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INTERRELATIONSHIP OF MORAL, FAITH AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT: STIMULATING PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IN LATE ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS

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INTRODUCTION

Religious leaders have always been concerned about an individual's religious and spiritual development, especially those individuals who are developing their own spiritual identity, such as adolescents and early adults. During this time individuals are leaving the dependency of adults and developing their own autonomy, independence, identity and value systems.

The principle thesis of this paper is that there is a basis in moral and faith development to guide educators and individuals in attaining higher levels of moral development; however there is relatively little structure concerning the principles of spiritual development. When more than two hundred "religious and spiritual" people were asked to write down six spiritual principles over ninety percent initially responded, "I haven't really thought about it."

After reviewing moral and faith development the concentration will be on selecting spiritual principles based on Biblical principles and supported by psychological research that might stimulate growth toward higher levels of spiritual development. The last part of the presentation will review educational and personal practices that could incorporate religiosity and spirituality into spiritual development. According to theorists moral and faith development exists from infancy to late in life; however, this study will concentrate on late adolescence and early adulthood or primarily from the ages of seventeen to twenty-five. There are several reasons for this. Much of early moral or faith development is controlled or heavily influenced by authority figures, such as parents or teachers. During late adolescence (from the ages of seventeen to nineteen) an individual becomes personally involved in developmental tasks that lead to early adulthood (ages twenty to twenty-five). These include but are not limited to the following:

1. Autonomy – the quality or state of being self-governing and exhibiting self-directing freedom, especially in moral independence. It includes a self-regulating behavior of making their own judgments and taking responsibility for their own actions.
2. Identity formation – In Erik Erikson's view, adolescence is a period when young people try out various alternative identities as they attempt to sort through the available options and forge their unique sense of who they are. Adolescents who are able to integrate the various aspects of their choices into a coherent view of their self attain a secure and stable sense of personal identity (Erikson, 1968).
3. Identity achievement – the status attained by people who have passed through an identity crisis and have made commitments to a set of personal beliefs. As a result, they attempt to live by their own individually formulated moral code. Identity achievement is usually viewed as the most desirable and most mature status (Marcia, 1980).

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Moral means the keeping of established codes or accepted notions which are sanctioned by one's conscience or ethical judgment. It involves ethics which may include the involvement of more difficult or subtle questions of rightness, fairness, or equity. Moral development is a sequential process that individuals follow from childhood to old age with the concentration in this paper on late adolescence and young adulthood.

During the conventional level the expectations and rules of the individual's family, group or nation are maintained but perceived as valuable in their own right. There is a concern not only with conforming to the individual's social order but in maintaining, supporting, and justifying this order (Kohlberg, 1976).

At the stage four conventional level we have the orientation toward authority, fixed rules and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake. One earns respect by performing dutifully.

The post-conventional level is characterized by a major thrust toward autonomous moral principles which have validity and application apart from the authority of the groups or persons who hold them. This level contains both stage five and stage six.

The stage five post-conventional level is a social-contract orientation, generally with legalistic and utilitarian overtones. Right action tends to be defined in terms of general rights and in terms of standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. There is a clear awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions and a corresponding emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching consensus. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, right or wrong is a matter of personal "values" and "opinion." The result is an emphasis upon the "legal point of view," but with an emphasis upon the possibility of changing law in terms of rational consideration of social utility, rather than freezing it in the terms of Stage 4 "law and order." Outside the legal realm, free agreement and contract are the binding elements of obligation. This is the "official" morality of American government, and finds its ground in the thought of the writers of the Constitution.

The stage six post-conventional level is the orientation toward the decisions of conscience and toward self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical (the Golden Rule, the categorical imperative); they are not concrete moral rules like the Ten Commandments. Instead they are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons (Kohlberg, 1976).

