

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY INTO:

***TEACHERS' INCLUSION OF THE
CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE IN
THE CLASSROOM***

IAN ANDREW HEWITT

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY OF THESIS

I certify my authorship of the Thesis submitted today entitled:

***AN EXPLORATORY STUDY INTO TEACHER'S INCLUSION
OF THE CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE IN THE CLASSROOM***

in terms of the Statement of Requirements for Theses in Masters' Programmes
issued by the Higher Degree Committee.

Ian Andrew Hewitt

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ABSTRACT

Trinity Christian School is a Christian parent controlled school which was established in 1980 with eleven students and one teacher. The current enrolment of the school is some six hundred and forty students. In 1991 the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* was written. This 'Vision Statement' gives an outline of the direction Trinity Christian School should be heading. It also gives a brief outline of the purpose for the school's existence.

At the present time Trinity Christian School is beginning to expand into a school of some seven hundred and eighty students and is also undergoing a process of whole school review. It is therefore a significant time in which to study how the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* is being implemented within the school, particularly, within the Secondary section of the school.

The focus of this study is to observe what if any, a selection of secondary teachers at Trinity Christian School are including in the classroom which would reflect the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*. In particular, to look for the inclusion of a Christian perspective as is defined in the 'vision statement'.

To undertake this study a naturalistic inquiry methodology was selected in which a range of field study techniques were adopted, especially from the field of ethnography. A range of data was collected from the following sources: curriculum statements; the Christian perspectives outline; teaching programs; lesson observations; teacher interviews; student interviews; student workbooks; and teaching resources.

From the data collected for this study there is much evidence to demonstrate the teachers' inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom at Trinity Christian School. The manner in which this is included varies between cases, much as the teaching style of each individual teacher varies.

How the Christian perspective is included also varies according to the subject and the unit being taught. For instance, to include a Christian perspective in the teaching of the

'Theories of Creation and Evolution' in Science is of course going to be far easier than in the teaching of 'Products and Factors' in Mathematics.

A key implication for Trinity Christian School, is that the consistency of the documentation could be improved. If this was done, then a greater inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom could be provided to challenge the students more than at present. This could be achieved if the Christian perspective were incorporated in many more aspects of the classroom than was observed in this study. In this way the students would have modelled to them the Christian way to live in many more of the situations which arise in the classroom.

CHAPTER 1

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

This study begins with a brief outline of Trinity Christian School and the purpose for which it was established in 1980. The inclusion of a Christian perspective within all that the school does is discussed briefly in relation to documents on which the school bases its entire operation. It is the inclusion of this Christian perspective which is the focus of this study.

This study is being carried out at a time of growth and review within Trinity Christian School. It is therefore important that this study focus on how the Christian perspective is being included within the Secondary section of the school to ascertain if the original purpose for the school is still be carried out fourteen years after it was established.

Background

Trinity Christian School is a Christian Parent Controlled School which offers an education for students from Kindergarten to Year 10. There are six hundred and thirty four students attending the school which was established in 1980.

The present school size comprises two classes in of the each year groups from Kindergarten to Year 10, excluding Year 7. In 1994 the school has begun an expansion program which has seen the introduction of a third class at Year 7. This expansion will continue until 1997 by which time it is planned that the secondary school will have three classes in each of the four year groups.

As the school begins this expansion into a school of some seven hundred and eighty students it is a significant time to study the way in which the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* is being implemented within the school, particularly, within the Secondary section of the school.

As part of the Trinity Christian School Tuggeranong A.C.T. Incorporated Constitution there is a *Statement of Faith* (see Chapter 4 for further detail). This *Statement of Faith* is the platform on which all activities are based. In 1989, the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* was written which details how the *Statement of Faith* will be

implemented in all that the school does. As the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* has now been in existence for almost five years it is timely that the way in which this vision is being implemented is studied.

At the time of this study being undertaken there is also a 'Whole School Review' being conducted. This review will:

"... consider all or any aspects of the School and its life - ranging from its biblical basis, administration, curriculum structure and content through to its operation and interaction with the wider school community."

(Trinity Christian School, 1994, p. 5)

The 'Whole School Review' will not be investigating the same questions as this study. Nor will it be using a methodology which investigates so closely what is occurring in the classrooms. This study will therefore provide additional information which will assist in the further development and improvement of the school.

"All staff (both teaching and non-teaching) shall declare their written consent to ..." the *Statement of Faith*. (Trinity Christian School, 1989, p. 20) This written consent is aimed at ensuring that the teaching at Trinity Christian School will contain the Christian perspective for which the school was established. Since all teachers have declared their written consent to the *Statement of Faith* it is expected that they will have a working knowledge of the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*. This being the case, as the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* outlines how the *Statement of Faith* will be implemented in the school.

In the guideline for "Secondary Programming" which outlines how teaching programs are to be written, it states that "Trinity exists to provide a Christian alternative in education. Our programs will articulate how we achieve this ..." (Trinity Christian School, 1994, p. 1) It is therefore expected that all teachers will have a working knowledge of the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* and that they will work in sympathy with this.

Statement of the Research Question

What are the secondary teachers at Trinity Christian School including in the classroom which reflects the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*?

With the above statement being the research question, the following comments outline briefly what is expected of the school by some of the teachers and parents.

Teachers and parents at Trinity Christian School have a range of expectations of the school. Some of these expectations relate to the Christian perspective in the classroom. Whether or not these specific expectations are being addressed is a part of this study.

All teachers were asked to outline their expectations of the school as part of the information being collected to give a background to the teachers at Trinity Christian School. Of the forty five teachers twenty one responded to this part of the questionnaire.

The three statements below best summarise the various expectations given by the teachers who responded to this question.

"To provide an educational environment which consists of such aspects as teaching Christianly, loving concern for the students, care of the whole person, high academic standards, staff that works together in harmony with a common vision, treats the students as individuals, is pro-kids, honours God and serves both parents and children."

(from a response given by Teacher 14)

"That 'it' will provide a quality of education that recognises and caters for individual differences amongst students and staff but one that actively encourages the pursuit of excellence. I would expect Trinity also to be a community where Christ-like attitudes and behaviours are modelled and actively encouraged, where Scripture is held in high regard as the inspired Word of God and where the Gospel is clearly and attractively presented."

(from a response given by Teacher 19)

"My expectation of Trinity is that it will be an excellent provider of education for students and that it will be a professional, humane, and generous employer of staff. I expect that true Christian principles will be in constant evidence and indeed be the prime motivation for how we live and work together."

(from a response given by Teacher 24)

Ten parents were also asked to explain what their expectations of Trinity Christian School were. The four responses below best summarise the parents' expectations.

"To provide a loving, caring environment in which students are stimulated to learn and to mature as individuals"

(from a response given by Parent 1)

"- high academic standards - competitive with government schools
- caring environment catering for individual differences
- Christian approach to school and life and attempting to draw the kids into a relationship with Jesus"

(from a response given by Parent 2)

"- very high standards of teaching and pastoral care
- families pay high fees and deserve good service
- encouragement of spiritual growth through personal witness and nurturing of Christian values
- staff are obliged to give a high level of service:
 - attention to students as individuals
 - awareness of student's personal development
 - remedial or extension help as needed"

(from a response given by Parent 3)

"- that God is honoured throughout the whole school
- that Trinity achieves an acceptable educational standard for all ages
- that Trinity is well organised in all areas to achieve a standard of excellence
- that Trinity provides a caring environment for both students and staff"

(from a response given by Parent 4)

Purpose of the Study

This study will involve : observing classes; interviewing teachers and students; and searching relevant documentation within the Secondary section of the school to ascertain what the school is actually achieving in relation to the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

This study will provide valuable information on how the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* is being put into practice within the secondary section of the school. It will also highlight the areas which have been neglected in the past and these can then be addressed by the school community.

Within the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* there are several areas which are outlined specifically. They all contribute to the overall school purpose and assist in the definition of how each part of the school will work towards achieving this purpose. The areas are: Our Faith; Curriculum; Our Staff; Our Children; Our Parents; Our Society; and Our School Community. (Trinity Christian School, 1989). Within each of these areas there is a set of beliefs defined and then a list of expectations to explain how the beliefs will be put into practice.

This study will focus on the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom as outlined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*. With this as the focus, the area of 'Curriculum' will provide the specific area of study from the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*. It will also provide this study with some key statements as to how the Christian perspective should be included in the curriculum and therefore the classroom.

Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this study is to look at what is occurring in the classroom at Trinity Christian School in the relation to the inclusion of a Christian perspective. Upon reading the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* it could be assumed that a Christian perspective is to be included in all aspects of teaching. Classes will be observed for this inclusion of the Christian perspective. From the observations the researcher will develop questions for the teacher and students which will provide insight into the events which took place in the classroom and how the Christian perspective was conveyed, if indeed it was conveyed.

If the Christian perspective is being included in the classroom it would be assumed that each of the steps involved in the preparation of the lessons would also include references to the inclusion of the Christian perspective. Documents such as Curriculum Statements and Teaching Programs are likely sources. Students should also have reference to the Christian perspective in their workbooks.

Delineation of the Research Problem

Within the context of the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* this study will look at the inclusion of various aspects of this vision statement. In particular the inclusion of the 'Christian perspective' in the classroom will be studied.

The *School Purpose*, which is a section within the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* states that:

"Trinity Christian School was established to provide a school environment with a Christian dimension, supporting parents in their task as prime educators.

In continuing to fulfil this foundational vision the school seeks:

* to develop a Christian community for learning, where we claim and demonstrate the relevance of Jesus Christ to all aspects of life by approaching all of the school's activities from a Christian perspective... "

(Trinity Christian School, 1991)

It is this key statement which forms the basis for this study. As the inclusion of this Christian perspective is paramount to the school's existence the way in which this is included in the classroom is of great importance to the school.

Delimitations of the Study

This study will focus on only a small part of Trinity Christian School. This can be defined in two distinct areas. These are the population being studied and the part of the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* being focused on.

The area of focus from the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* is that which refers to the area of 'Curriculum'. This is because the study is to focus on what is occurring in the classroom. The *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* contains two

sections: School Purpose; and Mission Statement. When referring to what Trinity Christian School is setting out to achieve the definition used is that which is set out in the *School Purpose*. To attempt to include the complete *Mission Statement* within this study would be difficult because of the number of items listed under each of the seven sub-headings and the complexity of each of the individual points raised in the *Mission Statement*.

For the purposes of this study only secondary students and teachers will be included. The key factor in deciding upon this is the limitation imposed by the methodology being used. If this study was to be carried out in anything other than an exploratory manner the time and effort required would be far greater than that available to the researcher.

The limit of time is twofold. Firstly there is the time over which the study can be carried out. With the demands of the lesson observations and interviewing only a small number of lessons can be studied over a few weeks. More time than this would impinge on the researcher's own job. The other time constraint relates to the fact the time in which the researcher does not teach is limited. Therefore, the times at which lesson observation and interviews can be carried out are limited.

Secondary students only are included in this exploratory study for the following reasons. If primary students were to be interviewed the questions would need to be structured quite differently and it could be difficult to assess the commonality between secondary and primary students and also the teachers and the primary students. Secondary students are already known to the researcher and so the development of rapport, essential to the effective implementation of the study, will not present a problem.

Questions to be Answered

As the *School Purpose* states in five distinct points what the school is setting out to achieve it is this section in particular which forms the basis of this study. The

Secondary section of the school will be studied to see how the *School Purpose*, namely the Christian perspective is being included within the classroom.

As this study uses a naturalistic methodology the researcher is interested in learning more about how the Christian perspective is included in the classroom rather than the testing of a hypothesis of how it is included.

Definitions of Terms

There are a number of key terms which will be used throughout this study which need to be defined in terms of their use here. Some of these terms are specific to structures or policies in place at Trinity Christian School, whilst others have a specific definition within the context of this study.

The inclusion of the Christian perspective is a key term used throughout this study. For the purposes of this study it can be defined as an idea or view being included which reflects a belief or a way of life which is consistent with Christ's teaching.

