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**CHURCH-BASED CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: CREATING A NEW PARADIGM**

**PART I: CHILDHOOD & ADOLESCENCE**

Before beginning to deal with the issues of the paradigmatic changes in the church and in the culture in which we live, changes which affect every facet of life, and our ministry models, I would like to give a brief account of how this paper came about. This is actually the fourth in a series of six paradigm papers on the church and its mission in the world, but was not originally part of the overall design.[1] For over twenty years I have been involved in renewal in theological education and missions - renewal which takes very seriously the centrality of the local church. Yet parallel to that work has been an ongoing effort to address the fragmented Christian education approach of the church in our generation, and to build an effective model which truly integrates the school, the home and the church.

About two years ago, Alan Pue, now Vice President of School Masters, asked me to consider constructing a framework for a wisdom-based Christian education paradigm based upon some extensive biblical theology work that I had done in the Hebrew wisdom literature, and which we had begun using with fathers and churches. Alan had worked with our church-based theological education paradigm in BILD-International, and saw tremendous potential for a parallel church-based paradigm for primary and secondary Christian education. A year later I met with Alan and Mickey Bowden and presented the core elements of the model. We all became excited about the implications of a church-based, wisdom-based education

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[1] The first paper, *Church-Based Theological Education: Creating a New Paradigm*, was delivered almost three years ago at the annual conference for the North American Professors for Christian Education (NAPCE). It was addressed mostly to Christian education professors and academic deans of graduate schools of theology, and is in one sense seminal to the entire discussion of the five articles. It calls the church to a whole new educational paradigm for educating its leaders. The companion to this paper, *Church-Based Christian Education: Creating a New Paradigm - Part II: Adulthood*, will be completed in the spring of 1996. The three together form a fairly complete treatise toward a comprehensive church-based Christian education paradigm. The next two were delivered at BILD-International's annual conferences, in 1992 and 1995 respectively. The first, *Church-Based Missions: Creating a New Paradigm*, deals with sweeping changes occurring in missions, in breaking free from the residual effects of the colonial missions model, and the second, *Church-Based Theology: Creating a New Paradigm* deals with the need to do theology afresh in culture, building upon a biblical theology base. The final paper in the paradigms for the modern church series, entitled *Church-Based Hermeneutics: Creating a New Paradigm*, in process as well, will deal with post-modern hermeneutical issues, and implications of electronic publishing on the life of the church. All place the local church at the center of the discussion. These can be ordered from LearnCorp, 1835 Meadow Glen Rd., Ames, IA 50014. Phone: 515-292-6810/Fax: 515-292-1933.

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paradigm. That time has led to a series of discussions which we hope will lead to a bold venture involving a network of prototype schools, churches and parents in a ten year adventure of building church-based Christian education models with this paradigmatic framework.

The concepts and model I'm about to share with you are not merely theoretical issues to me. They grow out of approximately 2,400 hours of study and teaching on the wisdom literature in the context of our church and its ministry apprenticeship training program, and in addition, are the framework, in elementary form, which guided Nancy and me in the raising of our two children. Anna, who is now married, is fully involved in the life of the church; my son-in-law George is with me at this conference. Anna and George lead the junior high youth ministry in our church, and George is in his second year of our church-based ministry apprenticeship. Jonathan, 17, is a student leader in our senior high youth ministry, founder of a Christian group, Revival, on his High School campus, and involved in a one year "boot camp" in preparation for our ministry apprenticeship program. I mention these facts only to emphasize the reality that the paradigmatic ideas I am about to share with you, though at times broad, theoretical and even technical, are highly practical when implemented; very effective if fully followed; and intensely personal; as they are the foundations upon which we have built our family, and the paideia of our local church.

*Our Contemporary Christian education model is fragmented–the church, the school and the home often on different agendas.*

I am convinced that one of the greatest needs today, in churches in our country and around the world, is to deal aggressively, and comprehensively, with the problem of the education, moral development and faith transmission of our children. And, that in light of the paradigmatic shifts being swept in with the emergence of a new technological society, we must seize this historic moment, to examine afresh the forms, the paradigms, if you will, of how we do Christian education today. Our contemporary Christian education model is fragmented - the church, the school and the home often on different agendas. The church often lacks a comprehensive plan, opting instead for a fragmented "Sunday school" system, purchasing market-driven fluff from the Sunday school publishing industry. Christian schools often find themselves in an uninterested relationship with churches, if not adversarial, and I might add, they often times deserve it. And parents, with little understanding of their central role in the paideia of their children, abdicate most of their responsibility to the church, the Christian school, or both, and therefore do not provide the overarching stability and guidance needed to span any successful education process.

The good news is that there seems to be a renewed vision for the Christian education of our children over the last decade. I have seen it in churches around the country, and the world for that matter. There is clearly a renewed interest in private schools, and especially Christian schools, as our

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national public education system hastens toward collapse.[2]  The continued growth of the home-schooling movement is also a positive sign.  It forces the question of the role of parents in Christian education.  Now is an opportune time, as opportune a time as the church has possibly seen in several hundred years, (if one accepts the thesis that we are now moving into a post-modern era), for a comprehensive evaluation of the whole concept of Christian education and an attempt at framing in a new paradigm - one which truly integrates the home, the church and the school.  But before attempting to tackle the boundaries of a new Christian education paradigm, we need to gain a sense of the sweeping changes which are reshaping education of every sort, changes which are truly paradigmatic in scope, changes which are inevitable.

## Paradigm Shifts in Education

Although it has become a little trendy, the concept of paradigm is rooted in some very significant literature,[3] which is crucial to understanding the history of the church, and how our ministry models are affected by the cultural realities and historical eras in which we live, work and minister. A paradigm is a more comprehensive idea than a model, since a paradigm can contain numerous working models.   The word paradigm comes from the Greek word paradeigma, which means example, model, pattern.   Kuhn defines paradigm as "the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques and so on shared by the members of a given community."[4]   Barker defines paradigms as follows:

> A paradigm is a set of rules and regulations (written or unwritten) that does two things: (1) it establishes or defines boundaries; and (2) it tells you how to behave inside the boundaries in order to be successful.[5]

In research today, a paradigm is understood as the acceptable boundaries of our ministry models.  In this sense then, the concept of paradigm is broader

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[2]  I am not at all impressed with the alarmist, unscholarly and often McCarthy type critiques of our national public school system set forth by the extreme religious right.  For an objective and mature contemporary assessment of the probable terminal nature of our system see the following works: *Public Education: An Autopsy*, by Myron Lieberman (Harvard, 1993), *Inside American Education: The Decline, the Deception, The Dogmas*, by Thomas Sowell, (Free Press, 1993), *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right From Wrong: Moral Literacy and the Case for Character Education*, by William Kilpatrick (Simon & Schuster, 1992), and *The De-Valuing of America: The Fight for Our Culture and Our Children*, by William J. Bennett (Simon & Schuster, 1992).

[3]  The seminal work on paradigms is *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, by Thomas S. Kuhn, (Chicago, 1970). Two theological works of great significance are:  *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, by David J. Bosch, (Orbis, 1991) and *Theology for the Third Millennium: An Ecumenical View*, by Hans Kung, (Doubleday, 1988). For a practical use of the concept of paradigms in strategic planning, see *Paradigms: The Business of Discovering the Future*, by Joel Arthur Barker (HarperBusiness, 1992).  Barker also has two very useful videos, viewed by school boards and corporations throughout the country, entitled "Discovering the Future: The Business of Paradigms" and "Paradigm Pioneers", both published by ChartHouse in Burnsville Minnesota, about $900 each.

[4]  Kuhn, p. 75.

[5]  Barker, p. 32.

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than the concept of model, in fact, there may be several models all existing within the same boundaries.

What does our education paradigm look like today? It includes grade levels, tests, grades, degrees, classrooms, etc. We all understand the rules. We all understand the paradigm, although probably no one ever sat us down and explained the education paradigm, its origins and its logic. It is sort of just learned. What is important to realize is that our current paradigm is undergoing radical transformation. Our current formal education paradigm is waning and a new one is beginning to emerge. This process, which happens every several hundred years, usually takes only a few decades to take place. If this is true, we are living in very extraordinary times.

*Schools will need to become lifelong learning centers to fit the new educational needs of a changing society.*

One of the best discussions of the magnitude of these cultural shifts and their implications for education is set forth by Alan M. Thomas in his book *Beyond Education: A New Perspective on Society's Management of Learning.*[6] Thomas develops the thesis that the formal educational system as we know it today arose in tandem with the industrial society, where uniformity was the standard and the need of the times; and that as a management of learning system it is going to need to be restructured, or reengineered, just as we see going on in the corporate world. We need a new management of learning system compatible with the emerging technological society we are entering. Corporations are needing to become learning organizations[7] by necessity of the changing society; and schools will need to become lifelong learning centers to fit the new educational needs of a changing society. Thomas suggests that the shift is inevitable, and that it can be made most smoothly by educational institutions who attach themselves to a learning organization.

A careful perusal of contemporary literature[8] on societal and cultural change, surfaces a general sketch of what this shift from the formal education

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[6] *Beyond Education: New Perspectives on Society's Management of Learning*, by Alan M. Thomas (Jossey-Bass, 1991).

[7] The "bible" of the learning organization books, one of the most influential business books of the 90's is *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization*, by Peter M. Senge (Doubleday, 1990). One of the most helpful for its numerous examples of learning center models - over 30 major examples, is *Corporate Quality Universities: Lessons in Building a World Class Work Force*, by Jeanne C. Meister (Irwin, 1994), published in association with the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD). And finally, Robert Aubrey, who wrote *Savoir Faire Savoir* (Knowing How to Know), winner of the prestigious University of Paris Prix Dauphine for the best business book of 1991, recently co-authored *Working Wisdom: Timeless Skills and Vanguard Strategies for Learning Organizations*, by Robert Aubrey and Paul M. Cohen (Jossey-Bass, 1995).

[8] Alvin Toffler's trilogy is by far the most comprehensive: *Future Shock* (Bantam, 1970), *The Third Wave*, (Bantam, 1980) and *PowerShift: Knowledge, Wealth and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century* (Bantam, 1990). Especially note chapter 18, "Education in the Future Tense" in *Future Shock*. Also very helpful are two books by Peter Drucker, *The New Realities: In Government and Politics, In Economics and Business, In Society and World View* (Harper & Row, 1989) - especially note Section IV: "The New Knowledge Society,"

paradigm, developed within the industrial society, to the emerging learning center paradigm of the technological society, would look like. See figure 1. A grasp of these developing patterns is extremely helpful in guiding us in strategically planning our educational forms for the future. These parallels are by no means exhaustive, but rather occur frequently in the literature and the early models.