According to Kohlberg (1976) if one were to analyze motives given for rule obedience or moral action, stage four to six would look like this: stage four conforms to avoid censure by legitimate authorities and resultant guilt; stage five conforms to maintain the respect of the impartial spectator judging in terms of community welfare; and stage six conforms to avoid self-condemnation.
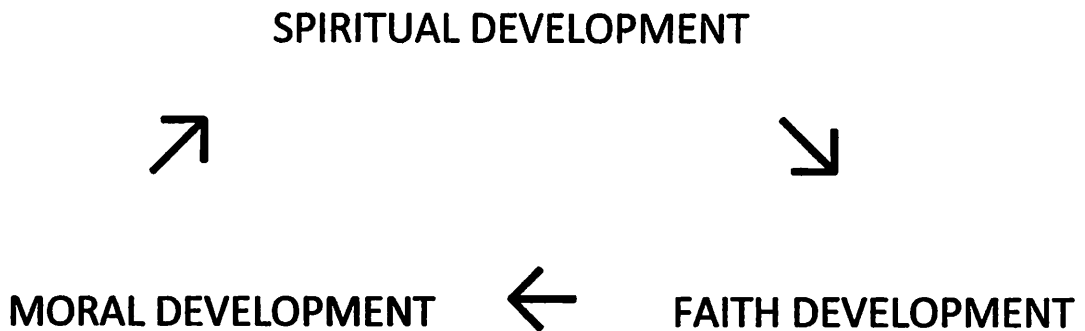
STAGES OF FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Following Erikson's human development theory and Kohlberg's moral development theory, James Fowler (Fowler, 1981; Fowler & Dell, 2005) proposed a theory of faith development; Fowler's theory is related to Erikson's, Piaget's and Kohlberg's theories of development (Torney-Purta, 1993). The concentration of this paper is on late adolescents and young adults; therefore, Fowler's stages four and five will be emphasized.

Stage 4: The *Individuative-reflective faith* is a transition between adolescence and adulthood. Fowler believes that, at this stage, individuals are capable for the first time of taking full responsibility for their religious beliefs. Often precipitated by the leaving home experience, young people begin to take responsibility for their lives. Young adults now start to realize that they can choose the course of their lives and that they must expend effort to follow a particular life course. Individuals come face-to-face with such decisions as these, "Should I consider myself first, or should I consider the welfare of others first?" "Are the religious doctrines that were taught to me when I was growing up absolute, or are they more relative than I was led to believe?" Fowler believes that both formal operational thought and the intellectual challenges to an individual's values and religious ideologies that often develop in college are essential to developing individuative-reflective faith (Fowler, 1981).

Stage 5: The *Conjunctive faith* develops during middle adulthood. Fowler believes that only a small number of adults ever move on to this stage, which involves being more open to paradox and opposing viewpoints. This openness stems from people's awareness of their finiteness and limitations. One woman Fowler placed at this stage revealed the following complex religious understanding: "Whether you call it God or Jesus or Cosmic Glow or Reality or Love, it doesn't matter what you call it, it is there" (Fowler, 1981).

Westerhoff (1980) believes that faith is best understood as the perception or awareness of God's rich grace. Faith becomes a part of human life in response. Gillespie (2007) views faith as a total personal experience with God, rather than an intellectual way of constructing the world. Because of the limited amount of research no one theory is going to explain everything about an adolescent's or young adult's faith development. However, Fowler's concepts are on faith development, relate more to moral and spiritual development, and therefore are the concentration for this paper.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF SPIRITUAL, FAITH AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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MORAL DEVELOPMENT ← FAITH DEVELOPMENT

The diagram illustrates the reciprocal relationships of spiritual, moral, and faith development. Each factor interacts and influences the other. So as moral development moves from stage four it is likely that faith development moves from stage three to four. Similarly as a person studies Biblical principles there is likely to be a positive impact on moral reasoning which would move the adolescent or young adult to stage five of moral development. There is the probability that faith development would also increase.

Controversy regarding the role of faith, religion, and spirituality within moral psychology is particularly surprising given their commonsensical interrelationships. For example, central to the teachings of all religious traditions are moral guidelines for living a good life and for interacting appropriately with others. Furthermore, the pervasiveness of morality in everyday life means that it will intersect with religious and spiritual concerns. Morality, properly understood, has both interpersonal and intrapsychic (occurring within the psychic, mind, or personality) aspects. The interpersonal aspects of morality regulate our interactions, order our relationships, and adjudicate our conflicts, whereas the intrapsychic aspects reference our identity (Walker, Pittss, Hennig, an Matsuba, 1995).