The Trinity Christian School Vision Statement is a document outlining what Trinity Christian School is setting out to achieve. This document outlines a *School Purpose* which briefly describes what the school is seeking to achieve. The *Mission Statement* then outlines specific areas of the 'school vision' and how each of these supports and guides the approach to all aspects of the work at Trinity Christian School.

In the constitution of Trinity Christian School is a 'Statement of Faith'. It is this 'Statement of Faith' which defines the Christian faith and the set of beliefs and fundamental truths which go with this teaching as used by Trinity Christian School. This statement is a set of beliefs which all staff and association members must accept to gain these positions.

The 'School Council' is the governing body of Trinity Christian School. They are the elected representatives of the Trinity Christian School Association which are charged with the overall management of the school. It is the 'School Council' which sets the policy and direction for the school as well as the employment of staff to fulfil the

purposes of the Trinity Christian School Association. Namely to provide a school environment with a Christian environment.

A body of people called the 'Trinity Christian School Association' are the incorporated body which operate Trinity Christian School. The rules governing membership of this 'Association' are outlined in Chapter 4.

Trinity Christian School is a co-educational school which provides an education for students from Kindergarten to Year 10 inclusive. The 'Primary school' is that part of the school which provides an education for students from Kindergarten to Year 6 inclusive. Whilst the 'Secondary school' is that part of the school which provides an education for students from Year 7 to Year 10 inclusive

Significance of the Study

The study reported here is designed to provide knowledge of what should be an enduring educational practice within Trinity Christian School. This practice involves the inclusion of a Christian perspective in the all classrooms throughout the school.

As this inclusion of the Christian perspective is a key feature of Trinity Christian School, the way in which this is or is not incorporated, will be of great value to the school community. The value of this study is enhanced by the fact the results will be presented at a time in which Trinity Christian School is undergoing a 'Whole School Review'.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although there has been little research in the field of Christian education, much of it is concerned with similar aspects to this study. The use of ethnographic techniques is predominant with the final methodology dependant upon the particular situation. Factors such as the time available to the researcher and the type of information being sought help shape the final methodology which is used.

Part of the difficulty in constructing a suitable methodology is that very few of the researchers in this field discuss in detail the methodology they have adopted. They do however, suggest areas for future research, some of which have been partially addressed by this study.

Overview

The nature of this study is very specific in relation the type of information being sought. That is, to study the inclusion of the Christian perspective as defined by Trinity Christian School. This study involves only a small number of classes at this school. As the nature of this study was not at all common the process of reviewing literature was quite difficult and time consuming with only a small number of references to this type of study found.

The Educational Resource Information Centre was used exclusively for this literature review. As this data base is extensive and recent in the area of educational research it is felt that the searches carried out using this data base were sufficient.

Two separate areas of this data base were searched. Firstly the data base which is available on CD-Rom was searched using a wide range of descriptors. Then secondly, the Educational Resource Information Centre Clearinghouses, which are available Internet, were searched using the same descriptors as for the CD-Rom.

On the CD-Rom are indexes of educational documents (eg. papers presented at conferences) and of journal articles. Whilst, the clearinghouses have copies of unpublished educational articles available which are not on the CD-Rom indexes as yet.

Perhaps the reason for the small number of research articles which discuss how the research was carried out in this field is given by Webb-Mitchell (1992) when he says,

"The ethnographic methods used for gathering information or material from the field are nothing new in the field of religious education. ... But rarely have (we been told) how ... qualitative research methods (have been used) ... especially using the ethnographic methodology ..."

(Webb-Mitchell, 1992, p. 251)

Further to these comments he says that by the information on the research methods not being passed on, religious educators are being deprived of vital information which would only assist with the validity and reliability of future research in this field.

Context

A small number of research articles were found which have a similar context to this study. Webb-Mitchell (1992) used as an example of research in this field a church which looked at the curriculum which had been set for the Sunday School program. Research was then carried out to look at what was being taught in the classroom and how this differed from the written curriculum.

Van Brummelen (1988) also looked at curriculum in religious education, this time however in three different schools in Canada. The study was carried out over a three year period and investigated how the curriculum in each of the three schools was changed over this period of time. Each of the schools in this study were all parent controlled as is Trinity Christian School.

The third of the most distinct studies in this field was that of Groves (1991) which set out to reveal what a number of science teachers believed about a range matters such as the nature of science and knowledge and in particular about "... basic beliefs regarding God and purpose in life." (Groves, 1991, p. i) This study involved one Christian school and a public school. The beliefs that the teachers had were then studied in relation to the influence this had on their classroom and the interpretation of the school's curriculum. Part of the study looked at how the school's purpose was being implemented within the classroom. This is not dissimilar to the study being reported.

There were two other studies which also had a similar context and will mentioned in greater detail in later in this chapter. They are Turner (1981) and Holmes & Hiatt (1984).

Methodology

Type of Research

Whilst the methodology adopted for this study is one of naturalistic inquiry, many studies in this field use ethnography as the basis for their methodology. As this is the case, and that naturalistic inquiry has "... its roots in ethnography ..." (Guba, 1978, p. 1) much of the methodology referred to in this section refers to ethnography. The fact that ethnography only was found in these studies could be due to the fact that only a small number of studies have been carried out in this field.

Webb-Mitchell (1992, p. 249) discusses in detail the use of ethnography as a method of research in religious education. This method of research is qualitative in nature and as a result "... is rich in description of people, places and conversations which cannot be done through statistical procedures." He also discusses that the use of ethnographic techniques for gathering information in religious education is not new.

In Grove's (1991, p. 2) study a qualitative methodology was adopted which was also of an ethnographic nature. In the case of Van Brummelen, (1988, p. 3) he used case studies in his paper to analyse the data and ethnographic techniques to collect the data.

When studying what is going on in a classroom there is the question of how to conduct the research because of factors such as: students and teachers being always on the go and never static; there are people coming in and out of the room; a great deal of activity going on. Webb-Mitchell (1992, pp. 250-251) suggests that the religious educator in this situation should use ethnographic research as this will "...capture or include as much of the action as humanly possible."

Data Collection

Many methods of data collection are used in ethnographic and qualitative types of research, "... particularly in the field of religious education, using interviews, field notes, personal journals, literature reviews, ... (and) systematic observations." (Webb-Mitchell, 1992, p. 249)

Van Brummelen used ethnography which included many methods of data collection. He "... spent five or six full days in each school between February 1985 and May 1988." (1988, p 4) In this study Van Brummelen

"... visited classes while in session, and discussed the school's program with the principal, several teachers, and some students. Further, (he) asked open-ended questions of parents and board members, during planned interviews and while attending school-sponsored events. ... (He was given) full access to curriculum-related documents, including teacher-prepared course outlines and student notebooks."

(Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 4)

This use of case studies was designed "... to add depth and dimension to the existing theory of curriculum implementation and change." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 3). The use of this methodology was designed to provide a picture of what was occurring in all aspects of the culture being studied.

Groves' (1991, pp. 2-3) study was also a qualitative study which incorporated both classroom observations and interviews of the teachers. The observations of each of the targeted classes focussed on "...the classroom climate, teaching strategies employed, and the type, frequency and duration of teacher-student interactions." A variety of teaching techniques were also observed in this study.

A possible threat to ethnographic study is the over preparedness of the research question which is discussed by Webb-Mitchell (1992, pp. 252-253). The key to this aspect of ethnography is to discover the views of the participants rather than proving if the researcher has the correct view. As a result, the process of conducting ethnography must begin with the establishment of an open, yet succinct, research question which will guide the research and researcher.

There were a number of questions posed by Van Brummelen in conducting his research which fit in with the ideas expressed by Webb-Mitchell in the previous paragraph.

Some of these questions are:

"What worldviews did the schools attempt to inculcate through their programs? In what ways were the schools' curricula unique and in what ways did they parallel what takes place in their public counterparts? Did their programs differ significantly?"

(Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 2)

"In conducting an ethnographic study of life in a religious community ..." (Webb-Mitchell, 1992, p. 253) the researcher is the primary instrument for collecting the data which they do as a participant and an observer. This requires the research to be carried out of a substantial period of time as the participants and researcher will be nervous at first.

Two of the studies discussed were conducted over a substantial period of time. Van Brummelen (1988) conducted his study over a period of almost three years. Groves (1991) observed five teachers in total with each teacher being observed for five full days over a period of three weeks. Webb-Mitchell (1992) however, conducted his research in the classes in just one morning and interviewed each of the teachers only once.

As a result of the limited time in which Webb-Mitchell (1992, p. 253) was able to conduct his research he only sat in the classes listening and observing. If he was able to devote more time to the research he would have participated in the classes as well.

Findings

The paper presented by Harro Van Brummelen titled *In the Training of the Lord: Curriculum and its Change Agents in Three Christian Schools* (1988) investigated a number of issues related to the idea of including a Christian perspective in both the curriculum and classroom. Van Brummelen believes fundamentalist Christians feel "... that society and its public schools has rejected traditional (Christian) values." As a result of this parents "... have transferred their faith in the power of education to ... the Christian day school."

Holmes & Hiatt (1984, p. 4) studied why parents sent their children to a Christian school. Parents from three different ethnic backgrounds were interviewed. Of those interviewed 71% said the primary reason was because of the Christ-centred education their children would receive.

The need for consistent and shared values and standards is discussed by Ascher (1985, p. 2). In this report it is stated that for a school to be effective in the areas of academic excellence and discipline there needs to be a set of clear and strong beliefs and values. An example of the success of Catholic schools is given which suggests that Christian beliefs and values can contribute to the effectiveness of a school.

Turner (1981) found that there was general agreement among Christian school administrators as to the reasons for these schools' existence. These schools were there to provide moral and spiritual instruction. This could be provided in a much smaller school compared to the public schools which meant that the students knew all of the teachers and most of the other students. It led to a feeling similar to that of being in a large family.

A study by Van Brummelen provides a number of perspectives which offer guidance to the study being reported. Van Brummelen states that his study investigates two areas of Christian schools in Canada (1988, p. 2). Firstly "... how the curricula of Christian schools differ according to the way their supporters view the role of Christians in contemporary society." Secondly "... it analyses the role of curriculum change agents in schools that are locally autonomous and have little or no external support systems."

A great deal of evidence of a Christian perspective being included in the curriculum of these schools is given throughout the reporting of the data in this paper. Each of the three schools included in Van Brummelen's study are reported separately.

The "Agape Academy" was, at the beginning of the study, a school which had adopted the "... Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) programmed learning curriculum." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 4) This style of education was a "... ready-made systems approach

..." where students worked at their own pace on self-teaching material produced in America. "Throughout, students were exhorted and pressured to accept traditional Christian virtues ... (where) blind acceptance was more important than interpretation, analysis, and evaluation." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 6)

Over the duration of the study the Agape Academy moved away from using the Accelerated Christian Education approach and towards writing its own curriculum material. The priorities for this school were now "... spiritual, moral and academic excellence." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 9) The curriculum of the school said "... that students should live ... by putting their faith in God, not in themselves nor in science or technology."

The Bethel Christian School used textbooks published by a A Beka who were "... the largest distributor of Christian curriculum in North America ..." which were based on a "traditional philosophy of education and promoting Christian morals and values." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 13) The school moved away from this material for a variety of reasons. These included the following which were comments made in a report to the school board in January 1986.

"The children are treated like machines. There is no room for individual response. ... Later readers ... misapply Scripture; a lot of the Christian stuff is not very good quality."

(from oral recounting Mrs Blue made to the board, February 12 1988,
in Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 14)

As a result of this report the search for a new language arts program began. The conclusion was "... that no suitable Christian programs existed." A non-Christian program was adopted with some Christian readers included as supplementary material. This program incorporated the "... up-to-date 'whole language' approaches" the school was looking for whilst allowing for some Christian content. (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 14)

The school was concerned that the Christian perspective was now not included in all of the textbooks and curriculum material the teachers were using. As a result "the school

required teachers to show in their yearly course outlines (of) how they incorporated Biblical principles throughout their programs." (Van Brummelen, 1988, pp. 14-15) There were some Christian perspectives which were promoted in all grades. Some of these were that "... teachers promoted good manners as an important part of a Christian life" and that students were "... continually reminded ... of God's care and providence and the need to serve Him in obedience."