**Figure 1**

| Waning paradigm | Emerging paradigm |
|---|---|
| 1.  Formal, institutional structures | 1.  Nonformal, flexible structures |
| 2.  For profit funding | 2.  For profit discipline |
| 3.  Testing and degree system | 3.  Competencies and portfolios |
| 4.  National vision | 4.  Community leadership |
| 5.  Institutional authority | 5.  Partnerships - parents, business |
| 6.  For service preparation dominant | 6.  In service preparation idealized |
| 7.  In service training marginalized | 7.  In service training foundational |
| 8.  Education for the young | 8.  Lifelong learning the focus |
| 9.  Institutional libraries | 9.  Community-based resource centers |

Why is the paradigm question so important for Christian schools?  Why should we concern ourselves with such matters?  Won't such a focus only cause us to divert our attention away from a return to the basics?  There are several reasons why as Christian school administrators, educators and teachers we need to pay careful attention to these trends.

First, the potential for improving the overall educational process is enormous if we put to full use, in an intelligent and biblical way, the benefits and advancements which are accompanying the information age. Education and curriculum packages are becoming available which allow input from every type of learning channel. The computer can facilitate creativity and fast research, since entire libraries can be accessed from our living rooms. Home-based and lifelong learning have greater potential than at anytime in previous history. We cannot design innovative and effective strategies for this new era if we are unaware of the paradigm shifts driving our culture.

Second, according to a recent report in *Christianity Today,* the home-schooling movement is coming of age.[9]  The subtitle is even more revealing, "teaching at home moves up to the cutting edge of education." The article assesses the quickly changing image of the home-schooling movement.

chapters 12-16, and *The Post-Capitalist Society* (HarperBusiness, 1993) - note section III, "Knowledge," chapters 10-12.  Finally, see *The Age of Unreason*, by Charles Handy (Harvard Business School Press, 1990) - especially chapter 8, "Re-Inventing Education."
[9]  "Home Schooling Grows Up," John W. Kennedy, *Christianity Today*, July 17, 1995.

"Although modern home-schooling families initially earned a reputation as being counter-cultural and separatistic, there is growing evidence such families are in the minority today.   Mark Weston, state services coordinator with the Education Commission of the States in Denver, a nonprofit, bipartisan interstate compact that services state policy makers, has found that home-schoolers are not unplugging from the culture at large, but rather may be early adopters of new trends and technology.  'Home-schoolers are no longer dropping out of society,' Weston says, 'These people are very plugged in -- with computers, accessing the Internet, and networking with other home-schoolers.'   Weston advocates cooperation among the public and private schools and the home-schooling community."[10]

M*any home schooling networks are on the verge of actually becoming new paradigm schools; innovative, educationally sound, learning centers–quite possibly a prototype of what is to come.*

Many home-schooling networks are on the verge of actually becoming new paradigm schools - innovative, educationally sound, learning centers - quite possibly a prototype of what is to come.  Traditional private schools, with all  their buildings, overhead and teacher salaries, are likely to go the way of the typewriter if careful strategic planning of a paradigmatic nature is not undertaken before the end of the decade.  Just this week an article appeared in the *New York Times* entitled "An Ode to the Typewriter,"[11] in which it creatively documented the recent bankruptcy of the Smith Corona Corporation, which once dominated the typewriter market- place. Failing to grasp the significance of the changes at hand, it merely tried to stretch the old paradigm by putting little memory screens on top of their typewriters, and eventually lost the entire market.  Is it possible that Christian schools could suffer the same fate by failing to harness the tremendous potential of their resources and do the necessary redesign, paradigmatic planning, and bold pioneering?  Joel Barker may be right, when he states in  "Paradigm Pioneers" - a video from  his widely known paradigm video series - that in the coming few decades it may not be the pioneers who are at risk, but rather the settlers.

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But third, and the most important reason for paying attention to these paradigmatic trends, is that our Christian education model does not fully integrate the home, the church and the school, and therefore is not truly Christian.  In general it is more reflective of the fragmented secular schooling paradigm, a product of the Enlightenment, which dominates our twentieth century societies. We must seek to build an overall framework, a biblical paradigm, if you will, (which by the way, allows room for many different models), which can guide us through the paradigmatic changes,

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[10] Ibid., p. 52.

[11]  "An Ode to the Typewriter," by Francis X. Clines, *New York Times*, July 10, 1995.

and the unparalleled opportunity of the first half of the next century. This is the task to which we now turn.

## Elements of a New Paradigm: Church-Based Christian Education

In building a new framework, it is necessary to assess the current framework, whether we decide to build upon its foundation - logical thinking - or move laterally and lay new foundations - lateral thinking.[12] I'm not so sure that lateral thinking is needed, at least not to the degree that we have called upon it in theological education and missions;[13] rather integrated thinking seems needed, which attempts to deal with the almost total lack of comprehensive ordered learning that we see in the church today. Three premises are foundational to the constructing of this paradigm.

### Three Premises of the New Paradigm - Church-Based Education

**Premise #1:** Christian education of children and adolescents is fragmented in that it does not seriously or comprehensively integrate the home, the school and the church.

It is my firm belief that our current Christian education paradigm is fragmented - the church, the home and the school all attempting to educate with little sense of an overall framework. This is compounded even further with the disarray in contemporary curricula, which demonstrates, at the deepest level, the same fragmentation of knowledge which characterizes public education and our public and private university institutions.

*1. Fragmented Christian education framework*

Christian education is fragmented at every level. (See Figure 2: "The Problem Visualized: A Fragmented Christian Education Approach.") Children seldom get a comprehensive, ordered, development of their faith through a Sunday school program, or through a program put together by their parents. Christian schools are not much better than the Sunday school systems, when it comes to a well-integrated, comprehensive biblical curriculum. They reflect the same fragmentation as the rest of contemporary Christian curricula. Young adults experience the same fragmented Christian education approach as they journey through youth ministry programs (usually disassociated from the adult life of the church), individualistic discipleship programs (in which the church often gets only token acknowledgment, if at all), or go on to Christian colleges, which are almost completely disassociated, in the educational processes, from the life of the local church, the family unit and the world of work, if not

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[12] The treatment of the concept and introduction to the skills of lateral thinking can be found in the book *Lateral Thinking: Creativity Step by Step*, by Edward de Bono (Harper & Row, 1970).

[13] *Church-Based Theological Education; Church-Based Missions; and Church-Based Theology*, op cit.

completely separated. Adults add to all of this "how to" books, Christian seminars and radio programs. Since no framework exists for serious, disciplined Christian education, each has to go out and find his or her own solutions as problems surface. The result is unestablished believers, who have little depth of Christian knowledge, and remain at an elementary level in their faith. (See Farley's quote on figure 2.)

The lack of a comprehensive framework for Christian education is evident as well in the disunity, and often tense relationships of those who are involved in Christian education. Who decides on the education forms, the curriculum structure, the materials used, the teachers hired? Who decides how the money, which we as Christians put towards Christian education, is to be divided up? Who decides what the parents are responsible for, the church is responsible for, and the school is responsible for, in the task of Christian education? Does it even matter?

Just the fact alone that we have three movements: Christian schools; home-schooling; and Christians with their kids in public schools who desire the Christian education of their kids to take place directly in the life of the church; is enough to say that the church today has a fragmented understanding, and fragmented approach to Christian education. Pastors often react to their churches being recruited for money by an educational system which says that Christian education is best handled by schools, and professionals - we have professional Christian missionaries, professional Christian counselors, professional Christian educators. The church often becomes a recruitment ground for funds with only token involvement. Thus the tension. Home-schoolers often react at the thought of anyone else teaching their children; and the Christian schools often react to non-professionals becoming deeply involved in the process.

We have little sense today of a serious disciplined and comprehensive approach to Christian education. On top of these realities, the average Christian adult has no desire for serious ordered learning of the faith because he feels that it is for those who are "going into the ministry," and therefore it is irrelevant to him. *The problem of contemporary Christian education is enormous.*

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## The Problem Visualized:
## A Fragmented Christian Education Approach

**Figure 2**

### The Reality Visualized

| Learning as a Child | Learning as a Young Adult | Learning as an Adult | Learning as an Older Adult |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experience Today: parental lectures market-driven Sunday school shallow family devotions fragmented Christian school | Experience Today: fragmented Christian college fragmented youth programs and adult Sunday school discipleship programs how to books by need Christian seminars | Experience Today: fragmented adult Sunday school how-to books Christian seminars religious radio programs | Experience Today: why bother, not needed |
| Serious, integrated ordered learning: none (nothing available such as the Jewish training of children and bar-mitzvahs) | Serious, integrated ordered learning: none (nothing available unless you decide to go to seminary) | Serious, integrated ordered learning: nothing available (except for seminary graduates - D. Min) | |

### The Problem Defined

"Why is it that the vast majority of Christian believers remain largely unexposed to Christian learning - to historical-critical studies of the Bible, to the content and structures of the great doctrines, to two thousand years of classic works on the Christian life, to the basic disciplines of theology, biblical languages and Christian ethics? Why do bankers, lawyers, farmers, physicians, homemakers, scientists, salespeople, managers of all sorts, people who carry out all kinds of complicated tasks in their work and home, remain at a literalist, elementary school level in their religious understanding? How is it that high school age church members move easily and quickly into the complex world of computers, foreign languages, DNA, calculus, and cannot even make a beginning in historical-critical interpretation of a single text of Scripture? How is it possible one can attend or even teach in a Sunday School for decades and at the end of that time lack the interpretive skills of someone who has taken three or four weeks in an introductory course in Bible at a university or seminary?"

*Edward Farley, in The Fragility of Knowledge: Theological Education in the Church and the University (Fortress, 1998)*

### The Solution Proposed

The church must take seriously its responsibility to fully train believers in their faith - in the whole counsel of God, if they are to be expected to make significant contributions in the cause of Christ in the world and work in which they live. Individual households must take seriously the ordered learning of their children.