Research has found that many people spontaneously invoke notions of religion, faith, and spirituality in handling their own real-life moral problems. A frequent theme in people's reported handling of these moral problems was their reliance on explicitly religious and spiritual values. For some of these individuals, religious tradition simply provided a reasonably adequate and convenient system of morality. For others, however, their moral framework was firmly entrenched in their faith. Moral decisions were made on the basis of reading holy writings and discerning the relevance of their standards for the issue at hand, and through seeking divine guidance in prayer and meditation (Walker, Pitts, Hennig, and Matsuba, 1995).

For these people, morality and spirituality were not really separate and distinct domains; rather their morality was governed and structured by their faith: the source of their values and goals, the resolution of conflicts, and the determination of appropriate social behaviors and interpersonal relationships were all based on religious beliefs and faith commitments. Kunzman (2003) has similarly argued that morality may only acquire meaning for some people within the context of religion. The sophistication of participants' religious rationales for moral choices varied, ranging in a developmental progression from straightforward fear of eternal damnation or anticipation of heavenly rewards, to the importance of a shared faith community, and then to rather principled notions of agape love and forgiveness.

Matsuba and Walker (2004) found that the young adults in their exemplar group attained a significantly higher level of faith development than did those in the comparison group, despite being closely matched on demographic variable, such as gender and age. The variable that emerged as the strongest predictor of group membership was faith development. This finding strongly implies that spirituality and faith commitments can form a foundation for moral functioning.

PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Since spirituality and faith development can form a foundation for moral functioning it seems reasonable to develop principles of spiritual development. The following principles are selected from Biblical passages that interrelate to faith and moral development. Inasmuch as possible they are supported by psychological research. These principles are not meant to be exhaustive, yet hopefully are complete enough for an individual to strive toward a high level of spirituality; neither are they meant to be in a hierarchical order. A most important principle of spiritual development is developing a love relationship with a higher being.

Develop a loving relationship with the Lord: During His ministry Christ was asked many questions about spiritual principles that He advocated. On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind" (Luke 10:25).

There are different kinds of love, but the emphasis is on "agape" love rather than "friendship" love. Agape love is a more sacrificial love where one loves regardless of whether such love is reciprocated (Agape Center, 2008). The major component of such love is a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith (I Timothy 1:5).

A pure heart speaks of pure desires and intentions or motivations. But these require a good conscience so one can evaluate right and wrong, good and evil. Thus a healthy conscience is

prerequisite to achieving a pure heart. Sincerity of faith is revealed by the degree of consistency between one's faith and one's thoughts or deeds.

Developing a spiritual relationship with God produces the characteristics of Agape love stated in 1 Corinthians 13: Love is kindness, tolerance and patience. Love does not boast, it is not proud, so those seeking greater spirituality have great humility. Love does not envy, it is not self-seeking. Love is not rude, it is not easily angered (Agape Center, 2008).

Love is an abstraction and in order to be understood it has to be shown in concrete action towards others. This is not always easy to do and is illustrated by research on moral hypocrisy.

Most research participants faced with assigning a desirable or undesirable task assign themselves with positive tasks seventy to eighty percent of the time even though in retrospect less than ten percent say that this was the moral thing to do. Their actions fail to fit their moral principles (Batson, Kobrynowica, Dinnerstein, Kamph, & Wilson, 1997). In another study involving small amounts of electric shock, participants gave up any pretense of morality and assigned themselves the positive consequences task without even feigning fairness. They were also quite ready, in retrospect, to admit that the way they assigned the tasks was not morally right.

However, when other participants were provided the fairness standard and coin to flip while sitting in front of a mirror the results were different. Exactly half of those who chose to flip the coin assigned themselves to the positive-consequences task. Apparently, having to face head-on the discrepancy between their avowed moral standard (be fair) and their standard-violating behavior (unfairly ignoring the results of the coin flip) was too much. In front of the mirror, those who wish to appear moral must be moral (Babson et al., 1999).

Thus developing a spiritual relationship with a higher being and perceiving a proper conduct with our fellow man through a clear conscience stimulated by the Holy Spirit (the mirror) produces a relationship between spirituality and morality or spiritual development and moral development.

Develop a loving relationship with man: Christ indicated that besides loving the Lord your God, there was a second great principle, "And love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27).

Agape love drives one not only to love friends, but also to help one's enemies. However, there is considerable research to indicate that prejudicial attitudes sometimes make this difficult to do.

