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**EMPOWERING AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH, 9-12,
THROUGH MORAL CHARACTER EDUCATION**

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ABSTRACT

EMPOWERING AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH, 9-12, THROUGH MORAL CHARACTER EDUCATION

**by
Karen E. Griffin**

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This project that was designed to enhance the development of moral character of African-American children, ages nine to twelve (9-12). For purposes of this dissertation, moral development and character development are used interchangeably. A curriculum was developed for children and one for parents to assist them to help young people reach their potential in regard to moral character development. The underlying principles of the study were moral character, spiritual formation, and faith development. The major premise of the project was that if children feel good about themselves and feel a connection to God, then people will behave better, love themselves and God, and they will make better decisions to negotiate life.

This pilot study was conducted at two urban churches. There was a total of 35 children participating in the study, and there were 38 parent participants. The training took place over a sixteen-week period. The results of the study indicate that there was a significant increase in self-esteem among the children. Additionally, findings from the behavioral scale demonstrated a significant positive change in behavior among children. There was also a significant improvement of the parents' level of contentment with their children.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated in loving memory of my mother, F. Estella Black. If it had not been for the love, support, encouragement, and the love of God that I saw in her, I would not be the person I am today. I saw the breath of God in her.

K. E. G.

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PREFACE

As partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Ministry project, this writer developed two curricula that are designed to serve as preventive tools and to enhance moral character among children, ages nine to twelve (9-12). The other is for parents to accompany the Moral Character Education Development Curriculum for children, ages nine to twelve. This curriculum for parents is designed to enable them to become prevention specialists and to help them to enhance character development in children.

In order to undergird moral development, it is crucial that faith development and its stages as well as spiritual formation within children are taken into consideration and incorporated into the moral education development curriculum. As persons' spiritual formation grows, a transformation to faith occurs which allows people to come to understand and know that there is something greater than themselves. Spiritual formation and faith development lead to people being good in the sense that they behave and make choices that are beneficial for themselves and the community. The spiritual grounding that takes place within the individual has a positive effect that causes them to behave according to moral principles--right vs. wrong, good vs. bad.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Children today are confronted with many life situations that require them to judge experiences using moral reasoning. For instance, today's news reports increased numbers of cases of immoral acts committed by children. In metropolitan Atlanta, a six-year-old was found to have seriously injured a baby by kicking the infant in the head, and there have been other cases throughout the United States of young people who have murdered their parents and demonstrated little remorse. There are also a growing number of cases of children being victimized. For example, a young father, again in metropolitan Atlanta, killed his small son, buried him, and then reported that he had been kidnapped. Consequently, an increasing number of children, in general, have engaged in antisocial, criminal, and immoral behaviors, and a large fraction of children have become victims of criminal and immoral acts. Providing moral education, therefore, would seem to enhance character development in children, and generally serve as a preventive tool against declining moral standards among children.

Children today continually face many life situations which require them to use their judgement and moral reasoning. Moral reasoning grows over time, but learning and teaching begins at birth (Proverb 22:6) and ends at the grave. Parents are a very important influence in the development of a child's character development.

Parents also confront many life tasks and decisions that impact their children's spiritual and character development. Therefore, it seems essential that parents must be ready to help their children awaken to all the wonderful possibilities that exist for them in life.

As one's spiritual formation grows, a transformation to faith occurs which allows people to understand and know that there is something greater than themselves. As spiritual formation develops, faith grows. Consequently, as spiritual grounding occurs a positive effect compels them to adhere to a moral code. Teaching parents to support and nurture moral character development effectively among their children is of paramount importance.

The ministry research question is: Can curriculum-based training enhance the development of character among 9- to 12-year old African-American youth in the community? My hypothesis is that if young people feel good about themselves and feel connected with God, then they will behave appropriately, love themselves and God, and find better ways to negotiate life. In essence, the research question explored here is that one's moral character can be enhanced through character education.

Theological Perspective

"Religious values" is a recent phrase and usually covers what was called in the past "goods" or "virtues." Religious values encompass what is known also as morals and character.

The term is sometimes used subjectively (and descriptively) to designate what a person holds as worthwhile, whether or not anyone would agree The term 'values' is also used prescriptively, with an effort to be objective and normative . . . in the sense we speak of Judeo-Christian values The association of religion with values is complex.... In general, there are four ways in which religion and moral values are associated: (1) Religion is often the perceived source of moral value knowledge . . . however, revelation may be seen as knowledge which is not magicalized divine forays into epistemology, but as

precious knowledge which is perceived as gift and privilege as a manifestation of divine largesse. Such knowledge, then, scripturally stored, becomes an ongoing stimulus to the doing of ethics within a creedal community. It does not become a substitute for ethics . . . (2) Religion may be also a sanction for moral obligation . . . the principal motive for following his [Jesus] moral teaching is the reign of God . . . (3) Religion also functions as a rationalization of moral value choices . . . and (4) Finally, religion functions as prophetic critique in the cause of social justice . . . [commitment to the poor and weak] is inspired in the Judeo-Christian traditions by a profound sense of social-distributive justice as a primary religious value (Richardson and Bowen 1983, 594-595).

Therefore, religious values are divinely given and are enshrined in scripture which is passed on from parent and the church from one generation to the next. Religious values act as a guide to negotiating life. These value, morals, and/or virtues are something that one holds as meaningful and worthwhile.

Spirituality has gained much attention or come into vogue recently. Spirituality describes those attitudes, beliefs and practices which give life to individuals lives, and it teaches them to reach out toward super-sensible realities (Richardson and Bowen 1983, 549). Spirituality need not be derived from Christian spirituality which is inspired by the revelation of God in Christ. Christian spirituality is synthesis and has gone through many changes and developments since its Jewish and New Testament beginnings. According to Richardson and Bowen (1983), Christianity “was profoundly influenced by Neoplatonist philosophy and monastic rule in the first millennium, and in our own time many Christians feel the lure of Eastern religions, though this is not new, and there are clear affinities between Buddhism and St. John of the Cross” (550).

Faith is so central to the Christian thought that it comprises several layers of meaning. The theological tradition of faith has created tensions in its understanding as follows:

1. Belief in and belief that. Corresponding to the question whether God's revelation to humans is the impartation of certain 'truths' about [God's] nature and will, or is [God's] personal self-giving in love, [or] is the issue of whether faith is primarily the acceptance of doctrinal propositions, or the response of personal trust in God.
2. Faith by which we believe and the faith which we believe. Either the subjectivity of the believer, or the objectivity of that to which their faith attaches, is liable to emphasis at the expense of the other.
3. Faith as human decision and faith as divine gift. Faith being humanity's response to divine initiative, human decision, trust and understanding are involved (Richardson and Bowen 1983, 207-208).

Biblical Perspective

In the story of Moses (Exodus 2:1-10), we see Proverbs 22:6 in its truest form. For it tells us that if we teach children the right way when they are young, they will not forget it when they are old. They may stray away for a time, but they will come back to the teaching that was presented to them early in life. This scripture tells us to empower our children for life. Therefore, Moses' rescue from the bank of the river while his sister Miriam watched to ensure his safety is an example of empowering our children. But it did much more than that. After Miriam staged the rescue of Moses, she told Pharaoh's daughter that she knew a nurse for Moses. Moses' mother did more than nurse him. She instructed him in the ways of his people. She provided him with an identity, religion, and a heritage. Moses did not forget his teachings because as Hale-Benson (1982) puts it, when Moses "saw an Egyptian overseer striking a Hebrew slave, he did not experience an identity crisis. He immediately knew whose side he was on and what had to be done" (46).

According to June (1991, 100),

In Scripture, the mandate for training and development is given first and foremost to the home (Deut. 5:29; 6:1-3, 7-8; Prov. 1:7-9; Eph. 6:4). To Israel, God commanded that God's laws and statutes be kept and taught diligently to the children . . . when you

sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up (Deut. 6:7, NIV). Their well-being of their children, and their existence as a nation depended on it (Deut. 4:39-40). Biblically, parents are to teach, and children are to lay hold of the teaching they have received by letting it guide their lives.

For example, Proverbs 6:20-23 states: My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever, fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you. For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light . . . (NIV).

Parents are further told to instruct their children in the ways of the Lord (Eph.6:4). Fathers are expected to be reasonable in what they expect of their children. Fathers are to provide for the physical and spiritual needs as well as to nurture their children properly. "It is a joy when parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents can look over their generations and see that the knowledge of God is being passed on in line with biblical expectations Christian parents must decide to train biblically . . . A primary focus of training children is to establish early in them a view of God, the world, and their place in it that is consistent with what the Bible teaches" (June 1991, 1101-1102).

Consequently, biblical teaching of children is mandated by the Bible. The role of parents is to provide a home in which the spiritual development of children is paramount. The first responsibility for preparing children remains with parents in the home.

Historical Perspective

Historically, religions and values have not always been tied together. There are examples of Babylonian women who had to serve the government as hierodules in the temple and Egyptians who have had to take formulas to their tombs to fool the god of judgement. Now certainly this kind of behavior goes against moral precepts of morals and religion. However, "on the contrary, ancient Israel believed that persons must be holy and good as

their God is holy and good. Christianity is heir to this connatural linkage of religion and values” (Richardson and Bowen 1983, 594).

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the concept spirituality stood for the clergy to act as a distinct order of society and sometimes it stood for ecclesiastical revenue or property. Later on, spirituality distinguished the material from the spiritual, and its modern meaning has come to mean piety or holy living (Richardson and Bowen 1983, 549).

The noun "faith" is rare in the Old Testament. However, it may mean faithfulness or loyalty to God. In the Synoptic Gospels faith was a response to the kingdom of God which Jesus proclaimed and belief in his salvific powers which are rewarded because of faith. But for Paul, faith is total reliance on God's grace because people know that they cannot obtain righteousness by faith but only through union with Christ.