*2. Fragmented Christian education curricula*

One of the toughest of all problems involves our concept of curriculum. We are all concerned about multiculturalism in our public schools, and what it does to a solid educational core, as well we should be. (The inability of our students of formal Christian education to move across cultural barriers ought to concern us as well.)[14] And we are concerned about the child-centered approaches derived form the romanticism of Rousseau, Dewey and others, and their effect on the study of an objective, disciplined core by all.[15] Yet paying attention to the unique learning styles of each person, and the developmental processes inherent in all persons, need not necessarily preclude the commitment to the disciplined, orderly study of a core of knowledge and truth.

What ought to be our *biggest curriculum concern*, with far greater consequences on Christian curricula than the above mentioned, is the very deep fragmentation of knowledge into unrelated academic disciplines. Not only are contemporary Christian education curricula fragmented (isolated) from the life of the family, the church and the workplace, but they are also fragmented in their very design. The old discipline of theological encyclopedia - which asked the questions: what should a minister study? and what order ought he to study it in? - is extinct, and so the serious questions of general encyclopedia for Christian education are almost never asked. Edward Farley, in *Theologia: The Unity and Fragmentation of Theological Education* argues that the original goal in theological education, prior to the enlightenment's effects on curricula, that of acquiring *wisdom*, has been replaced with the goal of mastering academic disciplines. [16] That is now the case in Christian schools and colleges as well. Most, if not all Christian schools are fooling themselves if they say they have integrated curriculum - that is a curriculum which integrates all of the disciplines into a wisdom-based orientation, which is well integrated with

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[14] It is a commonly understood and addressed problem in mission circles that students prepared in our Bible colleges are often ill prepared to enter another culture and minister effectively because they are unaware of cultural subtleties.

[15] E.D. Hirsch, in his national best sell*er Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (Houghton Muffin, 1987), (around which the core knowledge schools are built), deals with the importance of a core knowledge curriculum, and the fragmentation which is taking place in our public school curriculum, in chapter V: "Cultural Literacy and the Schools", see the section title "The Rise of the Fragmented Curriculum," pp. 110-125.

[16] In my previous paper, *Church-Based Theological Education: Creating a New Paradigm,* we dealt with one aspect of Christian education - educating leaders for the church, which we believe must be radically restructured. One of the books which influenced the entire discussion is *Theologia: The Unity and Fragmentation of Theological Education*, by Edward Farley (Fortress, 1983). Farley establishes that our entire theological education enterprise is fragmented and disassociated from the life of the church. Theological education curricula itself is fragmented, departmentalized and professionalized. Theological education, or serious ordered learning of our faith, has become a matter of professional ministerial preparation, rather than a disciplined orientation of the soul for the purpose of acquiring wisdom needed by all men regardless of their profession. Farley has traced the effects of the professionalization of theological education on the church, specifically on Christian education, is his invaluable article "Can Church Education Be Theological Education?" chapter 5 *in The Fragility of Knowledge: Theological Education in the Church & the University* (Fortress, 1988). The problem continues to move down the ladder of Christian education, in the sense that if the parents are "theologically uneducated" (no serious adult Christian education) then the children will be "theologically uneducated" (no serious, comprehensive childhood and adolescent education) as well.

the real life of the student: the life of the home, the church and the workplace.

What about childhood and adolescent Christian education and the local church? Here we have the Sunday school system, a carefully constructed paradigm designed in England to keep the noisy urchins off the streets on Sunday morning so they would not bother the churchgoers. It has evolved in the United States into a huge, market-driven publishing industry. Have the Sunday school publishers developed a carefully constructed curriculum which integrates the home and church, is wisdom-based, and builds a comprehensive biblical world view?[17] Have you ever exegeted a Sunday school workbook or teacher's guide?

Finally, what about Christian home-schooling curricula? They usually suffer from all of the above curriculum diseases, and many have picked up an additional virus along the way. Because of their often fundamentalist type stance toward culture, and their narrow belief that only parents should educate their children, home school curricula can be highly selective material, narrow, and often of poor academic quality. Though as mentioned earlier, many home-schoolers are moving out to the leading edge of Christian education, much of their curricula are rooted in an old rigid paradigm.

Where do we begin? We must start with a basic commitment in our churches. The local church family must take very seriously its responsibility to train believers in their faith - in the whole counsel of God - if believers are to be expected to make significant contributions in the cause of Christ in the world in which they live and work. Individual households must take seriously the ordered learning of their children, within a comprehensive church-based framework. The learning process must be serious, ordered, and integrated. It must be comprehensive in nature, comprehensive enough to warrant sustained effort over several years, or it will not bear its full fruit.

**Premise #2:** Christian education must be church-based at its core.

I believe, that at the foundation of any broad educational framework which calls itself Christian, must be the local church. Christian education must be church-based. Too often the local church is marginalized in our evangelical culture today: missions requires the special expertise of mission agencies; clergy education requires the expertise of professional theologians and seminaries; counseling requires the special expertise of Christian psychologists and psychiatrists; and Christian education requires the special expertise of professional educators. We need areas of special expertise and gifts. No one is disputing these matters. But the local church has been marginalized in most of our significant ministry paradigms, and therefore the models themselves become fragmented, and more often reflect our cultural values rather than the biblical ideals.

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[17] Lawrence Richard's made a valiant attempt at a home and church integrated curriculum several years ago, and the warehouses are still full of the stuff. We need more such attempts.

What exactly do I mean by church-based? Primarily I mean that the local church is at the center of our paradigm, our ministry models, and our year in and year out practice of the ministry itself - whether that be missions, leadership training, counseling and shepherding, Christian education, or any other major ministry enterprise. The image church-housed versus church-based, which I discussed in my theological education paper applies here as well. Too often today our Christian schools and home-schooling strategies are really church-housed, not church-based ministries.

*C*hristian

*Education must be*

*church-based at its*

*core and wisdom*

*based in its*

*infrastructure.*

This points to an inadequate view of God's design for the local church. If schools approach churches from a church-housed framework, the most solid pastors will resist the approach. Program oriented pastors will respond, but critical thinkers who think in an integrated fashion will reject a schooling model which does not understand the role and life of a local church, and have it fully integrated into its strategy. Let's look at the difference:

*Church-Housed*: The school is housed in the church building, or in some other building supported by the church or churches, the church recommends or sponsors the school, the parents send their kids, but the school builds and is responsible for the whole training program.

*Church-Based*: The school is integrated with the life of the church and the home, each understanding, respecting and fully carrying out its responsibilities, taking care that each institution - the church, the home or the school - attempts to carry out its functions within the integrated balance of the others, none usurping the God-given role of the home and the local church.

There are only two basic concepts which need to be grasped in order to set the basic integration framework in place. The *first is the concept* of the individual household, the family. The family is the basic, most core institution of the Christian education process. The overall responsibility of the paideia - the discipline and instruction, Ephesians 6:1-4 and Colossians 3:18-21 - of the children is given to the parents, especially the fathers. These passages are part of the "household texts" of the New Testament epistles, which were a common form in Greek literature of the day.[18] This is consistent with the Hebrew model and can be seen in such passages as Deuteronomy 6:6,7 and wisdom literature passages such as Proverbs 1-9 and 31.

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[18] Several early church scholars have dealt extensively with the household texts of the pastoral epistles, the most useful at this point is *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles*, by David C. Verner (Scholars Press, 1983). Verner demonstrates convincingly that 1 Timothy 3:14-16 is the organizing center of the pastoral epistles, and that Paul understood himself to be giving "household guidelines" for local churches, just as he gave "household guidelines" for individual families as in Ephesians 5:18-6:4.

The *second basic concept* is that of the household of God, the local church family. The idea of the local church being an extended household, a family of families, is not just a metaphor, but a real truth. This can be seen throughout the New Testament epistles, but is probably laid out the clearest in the pastoral epistles, 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. The organizing principle of these epistles is stated in 1 Timothy 3:14-16, where it states that the local church is the pillar and support of the truth, and that God has given instruction on how the community should order itself, just as he has for individual families. An example of how real God sees this family of families is this: He gives instructions that individual families are to take care of their own widows, and if they can't, the local church family is to care for the widows in their midst who are in need (1 Timothy 5:8ff). These epistles are full of instructions from the assumed framework that the church is a family of families - a true community.

The local church then, building upon these fundamental concepts, organizes community enterprises however it wishes, under the oversight of a council of household heads, referred to in the epistles as pastors, elders, church leaders, etc. Some common enterprises as we know them today are Sunday schools, day-care centers, schools, counseling centers, hospitals, seminaries, missions, etc. The point is that these enterprises should never replace the basic units - the family and the local church family - and their divinely intended functions, but rather enhance, strengthen and build upon them.

So whatever our program, it must respect the household - the house order God has set forth - which few of our contemporary ministry paradigms do. Rarely, if ever have I seen a comprehensive model which fully integrates the school, the home and the church. There is a tremendous need for an integrated model. The Christian school often misunderstands its role and makes itself the core institution with the family and local church being peripheral. Home-schoolers often misunderstand their core role, and assume that they are the only ones responsible, failing to recognize that they are a family within a family, and failing to recognize the teaching gifts within the church. We desperately need an overall framework, a paradigm if you will, which takes very seriously the integration of the home, the church and the school, at every point in the model.

**Premise #3:** Christian education must be wisdom-based throughout its infrastructure.

Assuming the church-based premise - that the church is a family made up of individual families, a household of individual households, and that this is more than just a metaphor - I believe that, from a biblical theology[19] standpoint, the best place to begin building a Christian education framework, is the wisdom literature.

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[19] Biblical theology is a way of going about theological study which lets biblical agendas surface from a careful study of the Scriptures, in the order in which they were written, respecting the individual authors and the categories of literature, such as the Pauline letters, or wisdom literature: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Job. This is in contrast to the typical way of doing theology today - systematic theology, in which theologians determine the categories and place biblical material in those predetermined categories.

*Old Testament Wisdom Literature*: It is important to understand the nature of the wisdom literature. The main Hebrew word for wisdom is "hochma," which literally means skill in living. It pictures all aspects of lifelong learning and development - life planning, family life, work, community life, finances, education, etc. Besides a general skill in living orientation, which seems to cover all ages, the wisdom literature, especially Proverbs, has a life long development orientation. Proverbs 1:1-7 gives a picture of one who is progressing, from the naive (open) stage to that of becoming wise (a basic skill in living) to the wiser ("making the wise wiser") which seems to apply to those who are acquiring a more complex wisdom in tandem with their progressing to an older age. See figure 3: "Developmental Aspects in the Hebrew Wisdom Tradition."