We have seen that strongly held attitudes predict specific actions, especially when the actions are unconstrained by social pressures. After 9/11, some people formed strongly felt attitudes

regarding Arabs. That led University of Michigan social psychologist Brad Bushman and his co-researchers Angelica Bonacci (2004) to wonder how strongly attitudes toward Arab Americans might influence unconstrained *behavior* toward them. To explore that, they wanted to assess the race-relevant attitudes of university students and then, some time later, to correlate their expressed attitudes with their natural behavior in a situation offering anonymity.

The participants (who generally expressed stronger feelings of prejudice toward Arab Americans than toward African Americans, Asian Americans, or Hispanic Americans) were less likely to recover the good news of the scholarship award to intended recipients with Arabic names. This discriminatory behavior was most strikingly evident among those students who had earlier expressed higher-than-average prejudice toward Arab Americans. Moreover, the students with highly prejudicial attitudes also were *more* willing than were those low in prejudice to convey bad news to Arabs. Thus, in the months after 9/11, prejudicial attitudes did indeed predict subtle but relevant discriminatory behavior.

Researchers who study stereotyping contend, however, that prejudicial reactions are not inevitable (Crandall & Eshelman, 2003). The motivation to avoid prejudice can lead people to modify their thoughts and actions. Aware of the gap between how they *should* feel and how they *do* feel, self-conscious people will feel guilt and try to inhibit their prejudicial response (Zuwerink & others, 1996). Even automatic prejudices subside, note Devine and her colleagues (2005), when people's motivation to avoid prejudice is internal (because prejudice is wrong) rather than external (because they don't want others to think badly of them). A principle of spiritual development might be that religious people do not let emotions dictate their attitudes, but compensate by monitoring and correcting thoughts and behavior in future situations.

Two major attributes, altruism and empathy, could be closely related to developing a loving relationship with others.

Altruism: Altruism is an unselfish regard for or devotion to the welfare of others. It is when a person does a beneficial act for another without expecting an extrinsic reward. Jesus' example of the Good Samaritan probably offers the best example (Luke 10:27-37).

The research on whether appealing to altruistic motives causes people to act for the common good is mixed. On the one hand, just *knowing* the dire consequences of noncooperation has little effect. In laboratory games, people realize that their self-serving choices are mutually destructive, yet they continue to make them.

Still, most people do adhere to norms of social responsibility, reciprocity, equity, and keeping one's commitments (Kerr, 1992). The problem is how to tap such feelings. One way is through the influence of a charismatic leader who inspires others to cooperate (De Cremer, 2002). Another way is by defining situations in ways that imply cooperative norms. Lee Ross and

Andrew Ward (1996) invited Stanford dormitory advisers to nominate male students whom they thought especially likely to cooperate and to defect while playing a Prisoner's Dilemma game. In reality, the two groups of students were equally likely to cooperate. What affected cooperation dramatically – in this and follow-up research (Liberman & others, 2004) – was whether the researchers labeled the stimulation the "Wall Street Game" (in which case one-third of the participants cooperated) or "the Community Game" (with two-thirds cooperating). Cooperation stimulates better relationships with others while extreme competition creates animosity towards others.

Communication can also tap altruistic norms. Robyn Dawes (1980) and his associates gave participants a short sermon about group benefits, exploitation, and ethics. Then the participants played a dilemma game. The sermon worked: People chose to forego immediate personal gain for the common good. People who regularly hear sermons in churches and synagogues give a disproportionate amount of time in volunteerism and charitable contributions. Hence there could and should be a relationship between spiritual development of hearing a sermon on proper beliefs and behaviors and moral development or doing what is right when relating to other people.

According to psychological research, society can minimize destructive entrapment in social dilemmas by establishing rules that regulate self-serving behavior, by keeping groups small, by establishing rules that regulate self-serving behavior, by enabling people to communicate, by changing payoffs to make cooperation more rewarding, and by invoking compelling altruistic norms.

Service learning is a form of education that promotes social responsibility and service to the community. Researchers have found that adolescents benefit in that they increasingly reflect on society's political organization and moral order, (Yates, 1995) and their civic attitudes and behaviors improved (Metz & Youniss, 2005).

