were incorrect. [3]
B. I might change my beliefs if they caused a conflict in my family. [2]

A. There are some people in my life that I'll never be able to forgive. [2]
B. I feel total love and forgiveness toward every person who has ever wronged me. [5]

A. I envision God as utterly loving and gracious toward me. [5]
B. A good way to relate to God is to do whatever God wants, so that God will help you when you need him. [2]

APPENDIX 2

FAITH DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

The Faith Development Survey first appeared in 1999, in an article entitled

"Development and Initial Validation of an Objective Measure of Faith Development"

(Leak, Locks, and Bowlin 1999). The researcher received permission from the primary

author to reprint the FDS and to utilize the instrument as an external criterion to assist in

assessing the content validity of the FSDS (Leak 2001).

The instrumentation utilizes a forced-choice format. For items 1, 2, 7, and 8,

the second response reflects higher development; for all others, the first response reflects

higher development. If an individual selects responses that reflect higher development in

five or more instances, she or he is categorized as "relatively mature"; this classification

is analogous to Fowler's Stages 4 and 5. If an individual selects responses that reflect

higher development in fewer than five instances, she or he is categorized as "relatively

immature"; this classification is analogous to Fowler's Stages 2 and 3.

Faith Development Survey

In each pair of statements below, please fill in the circle beside the **one statement** with which you identify most closely.

1. O I believe totally the teachings of my church.
    O I find myself disagreeing with my church over numerous aspects of my faith.

2. O I believe that my church offers a full insight into what God wants for us and how we should worship him.
    O I believe that my church has much to offer, but that other religions can also provide many religious insights.

3. O It is very important for me to critically examine my religious beliefs and values.
    O It is very important for me to accept the religious beliefs and values of my church.

4. O My religious orientation comes primarily from my own efforts to analyze and understand God.
    O My religious orientation comes primarily from the teaching of my family and church.

5. O It does not bother me to become exposed to other religions.
    O I don't find value in becoming exposed to other religions.

6. O My personal religious growth has occasionally required me to come into conflict with my family and friends.
    O My personal religious growth has not required me to come into conflict with family and friends.

7. O It is very important that my faith is highly compatible with or similar to the faith of my family.
    O It isn't essential that my faith be highly compatible with the faith of my family.

8. O The religious traditions and beliefs I grew up with are very important to me and do not need changing.
    O The religious traditions and beliefs I grew up with have become less and less relevant to my current religious orientation.

APPENDIX 3

ADMINISTRATION PROTOCOLS
FOR RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Each prospective research assistant received a copy of the administration

protocols as well as a copy of the survey packet, after the researcher made initial contact

with him or her. The administration protocols were intended to inform research

assistants of their responsibilities as research assistants and to provide a standardized

pattern for administering the survey packets.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT S RESPONSIBILITIES

The research assistant *should* . . .

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The research assistant *should not* . . .

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

2. . . .   administer the survey packets in any setting besides the setting discussed with the researcher. If the number of respondents in the approved setting is lower than anticipated, feel free to call the researcher at 918-266-5967 to discuss alternative settings.

3. . . .   influence or alter in any way the responses in the survey packets.

APPENDIX 4

SURVEY PACKET

This survey packet includes the instrumentations that were used to gather the data for the current study. The FSDS (referred to here as a "Religious Opinions Questionnaire") was scored by adding the numeric values—ranging from one to five—from the Likert response scale of the two statements typifying each Fowlerian stage. Individuals are classified at the Fowlerian stage with the highest sum. Because each Fowlerian stage includes and builds upon the previous stage, individuals who have attained more mature Fowlerian stage development (Stage 4 or 5) may still exhibit vestigial signs of less mature Fowlerian stage development (Stage 2 or 3). If, therefore, an individual had equal scores in two Fowlerian stages, one of which was a more mature stage and one of which was a less mature stage, she or he was classified at the more mature stage. When the two equal scores were consecutive stages within the broader categories of "less mature" (Stages 2 and 3) or "more mature" (Stages 4 and 5), the individual was classified as "transitional"—i.e., between two stages. For example, if an individual had an equal score in her responses to the Stage 4 and the Stage 5 items, she was categorized as "Stage 4 Transitional." Because relatively few individuals in this

study exhibited transitional stage development, transitional subjects were grouped with the individuals exhibiting the stage from which they were in transition—i.e., Stage 2 and Stage 2 Transitional surveys were grouped together.

The Shepherd Scale is scored by adding the numeric values of the responses in each of the sub-scales, Christian Belief (items 1-13) and Christian Walk (items 14-38). The sub-scale scores may be combined or treated separately.

Information About You and Your Beliefs

INSTRUCTIONS: Please fill in the blanks or circles, as indicated.