It is important to remember that the African-American Church has always been involved in the educational and social development process of African-American people. The church has been and is currently called on to continue to produce educational leaders. In addition to the church, we used to benefit from the guidance and nurture of extended family. But since then, we have become more mobile and have lost this supportive network. June (1991, 116) tells us that

the church, however, has remained a constant force in the lives of Black people. It therefore must strive to provide early, consistent, and relevant instruction to Black children. The church is where children are taught that Jesus loves them no matter what their skin color or socioeconomic status. Many of our children never get a chance to be “innocent.” They must face harsh realities at a tender age. It is in church that they are made to feel special, self-confident, and hopeful about their future.

Educational Perspective

Educational Approach

The intention of the project is to enhance the character development of African-American youth, ages 9-12. Through enhanced character, children are empowered to negotiate life more effectively and grow spiritually. By empowering, we mean equipping the children with some of the skills necessary to demonstrate compassion, love, patience, tolerance, kindness, good judgement. By education, we mean developing a curriculum that is culturally specific to African-American children, ages 9-12. Not only is the curriculum sensitive to the needs of this group, but developmentally appropriate too. Sensitivity to the children's needs better enables them to fully grasp the concepts presented. Curricula for African Americans must be interactive. Some hands-on learning experience during the learning process is important. The Elicitation Response method of instruction as presented at a week-long conference by the director of the University of Chicago's Teacher's Resource Center regarding infusing Afrocentric materials into curriculums is important to the application of the training package. The elicitation response method allows the teacher to draw information from the learner first to what knowledge they already possess. Then new information is added to their knowledge base. It is very important to know the kinds of character issues that the children hold prior to adding new sources of knowledge to the character base.

Consequently, teaching parents to be modelers of behavior is a key component to shaping children's moral character development. Parents are and can be prime examples of spirituality and deep faith. "Training impacts a child's mental, physical, social, spiritual, and

moral development. Just as Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and humanity (Luke 2:52), parents through the home can help their children mature in those same areas" (June 1991, 102-103).

Educational Normative Factors

The focus of this project is on children nine to twelve years old, and in order to appropriately address their needs one must have an understanding of this age group. Therefore, the study discusses normative factors of this group of fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. Fourth graders are usually energetic and healthy. They think concretely, like group activities, ask question, and enjoy personal attention from adults (Leavitt 1981, 38). This is a time when children begin to form a healthy attitude about themselves. Being a part of the group becomes important. Peer pressure can have a great effect on their lives. They have specific interests and a sense of morality. In addition, they are emotionally immature, eager to learn, want to help, and have an attention span of about 10 to 15 minutes. According to Lewitt, they need a variety of learning activities, concrete stories, opportunities to help, and patience (Leavitt 1989, 38).

Fifth and sixth graders are generally on the same level. They too are generally energetic and healthy. By the time they reach 11 and 12 years of age, they are very loud, inquisitive, and talkative. Peer influence is significant. They want to fit in, and they are very competitive. Lewitt goes on to say that children "dislike outward displays of affection, want to be involved in the classroom procedure, the activities they choose are affected by attitudes about themselves, they are at a time when they are developing attitudes toward groups and institutions, they are independent, and have an attention span of ten to twenty minutes"

(Leavitt 1989, 39). Fifth and sixth graders need firm loving discipline, involvement in activities, opportunities for memorization, security in competitive situations, encouragement, and good examples of Christian life.

Parental Involvement In The Educational Process

Parents are very important to the overall development of their children. The attitudes they hold, the thoughts they produce, the behavior that they model and their general temperament affects the household environment in very positive or negative ways. Consequently, “The most freeing contributions we can make to our children are mental ones. By constantly calling to mind the child’s ideal self, his essential perfection, we keep him free to pursue true freedom” (Berends 1983, 169). Loving thoughts from the child’s parents can make them leap for joy. Spiritual character, and faith development begins at birth. It is never too early to start the educational process. The parent educational process, whether spiritual, moral, or otherwise, has a purpose to encourage the right things and to discourage those things that are wrong. Parental education of children also seeks to instill the development of good positive healthy habits. Therefore, Carroll (1990) presents eight steps to use when teaching our children to enhance spiritual and character development.

1. **Children Learn Best When They Are Enjoying Themselves.** Punitive education in any subject is an extraordinarily inefficient way to teach . . . Fear seems to set in motion protective devices in the autonomic nervous system so that neither digestive tract, nor circulation, nor mental process function effectively for an extended period of time. Fear always induces some inner state of tension or panic: this may produce the immediate obedience desired, but it does not bring about constructive learning, or growth in maturity” (Manwell and Fahs 1961, 111, in Carroll, 1990).

2. **Many Basic Lessons in Spiritual Parenting Can Be Passed on to Children in the Form of Games, Stories, Puzzles, skits, art, Jokes, and Fun.**
... parenting need not--should not--be viewed as a ... formal classroom endeavor.
3. **The Best Kind of Teaching Takes Place When Children Are Not Actively Aware They Are Being Taught.**
Young ones, by large, are resistant to sitting still for solemn orations on “serious” matters--as parents have witnessed the zombie-like stares produced the moment the “religion spiel” is trotted out can testify to ... instead introduce spiritual ideas during moments of relaxed interaction, specifically during play, games, stories, and casual social exchange.
4. **Introduce Lessons into the Child’s Consciousness at the Precisely Appropriate Moments, Taking Care to Fit the Right Lesson to the Right Time, Place, and Situation.**
Don’t, for example, start speaking with children about Divine Mercy when they are absorbed in a favorite TV program ... Youngsters will not be receptive at this time and they will resent the intrusion.
5. **Incessant Repetition is Always Necessary When Teaching Children.**
One trap many parents fall into is the illusion that after one time, or two, or six, or seventeen, a lesson will be learned. Unfortunately, it doesn’t always work this way ... Civilized, kindly, reverent behavior must be learned.
6. **Good Behavior and Spiritual Conduct Must Gradually Become a Habit Before It Is Fully Assimilated.**
... Continually insist on certain acts, until these behavior patterns become part of the woodwork, until they are as natural to the child’s life as getting up in the morning and going to bed at night.
7. **The Process of Introducing Moral and Spiritual Concepts into the Life of a Child Is a Long-term Affair.**
Do it on a steady, rhythmical basis, a little each day; so that after a while these ideas seem natural to the child and become a regular part of his or her routine.
8. **Be Inventive, Be Flexible, Be Sincere, and Don’t Be Afraid of Making Mistakes.**
... In your enthusiasm to give your child the best possible moral and devotional upbringing, therefore, you will undoubtedly make mistakes ... Childhood is a long process, spiritual parenting is a difficult task, and there

will be many opportunities along the way to make up for your mistakes. The important thing is to try, to make the effort, to have the intent.

When children are in a supportive atmosphere, they take in vast amounts of information. They absorb material like a sponge in relatively short periods of time. Consequently, providing opportunities through the universal language of play integrated into daily lessons that are girded by fun activities like games, stories, and sometimes by just fooling around can produce growth in character by leaps and bounds.

Moral character development also depends on spiritual growth which requires a family plan for maximum enhancement. The family plan should have concrete measurable goals and objectives. There should be a carefully structured scheduled of activities for children daily that can be monitored on an ongoing basis to foster spiritual growth in them. According to Carroll (1990, 41), devising a spiritual parenting plan for children really depends on the character of the child and most importantly the vision of the parents. Parents must be aware of as well as the church spiritual normative factors of children from 9-12 years of age. According to Leavitt (1989, 38-39), children between the ages of 9-12 spiritually are able to understand what sin is, the need for salvation, Jesus as Savior, apply Bible principles to daily life, and Bible background.

Educational Process Within The Local Church

The correct educational growth and development of children are a primary and an essential task of the African-American Church. The church must be involved in the overall enhancement of moral character development and spiritual formation within children. June (1991, 115-116) concurs with this thought. The church must work with families to

counteract the effect of anything that is inaccurate, self-defeating, or that sends damaging messages to children. These messages may be received via the school, peers, or the media. The church must integrate the Christian faith and Christian learning with secular education. Also, in order to develop future spiritual leaders who are equipped and able to effectively teach, counsel, or guide others, the church must actively promote the study and mastery of academic disciplines.

According to June (1991, 117), "the Black church must reinforce and, in some instances, supplement the educational efforts of the school system. The responsibility for the educational development of the Black child lies with any segment of society that is concerned and equipped to make a positive impact. The Black church certainly qualifies as such."

Accordingly, this section will examine four practical methods to model African-American spirituality through teaching in the local church to children, ages nine to twelve. In order to model African-American spirituality, one must take into consideration the needs of the children. There are developmental concerns, emotional, intellectual, physical, environmental, social, and spiritual needs that must be addressed to aid the modeling process. In addition, we sometimes forget that modeling for children includes making sure that the modeling is student-centered. The modeling effort enhances character within children. The following four explanations explore teaching, worship, praxis, and retreats.

Teaching with cultural specificity is very important. Culture is the container of societies' beliefs and norms. The experiences of the community, its rituals, and customs are held by its culture. Crockett (1991) reports that "a society's culture transmits its values and

beliefs through its religious ethos, pattern of association, and relationships" (Crockett 56-57). The culture determines what will be taught as a part of the Christian education process.

There are many opportunities to model spirituality to children through the teaching process. Group activities such as the scouts, Sunday school, mission groups, and so on can provide time to foster a sense of community and oneness with God. Keeping the group activities student-centered will enhance the children's overall engagement in the learning process. This, in turn, will enable them to have a maximum of life experiences to promote their spiritual formation.