By reflecting on sermons or spiritual communication, by minimizing destructive entrapment in social dilemmas and by incorporating the teaching of altruism and service learning adolescents and young adults are taught how to develop a loving relationship with mankind.

Empathy: Empathy is the vicarious experience of another's feelings or putting oneself in another's shoes. When we feel empathy, we focus not so much on our own distress as on the sufferer. Genuine sympathy and compassion motivate us to help others for their own sakes. In humans, such empathy comes naturally. Most 18-month-old infants, after observing an unfamiliar adult accidentally drop a marker or clothespin, and then have trouble reaching it, will readily help (Warneken & Tomasello, 2006). To some this suggests that humans are hardwired for empathy.

To separate egoistic distress reduction from empathy-based altruism, Batson's research group conducted studies that aroused feelings of empathy. Then the researchers noted whether the aroused people would reduce their own distress by escaping the situation or whether they would go out of their way to aid the person. The results were consistent. With their empathy aroused, people usually helped.

After 25 such experiments testing egoism versus altruistic empathy, Batson (2001) believes that sometimes people do focus on others' welfare, not on their own welfare. Batson began his research feeling "excited to think that if we could ascertain whether people's concerned reactions were genuine, and not simply a subtle form of selfishness, then we could shed new light on a basic issue regarding human nature" (1999a). Two decades later he believes he has his answer. Genuine "empathy-induced altruism is part of human nature" (1999b). And that, says Batson, raises the hope – confirmed by research – that inducing empathy might improve attitudes toward stigmatized people – people with AIDS, the homeless, the imprisoned, and minorities.

According to research, empathy-induced altruism:

 1) produces sensitive helping. Since where there is empathy, it's not just the thought that counts, it's alleviating the other's suffering;

2) inhibits aggression since someone who feels empathy for a target of potential aggression is unlikely to favor attack, someone who's as likely to forgive as to harbor anger. In general, women report more empathetic feelings than men, and they are less likely to support war and other forms of aggression (Jones, 2003);

3) increases cooperation since people in potential conflict are more trusting and cooperative when they feel empathy for the other. Personalizing an out-group, by getting to know people in it, helps people understand their perspective (Batson and others, 1999); and

4) improves attitudes toward stigmatized groups since taking other's perspective, allows yourself to feel what they feel, and you may become more supportive of others like them.

Spiritual principles of altruism and empathy could and would relate to spiritual development and moral development. Such principles teach we should positively relate to isolates as Christ did with his interactions with those with diseases such as leprosy, immoral behaviors such as selfish pride or improper sexual conduct, and those of a different race or ethnicity such as the Samaritans.

Equity: Equity is often defined as a body of legal doctrines and rules developed to enlarge, supplement, or override a narrow rigid system of laws. Religious people in Kohlberg's stage

four of moral development will debate a rigid interpretation of the Ten Commandments much like religious leaders in Christ's time challenged Him with the interpretation of the Law. His response in Matthew 5:17 expands the rules to principles when He teaches about the Law.

> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law . . . I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, do not murder . . . but I tell you." "You have heard that it was said, do not commit adultery . . . but I tell you." "You have heard that it was said, eye for an eye, and tooth for tooth . . . but I tell you." "You have heard that it was said, love your neighbor and hate your enemy" . . . "but I tell you, love your enemies."

In the gospels Christ takes a stated rule and enlarges it to a set of principles. *Believing and keeping the rules are important, but believing and keeping the principles are essential.*

Following principled rules: Spiritual people strongly attempt to do what is right and keep the rules as well as the principles. Yet, even though most people say that cheating and lying are morally wrong, under many circumstances they will still cheat and lie.

In one research study University of Washington students to work on an anagram-solving task (which, they were told, was to predict IQ) and told them to stop when a bell in the room sounded. Left alone, 71 percent cheated by working past the bell. Among students made self-aware — by working in front of a mirror while hearing their own tape-recorded voices—only 7 percent cheated (Diener & Wallbom, 1976).

Research indicates that self-conscious people usually are in touch with their attitudes (Miller & Grush, 1986). That suggests another way to induce people to focus on their inner convictions: *Make them self-aware.* Other research has found similar results; making people self-aware promotes consistency between words and deeds (Froming & others, 1982).