*Ancient Wisdom Traditions*: In addition to the wisdom literature itself, we can look at this wisdom model worked out in the Jewish culture. In the Talmud, finalized around 400 AD, in "The Sayings of the Fathers," it talks of the "ages of man":

| | |
|---|---|
| 5 | years is for reading (Scripture); |
| 10 | for Misnah (the laws); |
| 13 | for Commandments (Bar Mitzvah, moral responsibility); |
| 15 | for Gemara (Talmudic discussions, abstract reasoning); |
| 18 | for Hupa (wedding canopy); |
| 20 | for seeking a livelihood (pursuing an occupation); |
| 30 | for attaining full strength ("Koah"); |
| 40 | for understanding; |
| 50 | for giving counsel; |
| 60 | for becoming an elder (wisdom, old age); |
| 70 | for white hair; |
| 80 | for Gevurah (new, special strength of old age); |
| 90 | for being bent under the weight of the years; |
| 100 | for being as if almost dead and passed away from the world.[20] |

And, built upon this wisdom tradition, and this overall developmental framework, the Jewish people have worked out an education framework, within which they build all of their educational and curricula strategies. This framework has taken on a universal acceptance amongst the Jewish people, which gives stability to the

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[20] This particular arrangement was taken from *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, by Daniel Levinson (Ballantine, 1978), p. 325.

# Developmental Aspects in the Hebrew Wisdom Tradition

## Figure 3

**Hebrew Wisdom Literature**

| CHILD | YOUTH (NAÏVE) | WISE | WISER |
|---|---|---|---|
| fear of the Lord<br>train up<br>discipline | gain common sense<br>shrewd, world-wise behavior<br>a clear head and focus | ability to manage life skillfully<br>ability to deal wisely with people | ability to see below the surface to real underlying issues<br>acquire and assimilate complex counsel<br>solve complex problems |
| APPROPRIATE PROVERBS | PROVERBS 1-9, 31<br>ECCLESIASTES<br>SONG OF SOLOMON | PROVERBS 10:1-22:16<br>(1st Collection) | PROVERBS 22:17-24:34<br>(Words of the Wise)<br>PROVERBS 25:1-29:27<br>(2nd Collection – Hezekiah's men)<br>PROVERBS 30:1-33<br>(Words of Agur) |
| | needs experience | needs overall skill | needs specialized skill |

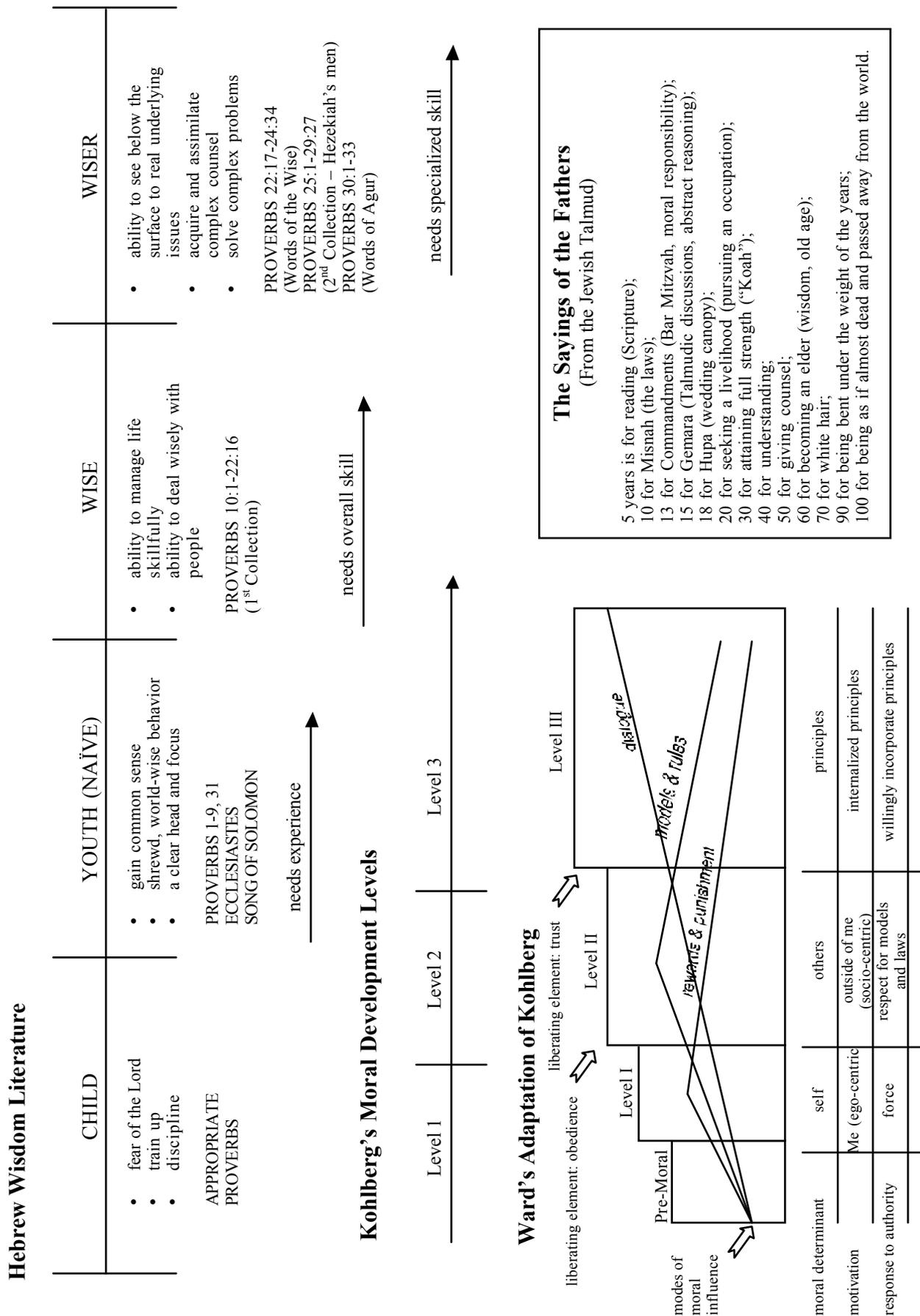**The Sayings of the Fathers**
(From the Jewish Talmud)

5 years is for reading (Scripture);
10 for Misnah (the laws);
13 for Commandments (Bar Mitzvah, moral responsibility);
15 for Gemara (Talmudic discussions, abstract reasoning);
18 for Hupa (wedding canopy);
20 for seeking a livelihood (pursuing an occupation);
30 for attaining full strength ("Koah");
40 for understanding;
50 for giving counsel;
60 for becoming an elder (wisdom, old age);
70 for white hair;
90 for being bent under the weight of the years;
100 for being as if almost dead and passed away from the world.

**Kohlberg's Moral Development Levels**

Level 1   Level 2   Level 3

**Ward's Adaptation of Kohlberg**

liberating element: obedience
liberating element: trust

Pre-Moral   Level I   Level II   Level III

dialogue
models & rules
rewards & punishment

| modes of moral influence | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| moral determinant | self | others | principles |
| motivation | Me (ego-centric) | outside of me (socio-centric) | internalized principles |
| response to authority | force | respect for models and laws | willingly incorporate principles |

overall education process, a reality which the church of Jesus Christ is woefully lacking. Probably the clearest treatment I have encountered in my research of this overall framework is found in a book entitled *Bar Mitzvah* by Sarah Silberstein Swartz.[21] The book is built around four sections, which give an outstanding picture of their education framework and their world view, or paradigm, to use the concept set forth earlier in this article. See figure 4. Several things are built into this framework: one's individual identity; family roles and responsibilities; a sense of community; and a vision and purpose in life which is far bigger than oneself, one's family, and even one's own local community of faith. Together this not only gives cohesion to one's life, but an outstanding educational framework from which to operate.

Figure 4

| Part 1: The Jewish Individual | "Today I am a man of duty." |
|---|---|
| Part 2: The Jewish Family | "Adolescence is something that happens to a family, not just an individual." |
| Part 3: The Jewish Community | "All Jewish people are responsible for each other." |
| Part 4: Jews in the World Community | "In you all the families of the earth will be blessed." |

*Contemporary Research*: There is another important aspect of this wisdom heritage, which is more indirect, and possibly cannot be tied together at all, except for the remarkable parallels to this Jewish wisdom heritage. That is the moral development research of Lawrence Kohlberg, which could not help but reinforce aspects of his Jewish heritage. I was introduced to Kohlberg's work through Dr. Ted Ward, of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, who has done extensive research with the findings of Kohlberg, and how they can be an archetypal guide for Christian parents in the moral development of their children. The following chart,[22] presented by Ward at a workshop for training BILD leadership, visualizes the moral development model well. See figure 3. It too plays a big part in helping us construct a working model of a wisdom-based educational framework for childhood and adolescence.

We are now are in a position to construct a model based upon the New Testament understanding of the church as a family of families, and the Old Testament wisdom tradition[23] - which together supply the essential elements of a biblical framework for Christian education.

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[21] *Bar Mitzvah*, by Sarah Silberstein Swartz, (Doubleday, 1985). This is a beautifully designed book which pulls together a sense of the strength of tradition behind the educational process, especially the moral development. It is out of print at the present time.
[22] The different phases of the chart are developed in chapters 6-10 of *Values Begin at Home*, by Ted Ward (Victor, 1989).
[23] This wisdom tradition has found itself as part of the entire history of western thought, though the west attributes its roots to Socrates, and to Plato and his academy, not to the ancient wisdom traditions of Israel and the surrounding nations. This wisdom orientation throughout the west is often referred to as "practical wisdom." There has been a recent resurgence of the wisdom tradition in every discipline in the last few decades, as can be seen in such books as *Working Wisdom* by Aubrey and Cohen, in which the authors tie in with the historical concept of practical wisdom; *Theologia* by Farley, who calls for the orientation of education being not the master of academic disciplines but the orientation of the soul for the

**The Basic Framework - Church-Based Christian Education**

In attempting to put together a Christian framework, we need to consider the fact that every Christian is to be involved in lifelong development - lifelong learning, and build a framework in light of this. In this article we will restrict our framework to childhood and adolescence. In the second article, we will deal with early, middle and late adulthood. In figure 5, "A Church-Based Christian Education Framework," we have attempted to visualize a model which takes into account all aspects of the preceding discussion. (Note: You will need to constantly refer to figure 5 while reading the following section.)