Teaching children on the fourth grade level when modeling spirituality involves helping them to understand and apply vividly Bible principles to life's problems. Activities that are child-centered and steeped in African-American life helps to bring about spiritual transformation. Planned activities such as projects, field trips, drama, role playing, puppets, Bible games and research, art activities, music, reading, listening, and memory facilitate African-American spirituality via modeling (Leavitt 1989, 38).

For fifth and sixth graders, modeling includes providing opportunities that will help them to know what sin is, the need for salvation, and the application of the Bible to daily problems. Activities of importance for spiritual formation are as follows: field trips, music, games, Bible research, role playing, choral readings, listening, and projects.

Modeling spirituality through worship is important because, according to Mitchell (1990), "the great strength of Black Christianity today, therefore, is not due to any great missionary activity, but to independent, clandestine meetings which adapted their African Traditional Religion (very close to that of the Old Testament) into a profoundly creative and

authentically Christian faith” (20). Children love stories and the story telling used in Black preaching helps to make the Bible story vivid and clear. This makes it easier for children to grasp the spiritual and moral meaning. The prayer is a petition for all emphasizing community, as well as the rich heritage of song. Including children in worship, in general, and in their own special worship service can be an ideal way to model African-American spirituality.

Practical experience working with individuals and groups in the community is paramount. Making room for others in the lives of children helps them to deal more effectively with that which is unknown. They have the chance to come face to face with realities that they may not have known existed. Ongoing activities of this sort may enhance spiritual formation. Collecting clothing for children living in a shelter or taking books to children in the hospital aids in the development of spiritual formation.

Retreats can help to build a sense of community. They can encourage discussions about problems that may come with life. They promote a time to tell bits and pieces of one's life story. Retreats as well as other activities can be a good opportunity to model African-American spirituality. It is important, when planning retreats, to remember to keep the activities student-centered and to use every opportunity to aid the spiritual formation of the child in the most positive manner. This will help to build a strong sense of self and a desire to be included in the community. Modeling African-American spirituality is necessary and important for the survival of our children.

Practical experience working with individuals and groups in the community is also important to the educational plan. Learning to make room for the stranger (those we do not

know) from without as well as from within (ourselves) is an experience that children can deal with as they venture into the unknown. Ongoing activities of this sort may enhance spiritual formation and moral character development.

CHAPTER II

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Moral Character

For the purposes of this project **character development** and **moral development** are used *interchangeably*. Moral education training may help young people to grasp a better understanding of what moral character includes. Character development may help young people to unmask themselves and to find truth for themselves. Moral development education may provide knowledge and skill to bring about change in behaviors and perceptions. It may also lead to the enhancement of moral character of those children with already existing high moral standards.

By moral character we mean that we live by core values, principles, and standards set forth by the Judeo-Christian tradition and by the society/culture in which we live. We must acknowledge, support, and affirm that one of the main roles of the family is to shape the moral character of children and the vital task of the church is to teach and inspire virtue and to model Christian moral character. By virtue we mean that we live by the guiding principles of the Ten Commandments and the gift and commandment of love emphasized by Jesus.

In shaping the moral character of our young we must be very aware of the differences that exist within our culture in regard to the moral and social issues that are at hand to be

addressed. According to Sichel (1988, 49), "the acceptance of moral pluralism and diversity by society created many problems for educators trying to transmit moral standards The moral pluralism of society and the linguistic analysis of theoreticians could not provide substantive moral standards for teachers to transmit to students." Therefore, in order to develop a society of compassionate youth we must address the challenges of the differing moral virtues and replace those that fall outside of the parameters of the Judeo-Christian ethic and work toward the vision of common good.

Children need well-defined standards of conduct even if they reject or resist them, and it is troubling or disturbing for children not to know right or wrong (Christenson 1981, 39).

Chazan (1985, 13) states in relation to Durkheim's discussion on moral principles:

Moral facts have several characteristics. First they are social in nature and, in fact, are subcategories of the phenomenon of social facts. The social nature of moral fact is not derivative; it is inherent in and integral to the definition of 'morality' and 'moral facts.' Second, moral facts are rules of conduct: [Morality] is not a system of abstract truths which can be derived from some fundamental notions, posited or self-evident . . . It belongs to the realm of life, not to speculation. It is a set of rules of conduct, of practical imperatives which have grown up historically under the influence of specific social necessities.

The morally educated person is one who has learned in church, school, home, and community to live in a way that reflects a sense and a practice of duty to a set of specific social norms and ideals. In addition, those who have been morally educated realize that diversion from moral standards ultimately lead to unwanted consequences. In essence, the earlier a child develops moral character the greater the likelihood that moral ethics will act as a guide for one's life. In order for the person to become morally educated, the person

providing the education must be concerned about the unity of the whole person and be willing to engage in praise of the learner.

Moral education is imperative because, it says, as found in Proverbs 22:6 "train children in the right way and when old they will not stray" (NRSV). Therefore, instilling moral virtues in children early on helps to build a firm foundation for them to stand on when faced with the challenges of life.

The premise of character and character development has been and continues to be a topic of great interest in many fields of study. For the most part, character can be understood as a group of behaviors that continue over time by an individual that describes them as a human being. Character deals with persistent habits or traits of a person. Specifically, character is commonly used to indicate a person's moral behavior as it refers to a pattern of acts that intend to do good or ill to other people. "In this case character means a persistent pattern of moral conduct, including a person's moral judgements, attitudes, and actions that identify or "mark" one's moral character. In this context moral virtues such as honesty, selflessness, compassion are important in the process of character" (Cully and Cully 1990, 106). As for character development, it refers to the manner in which an individual's moral character is formed.

Lawrence Kohlberg has been a leading proponent of moral development. Kohlberg's theory views moral development in terms of developmental stages, and the stages are pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. In the pre-conventional stage, morality is derived from knowledge and experiences that are limited to themselves or of an immediate other which serve as a guide to that which is good or not. In other words, morality is

generated from an authority figure most often. Power and control, punishment and control are focal-mechanisms used in this stage. In the conventional stage, morality is based on social perspectives of groups or doing whatever makes you liked by others. In this stage authority and the law or social order also dictates morality. In the post-conventional stage, human rights (the rights of the community outweigh that of the individual), fundamental principles, and personal conscience dictate to us that which is moral.

Kohlberg's theory does not include a place for spiritual growth and development and religious teachings. Kohlberg limits moral development to stages and suggests that the stages are universal and that moral reasoning is specifically related to moral conduct. His theory leaves little room for God, if any. Kohlberg's notions are not a foundational part of this project. However, it is important to present his work since it is reference and used by so many.

In any case, in Robert Cole's *The Moral Life of Children* (1986), he conducted interviews with various people regarding character. Noted below are some definitions of character (144-145):

- The aggregate of distinctive qualities belonging to an individual.
- Moral vigor or firmness, especially as acquired through self-discipline.
- The ability to respond to a setback.
- The ability to form an attachment to ideals of a larger community or organization other than oneself, and to exert one's influence for the good of the greater body.
- The possession of a sense of humor that allows one to see that there is more to life than living.

- The ability to be an individual in a crowd of people.
- A sense of self that has been found through experience.
- The ability to allow others to be individuals, even though they may be different.
- The ability to disagree with others without condemning (or losing respect for) the individual one disagrees with.
- A sensitivity toward the feelings of others.
- An understanding of the whole of the other people's personalities or character (even when it is different from one's own).

The list of attributes and definitions of character go on and on, but character, like spirituality, is multidimensional.

Susan Johnson (1989) comes up with a list of eight areas that explore the concept of character. She based some of the elements from her readings of various works of Stanley Hauerwas. The concept of character development here incorporates the place of God in the growth, development, and enhancement of our development.

1. *Character refers to a whole, created person, including our unconscious ...* biblical writers portray the human being as a created, whole person, animated by the breath or Spirit of God (Gen. 2:7).
2. *Character refers to the fundamental way we intend the world . . .* Christian character is forged in the vital dialectic between our intentions and our actions. To be a Christian means learning to see or intend the world in a particular way, and thus to become as we see. This closely linked to the biblical notion of discernment (cf. I Cor. 2:14) . . . Character, in terms of everyday reality, has to do with the intent to see our co-workers and colleagues and the strangers we meet as fellow creatures and fellow sufferers rather than fundamentally as threats to our security.
3. *Character involves the shape of our interiority, our inmost dispositions, affections, and attitudes.* Scripture reveals a God concerned with the condition of the human heart, the biblical metaphor for character. The

biblical insight is that who we are is as important as, and inseparable from, what we do, believe, or say. God desires that the whole person be formed in love (Deut. 6:5).

4. *Character involves what we do with all the givens in our lives.* Character means that we can become more than what is genetically, developmentally, and environmentally given to us. Character is what we do with the range of choices we have, since there is so much givenness and so much that simply happens to us.
5. *Character is a gift of community.* Character is not something that we ourselves alone create. It is a gift of those who bring us up, and those who continue to help nourish our Christian existence. As we mature, however, we assume increasing responsibility for the shape of our own character.
6. *Character is an ongoing, lifelong project . . .* Though we do have inconsistencies, Christian character means at least that we are committed to bringing every element of ourselves, everything we believe, feel, do, or, do not do, into relation with our primary loyalty to God's Realm. The shaping of our orientation to God's Realm is never finished once and for all.
7. *Character is the locus of sanctification . . .* Sanctification refers to the actual formation of Christian character . . . To be sanctified is to deepen, to clarify, to intensify our overall participation with the church in the Realm of God. To this there is no final stage . . . This will be a lifelong process of centering, de-centering, and recentering ourselves, with others, in Christ.
8. *Christian character requires Christian education.* To acquire character means we must be trained by the faith community to see and to take part in the world rendered by the Christian Story (112-117).