Forgiveness: Forgiveness is a suite of prosocial motivational changes that occurs after a person has incurred a transgression. People who are inclined to forgive their transgressors tend to be more agreeable, more emotionally stable and some research suggests more spiritually or religiously inclined than people who do not tend to forgive their transgressors. A review of results from seven studies suggested that people who consider themselves to be highly religious or spiritual tend to value forgiveness more highly and see themselves as more forgiving than do people who consider themselves less religious or spiritual (Mc Cullough & Worthington, 1999). However, it is also possible that religious and spiritual people are not more forgiving than are less religious and spiritual people in real life, but only believe themselves to be highly forgiving or aspire to be highly forgiving (Batson & Thompson, 2004).

Factors that affect why people are more likely to forgive include empathy for the transgressor and generous attributions and appraisals. Research on psychological interventions designed to help people forgive specific transgressors has revealed that empathy fosters forgiveness. Indeed, empathy for the transgressor is the only psychological variable that has, to date, been shown to facilitate forgiveness when induced experimentally (Worthington, et al., 2000).

Again there appears to be a relationship between spiritual and moral development and probably a converse relationship. Being empathetic fosters forgiveness and forgiving another probably fosters empathy. We are admonished to understand God's forgiveness which should make us more willing to forgive others (Genesis 50:15-21).

Avoid judging others: Spirituality means that a person should not be too quick to judge others (Acts 11:2-16) or should refrain from judging other people. "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you" (Matthew 7:1).

A mentor always reminded us that we had to remember the developmental stage of students when relating to them. We would often refer to their immaturity and he would remind us that we all acted that way when we were that age. Initially we didn't want to admit it but came to realize that extreme caution needs to be taken when assessing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of those that might be different or at a different stage of development.

This is not only true in all developmental stages, but true when dealing with different cultures or sub-cultures because of the many variations in backgrounds. In a class of thirty college students it is not uncommon to have at least twelve students from different countries when teaching in a diverse university. There is also a gender difference in faith development as boys and girls grow in a perception and relationship with God (Gillespie, 2007).

Within religious groups it is important to remember that cultural values change from generation to generation and what might not have been acceptable to one generation might be acceptable to another and the converse is true. Therefore, it would be wise to avoid judging certain cultural practices that relate to adolescent or young adult behavior as long as such practices do not relate to spiritual or moral principles.

Social justice: Justice is often defined as the establishment or determination of rights according to the rules of law, equity or fairness. This is a major component of stage five in Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, right or wrong is a matter of personal "values" and "opinion." The result is an emphasis upon the "legal point of view," but with an emphasis upon the possibility of changing laws in terms of rational consideration of social utility, rather than freezing it in the terms of stage four "law and order".

Any weekly news magazine has at least one or two moral dilemmas that adolescents and young adults can debate and thereby stimulate their moral reasoning about what is right and what is wrong. For example, the District of Columbia (Washington, D. C., United States of America) is arguing a landmark gun rights case before the U. S. Supreme Court. This effort is to revive the District's gun ban, which was struck down in court earlier this year. Students would be able to develop their own arguments, listen to the arguments of others, hear the arguments of the best attorneys before the Supreme Court, analyze the deliberation of the Supreme Court Justices, and evaluate the court verdict. This debate would be at the higher levels of moral judgment and moral development and thus stimulate students' moral reasoning.

Other Supreme Court cases concern affirmative action or an active effort in the United States since 1965 to improve the employment or educational opportunities of members of minority groups and women. Many such higher court cases not only refer to moral development, but also include concepts of spiritual development.

Most injustices in education come in improper discipline. Developing and following proper protocol in these areas alleviates many injustices and prevents many problems. A mentor always asked college students, "have we treated you fairly" when administering discipline. Another mentor thoroughly explained to adolescents why he was making a certain decision; however, if he could be convinced that some other process was more just, he would change his decision or modify his actions. Both are good practices of implementing Biblical principles of social justice into interpersonal relationships with adolescents and young adults.

The person striving for the higher level of spiritual attainment has to be aware of the strong tendency to retaliate toward others when treated unfairly. Therefore, the advice given about an "eye for eye, and tooth for tooth" . . . but I tell you, "if someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matthew 5:38-42) is excellent advice.