Covenant Christian School was "... operated by an autonomous association ... (but) drew three-quarters of its clientele from Dutch-Canadian Calvinists." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 18) In the thirty years the principal had been there he made few demands on the teachers' classrooms as long as they "functioned smoothly". Most of the teachers in this school were qualified Christian college graduates.

A new principal was appointed a year after the study was begun which saw a number of changes made. The teachers had analysed the school's shortcomings and suggested some changes in the curriculum area. The key change they suggested was "... the need for course outlines with detailed objectives and (the) 'Christian perspective ...' to be included in this section (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 19).

Covenant Christian School was attempting to achieve a goal of being "integrally Christian" in the classroom (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 22).

"One teacher said that 'Christian perspective comes about informally through our attitude and discussions on how we as Christians view issues.' Another explained that she would not artificially mention God or Jesus, but tried to engender an attitude of excitement and wonder as well as responsibility."

(Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 23)

In the school many units which had been developed by the "provincial association of Christian schools" were being used (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 23). These units "... all emphasised that God gave us special abilities and responsibilities that we must use to enhance the world." The teachers were able to impress upon the students in these units

that "... God the Creator has given us Biblical guidelines .." by which to live our lives. Some of the student's own writing also included "religious motifs."

Even with all of this the Christian perspective was not as distinctive as that of the other two schools in this study, Agape Academy or Bethel Christian School. The "course outlines ignored a Christian basis or purpose, listing topic headings without comment." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 23) There had been a period of change in this school and concern was expressed as to whether the school community and staff could reach a consensus "... on the Christian nature of the school's curriculum."

Covenant Christian School used many units developed by Christian teachers but which used resources that were not explicitly Christian. The leaders "... wanted the school to emphasise a Christian worldview that looked beyond legalistic personal morality ..." which they believed was done by schools such as Agape Academy and Bethel Christian School (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 26). An example of this is that Covenant Christian School "... taught a unit on drugs and drug abuse but left it up to the students to decide whether it was right to participate in social drinking." The parents at this school were generally accepting that their Christian faith did not necessarily have unequivocal answers to society's problems.

All three schools in this study received government funding which meant that they adhered to the government's core curriculum and met minimum time stipulations in core subject areas. This document listed the "... major learning outcomes from K-12. (Van Brummelen, 1988 p. 27)

The only school to use the government-supplied textbooks was Covenant Christian School. This school had "... no qualms about ... using public school guidelines and materials ..." but always placed these within a Christian framework. (Van Brummelen, 1988 p. 27) Agape Academy and Bethel Christian School "... used such resources only sparingly and critically ..." even though also received government funding. The school

board of Bethel Christian School "... vowed to drop government funding if its curriculum was ever bound by restrictive guidelines or resources."

Significantly, all three schools had not been prevented from adopting the general organisational and curriculum patterns of existing public education because of their "religious and philosophical differences". (Van Brummelen, 1988 p. 28)

In the study by Van Brummelen (1988, pp. 33-36) there is a brief description of the Christian schools and their culture in North America. The supporters of these schools "... have re-assigned ultimate responsibility for the control of education from the government to parents or churches." These schools induct children into a worldview shared by a substantial minority of North Americans. The following is Van Brummelen's summary of the key features of these schools.

"They expound the preeminence of the religious dimension of life. They teach that the Bible is the supreme Word of God and that personal salvation can come about only through faith in Jesus Christ. They infuse traditional virtues and the moral imperative of living according to the Ten Commandments. They regularly reinforce that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, although the interpretation of Genesis 1 varies from school to school and teacher to teacher. Teachers model commitment to a Christian way of life ..."

(Van Brummelen, 1988 pp. 33-34)

Implications for the Study Being Reported

Childers (1987, p. 4) discusses the need for research into the types of moral education which is being practiced in schools. The need for study into the effects of religious heritage on moral education were also raised and how the religious convictions of teachers and schools influence the moral education.

Turner (1981, p. 8) also suggests the need for further research into these Christian schools. His study was concerned with the reasons for the growth of the number of Christian schools. In concluding he states that there needs to be a comprehensive survey of these schools and this further research should include a check that the parents' desire to have their children in a religious environment is being met.

Since Van Brummelen's study includes "curriculum implementation" it has a great deal of relevance to this study. The inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom is part of this "curriculum implementation".

In concluding Van Brummelen (1988, p. 36) suggests what future research in Christian schools needs to explore. Whilst this study focussed on the curriculum:

"Future research about Christian schools needs to explore whether and how the lives of Christian school graduates differs from their public school counterparts. Such research needs to distinguish their schools according to their curricular and instructional approaches; otherwise, the results may just provide 'averages' that mean little."

(Van Brummelen, 1988 p. 36)

The study being undertaken in this paper is using part of Van Brummelen's recommendation to continue with research into the differences between Christian school graduates and their public school counterparts. The focus is on the classroom and the inclusion of the Christian perspective. As Van Brummelen (1988, p. 36) suggests, if there is no Christian perspective included in a Christian school there can be no difference between the Christian school graduates and their public school counterparts in this area.

From the various articles discussed here the methodology which should be adopted for this type of study should use the ethnographic techniques discussed. These techniques are "... interviews, field notes, personal journals, literature reviews, ... (and) systematic observations." (Webb-Mitchell, 1992, p. 249) Groves (1991) and Van Brummelen (1988) also support these methods of data collection.

By adopting this methodology, the views of the participants can be sought rather than the views of the researcher being checked (Webb-Mitchell, 1992, pp. 252-253). This is important for this study as the primary focus is to see if the Christian perspective is included in the classroom and if so, then how is this being done.

There has been little evidence of research into Christian education in the area of curriculum and what is being included in the classroom. The study being reported picks

up on each of the issues raised in this section by looking at what occurs in the classroom in relation to the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*. This study is investigating what is or is not being included in the classroom and reporting on this in relation to the inclusion of a Christian perspective in the classroom. To do this effectively, a naturalistic methodology, as suggested by many of the previous studies, is to be adopted.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for this study is that of Naturalistic Inquiry. Within this methodology it is possible to observe and report on the participants in their environment without the need to control the variables. In this way the research can be an observer within the classroom watching and recording everything which takes place. It is then possible to select from this the aspects which are the focus of this study. The key to the success of this type of inquiry is confirmability. That is, the agreement among a variety of information sources about the phenomena being studied.

Outline

In constructing the methodology a number of key factors need to be kept in mind to ensure the validity of the data collected. Also of great importance is the type of data collected and the analysis of this data. All of these are crucial to the success of the study. These issues are explained in more detail in the following section.

In Stubbs and Delamont (1976, p. 3) it is argued that a range of techniques be used. They say that "... no single technique or theory can capture the complexity of classroom life ... and that a wide range of methods ..." need to be used.

Naturalistic inquiry will be used in this study for a number of reasons. This study is setting out to observe what is happening in a number of classrooms. The researcher is seeking a holistic view of each of these cases and intends to be open-minded and exploratory. (Guba, 1978, p. 14) Another key factor in this decision is that the researcher does not wish to manipulate the situation. Instead, he wishes to observe all that occurs and then select those aspects which are critical for the purposes of this study.

A case study approach has also been used as Yin (1984, p. 25) explains that there are a number of applications for the case study which are applicable to this study. The predominant reason is that the case study can be used to describe real-life situations which are too complex for other methods of research.

Ethnographic techniques are often used in both naturalistic inquiry and case study. It is therefore important to note that Fetterman (1989: p. 89) says "Triangulation is basic in ethnographic (type) research." It is used to ensure validity of all information collected the "... testing of one source of information against another to strip away alternative explanations and prove a hypothesis ..." will be a basic part of the methodology.

Three methods of data collection will be used for the purposes of this study. These are as follows. Observation of a selection of Secondary classes over a period of time. Interviews of students and teachers from these classes. Then thirdly, the use of documents. In this case: curriculum statements; a Christian perspective outline; teaching programs; lesson plans; teaching resources; and student workbooks. Each of these three methods are explained more fully in the following sections.

The analysis of the data is iterative and will build on ideas throughout the study. By analysing the data it will assist with the construction of a conceptual framework about what is happening in the area of curriculum in the study. Throughout the collection and analysis of data choices must be made "... between logical and enticing paths, between valid and invalid but fascinating data, and between genuine patterns of behaviour and series of apparently similar but distinct reactions." (Fetterman, 1989, p. 88)

Naturalistic Inquiry and Case Study

The naturalistic inquirer is concerned with the description and understanding of a situation. (Guba, 1978, p. 13) In this study that is exactly what is required. The purpose of this study is not to test a hypothesis but to discover if the Christian perspective as indicated in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* is being included by teachers in the classroom.

Naturalistic inquiry does not set out to arrange or manage any variables as they may exist in a particular situation. Instead as discussed earlier, the entire situation is observed and then those aspects which are critical to the study are discussed. (Guba, 1978, p. 14)

From a practical perspective, naturalistic inquiry is concerned with the setting, context and conditions in which the participants operate. (Guba, 1978, p. 16) Rather than moving the participants out of their usual environment, the naturalistic inquirer does not want or need a contrived environment. They seek to understand the context and how this may impact on the participants. Lastly, the conditions remain as uncontrolled as possible so as to cause as little interference as possible.

Case Study can be seen as being part of this Naturalistic Inquiry approach. Yin (1984, p. 25) explains the particular purposes for a Case Study and how they can be applied to this study. He says that there are four different applications for a Case Study approach. The most important of these is to explain the "... causal links in real-life interventions ..." which are often too complex for survey or experimental strategies. Secondly it can be used to describe the "... real life context ..." in which the event has occurred. Thirdly, the study can benefit from this descriptive mode as it gives an illustrative account of the events. Finally, the case study enables the situation to be explored, particularly where there is no one clear set of outcomes.

Hopkins (1985, p. 81) provides a very clear justification for the use of case study which relates to this study. "The main use of the case study in classroom research is that it provides a relatively formal and fairly definitive analysis of a specific aspect of ... classroom life." The advantages which also justify this methodology are listed below.

- a relatively simple way of plotting the progress of a course or a pupil's ... reaction to teaching methods
- information yielded by case studies will tend to give a more accurate and representative picture than (many other methods); case studies draw on data gathered by many methods."

(from Box 6.10, Hopkins, 1985, p. 81)

Selection of Cases

Population

Two populations were drawn upon to select those to be involved in this study. One of the populations will be the group of teachers within the school who teach any class

within the Secondary section of the school. The other population will be that of the group of students who are in the Secondary section of the school, that is, they are in Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 or Year 10.

Five Secondary cross curriculum (excluding a subject called Christian Living) classes and their teachers will be used in the study. Of these five classes it is assumed that only four will be in the final analysis due to the possibility of teachers and/or classes not being available for all of the time frame over which the study will be conducted. From each of these classes a random sample of two to three students will be selected for the interview stage of the data collection. Stratified random sampling using the optimum allocation method to select the strata population will be used to determine the people who will be interviewed (Wiersma, 1986, p.270).

Generalist classes only will form part of this study, that is, any class other than a Christian Living class. This is necessary as the area of focus can be assumed to be present in an overt way in the Christian Living classes within the Secondary section of the school.

Cases Selected

The cases to be studied were selected according to the time at which they are scheduled in relation to the times available to the researcher. This is a method of convenience so that the researcher can observe and interview during lessons which do not interfere with his own teaching times.

A range of subjects and year levels were selected. Classes which have most of their lessons on a Tuesday and a Thursday will be selected as this is when the researcher has a significant amount of time to carry out all aspects of the study.