Character, simply put, is who are we as a person. It is our identity, that is, our self-identity.

Who am I and who are you as individuals.

Spirituality

Spiritual Formation

Spiritual formation cannot be adequately understood outside of the community context and faith tradition in which people are formed (Johnson 1989, 19). Spiritual

formation is not something that is generic. All of our life experiences help to form us spiritually. When we tell our life story, we are expressing how we were formed spiritually.

Susan Johnson (1989) states as noted:

It is Christianity that creates Christian spirituality, and it is participation in Christianity that nourishes Christian spiritual formation. To grasp the nature of spiritual formation, when it is Christian, we must grasp the significance of taking on the name and identity of Christian. Spirituality is not only a given. It is a reality that is learned . . . there is a content and a grammar to spirituality that must be taught and learned, especially in the context of the local congregation The church not only does formation but also is a spiritually formative community. By its nature, it is an ecology of spiritual guidance and formation (19-21).

Spiritual formation cannot be found in developmental stages of life like Maslow's self-actualization, Erikson's, or Piaget's developmental stages that deal with areas such as social and intellectual growth. Spiritual formation involves an ongoing inner change or transformation. Spiritual formation is the process of becoming who we want to be and who God wants us to be. This formation process is a lifelong effort. "The process of being changed is what Christians have called sanctification. It is what we mean today by the formation and shaping of Christian character" (Johnson 1989, 20). Spiritual formation involves becoming the song that we sing about. Spiritual formation is a focal part of becoming a Christian. In essence, ". . . spiritual formation . . . is our gradual transformation from a biological and socially mediated self into the more remarkable phenomenon of self as spirit . . . It is misleading, consequently, to think of spiritual formation in terms of invariant, hierarchical, or lawful progression" (Johnson 1989, 111).

Christianity Spirituality

Defining spirituality is not always an easy task. However, we can say that spirituality can be considered as one being grounded in the Spirit of God. Christian spirituality is not the only form of spirituality. There are other kinds of spiritualities such as spirituality of consumerism, of security, avoidance of pain, or destructive violence. What exactly is meant by spirituality? We search for its meaning looking for depth, community, and wholeness that it brings. According to Amirtham (1987),

Authentic spirituality is rooted in a living relationship with God and within the promise of God: "I shall be your God in all dimensions of life," and the commandment of God; "There shall be no God besides me." The present crisis of spirituality arises from a fundamental dysfunctioning in the lives of people - in relation to God, to fellow human beings and to their own selves. God has been dethroned from the hearts and minds of people. The God whom Jesus Christ revealed to us is no longer conceived as one who controls the forces of history. Humankind itself, and other gods, have taken God's place (6-7).

Therefore, to reverse the dethroning (sin) from the hearts and minds of people, we must have a clear understanding of what spirituality really is and means. Having a clearer idea of spirituality will help us to become more firmly rooted and grounded in the spirit of God and in development of a good relationship with the God of creation.

Generally speaking, all people have some kind of spirituality. But our spirituality is much more than we express or what we profess to believe. Our spirituality, according to Amirtham (1987), deals with "how we order our lives . . . but the resultant spirituality pervades our whole life and involves our whole person. Our stewardship of time, energy, and substance reflects the way we live out and express that ordering of our loves" (8). We must also keep in mind that spirituality can be described, but it is multidimensional. There

are three (3) components of spirituality and they are as subsequently noted: (1) an encounter with God, (2) reflection on the encounter, and (3) the liberating encounter--one is called to action that will transform life (Maas and O'Donnell 1990, 332).

More specifically, Christian spirituality helps those who follow the teachings of Christ to walk and live in the presence of God with their total being. It helps them to walk and live in the presence of God in body, mind, and spirit while dealing with the struggles of life that this world brings. Amirtham (1987) goes on to say that "discipleship is essential to Christian spirituality, but it is never self-centered or self-preoccupied; rather it is always oriented to the way of Jesus and to the communities of his followers. Christianity is being rooted in God in Christ and being open to people" (10). Christian spirituality is always God centered, but it is an earth center spirituality that deals with the joys and challenges of this life.

African American Spirituality

People of African descent have an attitude that sees life in the context of the encounter with the Divine, and the all-embracing vision of the Divine-human encounter (Maas and O'Donnell 1990, 332). This encounter is the essential factor for understanding the nature of African American spirituality. This spirituality is ingrained in an ancient world view. It would appear that one cannot effectively examine African-American spirituality without understanding the role of African religious traditions. Syncretism occurred when African religious traditions and Christianity encountered each other during the time of slavery. Those aspects of Christianity that would ease the pain of captivity were incorporated into the religions of African tradition (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990, 3).

African-American spirituality must be viewed from the life experiences (the joys, sorrows, and suffering) and world view as expressed by people whose roots are in Africa. For African Americans, "the faith community is not only the decisive context for . . . spirituality, it is the very shape of our spiritual existence" (Maas and O'Donnell 1990, 338-339). The community is of paramount importance. Spirituality is communal, liturgical, relational, and personal. Thus, we can again say that spirituality can be considered as one being grounded in the Spirit of God. Most members of the African Diaspora have a relationship with God that is both transcendent and immanent. Phelps (as cited in Maas and O'Donnell 1990, 341-346) states that

Black spirituality is characterized by a number of specific emphases and attitudes, none of which are exclusive to it but all of which, taken together, combine to produce a unique vision and practice of the spiritual life. First, black spirituality, like the African religions in which it is rooted, is community centered . . . It is in the context of the worshipping community that the God-awareness of black spirituality is nurtured.... Another fundamental element of black spirituality is its strong biblical character . . . black spirituality is always concerned to situate itself firmly in the present, in the midst of concrete daily experience The suffering caused by unemployment, poverty, hunger, homelessness, rejection, and the human degradation of racism is all brought to church to be transformed; and all of it is transformed by offering the entire community to God for healing, relief, and strength. Authentic black spirituality leads to prophetic action on behalf of justice, a justice that requires liberation from sin and its effects.

African-American spirituality is viewed in terms of all of our life experiences. Phelps (as cited in Maas and O'Donnell 1990, 341-346), states that "Black spirituality is characterized by a number of specific emphases and attitudes, none of which are exclusive to it but all of which, taken together, combine to produce a unique vision and practice of spiritual life Black spirituality is always concerned to situate itself firmly in the present, in the midst of concrete daily experience."

Foundations of Spirituality

Foundations of spirituality are those factors which undergird our growth. There are many areas which are foundational for spiritual formation. One such area is that of practical application (expressions in daily life). For example, demonstrating compassion toward someone less fortunate is practical application of spirituality. Embracing the stranger is also an expression of spirituality. Palmer (1991) states that "to be comfortable with the external stranger we must be comfortable with the stranger within" (66). In other words, in order to openly accept and love others we must be comfortable with ourselves. Hospitality focuses on our relation with the stranger. Developing a good sense of who you are, as the stranger within, is an important foundation. Palmer (1991) further states that "a hospitable space is alive with trust and good will, rooted in a sense of our common humanity Hospitality is especially important because it links the private and the public life, giving us a way to walk between the two realms" (68-69). Hospitality has to do with making room in one's life for others that are well known as well as those who are not. Showing compassion, kindness, mercy, and understanding are fundamental. Developing a spirit that is warm, loving, and giving is another example of practical application of spirituality.

Other expressions of the foundations of spirituality include worship, Bible study, growth groups, the use of songs and music, prayer, retreats, and spiritual discipline. "Spiritual disciplines authenticate the Christian life when they evoke compassion in us, sensitize us to what God is doing in the world, prompt us to embrace the stranger, inspire in

us the capacity for self-giving love, and lead us to authentic self-love" (Johnson 1989, 69).

Therefore, spiritual formation leads to character development.

Faith Development

Faith is universal. Faith is hoping for something that we have no tangible evidence that it will occur, and believing that it will happen. Faith is shaped by things that are outside of us, other people, spirit, and grace. Faith is interactive and social. Faith is complex. Faith is not always something that is religious in its context or content. Faith helps to form a foundation within us to build positive character. It makes us reach outside ourselves to look for answers and guidance because we come to know that we do not have the capacity inside us to go it alone. We know that someone bigger and greater fuels our desire and strength to go on and do that which is right. Fowler tells us that faith is a way that an individual or a group moves into the force field of life. It is a way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the many forces and relationships that make up our lives. Faith is the way that a person sees themselves in relation to others next to a background of shared meaning and purpose (Fowler 1981, xiii).

Faith acts as a shield that keeps us covered and it prevents us from being totally exposed to the harshness of life. Further, according to Fowler (1981):

Faith is a coat against this nakedness. For most of us, most of the time faith functions so as to screen off the abyss of mystery that surrounds us. But we all at certain times call upon faith to provide nerve to stand in the presence of the abyss--naked, stripped of life supports, trusting only in the being, the mercy and the power of the Other in the darkness. Faith helps us form a dependable "life space," an ultimate environment. At a deeper level, faith undergirds us when our life space is punctured and collapses, when the felt reality of our ultimate environment proves to be less than ultimate (xii).

Stages of Faith Development

Fowler states that there are six stages of faith development. But he also reports that there is a stage of infancy and undifferentiated faith. More specifically, we begin this stage as infants. We are thrown into a world where we have potential, but we do not yet have fully viable abilities. Here the seeds of trust, courage, hope, and love are planted and fused in an undifferentiated way so that we can contend with the threats of life such as abandonment and inconsistencies in child care. From the stage of infancy and undifferentiated faith emerge six stages. Although stages of faith development are not this cut and dry, this model does help to provide a framework from which to work. The stages may not occur in this order and one may not go through every stage, but it gives a theoretical base from which to work. The six stages are: 1. intuitive-projective faith; 2. mythic-literal faith; 3. synthetic-conventional faith; 4. individuative-reflective faith; 5. conjunctive faith; and 6. universalizing faith.