1   **Create a four-digit number that we may use to track your survey anonymously** *(We suggest your mother's birth date—if your mother's birthday were February 2, your number would be "0202").*   ___ ___ ___ ___

2   **Indicate your gender.**
- ○ Male
- ○ Female

3   **Indicate your age range.**
- ○ 18-24
- ○ 25-34
- ○ 35-44
- ○ 45-54
- ○ 55-64
- ○ 65 or older

4   **Indicate your church affiliation or preference.**
- ○ Adventist (Seventh-Day)
- ○ Anabaptist (Brethren, Mennonite, CMA)
- ○ Baptistic (Baptist, Bible Church)
- ○ Episcopalian (Episcopal Church, Church of England)
- ○ Evangelical (Evangelical Free, Evangelical Covenant)
- ○ Friends (Society of Friends, Quakers)
- ○ Lutheran
- ○ Moravian (*Unitas Fratrum*)
- ○ Orthodox (Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox)
- ○ Pentecostal (Assembly of God, Charismatic, Foursquare)
- ○ Reformed (Presbyterian, United Church of Christ)
- ○ Restorationist (Church of Christ, Disciples, Christian)
- ○ Roman Catholic
- ○ Wesleyan (Methodist, Nazarene, Salvation Army)
- ○ Other (including non-denominational)
- ○ No church affiliation or preference

5   **Indicate the length of time that you consider yourself to have been a Christian.**
- ○ Less than one year
- ○ 1-2 years
- ○ 3-5 years
- ○ 6-10 years
- ○ More than ten years

6   **The Bible is the perfect, authoritative, written record of God's will for humanity.**
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Uncertain

7   **Persons receive God's salvation by God's grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ.**
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Uncertain

8   **Every Christian has a responsibility to tell others how they may receive salvation through Jesus Christ.**
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Uncertain

9   **Jesus Christ is my Savior and my God.**
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Uncertain

OFFICE USE ONLY
FSDS   _____
SSCB   _____
SSCW   _____

Religious Opinions Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: After reading each statement, fill in the **ONE CIRCLE** that best describes your feelings. There are no "correct" or "incorrect" answers—the only correct answer is the one that honestly represents your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	*Somewhat disagree*	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Somewhat agree*	*Strongly agree*
1 **God gives people what they deserve; everyone should accept whatever God does without asking**	o	o	o	o	o
2 **My religion tells me all I need to know about following God.**	o	o	o	o	o
3 **It is important to try to understand how God acts and why.**	o	o	o	o	o
4 **Being open to other religions enriches my experiences of God.**	o	o	o	o	o
5 **A good way to relate to God is to do what God wants, so that God will help you when you need him.**	o	o	o	o	o
6 **My primary basis for loving others is the beliefs that we share.**	o	o	o	o	o
7 **It is important to understand the reasons for a religious ritual before I participate in it.**	o	o	o	o	o
8 **I can learn a lot about life and faith from other religions.**	o	o	o	o	o

The Shepherd Scale

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

		Not true	Generally not true	Generally true	True
1	I believe that God will bring about certain circumstances that will result in the judgment and destruction of evil.	O	O	O	O
2	I believe I can have the personal presence of God in my life.	O	O	O	O
3	I believe that there are certain required duties to maintaining a strong Christian lifestyle (i.e., prayers, doing good deeds, and helping others).	O	O	O	O
4	I believe that it is possible to have a personal relationship with God through Christ.	O	O	O	O
5	I believe that by following the teachings of Jesus Christ and incorporating them into my daily life, I receive such things as peace, confidence, and hope.	O	O	O	O
6	I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.	O	O	O	O
7	I believe that God will judge me for all my actions and behaviors.	O	O	O	O
8	I believe that by submitting myself to Christ, he frees me to obey him in a way I never could before.	O	O	O	O
9	I believe in miracles as a result of my confidence in God to perform such things.	O	O	O	O
10	Because of God's favor to us, through Jesus Christ, we are no longer condemned by God's laws.	O	O	O	O
11	Because of my personal commitment to Jesus Christ, I have eternal life.	O	O	O	O
12	The only means by which I may know God is through my personal commitment to Jesus Christ.	O	O	O	O
13	I believe that everyone's life has been twisted by sin and that the only adequate remedy to this problem is Jesus Christ	O	O	O	O