Once each possible class had been selected a letter to the class teacher requesting permission to use their class in the study was sent out. A copy of this letter appears in Appendix 1.

A letter was sent to the five teachers who were prepared to be involved in this study. Now that this had been established a further note of explanation was sent to these teachers which gave exact details of which lessons would be observed. It also gave some further notes of explanation as can be seen from the copy of the letter also in Appendix 1.

Collection of Case Data

The case observation will be unstructured and will be a narrative record of all that is occurring within the classroom. All of the data collected in this way will be of a qualitative nature. This method has been selected over a systematic observation, such as the *Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories*. The selection of an unstructured narrative record is supported by Delamont (in Stubbs and Delamont. 1976, p. 101). An "... individual teacher's personal style and subject matter (will) affect classroom interaction." Delamont argues that these "... cannot be tapped by orthodox research means." Systematic observation techniques cannot "... show why teachers differ on such measures ..." as the way they teach.

As well the previous comments "Education research often disregards how pupils see school." (Stubbs and Delamont, 1976, p. 21). This view further supports the naturalistic approach to be adopted for this study.

A naturalistic inquiry has been adopted so as to be able to select from the cases those phenomena which are relevant to this study under truly natural conditions (Guba, 1978, p. 14). In this situation the researcher watches the entire events without attempting to manage them as might be done in more conventional research.

Field Notes

The researcher will record field notes of the cases observed. These field notes are records of what occurs while the researcher is in the field, including the perceptions of individuals as they react with each other.

The field notes recorded will be detailed and descriptive. In this way the researcher will be able "... to obtain people's perceptions of reality expressed in their actions and expressed as feelings, thoughts and beliefs." (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989, p. 401) In all of this listening it is imperative that the researcher puts aside his own perceptions and seeks those of the participants only.

By observing over a period of time in different contexts the researcher can elicit data which is "... nearly impossible with other approaches, and he has access to some unique kinds of information" (Wilson, 1977, p. 256). Examples of this are: what the participant actually does; what is implied by the participant by non-verbal communication; and what the perceptions of the participants are to various activities.

The field notes will record the observations of the researcher whilst he is in the field. These field notes will be recorded and will identify: the case it refers to; the date and time the observation took place; and the participant (teacher or student only).

Interviews

The Rapport Process

"Ethnographic interviewing involves two distinct but complementary processes: *developing rapport* and *eliciting information*." (Spradley, 1979, p.78) The rapport will encourage students and teachers to talk about their experiences in the classroom. To complement this "eliciting information fosters the development of rapport."

If we assume this to be the case, the relationship between the researcher and informant will have to be harmonious. This will mean "... that a basic sense of trust has developed that allows for the free flow of information." (Spradley, 1979, p. 78)

It is stated by Spradley (1979, pp. 79-82) that rapport is developed over a period of time and moves through several stages. This development takes a great deal of time and as a result rapport will not be developed to such a high level as Spradley discusses. However, the key points in developing rapport can be used to assist in the eliciting of information.

An advantage the researcher has with the informants in this study is that he is known to them. The extent to which this is so varies between the informants but it will still be useful.

Initially there will be apprehension, especially on the part of the informant (Spradley, 1979, pp. 79-80). To overcome this an explanation outlining the purpose of the study will be given. This explanation will not divulge the true intent. It will explain that information is being sought on teachers and students perceptions of what occurs in the classroom. Informants will be told that there are no incorrect answers to the questions and that all of the data will remain anonymous. Lastly, this research is part of a university project and as such is not to be seen as part of the researcher's normal role.

Once the questions are begun, the focus will be on having the informant talking. "... *Descriptive questions* are especially useful to start a conversation and keep an informant freely talking." (Spradley, 1979, p. 80) With the informant talking it gives the researcher "... an opportunity to listen, to show interest, and to respond in a non judgemental fashion." These are very effective in reducing the apprehension as they "... communicate acceptance and engender trust."

With the students being interviewed in this study it is very unlikely that the rapport will go beyond this stage of development as described by Spradley (1979, pp. 79-80). The rapport with the teachers is likely to go beyond this stage. There is already a certain degree of rapport which has been developed from a professional relationship the researcher has had with the teachers involved in this study.

As there is already this degree of rapport, the relationship between researcher and teacher is expected to move quite rapidly through the development process Spradley (1979, pp. 80-83) outlines. The additional phases that is, those beyond that of apprehension, are: exploration; cooperation; and participation. As the relationship between researcher and teacher moves through these phases the level of participation

and cooperation increases which assists the researcher in obtaining all of the relevant information.

Ethnographic Questions

"In ethnographic interviewing, *both questions and answers must be discovered from the informants.*" (Spradley, 1979, p. 84) According to Spradley there are three main ways to discover these questions. Only one of these ways will be used as it is the easiest method for purposes of this study. This method is to use "descriptive questions" and is described in detail in the following paragraphs.

The researcher needs to know at least one setting in which the informant carries out routine activities. In the case of this study it will be the classroom. Descriptive questions aim to elicit a large sample of comments from the informant in their own language. These types of questions are intended to encourage the informant to talk, in this case, about the school and classroom environment being observed.

According to Spradley, there are five major types of descriptive questions and several subtypes. Only four of these major types will be used as one (Native Language Questions) is irrelevant to this study. The researcher is a part of the school being studied and so the language does not differ between researcher and informant. Several subtypes of these will also be used. The four types discussed are: Grand Tour Questions; Mini-tour Questions; Example Questions; and Experience Questions. In the following paragraphs each of the subtypes to be used will be defined. Examples of the questions to be used for teachers and students will then follow under separate headings.

The first major type of ethnographic questions is that of Grand Tour Questions. These types of questions provide the researcher with the first level of information in the interview. They encourage the informant to range from point to point or topic to topic informally and provide the researcher with many questions to continue the interview with. The subtypes used are explained below.

A Specific Grand Tour question asks the informant to describe the most recent event. This is something which informants can do easily as it specific and it is only asking about a recent event.

With a Task-Related Grand Tour question the informant is asked to perform a simple task which can then help them in the description. As this task is being performed by the informant the ethnographer can ask questions to expand the researcher's knowledge of particular aspects of the task.

Mini-tour questions are identical to grand tour questions except they deal with a much smaller unit of experience. These questions come about from the information derived from the "grand tour" questions. Mini-tour questions are used to investigate smaller aspects of experience. The Mini-tour questions use the same approaches as their counterparts do with grand tour questions.

Example questions are still more specific than Mini-tour questions. When the informant mentions a single act or event they are ask to give an example. This type of question can be woven throughout the interviews being conducted.

The final type of questions to be used will be Experience questions. These are very open ended questions are best asked after numerous "grand tour" and "mini-tour" questions have been asked. These questions tend to elicit atypical events rather than recurrent, routine ones. This may be useful in identifying possible variations in the lessons which could occur.

Samples of Questions Asked

In this section, examples of the questions to be asked for each of the areas of ethnographic questions to be used are given.

Teacher Sample Questions

Specific Grand Tour

Describe the lesson which you just gave.

Task-Related Grand Tour

Go through the class work you did with the class in that lesson and explain what you were doing.

Whilst these are being done ask questions such as:

What is this ?

What are you doing now?

Mini-Tour Questions

As per "Grand Tour" questions but deal with a much smaller unit of experience.

Go through a particular piece of work *perhaps one which has significance for this study* and explain what you were doing with the students.

Example Questions

Picks up on a piece of detail given by the teacher and asks for an example of this.

Experience Questions

Tell me about the experiences you had in that lesson.

Student Sample Questions

Specific Grand Tour

Describe the lesson which you just had.

Task-Related Grand Tour

Go through your class work you did in that lesson and explain what you were doing.

Whilst these are being done ask questions such as:

What is this ?

What are you doing now?

Mini-Tour Questions

As per "Grand Tour" questions but deal with a much smaller unit of experience.

Go through a particular piece of work *perhaps one which has significance for this study* and explain what you were doing.

Example Questions

Picks up on a piece of detail given by the student and asks for an example of this.

Experience Questions

Tell me about the experiences you had in that lesson.

Lack of Commonality in Interviews

Cooper and McIntyre (1992, p. 2) discuss a concern for a lack of commonality when using interview techniques in looking at teacher and student perceptions. The "...term 'commonality' ... refers first to similarities in teachers' and students' selection of ... events, and second, to similarities in the ways in which teachers and students talk about the same..." events.

If there is "a complete lack of commonality in perceptions..." this will tell of the "...differences in the most prominent concerns of teachers and pupils..." but will lead to speculation "...about commonalties which might be present but less prominent in their perceptions." Cooper and McIntyre (1992, pp. 2-3) suggest that a directive element can be added to the interview procedure to overcome this problem.

"Towards the end of interviews which lack evidence of commonality, examples of events and situations described by teachers as significant (can be) introduced; the same procedure (can) be applied in teacher interviews using (students') perceptions."

(Cooper and McIntyre, 1992, p. 2-3)

Document Search

A number of documents will be examined as part of this study. All of these documents will be commented on in chapter five which is the data analysis section of this study. A description of each of these documents is outlined in the following sections.

This document search will focus in particular on the four areas of Curriculum beliefs as written in the *Mission Statement* and identified earlier in this study. The cross checking of data collected by classroom observation and interviews will also be carried out in the document search section of the data collection.

All of the documents will be analysed in relation to this study and the specific classes that make up this study only. This will mean that not all of each of these documents will be analysed. Some of the information contained in these documents has no relevance to the area of interest for this study.

The documents to be used for this document search are: the *Curriculum Statements* relevant to each of the classes in the study; the *Christian Perspectives Outline; Teaching Programs; Teaching Resources; and Student Workbooks*.

Curriculum Statements

In the Australian Capital Territory there exists a policy of school based curriculum. As a result of this, each school is responsible for the development and implementation of their own curriculum. Therefore, the *Curriculum Statements* at Trinity Christian School should reflect the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

For each area of study at Trinity Christian School there is a *Curriculum Statement*. This statement gives a description of that area of study for students from Kindergarten to Year 10 at Trinity Christian School. These *Curriculum Statements* are made up of the following areas: *Rationale; Goals; Content; Learning and Teaching Strategies; Assessment; and Evaluation*.

All of the *Curriculum Statements* have been developed cooperatively by teachers, parents and the 'Curriculum and Assessment Committee' (this is a sub-committee of the 'School Council' - see Chapter 4 for further details). Once completed, these are then approved by the 'School Council' and implemented by the teachers.

Each area of the *Curriculum Statement* will be analysed against the specific area of focus which has been derived from the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

Christian Perspectives Outline

The *Christian Perspectives Outline* is a document which has been produced by teachers in the secondary section of the school. This document explains how the Christian

perspectives are included in each of the subjects in the secondary school. All outlines presented in this document should be derived from the *Rationale* in the relevant *Curriculum Statement*.

Each of these outlines has been written to assist parents understand how the Christian perspectives are included in each of the subjects that their child studies.

Teaching Programs

As part of the accountability of all teachers at Trinity Christian School a teaching program must be submitted for all units taught. These teaching programmes are a working document the teacher has written which details how the particular curriculum they are teaching will be taught in the classroom. They should all contain the following information for each courses/units being taught in a particular curriculum area: Rationale; Course Overview and the Assessment Strategy. For each unit or topic being taught there should be further information given in the following areas: Objectives; Content/Methods and Resources.

Teaching Resources

All teaching resources used by the teacher will be searched for any evidence of the inclusion of the Christian perspectives. These resources will include: student worksheets/handouts; references given to students; overhead transparencies used; and other material the teacher uses with the students as a resource.

Student Workbooks

All student workbooks from each of the classes involved in this study will be collected. These will be checked for any references the students have made which would indicate that a Christian perspective has been included in that unit of work.

Analysis of the Data

In the analysing of the data, the following, as suggested by Fetterman (1989, pp. 92-97), will be used as the foci on which to reduce the large amount of data collected: "patterns,

key events, matrices and content analysis". The operating definition of each of these is outlined below.