In stage one, intuitive-projective, the typical child in this stage is three to seven years old. This is a period filled with fantasies that are influenced by the stories of the seen faith of related adults that can have a permanent impact on the child's thoughts, actions, and perceptions. This is a period of self-awareness. Others see the child as egocentric.

In stage two, mythic-literal faith, the child is typical somewhere between eight and twelve and puberty. The child begins to make decisions and choices about stories, beliefs, and observances that represent their community.

Intuitive-Projective faith gives way to a more linear, narrative construction of coherence and meaning. Stories become the major way of giving unity and value to experience . . . For this stage the meaning is both carried and "trapped" in the narrative. The new capacity or strength in this stage is the rise of narrative and the emergence of story, drama and myth as ways of funding and giving coherence to experience . . . A

factor initiating transition to Stage 3 is the implicit clash or contradictions in the stories that leads to reflection on meanings (Fowler 1981, 172-173).

In stage 3, synthetic-conventional faith, puberty or adolescence has set in. The persons' experiences move beyond that of the family. Faith in this stage must bring together values and information and it must provide a basis for an identity and future outlook. Equilibrium within one's life is coming forth and it structures the ultimate environment in interpersonal terms. It is a conformist stage.

Stage 4, individuative-reflective faith, is the period of late adolescence or young adult. The person in this stage has to begin to take responsibility for commitments, beliefs, attitudes, and lifestyle. The individual reflects own self-identity and ideology.

In stage 5, conjunctive faith, the person is in mid-life. One begins to integrate self and ideology that were suppressed or unrealized in stage 4. Symbolism and conceptual meanings are revisited and a reclaiming and dealing with one's past become prominent. In the last stage, stage 6 universalizing faith, Fowler states the following:

Stage 6 is exceedingly rare. The persons best described by it have generated faith compositions in which their felt sense of an ultimate environment is inclusive of all being. They become incarnators and actualizers of the spirit of an inclusive and fulfilled human community. They are "contagious" in the sense that they create zones of the liberation from the social, political, economic and ideological shackles we place and endure on human futurity Universalizers are often more honored and revered after death than during their lives Their community is universal in extent Such persons are ready for fellowship with persons at any of the other stages and from any other faith tradition (Fowler 1981, 200-201).

The foundation for the following curriculum is based on spiritual formation and faith development.

CHAPTER III

NORM OF EVALUATION

Study Setting

The study was conducted in two settings. In the first setting an eight weeks training session was held for the parents and an eight weeks training for children. Each session for both groups lasted one hour and fifteen minutes.

The activities of the first setting were carried out at the Victory Baptist Church in Stone Mountain, Georgia, where the pastor is the Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Samuel. The church is located in a suburb of Atlanta in DeKalb County. Victory Baptist Church is eleven years old and has a membership of more than 2,000. The church's theology is a liberationist theology. The church currently holds three worship services and two Sunday school sessions per Sunday. One session of Children's Chapel worship is held each Sunday morning. The church has a strong emphasis on children, youth, and Christian Education. As a sign of their commitment to children, youth, and education, they hold the Victory Bible Academy on Wednesday nights and Saturday mornings.

In addition, the church operates a day care center and elementary school program. They have an active counseling ministry as well as other recreational and self enhancement activities. The church's adult membership is primarily made of well-educated African Americans who are between the ages of 20 and 55.

The training at the second site included a one-day seminar using a condensed modified curriculum for the children, and three two-hour training classes for the parents. The activities of the second setting were held at the New Bethel A. M. E. Church in Lithonia, Georgia which is also located in an Atlanta suburb in Gwinnett County. The pastor is the Rev. Mark Thompson. The church has a membership of 500 and holds two worship services per Sunday. This church also has a liberationist theology and a heavy emphasis on children, youth, and Christian Education. The Atlanta metropolitan area would be considered representative of most large urban areas in the country. The Atlanta area is diverse and growing rapidly.

CHAPTER IV

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The project participants were from two churches: Victory Baptist Church in Stone Mountain, Georgia, and New Bethel A.M.E. Church in Lithonia, Georgia. Prior to implementing the educational training, a curriculum was developed for children and parents. The curriculum was developed over the course of two semesters at Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta, Georgia as the result of two independent study courses.

The two curriculums were developed; one curriculum for the children and one for the parents, guardians, or significant others to help parents help their children develop a strong character. The curriculum is interactive for children and adults. Research has indicated that African Americans tend to learn better through experiential learning; however, most people seem to learn better through interactive means.

The training at Victory Baptist Church consisted of an eighteen-week session. The children engaged in eight weeks of two-hour sessions, and the parents participated in training for eight weeks of one and one-half hour sessions.

The training at New Bethel A.M.E. Church for children occurred during a day long retreat/workshop. The parents participated in three three-hour sessions of training over a three-week period.

The Evaluation Process

At the beginning of the training, a pretest was given to all participants to measure self-esteem, considerateness, social control, and anger control. The tools used were the modified version of the Jesness Behavior Checklist, Self-Appraisal Version and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale for the children. The Index of Parental Attitudes (IPA) by Walter W. Hudson (1976) was administered to the parents to measure the degree of contentment the parents have in their relationship with their child. The instruments were given as pre- and post-test only.

Self-assessment tools were given to all participants (parents and children) at both churches. The assessments were used to measure any change in self-esteem, children's behaviors, and level of contentment within the parent/child relationship. The self-assessment tools were administered in September 1997 (pretest only) at Victory Baptist Church, and the post-test was administered in December 1997 to all participants. The self-assessment instruments were administered in October 1997 to the parents and in November 1997 to the children (pretest only) at New Bethel A. M. E. Church, and post-test for both parents and children in January 1998.

However, the researcher also investigated as to whether there were any differences in study findings in regard to presenting information to the two congregations. The intention was to assess the impact of the training on affecting change that enhances character development as indicated by the differences determined between the pre- and post-test, if any. In addition, there was an interest in determining whether there was a significant difference in change of the participants in relation to the amount of material covered during

training, since one congregation's training was intensified even though the material content covered was shortened.

Dr. James P. Griffin, Jr. served as a consultant to the evaluation process. He is a professional program evaluator and is on faculty at Emory University, Rollins School of Public Health, in Atlanta.

CHAPTER V
SOURCES OF DATA

Results

Analysis of self-esteem, behavior, and parental attitudes were determined by means of t test. The t test is used to "determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups The t test compares the between-group variance against the within-group variance" (Grinnell 1981, 504). There was a total of 35 children who participated in the study from both churches. The children's ages ranged from 9 to 12 years of age with the average age being 10 years (see Table 1).

Table 1. Ages and Numbers of Participants
n = 35

Age of Participants	Number in Age Group
9	3
10	16
11	8
12	8
Average Age of Participants: 10	

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale which was given to the children, at pre- and post-test, is a ten-item assessment tool (see Appendix A). The scale was originally designed to measure global feelings of self-worth or self-acceptance. The result of the findings comparing the route of administration of training indicated that there was no difference in one method versus another. The children at Victory Baptist Church received an eight-week training, and at New Bethel A. M. E. Church the young people participated in a day-long training session.

T test results indicated that there was an increase in self-esteem among children at both sites from pre- to post-test. Although, it is also possible that the increase in self-esteem could have been a placebo effect, attributed to other factors, or short lived. In any case, the findings suggest that there was a positive increase in self-esteem. Therefore, further study and testing of the curriculum are warranted.

The Jesness Behavioral Checklist which was given to the children in its condensed form at pre- and post-test. Eighteen items were administered to the children from the Jesness scale (see Appendix B). Five of the 14 scales were used. The five scales used were considerateness, sociability, insight, social control and anger control. A description of each scale is listed below:

1. Considerateness vs. Inconsiderateness: Considerateness refers to a tendency to behave with politeness and tact, and to show kindness toward others.
2. Sociability vs. Poor Peer Relations: Sociability refers to the capacity for getting along well with others in groups.

3. Insight vs. Unawareness and Indecisiveness: Insight refers to accurate self-understanding and active engagement in efforts to cope with and solve personal problems.
4. Social Control vs. Attention-Seeking: Social control is demonstrated by the absence of loud, attention-demanding behavior.
5. Anger Control vs. Hypersensitivity: Anger control is defined as the tendency to remain calm when frustrated.

The results of the study also indicated that there was an increase in positive behaviors among the children at both churches in considerateness, anger control, and social control from pre- to post-test. T test results demonstrated that a positive increase in sociability occurred only in the children at New Bethel. The total insight scale was not used in the assessment tool, therefore, findings were not significant. It is also possible that this increase could be a placebo effect, attributed to other factors, or short lived. The findings do demonstrate that there was a positive increase in the behaviors of the children. Therefore, further study and testing of the curriculum are warranted.

The result of the findings comparing the route of administration of training indicated that there was no difference in one method versus another. The children at Victory Baptist Church received an eight-week training, and at New Bethel A. M. E. Church the young people participated in a day-long training session.

There were eleven boys and twenty-four girls in the educational sessions from pre-test to post-test. At Victory Baptist Church there were nine boys and sixteen girls, and at New Bethel A. M. E. Church there were two boys and eight girls. At Victory Baptist Church

twenty-five young people participated in the study, and at New Bethel A. M. E. Church ten children were in attendance (see Table 2). Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the participants were girls and thirty-two percent (32%) were boys.