		Not true	Generally not true	Generally true	True
14	I am concerned that my behavior and speech reflect the teachings of Christ.	o	o	o	o
15	I respond positively (with patience, kindness, self-control) to those people who hold negative feelings toward me.	o	o	o	o
16	I do kind things regardless of who's watching me.	o	o	o	o
17	Status and material possessions are not of primary importance to me.	o	o	o	o
18	I do not accept what I hear in regard to religious beliefs without first questioning the validity of it.	o	o	o	o
19	I strive to have good relationships with people even though their beliefs and values may be different than mine.	o	o	o	o
20	It is important for me to conform to the Christian standards of behavior.	o	o	o	o
21	I am most influenced by people whose beliefs and values are consistent with the teachings of Christ.	o	o	o	o
22	I respect and obey the rules and regulations of the authorities which govern me.	o	o	o	o
23	I show respect toward Christians.	o	o	o	o
24	I share things that I own with Christians.	o	o	o	o
25	I share the same feelings Christians do whether it be happiness or sorrow.	o	o	o	o
26	I'm concerned about how my behavior affects Christians.	o	o	o	o
27	I speak the truth with love to Christians.	o	o	o	o
28	I work for Christians without expecting recognition or acknowledgments.	o	o	o	o
29	I am concerned about unity among Christians.	o	o	o	o
30	I enjoy spending time with Christians.	o	o	o	o
31	My beliefs, trust, and loyalty to God can be seen by other people through my actions and behaviors.	o	o	o	o
32	I can see daily growth in the areas of knowledge of Jesus Christ, self-control, patience, and virtue.	o	o	o	o
33	Because of my love for God, I obey his commandments.	o	o	o	o

		Not true	Generally not true	Generally true	True
34	I attribute my accomplishments to God's presence in my life.	o	o	o	o
35	I realize a need to admit my wrongs to God.	o	o	o	o
36	I have told others that I serve Jesus Christ.	o	o	o	o
37	I have turned from my sin and believed in Jesus Christ	o	o	o	o
38	I daily use and apply what I have learned by following Jesus Christ.	o	o	o	o

Please carefully read and respond to this section.

This research is designed to analyze persons' religious attitudes. This study is being conducted by Timothy Paul Jones for the purposes of dissertation research. Any information you have provided will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

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

_____   **Initials of Participant**

Return surveys to Timothy Paul Jones, ___ ____ ____ _____, _____, __ _____-____.

APPENDIX 5

SAMPLE LETTER FOR THE ENLISTMENT
OF RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Individuals identified by the researcher as research assistants received the

letter included in this appendix, as well as copies of the survey instrument and a postage-

paid envelope.

September 9, 2002

___ ____ ____ _____

_____, ____ _____-____

Dr. Notting Davidham
Director of Anything
1234 Somewhere Street
Nowhere in Particular, Some State 12345

Dear Dr. Davidham,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study that we talked about on the telephone! Please find enclosed fifteen survey packets for your Bible study group, a postage-paid envelope, as well as a copy of the administration protocols.

These packets should be administered to your Bible study group between September 18 and October 1, 2002. I *must* receive the surveys no later than October 7, 2002, for the data to be included in this research. Please mail the surveys no more than three days after the group completes them. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Thanks again for your cooperation! I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Still learning to be His child,

Timothy Paul Jones
Associate Pastor
First Baptist Church of Rolling Hills
Tulsa, Oklahoma

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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOWLERIAN STAGE-
DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-ASSESSED MATURITY IN CHRISTIAN
FAITHFULNESS AMONG EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS

Timothy Paul Jones, Ed.D.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003
Chairperson: Dr. Mark E. Simpson

The purpose of this descriptive-quantitative study was to analyze the

relationship between individuals' development according to Fowler's stages and the self-

assessed maturity of their faithfulness to Jesus Christ.

Based on a review of significant texts from the Judeo-Christian Scriptures and

from church history, the researcher concluded that faith as understood by the earliest

Christians—which the researcher has termed "biblical-orthodox faith"—and the reality

to which James W. Fowler referred as "faith" are not the same phenomenon. Biblical-

orthodox faith entails two inseparable dimensions, faith-content and faith-commitment.

The validity and vitality of biblical-orthodox faith may be assessed by measuring

individuals' maturity in Christian faithfulness. Fowler's understanding of

faith—described in this research as "other-awareness"—more closely relates to the

phenomenon described in the writings of Friedrich D.E. Schleiermacher as *das

schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeitsgefuehl.*

The researcher created the Fowlerian Stage-Development Survey (FSDS) to

assess Fowlerian stage-development in the sample of 348 evangelical Christians. The

alpha reliability coefficient for the FSDS was 0.6941. The Shepherd Scale—a

standardized instrument with two sub-scales, the Christian Belief sub-scale and the

Christian Walk sub-scale—was utilized to assess individuals' maturity in Christian

faithfulness.

ANOVA indicated that no significant relationship existed between Fowlerian

stage-development and maturity in Christian faithfulness as assessed by the Shepherd

Scale. Both qualitative and quantitative analysis suggested that Fowler's Stages 2

through 4 describe the development of the Jungian Ego, while Stage 5 describes the

development of the Jungian Self. These findings suggest that Christian spiritual

formation comprises three separate "tracks"—Ego-development, Self-actualization, and

Christian faith-development. In light of his research findings, the researcher constructed

an integrative model of spiritual development that incorporated Ego-development, Self-

actualization, and Christian faith-development into a single model while recognizing that

Christian faith-development and Fowlerian stage-development operate on separate

structural-developmental tracks.

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DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-ASSESSED MATURITY IN CHRISTIAN
FAITHFULNESS AMONG EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS

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A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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by

Timothy Paul Jones

May 16, 2003