Patterns of thought and action in various players will often be repeated and thus allows for the differentiation between ideas and behaviour.

Key events provide a focus for analysis. "In many cases, the event is a metaphor for a ... specific social value." (Fetterman, 1989, p. 93)

Matrices provide the researcher with the ability to "... compare and cross-reference categories of information to establish a picture of a range of behaviours or thought categories." (Fetterman, 1989, p. 96)

Content analysis involves the analysis of written data, for example, teaching programmes, and the triangulation of this "... information within documents to test for internal consistency." (Fetterman, 1989, p. 96) The consistency between the teaching programmes and the school's approved curriculum can also be tested for consistency.

How each of these will be used in the data reduction process is explained in detail in the following paragraphs.

Within each of the cases patterns which exist between the participants will be looked for. These patterns may exist in responses given by students and teachers in interviews. There may be patterns of behaviour by various students in individual cases. In the various forms of documentation there may be patterns which exist between them.

Key events to be analysed may include how the Bible is used in the classroom or how evidence is used to support a particular Christian perspective. It could include how the students are treated with regard to the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

The use of matrices will allow for the cross-referencing of categories within each case. In this way the references made in the teachers program to the Christian perspective for instance can be cross-referenced to the actions of the teacher within the classroom.

Content analysis differs slightly from matrices in that the consistency of documents can then be checked. That is, the consistency of say the teaching program with the *Christian Perspectives Outline*. Likewise the consistency of the teaching program with the curriculum statement can also be checked.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEXT

Trinity Christian School is a Christian parent controlled school. This means that particular emphasis is placed on the parents role as prime educators of their children and of the sovereignty of God over all that we do.

The school is governed by an association of Christians who elect a School Council to fulfil this role. Parents must be Christians to be a member of the Association but need not be Christian to send their children to the school. All staff employed by the school must accept the Statement of Faith therefore confessing their Christian faith.

Derived from the Statement Faith is the Trinity Christian School Vision Statement. It is this document which sets out in practical terms what the school is setting out to achieve.

A Christian Parent Controlled School

A Christian parent controlled school gives particular emphasis to two aspects based on Scripture (that is the Bible).

"Firstly, the responsibility of parents for the nurture of their children, including that part of their education that takes place in school. Secondly, the sovereignty of God over all of life, including education, and thus the need for a Christ-centred perspective in all areas of the curriculum."

(Deenick, T., 1989, p. 4)

The management of a Christian parent controlled school is carried out by an 'association'.

"...These associations are (generally) independent of churches or denominations, and their membership is made up largely of parents of children in the school, (because of this) they have been called *Christian Parent-Controlled schools*."

(Deenick, T., 1989, p. 4)

Membership of these associations is tightly controlled so as to ensure that the beliefs on which the school are based are not undermined.

"The membership of (the) Association provides the backbone for the management of the school, so that it maintains the God-honouring, Christ-centred and Holy Spirit-inspired environment desired by Christian parents for the education of children."

(Trinity Christian School Association, 1990, p. 2)

"In practice the associations are incorporated ... (and) administer their schools" through a school council or board (Deenick, T., 1989, p. 4). These councils or boards are the elected representatives of the association. It must be understood that it is these school councils or boards which are "... responsible for the overall development and functioning of the School." (Trinity Christian School Association, 1990, p. 1)

It is the school council or board "...which appoints the Principal and staff to implement the Curriculum and to oversee the day to management of the school." (Trinity Christian School Association, 1990, p. 1)

Trinity Christian School

Trinity Christian School currently offers an education for students from Kindergarten to Year 10. There are six hundred and forty students attending the school which was established in 1980.

The school is situated in the Tuggeranong valley in the southern part of Canberra.

Trinity Christian School is "Incorporated under the Associations Incorporations Ordinance." (Trinity Christian School Tuggeranong A.C.T. Incorporated, 1989, p. 1)

The objects and purposes of this association are " To establish and maintain ... institutions to provide education for children ... in accordance with the fundamental truths of Christianity as contained in the Bible."

The doctrinal basis for the school is outlined in detail in the *Constitution* (Trinity Christian School Tuggeranong A.C.T. Incorporated, 1989). This "Doctrinal Basis" explains the fundamental truths of Christianity as contained in the Bible on which the school is based. Two key points of the school's doctrinal basis which are important in defining Trinity Christian School in this study are:

"(l) Christian parents have the responsibility of disciplining and instructing their children in the Lord. Parental responsibility includes the total welfare of their children: spiritual, mental, physical and cultural.

(m) The education of children of Christian parents should be God-honouring, being Christ-oriented and Bible-centred."

(Trinity Christian School Tuggeranong A.C.T. Incorporated, 1989, p. 2)

These two key points are consistent with the views expressed earlier in this study by Deenick (1989, p. 4)

Association Membership

As the Association controls the school the membership of this is also governed by the constitution. To become a member of the Association a person must apply to Council. They will be then be interviewed by at least one Council member and one Association member.

At this interview they will "... be questioned in detail as to their understanding of and agreement to ..." (Trinity Christian School Tuggeranong ACT Incorporated, 1989) the objects and purposes of the Association and the *Statement of Faith*. The applicant is also introduced to the rights and responsibilities of membership.

"... upon receiving a favourable report ...and being approved by (a) majority vote of Council ..." the applicant can then become a member of the Association. (Trinity Christian School Tuggeranong ACT Incorporated, 1989)

Teachers

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, at Trinity Christian School must declare their written consent to the *Statement of Faith* (Trinity Christian School, 1989). This *Statement of Faith* is a list of the Christian principles by which all teaching and other activities will be carried out at Trinity Christian School.

The *Statement of Faith* is a list of the "... fundamental truths of Christianity as contained in the Bible ..." and believed to be of the greatest importance to education of children by Christian parents (Trinity Christian School, 1989)

Further to this requirement all staff "... shall be regular members of a Christian congregation." (Trinity Christian School Tuggeranong ACT Incorporated, 1989) All staff are appointed by the School Council and can only be dismissed by the School Council.

Full details of the current teaching staff at Trinity Christian School are given in the table in Appendix 2. The details given are their: age; total years in the teaching profession; total years taught at Trinity Christian School; and the tertiary qualifications they have gained.

Of the forty five teachers at Trinity Christian School only fifteen are male whilst the remaining thirty are female. The average age of the teaching staff is forty years. Total professional experience of teachers is an average of twelve and a half years whilst the average time that teachers have taught at Trinity is five and half years.

Whilst the averages are given above, it is interesting to note the range of experience and ages amongst teaching staff as well. The range of total professional experience is from teachers in their first year of teaching to one teacher who has been teaching for thirty years. Years of teaching at Trinity Christian School range from one year to eleven years. Whilst the age range of teachers is from twenty three years of age to fifty seven years of age.

It is also interesting to note that of the forty five teaching staff at Trinity Christian School only two have a tertiary qualification in theology. These are Teacher 19 with a Letters of Theology and Teacher 41 with a Doctorate of Theology.

Parents

Parents of the students at Trinity Christian School do not have to be Christians. When enrolling their children parents are asked what their church affiliation is, this does not

however indicate necessarily if they are committed Christians or not. The school, through a database it has on all families in the school estimates that of the three hundred and sixty families in the school, two hundred and eighty of these are committed Christians.

All prospective families and students of the school are interviewed by either the Principal or one of the Assistant Principals. The purpose of this interview is to answer any concerns the parents may have and to gauge the suitability of the family and student for enrolment in the school. A list of questions given to parents before the interview is also discussed.

As part of the vision to have a "... Christian community of radical love and care ..." (Trinity Christian School, 1991) the parent interview provides an opportunity where the Principal or Assistant Principal are able to meet all parents and students.

After the interview it is then decided as to whether the student will be offered a place. In making this offer an order of priority is used to determine who is offered a place at the school. This order, in descending order, is as follows: siblings, staff, Christians on the waiting list, students transferring from other Christian schools and then any others. The ratio of boys and girls is always kept in mind and this may mean that the order of priority will vary. Where possible there is the same number of boys to girls.

Students

The current enrolment of students at Trinity Christian School can be described as follows:

	<i>Infant/Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Boys</i>	213	116	329
<i>Girls</i>	195	110	305
<i>Total</i>	408	226	634

Trinity Christian School Vision Statement

Definition

In 1991 Trinity Christian School had been established for eleven years. Many of the people involved with the establishment of the school in 1980 have since had little to do with the school and so their 'vision' for the school could be lost. The school community as a whole wrote a Vision Statement for the school which they believed was in keeping with the 'vision' of the people who began the school.

This 'Vision Statement' gives an outline of the direction Trinity Christian School should be heading. It also gives a brief outline of the purpose for the school's existence.

Structure

The *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* is divided into two sections. These sections are the *School Purpose* and the *Mission Statement*. Combined, these two sections make up what is referred to as the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

Under the heading of *School Purpose* a brief outline of the direction the school is to take is given. This is in general terms and lists the principles by which all activities at the school will be carried out.

The *School Purpose* states that:

"Trinity Christian School was established to provide a school environment with a Christian dimension, supporting parents in their task as prime educators.

In continuing to fulfil this foundational vision the school seeks:

- to develop a Christian community for learning, where we claim and demonstrate the relevance of Jesus Christ to all aspects of life by approaching all of the school's activities from a Christian perspective.
- to assist each student find their true identity spiritually, academically, physically, socially and emotionally, and to strive for personal excellence in all that they do.
- to challenge all students with the reality of the living Christ within a climate of open and positive enquiry.

- to provide a Christian community of radical love and care based on justice and mercy. Within this context the school aims to foster in each student a strong value system, sound self discipline and a desire to serve others.
- to challenge the Christian student to live and think in ways which will reclaim and transform the world for Christ."

(Trinity Christian School, 1991, p. 1)

The *Mission Statement* "...outlines specifically..." how the *School Purpose* is to be applied in "...all aspects of our work..." at Trinity Christian School, whatever role in the community that person may have (Trinity Christian School, 1991, p. 1).

The *Mission Statement* "... supports and guides our approach to all aspects of our work." The areas outlined in detail are: "Our Faith"; "Curriculum"; "Our Staff"; "Our Children"; "Our parents"; "Our Society" and "Our School Community".

Within each of these areas in the *Mission Statement* there is further detail defining a set of beliefs. Then following on from this is an explanation how each of these beliefs will be put into practice within the school.

Specific Area of Focus

"A focus on relevant, manageable topics is essential and is possible through the refinement of the unit of analysis. But then the fieldworker must probe these topics by comparing and contrasting data, trying to fit pieces of data into the bigger puzzle - all the while hypothesising about the best fit and the best picture"

(Fetterman, 1989, p. 89)

With this in mind, for the purpose of this study only part of one area of the *Mission Statement* will be used as a focus in the collection and analysis of data. This area being that of "Curriculum" with the focus being on the school's Christian expectations.

As this study is to look at the inclusion of the Christian perspective only, it is necessary that the following expectations are the key focus for this study.

" We expect

- (a) The curriculum and classroom practice will include effective regular instruction from the Scriptures and their implications for Christian Living.
- (b) The curriculum will guide students to relate their learning to broader concepts and contexts and to the outworking of God's providence. ...
- (c) Basic skills will be a priority, and the curriculum will be designed to foster development of the complete person.
- (d) Students to attain their individual potentials; the curriculum will be broad enough in objectives and methods to cater for individual differences.
- (e) The curriculum will offer reasonable subject variety and choice, but will also ensure time to permit depth and excellence in all offered subjects.
- (f) The essential areas of learning will be identified and considered compulsory.
- (g) All conclusions, theories and activities will be open for review by students and teachers, especially in the light of God's Word. All curricula and teaching choices will be open to appraisal before the school community.
- (h) The curriculum will anticipate and complement other learning in the home, church and community at large."

(Trinity Christian School, 1991)

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter the analysis of the data is presented. The data which was collected for this study is contained within a separate volume because of the amount collected using this type of methodology. Each case has been reported separately and the evidence of the Christian perspective is detailed.