Table 2. Participants by Gender and Churches
n = 35

Number of Boys	Number of Girls	Number of Boys at Victory	Number of Girls at Victory	Number of Boys at New Bethel	Number of Girls at New Bethel
11	24	9	16	2	8

The Index of Parental Attitudes (IPA) (see Appendix C) was administered to the parents at both churches at pre- and post-test. The IPA is a 25-item index designed to measure the degree of contentment that parents have with their children. T test results showed that there was a significant increase in the level of contentment that parents had in their relationship with their children from pre- to post-test.

There was a total of 38 parents who participated in the study. There were twenty-seven parents from Victory Baptist Church and eleven parents from New Bethel A. M. E. Church. The result of the findings comparing the route of administration of training indicated that there was no difference in one method versus another. The parents at Victory Baptist Church participated in an eight-week training session, while the parents at New Bethel A. M. E. Church participated in three two-hour sessions.

CHAPTER VI

REVIEW OF THE WORK OF OTHER INVESTIGATIONS

A review of the literature indicates that there has been some research conducted in the area of character and moral development. The literature search revealed that there was limited information available in the area of Christianity or religion and moral character development. Materials were identified primarily in the social services areas. In regard to the broad areas required for research of this project, the information is limited and additional research is needed to add to the base of knowledge. More research in regard to character development especially in relation to African Americans is needed. The development of curriculum for character development that is tailored to the needs of African Americans is also needed.

In any case, a research article by Ron A. Astor (1994, 1054) evaluates children's moral reasoning in relation to violence in unprovoked and provoked situations. The findings suggest that approval of and disapproval of violence was justified by violence. Further, it seems that the children deemed to be violent in the study focus were greater on psychological provocation because of past experiences and self-perceptions of victimization.

In the article "Environmental Views and Values of Children in an Inner-City Black Community," "72 children . . . from an economically impoverished inner-city Black community were interviewed on their views and values about the natural Children's

environmental moral reasoning largely focused on homocentric considerations . . . Findings are discussed in terms of moral-development theory, and the place of social-cognitive research in understanding the human relationship to the natural environment" (Kahn and Friedman 1995, 1403).

"Children's Moral Motive Strength and Temperamental Inhibition Reduce Their Immoral Behavior" by Asendorpf and Nunner-Winkler (1992, 1223), is concerned with the prediction of inter-individual differences in children's immoral behavior in real moral conflict situations involving a clash between a personal desire and moral rules. Children's knowledge and understanding of moral rules as well as their readiness to abide by these rules should be expected to play a major role in determining behavior in such situations. The discussion focuses on the influence of moral motive strength, temperamental inhibition, ego control, and their interactions on the reduction of immoral behavior.

In Kay Bussey's research (1992, 129), preschool, second, and fifth grade children's definitions of moral standards for and internal evaluative reactions too both lies and truthful statements were investigated. Results revealed that while older children identified almost all statements correctly, preschoolers correctly identified about 70% of lies and truthful statements. Lies were rated as worse than truthful statements by all age groups. However, only the second and fifth graders ascribed feelings of pride to story characters after truthfulness. Implications of these findings for children's moral development are discussed.

In this study, Helwig, Tisak, and Turiel (1990) reply to work done by Gabennesch. They present in the article a summary of 28 studies demonstrating that children distinguish morality and convention. Gabennesch's perceptual metaphors hinge on an exaggerated role

for conventionality in social formations at the expense of other complex social phenomena.

In Paul Jose's study (1990), he investigates Piaget's belief that immanent justice responses occur when fairness judgements override conceptions of physical causality in young children's understanding of a certain type of story. There were 48 subjects in grades 1, 3, and 5 and 38 college students. The results supported the prediction that children use the belief in a just world in immanent justice judgements.

In their article Grusec and Goodnow (1994) examine the widely held and accepted proposal that parental discipline effectiveness is strongly influenced by the particular method used and the use of restrictive power assertion. The researchers conclude that the criteria for investigation should include other outcomes than internalization. They should include the encouraging of new values and ways of behaving that may differ to an extent from parental values and ways of behaving, the maintenance of a child's self-esteem, and the parent's ability to tolerate noncompliance when it serves a positive goal. Answers to such questions will provide the beginnings of a better understanding of one of the most emotional and significant interactions that will occur between parent and child.

In conclusion, the information from the social and psychological aspects of character development appears to be well researched. There is little information from the religious theological nature in terms of moral character education curriculum and research. More research and curriculum development is needed. Only a small amount of data on character development and African Americans was identified.

CHAPTER VII

SCOPE AND LIMITS OF THE STUDY

First, this project is limited to African-Americans participants. Second, the research is limited to children aged 9-12. Third, the project is concerned only with enhancing moral character in children and assisting parents to help their children develop character. Finally, the curriculum has not been tested with any population other than those who participated in this study. Therefore, further testing of the curriculum is recommended.

The sample size is small even though the group was large enough to find statistically significant findings. This project was carried out only in a Christian environment.

CHAPTER VIII

IMPLICATIONS FOR MINISTRY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study indicate that focusing on training in the area of moral character development in a formalized matter is paramount in the life of the church. Since there were significant results regarding a positive change in self-esteem and an increase in positive behavior among children as well as a greater contentment among parents in their relationships with their children, it seems that this training should be studied further. When teaching young people, who are at an impressionable period in their lives, focusing on spiritual formation and faith development is important. Spiritual formation and faith development acts as undergirding principles in life. Ministry must focus on all areas of life that foster and enhance a connection to God. Ministry must develop a pedagogic style that will meet the needs of the young people by developing more curriculums that will help to increase self-esteem, positive behaviors, and increase parents' contentment with their children. Ministry must focus on making educational opportunities for children to enhance their relationship and connectedness to God.

This project gives indication that a well-rounded approach to teaching life skills that are exciting, relevant, and guided by the spirit of God pushes people to feel good about themselves and leads to a desire to do that which is good. This study suggests that ministry must maintain a broad perspective and focus on more than just Bible study if we truly want

children to be disciples. Education is a key factor in the growth and development of children, and ministry must keep this in mind when addressing the needs of our children.

A key question raised by this study is as noted. First, since it seems that including parents in the educational process by teaching them to teach their children has benefits, then why has the church not addressed this element before. Teaching children without teaching parents how to help their children can be futile. That is not to say that children cannot grow and develop without full parental participation, but it certainly will strengthen their overall growth. The church must be willing to embrace new and different ways to teach children and include the parents in the process. Parents, guardians, and/or significant others are children's first teachers.

This study suggests that combining the approach of teaching both children and parents is important. Even though the results are generated from a pilot study, nevertheless, the results cannot be ignored. The approach used is noteworthy of replication to further address the question of teaching both parent and children in matters that increase their spiritual development and faith walk.

Another concern for ministry is that of the effective use of children's church in the enhancement of moral character. Children's church should not be a place for children to be shifted off to in order to make worship stress free for parents. Nor should it be a place for children to go in order to make room for the adults. Children should have the opportunity to worship with the corporate body. "In many congregations the presence of children is an accepted tradition. The issue in those congregations is one of finding appropriate expressions of worship for all gathered " (Duckert 1991, 8). Children's church can be used

as a means to implement moral character training and enrichment classes to prepare children for life and the worship experience. Children's church is not a substitute for corporate worship, but an enhancement to worship. The idea combination would be that every other Sunday learning the skills necessary for worship and preparation for life through moral character development would be the focal point, and on the alternate Sundays the children would attend regular worship services. Consequently, the church can offer opportunities for children to grow and develop. Most of all, the church can make a difference in the life of children. They can learn to follow and obey the Great Commission to love and obey God which in turn leads high morals and character.

The project was designed to enhance the development of African-American children, ages 9-12. The results of this pilot study indicate that the combination of spiritual formation and faith development in conjunction with activities that are geared toward increasing self-esteem and positive behavior are salient. The findings suggest that when children feel good about themselves they do tend to act better and greater control over anger which leads them to make decisions that would be pleasing in the sight of God.

There is a clear and urgent need for the church to engage in moral character education, as children increasingly hurt themselves and others because of unawareness of and/or indifference to moral values. Transmitting moral values to the next generation has always been one of the most important functions of the church. The church's role as character educator is even more important when it is so obvious that children get little or no moral teaching from their parents, communities, or schools.

With the mixture of cultures that exist in our world and various acceptable standards of behavior in our society, the moral condition of and the direction in which the character development of children, generally, is headed has caused alarm and great concern for religious and nonreligious parents, teachers, and all those who are concerned. Consequently, moral education and development of our children are a growing concern. According to Christenson (1981), "The subject of moral education . . . is a growing concern to many parents, teachers, and concerned citizens. As Christians should be the first to recognize, what is most important about any society is not its Gross National Product or its military might or its artistic triumphs. It is, rather, the kind of people it produces. That outcome depends largely on the moral and ethical principles honored in that society. Thus, it logically follows that passing on the best of our ethical heritage to the young should be one of our foremost obligations" (37).

In order for young people to know, understand, and learn, what responsible people have done over the ages, they must be taught. In light of this, the investigator developed two curriculums to help bridge the apparent character gap that has often had a snowball effect among the young. Character education strengthens self-esteem, increases respect for self and others, develops responsible individuals, encourages honesty, virtue, compassion, sound judgement, patience, justice, tolerance, self-discipline, kindness, and spiritual formation.

Parents should remember that spirituality includes all aspects of life, and modeling of life-transforming actions teaches and fosters the desire to do good things or not within their children. African-American spirituality is of utmost importance in the development of morality. A spiritual plan should reflect the long term nature of child development.

African American spirituality is vital and enmeshed in the lives of African -American people. As people begin and develop their search for a contemporary African-American spirituality, it becomes very important to examine techniques currently used to help enhance spiritual formation. The communal world view found in people of African descent is also a salient factor in spiritual formation.