*The Basic Framework*

*First*, notice that the paradigm converges the Jewish Bar Mitzvah world view examined earlier - the individual, the family, the believing community and the world community with the developmental elements observed in the wisdom literature, especially Proverbs. The ages are merely guides, not intended to box anyone into a bracket. An addition to what has been established up to this point, is the *progression* from individual to family to local church member, to the world community. In this fashion a biblical world view unfolds as the educational process progresses.
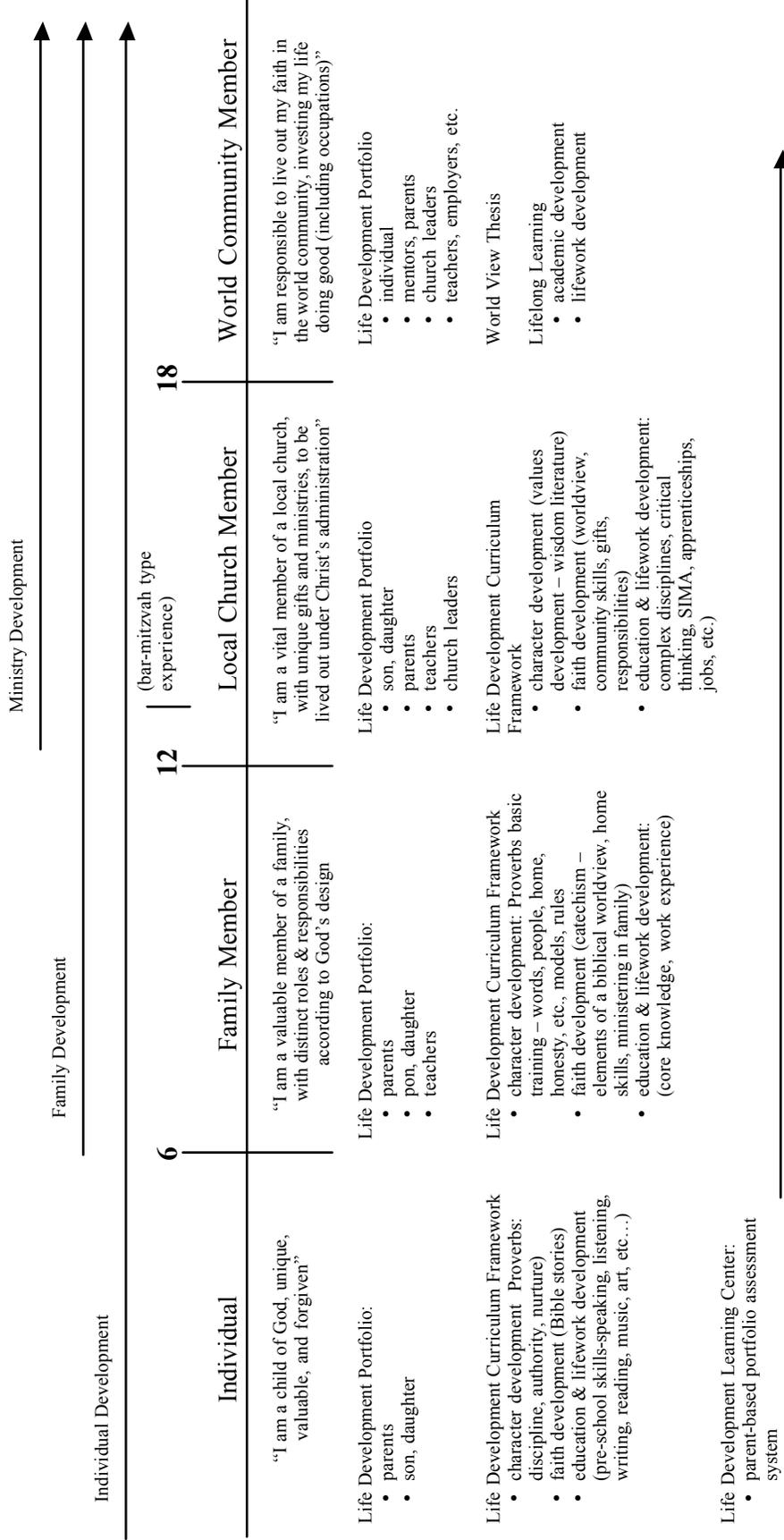
The emphasis from *ages 0-6* is on the individual's core identity - his unique worth and value to God. This has to be tempered with the reality of his fallen nature, thus the concept of authority. Discipline from outside themselves has to be part of the framework of this stage. Things to be learned are individual physical skills: walking, talking, reading, etc.

The emphasis from *ages 6-12* is on the family, since they are not developed enough to live, work and minister on their own outside of the family. Much of their family values are rooted into them for life at this stage. Family roles and values frame in their sense of masculinity and femininity. Things to be learned at this stage are core in their nature: core knowledge, core family values, core wisdom truths, basic stories of their faith, etc.

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purpose of acquiring wisdom - both previously cited in footnotes. Stephen Covey, in his most recent book *First Things First* (Simon & Schuster, 1994), devotes an entire appendix to the wisdom literature of the west and the east. The extremely popular *The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of great Moral Stories*, by William J. Bennett (Simon & Schuster, 1993), is clearly out of the wisdom tradition. And on a philosophical note, *Truth and Method*, by Hans-George Gadamar (Crossroads, 1975/1992), the groundbreaking book on hermeneutics and historical understanding, which is being felt at the roots of many disciplines such as law, theology and philosophy, essentially argues that the enlightenment approach of gaining truth by scientific method has collapsed, and that truth can only be gained through dialogue and comity interaction - or in essence the pursuit of wisdom. This post-enlightenment age opens the door for such secular movements such as the New Age Movement, but at the same time provides tremendous opportunity for Christians maturely steeped in the wisdom tradition.

# A Church-Based\Wisdom-Based Christian Education Framework^sm

## Childhood and Adolescence

### Figure 5

Individual Development

Family Development

Ministry Development

| | Individual | Family Member | Local Church Member | World Community Member |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 6 | 12 (bar-mitzvah type experience) | 18 |
| | "I am a child of God, unique, valuable, and forgiven" | "I am a valuable member of a family, with distinct roles & responsibilities according to God's design" | "I am a vital member of a local church, with unique gifts and ministries, to be lived out under Christ's administration" | "I am responsible to live out my faith in the world community, investing my life doing good (including occupations)" |

Life Development Portfolio:
parents
son, daughter

Life Development Portfolio:
parents
pon, daughter
teachers

Life Development Portfolio
son, daughter
parents
teachers
church leaders

Life Development Portfolio
individual
mentors, parents
church leaders
teachers, employers, etc.

Life Development Curriculum Framework
character development: Proverbs:
discipline, authority, nurture)
faith development (Bible stories)
education & lifework development
(pre-school skills-speaking, listening,
writing, reading, music, art, etc…)

Life Development Curriculum Framework
character development: Proverbs basic
training – words, people, home,
honesty, etc., models, rules
faith development (catechism –
elements of a biblical worldview, home
skills, ministering in family)
education & lifework development:
(core knowledge, work experience)

Life Development Curriculum
Framework
character development (values
development – wisdom literature)
faith development (worldview,
community skills, gifts,
responsibilities)
education & lifework development:
complex disciplines, critical
thinking, SIMA, apprenticeships,
jobs, etc.)

World View Thesis

Lifelong Learning
academic development
lifework development

Life Development Learning Center:
parent-based portfolio assessment
system
integrated courses and seminars
apprenticeships, mentoring system,
learning networks
curriculum, resources & publications
parent development – seminars,
portfolios, parent groups, resource
review
teacher development – seminars,
portfolios
computerized learning system &
electronic library (on-line)

Note: In a church-based system, where this all takes place in the life of healthy churches, parents can take advantage of all this is offered in the learning center and still choose to entrust the education development to a Christian school, a public school, private school such as a core knowledge school, or become part of a home school network. If done well, the learning center could actually become a "new paradigm" church-based school.

The emphasis of *ages 12-18* is on the community of faith, often overlooked in our evangelical churches today. Unless they learn to become a part of the community of faith, and learn to minister and serve out of their own unique giftedness, they cannot move out into the adult world with a fully integrated life and world view. Things to be learned at this stage are more complex, and have to do with developing critical thinking abilities, and the development of individual convictions. This also matches Kohlberg's third level of moral development very nicely. Also, notice the little short vertical line after the age 12 marker. This parallels the Jewish bar-mitzvah concept, at about 13, and is intended to put the whole community of faith in perspective. Our teens need to become, both symbolically, and actually, a vital part of the adult community at this age. They are emerging young adults, and should be treated as young adults, not children to be entertained, if we expect them to continue on in the faith as they enter the world community through the sphere of their lifework. Also note that each inaugurated emphasis of development, such as individual development, continues on throughout life.

*The Core Elements*

*1. The life development portfolio*

The life development portfolio is an integrative learning tool designed to facilitate parents in guiding and overseeing the education of their sons and daughters. The portfolio is also designed to be a flexible tool for the child and the emerging young adult to gain a sense of the overall educational process in which they are involved, and to guide them in pulling their entire education into a life planning process. In the *first stage*, the parents oversee the portfolio, and include their son or daughter as seems appropriate. In the *second stage*, the parents still oversee the portfolio, the son's or daughter's involvement increases significantly, and teachers become a part of the process, thus integrating the ordered educational development into the overall plan. In the *third stage*, the son or daughter begins managing his or her own portfolio, under the guidance of his or her parents, assisted by teachers, and church leaders, who also should become involved in their lives at this time. This is crucial to understand - that these emerging young adults, are now members of the adult believing community and need to be treated as such. Finally, and gradually, they transition to an adult life development portfolio as they move out into the world community, through their lifework, and become responsible for their own lives. They will rely on mentors, parents, church leaders, teachers, employers and other significant people in their lives, as they continue their Christian development, monitoring their own life development portfolio from then on.