Structure of Data Analysis

Overview

Each of the four classes involved with this study will be analysed separately for the purposes of data analysis. In this format, the structure of the analysis can be simplified as it will only involve a narrative analysis of the data in a number of different areas for one class at a time.

Sub-sections of the Analysis

The *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* is a document which gives a purpose and an outline for the direction the school should be heading. Under this document, all of the operations of the school take place. As a result of this, the interpretation of the *Trinity Christian Vision Statement*, as it relates to specific areas of the curriculum and classroom practice, is documented in a number of areas.

A variety of documentation will be analysed under their own headings in relation to each of the classes observed as part of this study. The classroom observations will then be analysed lesson by lesson.

The sections under which the analysis will be done are as follows: Curriculum Statement; Christian Perspectives Outline; Teaching Programs; Lesson Observations; Teacher Interviews; Student Interviews; Teaching Resources and Student Workbooks

Analysis of Case Number One

Summary of Case Number One

The documentation for this case gives a rationale for the subject from a Christian perspective. This rationale does not appear to be discussed or acted upon anywhere else in this case.

In the classroom Case One provided a great deal of evidence to indicate that some of the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* are being included. The evidence did not support the specific area of focus as outlined, but instead, supported another area of the vision statement. Instead, the Christian perspective appears in the treatment of students as individuals by recognising and encouraging their particular gifts. The teaching style is also varied in recognition of these individual differences.

The students in this case recognise the fact that they are treated as individuals and enjoy the way in which the class is structured. There is also an emphasis on seeing that they are all challenged by the work set.

Class Observed

Case Number One is a Year 9 Mathematics class. This is a core (non elective) subject, which these students study for the entire year, for six, forty minute periods per week.

Teacher Background

Teacher number one is female. She is married with four children. Currently, she teaches Mathematics to Year 9, Christian Living to Year 10, and has a Year 10 Roll Call Class (pastoral care).

Qualifications

Her tertiary qualifications are:

Bachelor of Science (Australian National University)

Post Graduate Diploma in Nutrition and Dietetics (Western Australian Institute of

Technology)

Master of Middle School Education (Appalachian State University, USA)

Teaching Experience

1985

full time Maths and Science

1986 - 1990

relief teaching in a variety of schools

1990 - Present

permanent part-time Maths and Christian Living

This teacher has worked in two Christian schools since 1986, this is including Trinity Christian School since 1988.

Reasons for Teaching in a Christian School

There are a few reasons she has for working in a Christian School. Firstly, it is enjoyable to work in a caring, loving and supportive environment. Being able to honour God through Christian education is a privilege. The Christian fellowship between all parts of the school community (parents, staff and students) is very special. Probably the most positive aspect is the freedom and opportunity to teach God's word and to share the gospel with the students.

Curriculum Statement

The Mathematics Curriculum Statement discusses the inclusion of a Christian perspective in the classroom in a great many places throughout the document. Each of these areas discussed both how and especially why this aspect is included in the Mathematics Curriculum.

The rationale for mathematics begins with this statement. "Mathematics has its roots in God's creation order. In His orderly design, God is showing His faithfulness in Christ to

His world." It then goes on and discusses that mathematics is a human attempt at discerning "... the arithmetic and spatial laws which God has ordained."

There is some discussion about children experiencing "... mathematical ideas from contact with concrete objects and by analysing spatial and arithmetic aspects ..." in everyday life in God's created world. "God as our creator has given us mathematical ability." This "mathematical ability" gives us an "... understanding of God's world in activities such as computer science, engineering, physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, economics, art, design and technology.

One other key component discussed in the *Rationale* is that of how mathematics can be used from a Christian perspective. Wherever possible mathematics should be "... based in reality, arising from real situations." Students will also study the "... proper and improper uses of mathematics and by realising its power as well as its limits, mathematics learning can be education for responsible (Christian) action."

In the goals section of the curriculum statement where it is stated that "By the end of Year 10, students should be able to:" no Christian perspective is given. Under the heading of "General Goals - Kindergarten to Year 10" it is expected that students will be able to "Appreciate from a mathematical perspective the order and patterns in God's world." They will also "Appreciate what is involved in being a good steward who participates in our mandate from God to subdue this world."

The content for each year level is listed very clearly and in great detail. For Year 9 mathematics students there is a list of all the topics to be covered and some detail about each of these. All of the topics and information given about these is purely about mathematics. There is no reference given in the area of content as to where or what Christian perspective will be included.

As for the area of *Content*, all of the following areas in the mathematics curriculum do not discuss or give reference to any Christian perspective. These remaining areas are: *Teaching and Learning Strategies; Assessment and Evaluation.*

Christian Perspectives Outline

A brief summary of the key Christian aspects is given below. The main aspects of teaching mathematics from a Christian perspective are to do with our God given mathematical ability and the application of this to then understand God's world.

The Christian perspectives for mathematics are outlined in brief and begin by discussing the fact that "... mathematics has its roots in God's world ...". Mathematics is experienced by children in their everyday "... contact with concrete objects and by analysing the spatial and arithmetic aspects of everyday experience."

As a result of this, mathematics is taught drawing "... the mathematical aspect from everyday situations." This is not always possible but is done wherever possible. "A principal activity in mathematics is to apply mathematical concepts to the understanding of God's world ..." in many different areas science, the arts and technology.

The final aspect discussed is that of the students using their God given mathematical ability "... in a variety of settings and problems. By studying proper and improper uses of mathematics and by realising its power as well as its limits ..." mathematics can lead students to responsible actions which are "... pleasing to Jesus."

Teaching Programs

The teaching program written by the teacher for this unit lists only the content to be covered. Four different headings are used to describe the content for this unit. These headings are: concept; textbook reference; worksheet reference and computer reference. The last three headings are really a list of the teaching resources and exercises to be used. Nowhere in the teaching program is there any mention of how or what Christian perspective will be included in this mathematics classroom.

Lesson Observations

The Christian perspective being included in this classroom was related to the teaching strategies employed, rather than, the teaching of the Christian perspectives as outlined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

Whilst observing this class there were a number of instances where the students were being allowed, and often encouraged, to work as a team. From the lesson on June 7 the following example supports this.

"Students help each other and discuss various problems with each other and discuss solutions. There are a great many students discussing their work with each other, some get out of their seats to discuss this with other students."

(field notes of Case 1, June 7)

The field notes of June 9 also give an example of this when it was noted that "various students are taking time to help each other with their work, sometimes by moving around the class. "In this situation they were being treated as individuals with particular strengths. These strengths were then being used to assist others in the class who were having difficulty with some of their work. This type of classroom management where students were able to discuss their work with each other was seen in the lessons on June 7 and June 9.

This structure involving students being able to discuss their work enabled the "Students to attain their individual potentials ..." (Trinity Christian School, 1991). In the lesson on June 7 the teacher was encouraging the highest level students to "... continue (working) at the rapid pace they ... " were. "This amount of work is set for bright students like you."

Something which is of great importance throughout the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* (Trinity Christian School, 1991) is the way that individual students are treated as being valued and cared for. An example of this was observed on June 7 when the following occurred:

"A challenge was then put out to the students who want even more theory and faster ways to solve these to come to the front of the class to see this new method explained and worked through. A small number of students responded and went through the new faster method."

(from field notes Case 1, June 7)

In the class on June 9 there was a student who was upset about a pen which had been lost. Another student in the class was aware of this and set about to try and help and console the student who was upset. It was established that the pen was of no great monetary value and therefore could be replaced quite easily. It was suggested that the student's parents could buy him another pen. When this was obviously not satisfactory a suggestion that one of the student's siblings could buy it. This was a "great idea" as far as the student was concerned. Both students then continued with their work. The student who had been upset was now consoled and appeared to look much happier than he had previously.

It is expected that the teachers will learn, with the students, who ever the students are and whatever their abilities. Two examples of this came from some of the lessons observed. In the lesson on June 14 there was a brief discussion of a student versus staff basketball match. This brings the staff and students much closer and allows the teachers to "... demonstrate, model, and share their faith and delight in learning with the students." (Trinity Christian School, 1991)

Another example of this type of behaviour was in the lesson on June 16 when the teacher had given some incorrect information to a student about a question. One of the students complained that the teacher had given the class some wrong information on the worksheet which was needed to answer some of the questions. When the student raised this issue with the teacher, the teacher simply checked what the student was telling them. It was quickly established that the information on the worksheet was incorrect. The teacher simply apologised, thanked the student who had discovered the error and asked them to write the correct information on the board for the rest of the class.

Teacher Interviews

The main area of the *Trinity Christian School Vision* (Trinity Christian School, 1991) which this teacher addresses in a number of lessons is that of "... catering for individual differences ...". These individual differences are wide ranging as can be seen by the comments made when interviewed after each lesson.

It was stated by the teacher on June 7 that "the beginning of the lesson ... was done very quickly (to cater for) those students who are oral learners." This allows the students who "... understand (to) go on with the work which has been set ...". Other comments were made during this interview which attributed this type of response to the fact that the school is a Christian school. "We are a Christian school trying to address the needs of the individual." As part of this response "... we also have to cater for the different learning styles."

Teacher 1 believed that a large part of catering for individuals was to cater for their different learning styles. In the interview on June 7 they were asked to give examples of how they had done that in the lesson just given. These are listed below:

- "• the structured explanation from the board is one method which I use regularly - this allows the work to be introduced very quickly and students are questioned to gauge their understanding (this method is good for the oral and interactive students)
- after this I can see individual students and go through examples on paper with them
- some students need minute by minute plans whilst other students like to know the plan for the work a week ahead
- I cater for both of these by writing all work on the board for the day and talk of the work schedule for the coming week or often longer
- students are allowed a choice of where they sit - this allows for small group work with 2 - 3 students
- as much as possible there is practical work included to show to the students how maths is used - this is not possible with the work we did today
- the splitting of the class for Level 1/Level 2 is another way I cater for individual students
- I also write positive diary notes to the student's parents very regularly as well"

(from Interview of Teacher 1 on June 7)

The work which is set for the students and the way in which this is managed is also part of this teacher's Christian response. In the interview on June 16 a number of comments supporting this were made. At present "... the class is very spread out. I don't believe in holding any students back, they need to be extended ... " at all times. Some students will have finished all of the set work by the next lesson. The teacher was therefore planning some additional work for them as it is always important to remember the "... school aim of meeting individual students' need and ability ... (and) to cater for the needs of all students, not just keep them in the middle."

As well as the teaching methods used, assessment methods are also part of the school's Christian response according to Teacher 1. In the interview on June 7 it was said that "It is important to have a variety of assessment tasks for the students ... (as) this is all part of our Christian response." All of the students are individuals and therefore react differently to various methods of assessment. The "... students are (all) different, we need to meet their needs not just ours ..." in terms of assessment.

Allowing the students to work in groups and assist each other with their work is a teaching strategy which Teacher 1 also uses to cater for individual students. In the

interview on June 9 Teacher 1 said that this allows the students "... to share their own expertise and draw on others ... (through this) they begin to appreciate each other as being unique." Apparently it is often the same students being the helpers so Teacher 1 "... will sometimes turn this around so that all of the students in the class are helpers at some stage." This helps "... to encourage ... (all the) students ..." and to show them that they are all unique.

The final Christian response which came through the interviews with Teacher 1 was on June 14 when they spoke about students making mistakes. "I ... teach the students that it is okay to be wrong and that they should admit this. I believe this is part of my role as a Christian teacher." Teacher 1 tells and models to the students that "... there is nothing wrong with being wrong but you must admit it." The fact that we all "... make mistakes ... is very difficult to get across to students sometimes."

Student Interviews

Throughout the interviewing of the students it became apparent that they felt they were being treated as individuals and that the classroom environment was one in which they felt very comfortable. There was little evidence of the specific Christian perspective being included as is outlined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

The students in this class feel as though they are treated as individuals. At times groups of students are divided into groups as was said by Student 2 on June 7. "The Level 2 people went with the other teacher for this lesson, that means that we (the Level 1 students) can work through our work much quicker."