Respect or Reverence: An example of respect in the Bible that relates to stage six of Kohlberg's theory is found in 1 Samuel 30:21-25 which describes David's process for splitting the spoils of war. The passage indicates that David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow him and who were left behind at the Besor Ravine. They came out to meet David and the People with him. As David and his men approached, he greeted them. But all the evil men and trouble makers among David's followers said, "Because they did not go out with us, we will not share with them the plunder we recovered. However, each man may take his wife and children and go."

David replied, "No, my brothers, you must not do that with what the Lord has given us. He has protected us and handed over to us the forces that came against us. Who will listen to what you say? The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him

who went down to the battle. All will share alike." David made this a statute and ordinance for Israel from that day to this (1 Samuel 30:25).

Stage six of Kohlberg's moral development theory indicates an orientation toward the decisions of conscience and toward self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical, are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

Christ's respect for His mother who was concerned about the lack of refreshments at a wedding ceremony where she was the coordinator, His respect and concern for His mother when He was dying on the cross, His concern for the woman taken in adultery and for the Samaritans who were rejected and despised by the Jewish nation, for Nicodemus who was seeking answers in order to strengthen his faith, and many other similar examples indicate that respect and reverence were a major belief and behavior of His ministry.

Principled Defiance: Principled defiance is a disposition to resist or a willingness to contend or fight a code of conduct, a comprehensive and fundamental law, doctrine, or assumption.

Sometimes there are practices that are wrong and should be changed. Such was the situation recorded in Matthew 21:12 where Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. "It it written," He said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers."

During my first year of employment we had a major discipline problem that became so complex that it involved the President's cabinet. In suggesting a solution a vice-president developed a scenario whereby the alleged would have to answer a series of questions. "And after they answer the questions, 'aha', we will have them." The main problem was that the questions were tainted with dishonesty.

After the meeting a mentor expressed major concern, both verbally and behaviorally, about what we were planning to do. After discussion we went to another vice-president and indicated that we were uncomfortable with the process. The three of us then went to the president and indicated that we could not support the methodology being advocated in questioning those deemed to be guilty. In fact, the mentor indicated, "if we ever use that practice within this institution, you will have my resignation on your desk within the day!" We never did use that proposed procedure because one person was principled enough to defy authority, to stand up for what was right and not do something that was convenient. Sometimes spiritual, moral and faith development mean standing up for what is right and suffering the consequences.

CONCLUSIONS

There are many content areas related to faith and learning that are important to the total development of the student. However, the author believes, maybe with a little bias, that none is more important than moral, faith, and spiritual development. Both the church and the overall religious community have not examined these three areas as they might and really haven't examined spiritual development to any extent.

We could and should change this by improving on some concepts that are believed and haphazardly implemented. For example, almost all secondary and college personnel talk about and have some sort of service learning. Many of them concentrate on providing a day or half day where faculty and students go out and do projects that improve the community. Usually about twenty to thirty percent of the faculty and students participate. However, one Adventist university has integrated service learning into the curriculum where it is taught, where students participate two to three hours every week, and where there are written assignments so that students reflect on what they have done, what difference they made, and why it is important. All universities, colleges, and academies could have similar programs. Since "unselfish service" is a Biblical principle why don't we incorporate it into all educational programs?

Also we could and should do more in-depth study about such moral and spiritual concepts such as equity or fairness, justice, obedience, forgiveness, mercy, and moral hypocrisy. Then there are those related areas that all people, but especially Christians, need to be concerned about such as discrimination, prejudice, unacceptable punishment or discipline, harassment, poverty, and immoral wars.

We could and should thoroughly study moral development, faith development, and spiritual development through many avenues in the church. Graduate students doing theses or dissertations should do descriptive and experimental research in this area. Panels of experts including theologians, philosophers, scientists, psychologists, humanity experts, educators and others could convene on an annual basis to deeply think about these topics, arrive at some consensus, and publish conclusions.

Since the author is deeply concerned about Adventist youth who do not go to college and also the developmental stages well beyond age twenty five, these topics should be addressed by all church members. This could be approached by having more in-depth articles in denominational magazines, by having an entire quarterly adult and college Sabbath School lesson study on the topics, and by having a concentration of sermons on spiritual principles.

Finally, this is not just an interest and concern among Adventists. Some of my better input has come from religious people of all faiths. By interacting with them we would all grow in a greater understanding of spirituality and a greater appreciation of what God has done for us.

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