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The portfolio concept is an emerging powerful learning tool in education and business as we enter the age of the knowledge worker. It is estimated that our present knowledge has a half-life of four years.[24] Not only is knowledge changing faster than we can educate ourselves, but the whole job paradigm is changing as well. William Bridges, listed by *Wall Street Journal* as one of the top ten executive consultants in the country, in his recently released book, *JobShift: How to Prosper in a Workplace without Jobs*,[25] suggests that we are part of another paradigm shift, a jobshift. We are moving from the job paradigm, to a post-job era in which we will all be required to design a composite career, consisting of many types of work, rather than the security of having *a* job. Charles Handy, in *The Age of Unreason,*[26] the book which caused IBM to rethink its whole corporate structure, (breaking up the "big blue" and creating a number of "little blues"), sees the same picture of the future, and calls for each person to develop a work portfolio.

*The portfolio concept is an emerging powerful learning tool in education and business as we enter the age of the knowledge worker.*

It is not just business which is recognizing the value of portfolios. Education is cultivating the concept as well, both in adult education, and in primary and secondary education. Lewis Jackson and Rosemary Cafarella, and their colleagues, a team mostly from the University of Northern Colorado, introduce a process model of adult education built around the concept of a folio and a portfolio. The folio is your ongoing assessment and working documents of your education and work related training and experience. The portfolio is your periodic assessment of your educational progress and your self presentation tool for future work and education.[27] Howard Gardner of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, introduces the concept of a process-folio, built around significant projects, as a power development and assessment tool in education.[28] And the powerful influencer of public education curricula, The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) devoted a significant portion of an issue of *Educational Leadership* to the use of portfolios in education.[29]

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[24] *Working Wisdom*, p. 120.

[25] *JobShift: How to Prosper in a Workplace Without Jobs*, by William Bridges (Addison Wesley, 1994). See also *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*, by Jeremy Rifkin (Putnam, 1995).

[26] *The Age of Unreason*, by Charles Handy (Harvard Business School Press, 1989).

[27] *Experiential Learning: A New Approach*, edited by Lewis Jackson and Rosemary Caffarella (Jossey-Bass, 1994) in the Jossey-Bass Series *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, Number 62, 1994.

[28] *In The Unschooled Mind: How Children Should Think and How Schools Should Teach*, by Howard Gardner (Basic Books, 1991), pp. 240,241, 259, and 260, he introduces the idea of process-folios and performance based assessment portfolios; and in *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice* (Basic Books, 1993), pg. 115, he introduces five dimensions to a project- based student portfolio.

[29] "Using Portfolios," six articles in *Educational Leadership: Journal for Supervision and Curriculum Development*, Volume 49, Number 8, May, 1992.

At LearnCorp we have developed a very comprehensive and powerful educational tool entitled the *LearnCorp Life Development Portfolio*. The portfolio has two editions: one for children and adolescents, and one for adults. The adult edition will be published late fall, 1995 and the edition for young adults (ages 12-18) will be published early summer, 1996. The *LearnCorp Life Development Portfolio - Childhood & Adolescence Edition* is designed to have three levels: Level I for ages 0-6, Level II for ages 6-12, and Level III for ages 12-18. Each level will integrate the character development, faith development and education and lifework development sections of the life development curriculum model described in detail below. Besides the basic life development guides (character development, faith development and education and lifework development), there will be several curricula guides, development workbooks and worksheets, learning style guides and a 24 module seminar system for assisting parents, church leaders and teachers at each level of development. The *LearnCorp Life Development Portfolio - Adult Edition* and the *Level III*, C*hildhood and Adolescence Edition*, build the portfolio around a life development time line, four basic life development guides, and a strategic life planning guide. This allows an integrated transition from adolescence to early adulthood. In addition, the adult portfolio is designed to accommodate the design of supplementary guides for developing teachers, parents, church leaders, administrators, etc., as well as guides tailored to a particular company or industry.

*2. The life development curriculum framework*

The curriculum[30] framework puts the need for serious, sustained, and integrated ordered learning in perspective, and begins seriously addressing the need for some type of schooling strategy. This again must be viewed as a partnership between the school, church and parent. From the strategic overview vantage point, several things need to be noted about the curriculum framework. During the second stage, ages 6-12, the emphasis should be on core knowledge. In the third stage the emphasis should be on developing wisdom - the ability to think, to discern, to develop and put the core knowledge to use. This stage is capped off with a world view presentation by each young adult, which is designed to pull everything together from the entire process. They will also design the next stage in their development: advanced studies, vocational development, lifework goals, etc. Refer to figure 6: "Wisdom-Based Life Development Curriculum Framework" frequently throughout this section.

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[30] Notice the word curriculum, not curricula. It is a comprehensive curriculum in the sense that it integrates all curriculum into one whole, thus paradigmatic. It is a curriculum made up of many curricula.

# Wisdom–Based Life Development Curriculum Framework

Childhood and Adolescence

**Figure 6**

| | Individual (Founding) | Family Member (Building) | Community Member (Deepening) |
|---|---|---|---|

**CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**
(Hebrew Wisdom Literature)

(Parents)

Kohlberg →

### Individual (Founding)

PROVERBS: MORAL CORE

Proverbs for Kids From the Book

(Over 190 simple categories)

### Family Member (Building)

PROVERBS: BASIC TRAINING



Skillful Life — 1 2 3 4 5

Theology of Proverbs:
1. Character/Habits of Lifelong Learning
2. Work, Honesty, Money
3. Home, Wife, Children
4. People, Words, Conflicts
5. Community, Authority, Justice

(Over 65 basic category clusters)

### Community Member (Deepening)
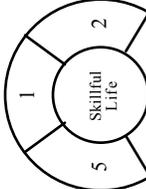
WISDOM LITERATURE: VALUES DEVELOPMENT



Core — 1 2 3 4 / Skill Words

Theology of Wisdom Literature:
1. Skill in Life Choices – Prov. 1-9
2. Skill in Processing Life (Meaning & Purpose) – Ecclesiastes
3. Skill in Romantic Love & Marriage – Song of Solomon
4. Skill in Processing Personal Crises - Job

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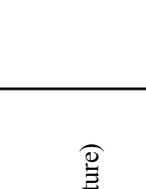
**FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

(Parents, Church)

Fowler →

### Individual

CORE TEACHINGS

(Bible Stories)

### Family Member

CATECHISM: ELEMENTS OF A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

Basic Framework:
1. Individual
2. Family
3. Church
4. World

1 → 2 → 3 → 4

(Minister with family)

### Community Member

THEOLOGY IN CULTURE: TOWARD A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

Biblical Theology (Building a Framework from Scripture)

Biblical Worldview and Practical Theology for Life and Ministry

Cultural Worldviews and Issues

(Bar-Mitzvah experience & full church responsibilities, develop personal ministry)

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**EDUCATION & LIFEWORK DEVELOPMENT**

(Parents, Church, School, Business)

Piaget →

### Individual

PRE-SCHOOLING SKILLS

(Speaking, listening, writing, reading, music, art, etc.)

### Family Member

CORE KNOWLEDGE

Working Curriculum/Content Models
1. Core Knowledge Series – Hirsch
2. Paideia Program – Adler

Educational Philosophy:
1. Adler's Three Kinds of Teaching/Learning pattern
2. Gardner's "Unschooled Mind" natural learning pattern
3. Miller's motivated abilities pattern

LifeWork Experience

### Community Member

COMPLEX DISCIPLINES

Working Curriculum/Content Models
1. Core of Common Learning – Boyer (Carnegie Foundation)
2. Propaedia – Outline of Knowledge – Adler
3. Syntopicon – 101 Great Ideas – Adler

Educational Philosophy
1. Bloom's Taxonomy
2. Seminars/Socratic Discussions – Adler
3. Harvard Business School's Case Method system

LifeWork:
1. Apprenticeships
2. Small business
3. Work Experience

Worldview Thesis

Lifelong Learning:
1. Advanced studies
2. Vocational developments
3. Reading Program

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Paradigm: Thomas, Lieberman, Collins, Adler, Hirsch, Kohlberg, Gardner, Miller

The fact that it is a curriculum *framework* needs to be clearly and fully understood in order to use it as a tool in the way in which it is intended. It is itself not a curriculum, though at LearnCorp we intend on developing curricula to fit within the framework. Many of the initial tools though will not be actual curricula, but process tools designed to guide parents, church leaders, teachers and the children and young adults themselves throughout the process. It is also an educational philosophy, in that it has purpose - it is driven by the desire to help each individual, uniquely created by God with gifts and abilities, to fully serve God within a biblical world view; and it has core content: biblical core content (the didache, wisdom literature, etc.) and general "core knowledge."

*Character Development*: In this section, as established earlier, the Hebrew wisdom literature sets the framework. It is amazing when studied thoroughly how comprehensive its topics are. When we thoroughly studied Proverbs from a biblical theology vantage point, we came up with over 65 basic category clusters, grouped around five general ideas. The progression of the use of the wisdom literature in this curriculum framework is fairly basic. First, from ages 0-6 the emphasis is on the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of all wisdom (Proverbs 1:7). An excellent resource is *Proverbs for Kids from the Book,*[31] which has over 190 simple topics, and is well illustrated. From ages 6-12 the basics of Proverbs, the five general idea clusters, and the 65 basic category clusters, are more than enough material for these six years. From ages 12-18 the curriculum framework piece is built around the more complex wisdom literature, especially that which emphasizes values and convictions development.

The curriculum framework chart in this section begins with skill in living at the core (wisdom). The second concentric circle lists all of the key synonyms for wisdom. The outward circle is divided into four sections, which completes the study of the wisdom literature, and beautifully surfaces the main issues of adolescence: staying on the moral path; romantic love and marriage; meaning of life, work, suffering; and world view issues. If we did nothing else for our kids than take them through the process of building a comprehensive theology of the biblical wisdom literature, we would have laid excellent foundations. LearnCorp is well down the road in developing a comprehensive wisdom-based character development guide for parents, church leaders and teachers which we hope to field test in 1996.

*Faith Development*: In this section of the curriculum framework, we are particularly fragmented in evangelicalism today. This has not always been the case in church history. In the early church the new believers, even young believers, were trained in the core gospel, taught through the creeds and the core teaching of the apostles, which were packaged into early century didaches (the Greek word for teaching). During and after the Reformation, the terms were changed, but the believers, even the young ones, experienced the same ordered, disciplined training - the core gospel being taught in the confessions, and the didache was packaged into catechisms. But today we have no such packaged "core knowledge," nor do we require any serious study or mastery of such core knowledge. We have little sense of an ordered world view, as exemplified in the Jewish model. We have no Christian "bar mitzvahs," which inaugurate emerging young

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[31] *Proverbs for Kids From the Book*, (Tyndale, 1985).

adults into the adult community of the church after a period of serious study of the core teachings of the faith.