On an individual basis the students find the lessons "... easier as we all get to work at our own pace and we can keep asking questions if we don't understand." This was said by Student 3 on June 7.

The classroom is a "... more relaxed environment ... and we can share (our) different expertise ..." by helping each other. Student 1 on June 9 made this comment. Student 2 on June 9 also made a similar comment when they said that "... you're allowed to get up

and go and help others, and you can talk too which is really helpful." It is also a positive experience for the students as indicated by Student 2 on June 14 with the comment that "... it makes you feel good that you can help others understand their work. They can feel the same when they help you with something you don't understand."

Students are continually being encouraged to extend themselves as far as possible. On June 14, Student 3 said that "... the teacher is always encouraging you, especially to help each other and to get as much work done as you can. You don't have to wait for the others to catch up." Student 1 on June 14 also said made a similar comment when they said that "... I'm always being encouraged to go as far as I can. There are quite a few of us in the class who the teacher does this to."

A comment was made by Student 1 on June 14 about the students who struggle with maths and how these students are also encouraged to their best. "The teacher can be lenient towards those students who struggle ... (but she) always tries to get the best out of them as well."

To assist with this environment of a very positive classroom the teacher "... doesn't get annoyed when we don't understand the work." Student 2 made this comment on June 14 when interviewed.

Many of these comments made by the various students when interviewed show that the students are given the opportunity and encouragement to "... attain their individual potentials ...". (Trinity Christian School, 1991)

Teaching Resources

The only teaching resources used for this unit were a series of worksheets with maths problems on them. There was no evidence of any Christian perspective included on these worksheets.

Student Workbooks

The student workbooks had many completed questions which were from the textbook. In these questions there was no evidence of the Christian perspective.

Students also had a set of completed worksheets which were discussed in the section preceding this on 'Teaching resources'. There was, of course, no evidence of the Christian perspective in these as has been previously discussed.

Analysis of Case Number Two

Summary of Case Number Two

In Case Two the documentation gives some evidence of a Christian outline for the subject. The evidence given, explains the importance of English as the primary means by which communication about God's created world occurs.

Within the classroom there was almost no evidence of the Christian perspective being included. The only times that this did occur were with the treatment of students as individuals and one very brief discussion about the theory of creation.

Many students in this class did not appear to recognise their treatment as individuals. One student did mention how important it was in their work in the Primary school to recognise each student as individual though.

Class Observed

Case Number Two is a Year 9 English class. This is a core (non elective) subject, which these students study for the entire year, for five, forty minute periods per week.

Teacher Background

Teacher number two is female. She is married with four children. Currently, she teaches English to Years 7 and 9, and Drama to Years 9 and 10.

Qualifications

Her tertiary qualifications are:

Master of Literature (University of London)

Diploma of Education (University of London)

Teaching Experience

She began teaching in 1969 and has taught for a total of twelve years over that time. The other years have been taken up with the raising of a family. Seven of these years have been at Trinity Christian School as a permanent part-time teacher. This has been the only Christian school she has worked in. Prior to working on a paid basis at Trinity Christian School, she assisted in the classroom on a voluntary basis for four years.

Reason for Teaching in a Christian School

Originally she was asked to come in to teach at Trinity Christian School whilst another teacher was on extended sick leave. She enjoyed teaching at the school because of the Christian ideals being espoused in the classroom. It was also a good school to work in and was very close to home. The idea of a Christian school was something which she had liked for her own children as well.

Curriculum Statement

The *English Curriculum Statement* says very little about Christian content and how this will be included within the classroom. The few times that the Christian perspective are given are outlined in the following sections.

The *Rationale* for English discusses in detail the importance of language to the students in all of aspects of their education. Students should be excited by all aspects of language and be taught this through the modelling of those who teach them. There is one statement which outlines the importance of English from a Christian perspective.

"Language is one of the most powerful aspects of human experience. It is most powerful because:

- it is a gift from God the creator and it is the primary means by which we become aware of God, and our role in His created world ..."

(Trinity Christian School - English Curriculum Statement)

In all of the other areas in the Curriculum Statement of *Goals, Content, Teaching and Learning Strategies, Assessment and Evaluation*, there is no discussion or reference made to how each of these areas will support the idea of using language to "... become aware of God, and our role in His created world ...".

It will be of interest to see where the Christian perspective for English comes from when it is obvious from this section that the *English Curriculum Statement* makes little reference to this aspect at all.

Christian Perspectives Outline

In this document the point about language being important so students can "... become aware of God, and or role in His created world .." is made again. This point is made under the heading of *Why teach this subject?*

There is another section to this document, however, which outlines the Christian perspective and has the following heading, *How will this subject assist Christian Growth?* This section is shown in full below as it outlines in detail how the Christian Perspective is included in English.

- "• It extends student's appreciation of the beauty and goodness which exist in God's world and also the trouble and suffering caused by evil in our world. Literature can play an important role in the development of the student's understanding of him/herself and the worlds, and is a valuable tool in discussions on the nature of man and our Christian responsibility to God and His Creation. It can assist students in developing an effective language to communicate the Gospel to others.
- Through the study of the many aspects of English, society's values can be examined from a Biblical perspective and issues/themes, such as the following, can be effectively explored - relationships; family; suffering and adversity; peer pressure; notions of gender; racial issues; development and technology; the spiritual aspects of man's personality; issues of honesty, integrity and virtue.
- Through understanding language, students can expand and enhance their creative imaginative, God-given gifts."

(Trinity Christian School, *Christian Perspectives in Year 9 - 10 Courses, 1994*)

There may be little discussion of the Christian perspective in the *English Curriculum Statement*. There is, however, a detailed explanation in the above documents of how it will be included in this subject.

Teaching Programs

The teaching program was very brief and only contained a brief introductory paragraph defining the unit. There was then a series of points under the headings of: *Skills to be promoted; Attitudes to be promoted; and Assessment*. There was no reference to any Christian perspectives in this unit.

Lesson Observations

Much of what occurred in this class cannot be viewed as having a Christian perspective included. Many of the instances where some form of Christian perspective is being included were more about the teaching strategies employed, rather than, the teaching of the Christian perspectives as outlined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*. There is an example of a discussion with one student which contains some of this Christian perspective.

In the lesson on June 9 there was a brief discussion between the teacher and a student about how the world was created. The teacher had been talking about the universe expanding. This appeared to concern the student and they said "... that this would be something which those who believe in the 'big bang' theory would accept quite readily." They then said that they "... have trouble accepting that though because the Bible says that we were created, ... I can't see how the 'big bang' theory can be proved anyway."

The teacher responded to this with the following comments. "It is worth keeping an open mind on this though, remember that they are all theories and there are always new pieces of evidence being discovered to support these." It is always important that "... you weigh up all of the evidence and not dismiss it so easily." No further explanation of this was given as another student required some assistance with their children's story.

The other observations to be noted here refer to the teaching strategies only. In the lesson on June 14 the teacher was encouraging individual students in the reading of their books to Primary students. The teacher would read the student's story and then "talk to the students about a specific year group for their story depending on the language used in the story. (Field Notes, Case 2, June 14) This was very encouraging for individual students as it was obvious that all of their stories would appeal to at least some of the Primary students.

Many of the students in this class are assisting with the reading program in the Primary school. In this they are able to assist many of the students in those classes who are in need of extra assistance with their reading. Some feedback was given to the students on June 21 regarding this aspect of their work. The teacher said that "... the feedback from all of the Primary teachers regarding the reading assistance ... (was) very positive and it will be repeated later in the year." One group of teachers in particular was very impressed as indicated by this comment "... the Year 3 teachers ... were very impressed with the Year 9 students ... this will probably occur again in Term 3."

Teacher Interviews

Many of the comments made by the teacher in the interviews support the need to "... cater for individual differences." (Trinity Christian School, 1991)

The individual differences were not always of those students in this particular class. This can be seen by the comments about the primary students. Many of the students are assisting Primary students with their reading. "They are mainly helping one to one to listen to the students read." This was a comment made by the teacher on June 14. The students in this class were only to keen to be involved with this as the teacher said on June 14 also that "... not all the students who wanted to help have been able to as there were not enough classes to send them to."

At the time of this study the students were writing children's stories. The story they wrote was their own choice and so again students were being treated as individuals. Each student was able to write a children's story on a topic of interest to them, or produce a story in which they could use some of their gifts. Examples of this would be the students who wrote stories with many pictures. They were able to use their artistic gifts in their stories. Other students, especially the boys had a great deal of knowledge about cars and so included this in their stories.

The idea of writing children's stories was partly prompted by a survey the teacher "... did of the students asking them what types of work they wanted to do this term in English." The teacher made this comment on June 14. In teaching this unit, the teacher was also able to cater for individuals in a some other ways as well.

In the Primary school the Year 9 students from this class were reading their stories they had written. The teacher had spoken "... to some of the students about reading to the junior classes, (she) was encouraging them to do this but it is not obligatory that they do this." This comment was made in the interview on June 7. Also in this interview she said that "... some of the students find it very threatening to have to read aloud ...". She

finds other avenues for them to "... present their work. One of these is the school bulletin ..." which goes home to parents once a fortnight.

Student Interviews

A discussion about the 'Big bang' theory which was reported in the Lesson Observations for June 9 of this class was also mentioned when the student involved was interviewed. The student was asked what they had been discussing with the teacher. In reply to this he said that the teacher "... mentioned that the universe is believed to be continually expanding." To this the student said they hadn't "... heard of this before but asked if it was something to do with the 'big bang' theory which (they) didn't believe because (they) were a Christian." The student was asked why they didn't believe in the 'big bang' theory. They replied "... because the Bible says God created all of the heavens and the earth, so how could there have been a 'big bang'?"

Student 2 on June 9 said that they "... don't like reading aloud ... (but) the teacher is good about this ... because we don't have to read it out if we don't want to." This comment indicates the preparedness of the teacher to accommodate for the need of the individual students. Student 3 on June 14 was obviously at ease with the idea of reading to other students when they said they "... felt pretty good about reading ... (afterall) it is only going to be read to Year 1."

Two students who had been 'tutoring' in the Primary school were interviewed on June 21. They had a number of comments to make about the work they were doing. This work assists the primary teachers to cater for the needs of the individuals. It also allows the secondary students to use their gifts and abilities in assisting these students.

Both students were asked what this 'tutoring' involves. Student 2 said that they "... help the students with their reading then check their understanding of the book by asking them questions." It also helps them "... understand how other people read." Student 3 said that "... they read their story to me and then we talk about this and usually talk

about something else. All of this helps them with their reading and gets them interested."

When asked why they were doing this the responses were quite interesting. Student 2 said "... it would be more interesting than doing normal English work ...(and enjoy) helping other students, especially the younger ones because they appreciate you more than other people do some of the time." Student 3 "... volunteered because it is fun to work with younger students and see them learning." They also said it is enjoyable to have "... the special contact that they have with a student from the secondary school."

The idea of recognising something special in every person was mentioned by Student 3. They were saying that "... each Thursday the best student gets an award, over the term each student will get an award actually." This was explained further by the following comment. "Every student is getting better and all of them have done something to get an award."

Teaching Resources

The teacher indicated that there were no particular teaching resources used for this unit of work. As a result, there can be no evidence of the Christian perspective derived from this source with Case 2.

Student Workbooks

The student workbooks were the children's stories which they had written. There was no evidence of the Christian perspective coming through in any of these stories. It was very evident though that each student had chosen to do a story in which they were able to use the gifts which they had. Some examples are: the use of a computer to write the story; the inclusion of many hand drawn images to illustrate the story; and the use of a very good knowledge of cars to use as the basis for a story.

This evidence supported what the teacher had discussed in the interviews about catering for individual students.