One final thought regarding the parents at Victory and New Bethel. They were very pleased with the concept of spiritual parenting of their children and helping to enhance the character development of their children. They were so pleased that each church decided to start a parent support group to continue the growth process that had started. The church needs to struggle with and support children and parents on issues which affects their lives in the community.

CHAPTER IX

STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT

Moral Character Education Development Curriculum

Parent's Training Package

I. Curriculum Outline

The curriculum will cover the following areas:

A. Course Introduction

1. Parents as teachers
 - a. Why teach?
 - b. Why and how to model behaviors?
2. What is faith?
3. Spiritual Formation (Connection to a source higher than self--God)
 - a. What is Spirituality?
 - b. Ways to help children form spiritually
 - c. Prayer--a key component
4. Using stories, games, and everyday activities to help build character
 - a. Teach moral lessons
 - b. Introduce children to spiritual truths
5. Teaching value clarification
 - a. Problem solving
 - b. Decision making
6. Teaching respect (property, others, God, self)

7. Teaching virtue
 - a. Honesty
 - b. Trustworthiness
 - c. Self control/self discipline
8. Enhancing self-esteem
 - a. Modeling parental love, support, and acceptance
 - b. Children are special--uniquely made by God
 - c. Self love and care

II. Sessions (each session will last for approximately one and one-half hours.)

Parents' Training Package Activities

Session I

A. Course Introduction

1. The training is a seven-session course designed to assist parents to enhance the moral character of African-American children, ages nine to twelve.
2. The training for parents is to be done in conjunction with the children's moral character development curriculum.
3. An overview of the sessions as well as an explanation of how these sessions compliment the children's training; parents will have an opportunity to foster their children's training.

B. Parents as teachers

A forty-five minute presentation on the importance of teaching, and the role parents play as the child's first teacher; the lecture will cover:

1. Introduce spirituality.
2. We all have something to learn in this life.
3. Instruction starts at birth and ends with death.
4. Lessons learned as children are special and remain with us.

5. These lessons stay in our hearts.
6. These lessons influence us more than any thing else in life.
7. Once planted they cannot completely be uprooted.
8. Once these lessons are planted, they form our character.
9. Modeling behaviors are the best teachers; the dictator approach rarely forms a lasting truth.

C. Activity

Parents will break up into small groups and discuss the following: (20 minutes)

1. How important is it to you to be the primary teacher of morals and values to your child?
2. What does God say about teaching your children in Deuteronomy 6:7? Education for the Hebrews was life oriented and not information oriented. How can you use this information to help you as you teach your children daily?
3. Reconvene as a group and discuss group responses. (15 minutes)
4. Closing remarks and restatement of key points (10 minutes)
5. Prayer and Dismissal (5 minutes)

Session II. What is Faith?

- A. A forty-five minute presentation on faith and the importance of it in the development of character. The presentation will discuss the following:
 1. For children to develop faith, we must teach them about God.
 2. If parents want their children to love God, then God must be seen in and as a part of everyday life.
 3. Faith helps us to know that there is someone bigger than we.
 4. Faith is interactive and social.

5. Faith is something of which we have no tangible evidence.
6. Faith builds the foundation for positive character development.
7. Faith makes us strong and helps us to face our fears.
8. A discussion of Fowler's (1981) stages of faith development and its relationship to their children.

B. Activity

Parents will break up into small groups and discuss the following: (20 minutes)

1. Parents will write and perform for the whole group a two and a half-minute rap song or poem about faith and character that they think their children will listen to.
2. The key is to give the song or poem meaning by making it relevant to life and to the world of a child.
3. Do not be afraid to act out the song or poem. It could be rather freeing; that is, it's okay to goof off sometimes with your children.
4. Each group will present their rap song or poem. (12 minutes)
5. Closing comments and discussion about effect of the group presentations. (14 minutes)
6. Prayer and dismissal

Session III. Spiritual Formation

A. A forty-five minute presentation on spiritual formation and spirituality and the importance of it in the development of character. The presentation will discuss the following:

1. Spirituality is multidimensional.
2. Three components of spirituality
 - a. Encounter with God
 - b. Reflection on the encounter
 - c. The liberating encounter

3. African-American spirituality is viewed from life experiences.
4. Spirituality is communal, liturgical, relational, and personal.
5. Spirituality can be considered as being grounded in God.
6. God is transcendent and immanent.
7. Spiritual formation defined is in a sense how we were formed; this formation builds character.
8. Become the song that we sing.

B. Activity

1. Parents will break up into small groups and discuss the following: (20 minutes) Parents will discuss how they can begin to model spirituality to enhance their children's moral development from the list below.
 - a. Modeling expressions of spirituality in daily life
 - b. Demonstrating compassion toward someone less fortunate than you.
 - c. Show hospitality.
 - d. Being warm, loving, and giving.
 - e. Communal worship
 - f. Bible study
 - g. Prayer
2. Reconvene and each group will present their group's ideas (15 minutes)
3. Closing discussion and prayer

Session IV. Using Stories, Games, and Everyday Activities to Help Build Character

- A. A forty-five minute presentation on using stories, games, and everyday activities to help build character. The presentation will discuss the following:

1. Develop a habit of just giving thanks at meals.
2. Teach your children the importance of having daily devotions.
3. Teach your child to be courteous around the house.
4. Turn everyday things into opportunities to teach a moral lesson.
5. Use life stories to make a point.
6. Make up stories that have a character-building meaning.
7. Read stories from the Bible and other books that have real life meanings.
8. Use games to teach moral lessons.

B. Activity

Parents will break up into small groups and discuss the following: (20 minutes). Parents will participate in two games as presented by Jenkins (1984) in her book, *A Child of God: Activities for Teaching Spiritual Values to Children of All Ages*.

1. Each participant is given a rubber band. Have each person stretch it out and snap it several times. Explain that thoughts are like rubber bands. Think a good thought and more good thoughts come back to you. Think bad thoughts and bad thoughts come back to you.
2. Shake some salt into a bowl of water. Say that we cannot retrieve the individual grains of salt from the water. Therefore, once we say nasty words we cannot take the words back. So always think first before speaking. Mistakes can be made right and we can be forgiven only if we pray.

- C. Parents will, as a group, now make up two games that can be used with their children to teach spiritual moral truths.
- D. Reconvene and present the two games; tell what the experience meant to them (15 minutes).
- E. Closing comments
- F. Prayer and dismissal

Session V. Teaching Value Clarification

- A. A forty-five minute presentation on value clarification to help build character. The presentation will discuss the following:

1. Problem Solving and Decision Making
 - a. Teaching children to identify and define the problem
 - b. Listing alternatives to resolve the problem
 - c. Choosing the best alternative
 - d. Reviewing the choice again
 - e. Trying out the alternative picked
 - f. Evaluating the effectiveness of the choice

- B. Activity

1. Parents will break up into small groups and discuss the following: (20 minutes). Parents will discuss how they would help their children define the following problem and how they would help them make the best decision.
 - a. Teneshia and LaShondra left church without permission after Sunday School was dismissed. They thought that they would not be missed and would return before the benediction. While Teneshia and LaShondra were skipping church, LaShondra falls and tears her dress and scratches her leg up pretty badly. The girls decided that they should return to church as quickly as possible. The girls arrive right as the preacher was beginning the sermon. They sat there in church passing notes back and forth trying to decide what they were going to say and do. They knew that LaShondra's mother would see the dress and her leg.
 - b. What would you do to help your child handle this scenario?
 - c. How would use the steps of problem solving and decision making?
 - d. What lessons could you help them learn from this incident?

2. Reconvene and each group will present their group's ideas (15 minutes).
3. Closing comments
4. Prayer and dismissal

Session VI. Teaching Respect

- A. A forty-five minute presentation on teaching respect to help build character. The presentation will discuss the following:
 1. Encouraging children to like and love themselves
 2. Fostering self-respect through personal neatness
 3. Encouraging children to take care of their bodies
 4. Encouraging children to take care of personal items
 5. Respecting their environment and neighborhood
 6. Keeping others from disrespecting personal things
- B. Activity
 1. Parents will break up into small groups and discuss the following: (20 minutes). Parents will write a three-minute skit demonstrating how they would teach their children how to take care of themselves, God, others, and property. Each group will perform their skit for the group as a whole (15 minutes).
 2. Group feedback on the skits (8 minutes)
 3. Closing comments (2 minutes)
 4. Prayer and dismissal

Session VII. Teaching and Modeling the Development of Compassion, Kindness, and Virtue

- A. A forty-five minute presentation on teaching and modeling the development of virtue to help build character. The presentation will discuss the following: Honesty, trustworthiness, and self-control/self-discipline are something we learn how to do or be.

- B. Appealing to the child's moral sense about honesty and trustworthiness must be done on two levels.
 - 1. Mind
 - 2. Emotions
- C. Let the child know that you are sad that dishonesty or a lack of trustworthiness occurred, but do not get angry.
- D. Let the child know that stealing goes against what the family believes. That it is wrong spiritually and morally wrong to lie or steal, for example.
- E. Teach the child to tell the truth; encourage them to tell the truth.
- F. Introduce honesty and dishonest behavior with story-telling.
- G. Teach patience because patience leads to self-control and self-control leads to honest behavior.
- H. Create an environment where there is mutual trust between you and your child.
- I. Talk about fair play.
- K. Activity
 - 1. Parents will break up into small groups and discuss the following: (20 minutes).
 - 2. Parents will discuss ways in which they can teach their children to be honest and truthful without anger.
 - 3. Parents will write a short story on the following situation:
 - a. An eight-year old boy takes a roll of quarters off his mother's dresser. How would you get the quarters back by appealing to the emotions and intellect? How would you encourage the child to act honestly?
 - b. Reconvene and present ideas to the whole group (15 minutes).
 - c. Closing comments (10 minutes)
 - d. Prayer and Dismissal

Session VIII. Enhancing Self-Esteem

A. A forty-five minute presentation on enhancing self-esteem to help build character. The presentation will discuss the following:

1. Accept your child unconventionally.
2. Be supportive.
3. Model lovingkindness.
4. Encourage children to love themselves.
5. Encourage exploration of gifts and talents.
6. Stress to children that they are special and uniquely made by God.