In our model, at ages 0-6 we recommend reading stories to and with our children, as the main way of passing on the faith. In the Jewish model, age five was for reading, thus paralleling our life development framework suggestion. At ages 6-12 we suggest building the framework of a biblical world view, a catechism, which is studied very seriously from the ages of 10-13. This is again heavily influenced by the Jewish model, which among other things required the commandments - the entire Pentateuch - to be memorized during this time. At ages 12-18, we suggest building a serious "theology in culture" approach to training these young adults. This would include building a comprehensive framework from Scripture; a careful look at contemporary cultural world views and issues; and the building of a comprehensive biblical world view, ministry and lifework paradigm.[32]

Throughout this faith development process, should be a faithful practice of ministry, first with and through the family at ages 6-12, and then, in addition to ministering in and through the family, full church responsibilities should be assumed, marked by some sort of community ceremony that ushers them into this 12-18 stage. During this time, personal gifts should be identified, and personal ministries developed. This is one reason why it is impossible to divorce Christian education from the life of the church, just as it would have been absurd in the Jewish training process to divorce the bar-mitzvah from the synagogue and the community of faith.

*Education and LifeWork Development*: This is where the issues of a schooling approach surface the strongest. To do thorough work in the educational process at this level requires some sort of schooling. This part of the life development curriculum framework will be useful regardless of whether parents are sending their kids to Christian schools, private or public schools, or home schooling. We at LearnCorp hope in the near future to embark on a joint project with interested investors, publishers, churches, schools and parents, to create, (over approximately a ten year period), a comprehensive curriculum which will integrate all of the elements of this level of the life development educational framework. But for now, lets examine the framework itself. As in any comprehensive effort, many people contribute to the architecture. In this case several authors and educators have been drawn upon to surface and conceptualize this framework.[33] Their names are scattered throughout the diagram.

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[32] For treatment of both the core teachings (didache, catechism) and theology in culture process, see my paper "*Church-Based Theology: Creating a New Paradigm.*" For leadership level courses on these two ideas, see BILD-International's leadership series courses: *Essentials of Sound Doctrine,* which is in the final stages of field testing, and will be released this fall; and *Doing Theology in Culture*, which is in the final stages of the first draft. Also note that BILD's four volume *Establishing Series I*, covers the essentials of the core teaching (didache, catechism), and has been used effectively with high school students. To inquire on these resources call BILD-International at 515-292-7012.

[33] Some of the most influential works include *Beyond Education*, Thomas (1991); *The Credential Society: The Historical Sociology of Education and Stratification*, by Randall Collins (Academic Press, 1979); *Public Education*, Lieberman (Harvard, 1993); *Cultural Literacy*, by E.D. Hirsch (Houghton Muffling, 1987), and his 6 volume *Core Knowledge Series: What Every 1st Grader Needs to Know*, (Delta, 1992,93), one volume for each grades 1-6; Mortimer Adler's paideia trilogy: *The Paideia Proposal* (Macmillan, ), *The Paideia*

At the outset it should be noted that this curriculum framework, often thought to be the sole job of schools, is in reality, (even though centered in a school, residential or "virtual"), most effectively carried out as a partnership between the school, the church, the parents and the business community. The ages 0-6 stage concentrates on pre-schooling skills, which are fundamental, and are best facilitated in a creative, loving family environment, ideally with very significant availability of the mother. The two main parts of our focus, from an educational, schooling mind set are: the second stage, ages 6-12, of which the focus is core knowledge; and the third stage, ages 12-18, which we are marking by the term complex disciplines.

The framework of the *core knowledge* stage, ages 6-12, is marked by the work of two men who have a tremendous grasp of the problems of contemporary curricula. E.D. Hirsch, with his core knowledge idea, has built an excellent case for the fact that we must all have a common knowledge base from which to function effectively in culture.[34] His six volumes, previously footnoted, provide an excellent core knowledge guide. His core knowledge categories, which can serve as an excellent guide to "checking" the current core knowledge base of our children include the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| English Language and Literature | A Foreign Language |
| Mathematics | The Fine Arts |
| Science | The Manual Arts |
| History | The World of Work |
| Social Studies | Physical Education |

Mortimer Adler has attempted to identify that core and set forth a program as well, in *The Paideia Program: An Educational Syllabus*. Whereas Hirsch focuses on the core information we need to know, and summarizes that core content. Adler focuses on what he calls the great conversation, and builds a reading program around that conversation from grade one, on into the *Gateway to the Great Books* on to the *Great Books* series, both published by Britannica, Inc. Together they provide a comprehensive guide to the core knowledge needed in this stage. Parents can use these guides to supplement whatever curricula strategies their children are part of; schools can use them in building a comprehensive curriculum; and adults can use them as a lifelong learning strategy, since most of us adults are products of a fragmented educational process, and don't have a sense of a complete "core knowledge."

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*Problems and Possibilities* (Macmillan, ) and *The Paideia Program: An Educational Syllabus* (Macmillan, 1984); along with *A Guidebook to Learning for the Lifelong Pursuit of Wisdom* (Macmillan, 1986); several of Howard Gardner's works: *The Unschooled Mind* (Basic Books, 1993), *Multiple Intelligences* (Basic Books, 1993, and *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (Basic Books, 1983/1993); and Paulo Friere*, Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Continuum, 1970/1984) and *Education for Critical Consciousness* (Continuum, 1973/1994).

[34] To become more informed on the concept of core knowledge, *see Common Knowledge: The Core Knowledge Newsletter*, put out by the Core Knowledge Foundation. Call (804) 977-7550.

*their diseases.* A commitment to the concept of core knowledge does not preclude paying attention to some of the better contributions of educational philosophy, even aspects of child-centered education. Gardner, in his voluminous research and writing, has done excellent work in effectively demonstrating that there are several, seven to be exact, natural learning patterns that we have as human beings, and that if we organize core curricula and our teaching methods to match those styles, learning will be greatly enhanced.[35] Adler makes a case for a core curriculum, but then goes on to emphasize that the content can be taught by three different methods:

T*he*

*Academic disciplines are*

*quite unrelated, and the*

*entire educational*

*process, with all of its*

*choices and electives, is*

*much like wandering*

*through the line of a*

*cafeteria.*

acquisition of organized knowledge by means of didactic instruction and lectures (textbooks: language, math, history, etc.)
development of intellectual skills by means of coaching, exercises and supervised practice (reading, writing, speaking, etc.)
enlarged understanding of ideas and values by meaning of Socratic discussions (books, other forms of art, etc.)[36]

Some extraordinarily useful work has been done by Art Miller, the creator of SIMA, and his team of colleagues who make up People Management International. Art has created SIMA, which stands for System for Identifying Motivated Abilities. Through their extensive process they can begin identifying an individual MAP - motivated abilities pattern - built not from tests, profiles or predetermined classifications, but from an individual's own personal story. The results are a careful, individualized analysis of one's natural motivating abilities, interests and ideal work environments which can maximize the learning process in the present, and guide one in his future lifework.[37] (We are in discussion with SIMA to integrate their process with the *LearnCorp Life Development Portfolio*, which together with the life development time line would be an unbeatable combination to aid individualized strategic planning for lifelong learning and lifework development.)

The framework of the *complex disciplines* stage, ages 12-18, is much more complex, but also very exciting. It is the stage where one enters the world of vast knowledge, with a wide array of almost inexhaustible disciplines, any one of which a person could work within for a lifetime. The problem is that the academic disciplines are quite unrelated, and the entire educational process, with all of its choices and electives, is much like

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[35] An excellent resource to begin looking at the practical uses of Gardner's work on curriculum development and teaching methods, see *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*, by Thomas Armstrong (ASCD, 1994).
[36] *The Paideia Proposal*, pp. 21-36.
[37] People Management International has offices in Hartford, Atlanta, Minneapolis and Seattle. International offices are in Holland, England and Australia.

wandering through the line of a cafeteria, where one has to make quick choices from a wide variety of food. One of the major implications of this dilemma, which only compounds itself upon entrance into a university, is that these quick cafeteria type choices often set a direction for one's lifework, without adequate exposure to one's natural motivating abilities, without a sense of the whole of this knowledge, and with very little valuable lifework experience. All this means that our life development curriculum framework must help us sort all of this out, integrate it, and guide us in constructing a well informed education and lifework plan, though provisional and heuristic in nature. There are three aspects to this process: 1) categorizing the disciplines into a whole, so that one can develop specifically in any area with a benefit of the whole; 2) learning methods and styles appropriate to gaining wisdom, not just knowledge; and 3) applying this wisdom to our unfolding sense of lifework, which will ultimately be our integrating core.

*First then, is the task of developing a sense of the disciplines as a whole, or maybe a more foundational task of summarizing the key ideas from which these disciplines are formed.* Several attempts have been made to build a sense of the unity of knowledge, which today is divided into several academic disciplines. For us as Christians, our overall unity is our world view, as worked out in the faith development section of the curriculum framework. Nevertheless, an attempt at integrating all of the disciplines into a unified whole is useful for all to gain at least an elementary grasp, both for future lifelong learning, and for gaining balanced exposure. Two models have emerged, which can serve as reliable guides. The first is from the summary of a study sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.[38] They recommend the following academic framework for general education:

| | |
|---|---|
| Language: | The Crucial Connection |
| Art: | The Esthetic Experience |
| Heritage: | The Living Past |
| Institutions: | The Social Web |
| Nature: | Ecology of the Planet |
| Work: | The Value of Vocation |
| Identity: | The Search for Meaning |

The point is, that all of our academic disciplines, such as engineering, need a framework home, or a world view home, which this Carnegie framework is attempting to give them. Each discipline has to be related to an overall framework to give it meaning and from which to build a lifework plan. Without it, one would have to be satisfied to have, "he was a good engineer" engraved on his tombstone. Whereas Hirsch's core knowledge categories serve as a guide for basic knowledge, these categories serve as a beginning to forming a world view and shaping a life plan.

The second attempt is by Mortimer Adler, outlined in his *Guidebook to Lifelong Learning: For the Lifelong Pursuit of Wisdom*. His framework is built around two tools: the Propaideia, and the Syntopican.

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[38] *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America - The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching*, by Ernest Boyer (Harper Row, 1987), pp. 92ff.

E*ach*

*Discipline has to be*

*related to an overall*

*framework to give it*

*meaning and from*

*which to build a*

*lifework plan.*

The Propaideia:
Organized around ten basic areas of knowledge, each extensively outlined and integrated with the entire Britannica Encyclopedia, which is now on CD

The Syntopican:
Organized around 101 great ideas and over 3000 sub-ideas, and coordinated with the 60 volume *Great Books of the Western World*, also published by Britannica

When tied together with the paideia program mentioned in the core knowledge stage, this becomes a very impressive framework for guiding the general educational development of our children.[39]

*The learning methods are very important at this stage of the curriculum framework as well.* The process of gaining wisdom is more than just gathering facts, expressing those facts in one's own words and then doing something with those facts. (Those are the first three levels of educational outcomes in Bloom's taxonomy.) But we must, as Bloom demonstrates, raise the outcomes to much deeper levels, which include the more complex processes of breaking down information: understanding how the parts relate to the whole; putting things together so that they fit and integrating parts into a new whole; and validating - evaluating the use of knowledge, judging or comparing ideas, procedures and products.[40]

One very effective way that this can be done is by what Adler calls the Seminar/Socratic discussion method[41] (which parallels, by the way, the Jewish talmudic advice: 15 years old, for Gemara - for Talmudic discussions and abstract reasoning), which is a lot like graduate education teams at Oxford in England. The case study method, which is modeled as the almost exclusive education method at Harvard Business School,[42] is a second learning method for gaining wisdom. A third is a problem-posing method, drawn from real life situations, designed by Paulo Friere.[43] Properly used, these three methods can open up an educational system, and adapt themselves to all sorts of varied learning styles and situations. Integrated together with a project-based portfolio system, the combinations are almost inexhaustible.

*The final element of the curriculum framework in the complex disciplines stage, is the real life part - the lifework section.* We have been using this

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[39] For information on purchasing packages of these resources published by Britannica, call LearnCorp at 515-292-6810.

[40] See *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Book 2 Affective Domain*, by David R. Krathwohl, Benjamin S. Bloom and Bertram B. Masia, Longman, 1964).

[41] Developed in chapter 1 *of Paideia Program.*

[42] See chapter 1, "Why Wisdom Isn't Told," in *Inside the Harvard Business School: Strategies and Lessons of America's Leading Business School*, by David Ewing (Random House, 1990).

[43] *Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Education for Critical Consciousness*, previously cited.

term throughout the paper. What exactly do we mean by forming a lifework plan? Why coin a new term? By lifework we are referring to a concept much bigger than your present job. A job is only part of your lifework. A profession is only part of your lifework. Paid work is only part of your lifework. By lifework we are referring to all of the work in your life, paid or unpaid, which you are doing because it relates to your overall purpose in life, and which increasingly matches with your God-given abilities and gifts. There should be a growing sense of purpose to our lifework, ever broadening horizons as we plan each unfolding phase. Our lifework should bring satisfaction and meaning to our lives, and be a big enough idea to sustain the thought at the end of each of our lives that our lives were well invested, and properly invested. Our lifework is the integrating element of our educational development. In order to get the full value out of this educational framework, then, this area of lifework must be taken very seriously as part of this complex disciplines stage. In some European educational systems, students are either placed on a university track or on a vocational, apprenticeship track around the "bar-mitzvah" age, based on their academic performance. In our system, everyone is placed on the academic track. Neither system is ideal, in the sense that all students need a combination of both tracks. In our educational framework, we need to take a fresh look at the concepts of apprenticeships, the starting of small businesses, and the experience of sustained work, as a vital part of the educational process during this stage. With careful planning, we can build this into our educational frameworks today. For example, with our son Jonathan we encouraged him to focus on getting straight B's rather than straight A's, and to use the time difference for work and ministry. When our lifework plan is integrated using the *LearnCorp Life Development Portfolio*, then the whole process reaches its peak integration point, and it all begins to make sense. What a goal! What a way to enter the world community!

*3. The life development learning center*

This final element of our church-based Christian education framework is what we are calling a Life Development Learning Center in the educational domain, and a Life Development University in the business domain. This concept could very well be a prototype of what our Christian schools and our home-schooling networks, may evolve into with the coming of age of the information society - whether we plan for change or not. Two key concepts must be kept clear as this idea of a life development learning center is adopted. First, it should be church-based at its core. And second, it should be made available to all children and young adults in the church or participating churches. That is, it should accommodate kids who are being home-schooled, who are in Christian schools or other private schools, and who are in the public school system. If done well, it can become the dominating influence in the Christian education process, and can shape children and families regardless of other existing influences. It can become our new Christian education paradigm.

For those who have their kids in public schools, it may be nothing more than a very high powered resource center for parents to use to get training to oversee the development of their kids, and a serious ordered faith development strategy for their children. For those home-schooling, it may provide additional structure and networks to facilitate a more complete

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educational process. For Christian schools who are the most innovative, it may provide a way to break out of the old schooling paradigm, and move quickly into the new, emerging technological society, by taking the initiative to pioneer aspects of this new model.

Let me paint a possible scenario. Suppose that all committed to this system - participating Christian schools, private schools, and home-schooling networks - made a commitment to devote the morning of each day to the teaching and study of core knowledge for ages 6-12 stage, and the mastery of the complex disciplines in the ages 12-18 stage. The afternoons were made available for all different types of options. At the 6-12 stage, afternoons might be spent working on group projects (remember the science fair projects, the 4-H projects), gaining appropriate work experience, computer time for all the various forms of interactive learning, sports, very disciplined catechism training, community service, church work, assisting in day-care of elderly, small business ventures, etc. The afternoon staff, adjunct teachers if you will, could be made up of professionals, businessmen and women, pastoral staff members, professors, self-employed, homemakers, retirees, all sorts of adults from the workplace, who are willing to devote an afternoon or part of an afternoon a week to be part of this process. They could come to the resource center, or bring the older kids of this stage into their work environment if appropriate. At the 12-18 stage, a similar pattern could be followed, with the additional ingredient for all, to include some type of sustained work experience, possibly varied from year to year, or even semester to semester. Apprenticeships should be made available by participating professionals, businessmen and women, as well as opportunities to work in a family business, or even start a business of their own. Large, complicated case studies, or work projects could be pursued as well. Community and church volunteer work could be more substantive, and even include political involvement and causes. The point is to take the integrative element of the formation of lifework very seriously.

What are the core elements of such a Life Development Resource Center for Christian education? This new paradigm educational framework could be held together by the following core elements:

      a parent-based portfolio assessment system

      a strategy of all participants to a "core knowledge" approach to general educational development (regardless of schooling choice)

      an integrated lifework system - including apprenticeships, learning networks, a network of participating professionals, businessmen and women, etc.

      a comprehensive system of "adjunct" teachers

      a wisdom-based curriculum framework - paradigm seminars, framework process guides

      integrated resources - curricula, courses, seminars, CDs, tapes, and other resources integrated with the framework, available for rent or purchase

      a parent development strategy - including a comprehensive seminar system for each framework stage

      teacher, volunteer development system - coordination, training, portfolios, etc.

      computerized learning system and electronic library, which can support home-based computer centers

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## Building a New Partnership: Parents, Home and School

We need to begin with an understanding that our current system is fragmented, and needs to be reassessed by all parties involved: the parents, the churches, and the schools. The following is a set of guidelines designed to help get the process started.

Implications and Guidelines for Building a New Partnership:

1.  All of us who are concerned with Christian education need to be aware that these are unprecedented times of change, and if we want to be fully effective in training our children and impacting the world in which we live, we need to build a new paradigm.

2.  In the immediate future, churches, schools, and parents need to sit down, regardless of their relationships and together map out a short term integrated strategy which respects all of the above elements (church, home and school), maximizes the current strengths of each, and dissolves any existing tensions.

3.  In addition, this church, home and school team ought to design and inaugurate a long term strategy which is bold, innovative and paradigmatic in nature, with the view of building a new paradigm for Christian education for their children, and their children's children.

4.  Finally, this church, home and school team needs to aggressively approach the Christian business community to engage them in this process, draw on their expertise, and build apprenticeships and learning partnerships, as well as empower them to become adjunct teachers at their own expense.

What will it take to make this work?

*Existing schools* need to recognize that the time is right for building dynamic new models for the future, and this process will involve more than adding a little text viewer on the top of a typewriter. *Home-schooling movement* leaders should think creatively to seize the opportunities provided by the times, and build partnering relationships with church and school leaders, if they want to play a significant role as innovators in Christian education. *Pastors and church leaders* need to take the initiative to build a comprehensive vision of Christian education, for if churches were leading out in Christian education as they should, and truly equipping men and women for full service in the world community, then integrated church-based models such as the one proposed in this paper would be popping up all over the country.

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As I stated in the introduction to this paper, even though parts of it are technical and scholarly in nature, this is not a mere academic exercise for me. It is part of a vision and a process to which I have devoted 25 years of my life. And if God wills, I intend to see it fully realized.

I*n*

*The immediate future,*

*churches, schools, and*

*parents need to sit down,*

*regardless of their*

*relationships and together*

*map out a short term*

*integrated strategy.*

With this in mind, I make these final comments. At LearnCorp, we are committed to facilitating just such a process. We are involved in this process in our own church, and with other churches around the world. We offer paradigm seminars to churches, pastors and church leaders; Christian schools, colleges and seminaries; home-schooling networks and to Christian businessmen. In the future we will be offering a series of seminars on the LearnCorp Life Development Portfolios. In addition, we offer consulting services to those interested in building new models in Christian education. In the future we will be publishing several tools designed to assist church leaders, parents and teachers in building aspects of this model. And our intention is to publish the curricula described in the character and faith development sections of this guide, resources permitting, for use by parents and churches, respectively. Our materials are developed in tandem with BILD-International's church-based leadership development curriculum, which is an excellent resource for churches to use in building the level of leadership capable of leading in such enterprises as the church-based Christian education strategy set forth in this paper.

And finally, we are asking God for a few teams of parents, church and school leaders, who over the next few years, backed by a team of investors, a foundation or two, and an excellent design firm, will pioneer with us in bringing this church-based, wisdom-based Christian education framework to maturity. These are exciting times - paradigmatic times. Times to dream bold dreams. Times to entrepreneur. Times to work very hard. Times to ask God to work mightily in our midst, and out of the wealth of our opportunity, to bless our children, and our churches.