B. Activity

1. Parents will break up into small groups and discuss the following: (20 minutes).
2. Parents will discuss ways in which they can help to foster a positive self-image within their children.
3. Parents will develop a list of five things that they can do that will have the most positive effect on their children's self-esteem.
4. Parents will devise a game using the five techniques listed that can be played with their children to foster a positive self-image and enhance character.
5. Reconvene and discuss the list; give a demonstration of the game (15 minutes).
6. Presentation of Certificates of Completion
7. Closing Comments
8. Prayer and dismissal

Children's Training Package

I. Curriculum Outline

The curriculum will cover the following areas:

- A. What is faith?
- B. Spiritual Formation (connection to a source higher than self--God)
 - 1. Prayer
 - 2.. Significant others
- C. Value Clarification
 - 1. Decision making
 - 2. Problem solving
- D. Respect (property, others, self)
- E. Development of compassion, kindness, and virtue
 - 1. Honesty
 - 2. Trustworthiness
 - 3. Self control/Self discipline
- F. Self-esteem
 - 1. Uniquely made by God
 - 2. Self love and care
- G. Family, Community, and Church
 - 1. Importance of
 - 2. Helping to shape one morally and socially

Sessions (each session will last for approximately 45 minutes)

Children's Activity Training

Session I. Group interview

- A. The children will interview a panel of children from within the group as investigative reports at a press conference. The children will

interview each other to determine what they know about God, spirituality, salvation, the Bible, and character. After interview the entire group will discuss the findings. The following questions plus other questions generated by the reports will be asked.

1. Who is God?
2. What does God do?
3. How do you know God?
4. What do you think to be spiritual is?
5. What does having good character mean?
6. What makes for good character?
7. Do you think you have good character?
8. Do you know any people who are spiritual? Do you like the person that you know who is spiritual?
9. Do you see yourself as being spiritual?
10. What have your parents told you about God?
11. Does God like you and why?
12. Is there really a God?
13. When did you first start to read the Bible?
14. When did God become important to you?

B. Closing prayer (by a child)

Session II. What are Character, Faith, and Spirituality?

- A. The children will learn what character, faith, and spirituality is and how to develop more faith (lecture 15 minutes).
- B. Small group activity

1. Write a rap song about character, faith, and spirituality (15 minutes)

2. Perform the song (all groups 15 minutes).
3. Closing prayer (by a child)

Session III. Developing Good Judgement

- A. The children will role play the following and decide how best to resolve the dilemmas and find ways to demonstrate self control.
 1. A family friend runs through your house and destroys your parents' water bed. What will you do?
 2. A friend sits on top of the canvass covering on your play set and calls you and your mother names. What will you do? What do you think God would want you to do?
 3. Friends come into your house when you tell them not to and track mud through the house. What will you do? What will you tell your parents?
 4. You pick up a friend's bike and throw it onto the ground and then kick it. What is wrong with this situation?
 5. A friend borrows your new jacket and refuses to give it back. What will you do?
 6. Closing prayer (by a child)

Session IV. Trustworthiness

- A. The children will examine what it means to trust God and others and the importance of being trusted by others. Before the children arrive, candy suckers will be randomly placed on chairs throughout the room. The purpose will be to see how trustworthy children will be in terms of eating the candy before being told to do so. A discussion of what happens with the candy will begin the presentation and discussion of trustworthiness.
 1. The children will have a 15-minute presentation on trustworthiness.
 2. The children will write a skit with the help of the leader on trustworthiness.
 3. The children will discuss why they wrote the script the way that they did.

4. The children will discuss what they have learned about the importance of trustworthiness to character development.
5. Closing prayer (by a child)

Session V. Self-Respect/Self-Esteem

- A. The children will have a 15-minute presentation on self-respect.
- B. The children will write a short story and make a poster about respecting themselves as a group using the following components:
 1. Choosing to like yourself
 2. Showing self respect through neatness
 3. Taking care of your body
 4. Taking care of personal belongings
 5. Taking care of your home and neighborhood
 6. Not letting others disrespect you or your belongings
 7. Closing prayer (adult leader)

Session VI. Continuation of Self-Respect

- A. The children will discuss their posters from the previous session (20 minutes).
- B. The children will discuss ways in which they showed self-respect for themselves since the last session (20 minutes).
- C. Closing prayer (by a child)

Session VII. Prayer

- A. The children will have a presentation on prayer--why it is important and how it helps to develop good behavior and character.
- B. The children will discuss how prayer has helped them make good decisions in the past.

- C. The children will talk about how prayer can help them in the future.
- D. Closing prayer (adult leader)

Session VIII. Values Clarification

- A. The children will have a 15-minute presentation on value clarification
- B. The children will talk about the values that are guides in their homes.
- C. The children will discuss some of their own beliefs and values.
- D. The children will discuss differences in values among those in the group.
- E. Closing prayer (by a child)

Session IX. Value Clarification Continuation

- A. The children will have a presentation on how to solve problems and come up with the best possible choice for themselves. They will look at differences and similarities of the following to better clarify their own values:
 - 1. The children will examine right and wrong.
 - 2. Opinion/Beliefs of self and others
 - 3. Individual rights
 - 4. Differences
 - a. Clothes
 - b. Economics
 - c. Looks
 - d. Abilities
 - e. Ethnicity
 - f. Religion
 - g. Choice of friends
 - 4. Examination of the following through group discussion and presentation
 - a. Not letting others control your behavior
 - b. Thinking for yourself
 - c. Solving problems on your own

- d. Knowing when to ask for help
- e. Consider the consequence of your behavior
- f. Not letting others determine what you think of yourself
- g. Seeking help from God through prayer

5. Closing prayer (by a child)

Session X. Family, Community, and Church

- A. The children will have a final lecture on rediscovering traditions and Afrocentric perspective. Traditional African and blended African/ American values, moral codes handed down from generation to generation as guidelines for living will be presented.

- 1. The children will make a design for a t-shirt to represent their family, community and church.
- 2. The children will talk about how the things on the shield help to develop their character.
- 3. Closing prayer (adult leader)

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Circle for each question one of the following:

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

9. I certainly feel useless at times.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

10. At times, I think I am no good at all.

1 - Strongly Agree 2 - Agree 3 - Disagree 4 - Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX B

Jesness Behavior Checklist

Circle one of the following for each question:

A = Almost Never

N = Not Often

S = Sometimes

F = Fairly Often

V = Very Often

1. I clown around, horseplay, or act up when I know I'm not supposed to
A M S F V
2. I am well-groomed, clean, and neat in appearance.
A M S F V
3. I keep on talking or fooling around, even after I have been asked to stop.
A M S F V
4. I get loud and noisy at times and places when I probably shouldn't.
A M S F V
5. I get angry and upset when I am frustrated or don't get my way.
A M S F V
6. I get in fist fights.
A M S F V
7. I can take criticism or teasing without getting angry or flaring up.
A M S F V

8. I get along well with others in group recreation activities.
A M S F V
9. I work well with others and get along with others in groups.
A M S F V
10. Others agitate and tease me.
A M S F V
11. I have a pretty good understanding of how to get along with my parents and/or other persons at home.
A M S F V
12. I will go to others for help or advice when I need it.
A M S F V
13. I go out of my way to say hello or speak to others, even those who aren't very popular.
A M S F V
14. I say "I'm sorry" or apologize at times when I should.
A M S F V
15. I give compliments and encouragement to others.
A M S F V
16. I try to be polite. I answer when spoken to, I smile when others smile at me, and so forth.
A M S F V
17. I am able to express my opinion, or disagree with and criticize others in a way that does not get them angry or upset.
A M S F V

18. I help others, even when there may be nothing in it for me.

A

M

S

F

V

APPENDIX C

INDEX OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES (IPA)

Parent's Name _____ Today's Date _____

Child's Name _____

This questionnaire is designed to measure the degree of contentment you have in your relationship with your child. It is not a test, so there are no right and wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can by placing a number beside each one as follows:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | Rarely or none of the time |
| 2 | A little of the time |
| 3 | Some of the time |
| 4 | Good part of the time |
| 5 | Most or all of the time |

Please begin:

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------|
| 1. | My child gets on my nerves. | _____ |
| 2. | I get along well with my child. | _____ |
| 3. | I feel that I can really trust my child. | _____ |
| 4. | I dislike my child. | _____ |
| 5. | My child is well behaved. | _____ |
| 6. | My child is too demanding. | _____ |
| 7. | I wish I did not have this child. | _____ |
| 8. | I really enjoy my child. | _____ |
| 9. | I have a hard time controlling my child. | _____ |
| 10. | My child interferes with my activities. | _____ |
| 11. | I resent my child. | _____ |
| 12. | I think my child is terrific. | _____ |
| 13. | I hate my child. | _____ |
| 14. | I am very patient with my child. | _____ |
| 15. | I really like my child. | _____ |
| 16. | I like being with my child. | _____ |
| 17. | I feel like I do not love my child. | _____ |

18. My child is irritating.
19. I feel very angry toward my child.
20. I feel violent toward my child.
21. I feel very proud of my child.
22. I wish my child was more like others I know.
23. I just do not understand my child.
24. My child is a real joy to me.
25. I feel ashamed of my child.

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