Analysis of Case Number Three

Summary of Case Number Three

The documentation for Case Three has some evidence of the Christian perspective being included. It discusses the need for Christians to know what has taken place in God's created world and to have an understanding of the history of Biblical times. Social responsibility from a Christian perspective is also discussed.

Within the classroom the key feature of this case was that the topic studied was of a civilisation which is detailed in the Bible. As a result of this, the Bible was used as an additional textbook. Included in the lessons were comments on the role which God had in destroying some of the cities discussed in this unit.

Students in this class accepted the use of the Bible as one of their textbooks. They also recalled the reasons for the destruction of some of the cities from a Christian perspective.

Class Observed

Case Number Three is a Year 7 History class. This is a core (non elective) subject, which these students study for one Semester in Year 7, for four, forty minute periods per week.

Teacher Background

Teacher number three is male. He is married with three children. Currently he teaches History to Year 7 and is the School Counsellor.

Qualifications

His tertiary qualifications are:

Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) (University of Melbourne)

Diploma of Education (University of Melbourne)

Master of Education in Psychology (University of Melbourne)

Teaching Experience

This teacher began teaching in 1977 and taught for his first seven years in Primary schools. Then he taught in a Secondary school until coming to Trinity Christian in 1992. Trinity Christian School is the only Christian school he has taught in.

Reason for Teaching in a Christian School

When he was deciding where to send his own children he investigated the concept of Christian schools in detail. In doing this, he came up with some key things which persuaded him that the Christian schools offered an education he would like for his own children.

The key points were as follows. The moral values were the same as he would teach his own children. Discipline was very good in these schools. There was an active encouragement of the Christian faith within the students. Lastly, the teachers and school were supporting the family in their role as prime educators.

When the position of counsellor was advertised at Trinity Christian School he had already heard a great deal about the school and held the school in quite high esteem. He was therefore already interested in the school. This would then provide him with the opportunity and advantage of having his children attend the school in which he taught.

Curriculum Statement

The curriculum statement for this subject of History, is described in the *Social Science Curriculum Statement*.

"... Social Science includes the study of ecology and the natural sciences; history, the social, political, and economic structures of human societies; and seeks to increase the student's awareness of the physical, cultural and spiritual forces shaping their lives."

(Trinity Christian School, Social Science Curriculum Statement)

The *Rationale* of *Social Science* says nothing of the Christian perspective. It is not until the section on *Goals* is looked at the Christian perspective is first discussed. The *Goals* of *Social Science* have been drawn from four broad themes. Two of these, namely "God

and His Creation" and "Ethics and Social Responsibility", discuss the Christian perspective. It is stated that these "... two themes (are) derived from Trinity Christian School's overall curriculum goals ..."

The first of these *Goals*, "God and His Creation", is very brief and simply states that students should "Become aware of the God-centred nature of reality; Christ as the creator and sustainer of all things; and recognise His agency in the world, and at work in people's lives."

Under the *Goals* of "Ethics and Social Responsibility" there are a number of different areas discussed. Two of these mention specifically a Christian perspective, whilst a further two discuss ideas that appear in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* (Trinity Christian School, 1991).

The two *Goals* which mention the Christian Perspective state that students should:

- Be aware of the complexity of social issues and develop their ability to respond to these, (and) to explore their beliefs and values and be encouraged to act upon them in the light of the Gospel principles.
- Be able to apply Biblical principles to social issues"

(Trinity Christian School, Social Science Curriculum Statement)

Other *Goals* which must be included in this section are important as they reflect the following point made in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* (Trinity Christian School, 1991). That is that "The curriculum will guide students to relate their learning to broader concepts and contexts and to the outworking of God's providence."

The key points in the *Goals* are students should be members of a group who "... co-operate ... respect others ... (develop) a commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflict ..."

In the *Content* section in the curriculum statement there is no direct referenced to including a Christian perspective. However, the focus is on ancient civilisations and a number of these are discussed in the Bible and so a Christian perspective could be

included if the teacher chose to do so. The ancient civilisations which are relevant in this context are the "... Sumerian, Babylonian, Persian ...(and) Hebrew."

In the section on *Learning and Teaching Strategies* a great deal of it is devoted to listing a variety of teaching strategies to cater for many pedagogical requirements. All of these strategies will promote the achievement of the *Social Science Goals*, including, "... awareness of God-centred reality (and) social responsibility ..."

The final two sections of *Assessment* and *Evaluation* make no reference to the Christian perspective and could be assessed or evaluated in the *Social Science Curriculum Statement*.

Christian Perspectives Outline

History is seen as a subject which can "... improve (students) analytical skills ..." and also "... broaden their understanding of God's world." History is:

"... a subject which analyses the people, events and ideas which have made our world (and is therefore) essential for the well rounded education of any individual, and indispensable for the development of mature, clear-thinking, well-equipped Christians in the modern world."

(Trinity Christian School, Christian Perspectives in Year 7 - 8 Courses, 1994)

"Christians are in an excellent position to comprehend the value of people in the past ... after all, their faith is centred on historical Jesus." Christians can therefore see the "... reality and the power of the past and its potential to effect change in individuals in the present."

The study of bias is also important for Christians. With an understanding of bias, students can be aware of it "... and therefore do a better job of establishing the implications and interpretations they have read." Students can also explore their "... bias and try to discover how it colours their work."

To be able to confront the great questions of life, such as Christianity, students need to be "... aware of some of the major ideas which have shaped thinking over thousands of

years." For this reason it is seen as being important to study "... the struggle of ideologies ...(such as) Aristotle, Plato, Thomas Aquinas, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Karl Marx (and) Jesus of Nazareth ...". This study can lead to a structure and foundation that students can use for interpreting life.

In summary, "... the study of history provides a context for understanding the present, and opens up the student to a variety of views and beliefs which affect the interpretation of life." thus, producing a well-rounded Christian.

Teaching Programs

In the teaching program for this unit of work there is no direct discussion of the Christian perspective in the classroom. However, the unit is looking at the 'Alpha Civilisation' (or Sumerian civilisation) which is a civilisation written about in the Bible. So by the very nature of the unit being studied it would relate a great deal to the inclusion of the Christian perspective.

There is only one direct reference to the Bible made and that is when a map of Mesopotamia is to be drawn by the class. At this point the teacher has indicated in their program that they will refer to the Bible in Genesis 2 and Genesis 12 where it talks of the two rivers around Mesopotamia.

Lesson Observations

In the lesson observed on June 9 there were a great many references to the Bible made and also many Christian principles were at least mentioned if not discussed. Many of these principles had to do with the evil nature of man and how God punished this. The following comments were made along these lines by the teacher.

"One of the things we have been told about a civilisation is that it must have rules and laws - this is because we are generally not very nice to each other. I sometimes wonder if God really meant us to live in cities."

The teacher asked about another place marked on the map, Ninevah, and asked "Where is Ninevah mentioned in the Bible?" A student replied "Jonah", which was correct. The teacher then said "... the people of Ninevah were terrible people, they were murderers and would put up (their victims) skins to dry." An explanation of what Jonah did was then given. "Jonah came to Ninevah to clean up the city which did work to begin with but they reverted to their old ways. Ninevah no longer exists."

Another city marked on the map is Babylon was talked about by the teacher. "It is mentioned in the Bible also, there is a prophecy that it would be destroyed and never be re-built" because the people here were also disobedient to God. "This did occur, if it was ever re-built the gates would be built first and the first born son would die, this has also come true."

In the next part of the lesson the teacher talks of various geographical features of the region and relates these back to the Bible. Examples of these are when the teacher "... points out to the students various points on the geography of the region related to the Bible and where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and travelled to Canaan." Another example is when the students are asked "... where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers are first mentioned in the Bible."

Students knowledge of the Bible is also tested informally, for example, the "... teacher reads a section from the Bible which mentions the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and asks students if they know where this has come from." The students are able to give the correct answer of "Genesis ... Chapter 2". The teacher later in the lesson "... points to Ur and asks who lived there?" Again the students give the correct answer of "Abraham".

To indicate the reality of what the Bible talks of in these sections the teacher then says that "... archaeologists have concluded from evidence they have collected that civilisation began in this region as the Bible says."

To conclude the discussion about the geography of Mesopotamia the teacher has a map of the same region as it exists today. "Babylon, Ninevah and Ur are mentioned many times in the Bible. Now we are about to look at the same area today. You'll see that these cities are no longer" as the Bible says.

Throughout much of this lesson the Bible was being used as a textbook. The students were able to see how the many things the Bible speaks of are history and can be used as a source of factual information. The geographical references also matched up with what the students were able to see on the maps in front of them.

There was very specific example of the teacher catering for an individual students need. In the lesson on June 16 the teacher explained the class work "... to individual students who missed the last lesson." The teacher then modified "... the work requirements for those students.

Teacher Interviews

In the interview with Teacher 3 on June 9 there was a great deal of evidence which showed how the Christian perspective has been brought into the classroom in a variety of ways.

Teacher 3 said that they "... try to bring the Bible into history as much as possible and have done so in other units. For example, the unit on farming." In this particular unit the class "... looked at the need for hard labor after the fall (of Adam and Eve) and that perhaps farming wasn't meant to be as hard as it is." The teacher was suggesting that hard labor is only a reality because of man's sin.

Throughout the lessons the teacher likes to "... throw out challenges to the students ...". In the lesson on June 9 the teacher said that they challenged the idea that "...cities are good places ...". If this is the case, then why do "... we need to have rules and laws ..." in our cities. The "... history books tell us how good cities are, I get students to think about and challenge this idea." In the history lessons the teacher likes to "... turn around the world's view and challenge them with the Christian perspective."

The teacher was discussing a plan they had for a possible unit for this history class he would like to do which also brought in the Christian perspective. In this unit the teacher would like to "... get the students to look at the historical evidence for the resurrection." This would be "... a good case study in the use of evidence." One lesson in the use of evidence the teacher has done is to "... look at the film the 'Raiders of the Lost Ark' ..." and use this as the beginning of the unit.

It is important, from the teacher's point of view, to ensure that he doesn't "... get over Bible centred, just weave it into the course. This can be done especially when looking at evidence." These comments were made on June 9. In the interview on June 16 the teacher made another reference to the how the Bible was used in the class, thus bringing in the Christian perspective. He said that "... many of the activities (we are doing in class today) are mentioned in the Bible and so I use this as one of the sources of information for the students." The activities spoken of here related to the way the people lived and their agricultural practices. This was of the Mesopotamian civilisation which the students were studying on June 16.

In the interview on June 23 the teacher was presenting the reasons for including various aspects of the lesson in which the students were being taught as they may have been in a Sumerian culture. Throughout the lesson there was also a quiz being conducted. Many of the questions from the quiz were Bible related. According to the teacher, the reason for this was "... to remind the students that this period in history that they are studying is a very important time for Christians."

Student Interviews

In the interviews the students were only being asked about the lessons which they had just been in. As a result of this, the references made by the teacher to other lessons was not mentioned by the students.

All references the students made to the inclusion of the Christian perspective related to the use of the Bible in a few different ways. Student 2 on June 9 said that "... the Bible

was used to prove a few things that he (the teacher) spoke about." Examples given by Student 1 on June 9 of this use were that "... it was used to tell us of the history of the area." The class was "... told of how Ninevah fell. How Israel fell but that it was rebuilt." Student 2 mentioned that "Babylon was used as an example of a city which didn't listen to what God was telling them to do ..." and fell as result of this. Student 1 also spoke of the example of Babylon falling.

Student 1 summed up the way in which the Bible was being used in the class when they said "... the Bible can be used to help back up and support other data ..." the teacher has presented. On June 21 Student 1 made a similar comment when they stated that "... the teacher sometimes gives information from the Bible to help answer the questions."

Teaching Resources

The teaching resources which were presented for this study supported all of the findings of the other data collection methods but added nothing new. The main strategy for introducing the Christian perspective in this classroom was the use of the Bible. As discussed in the observations, teacher interviews and student interviews the Bible was used as a textbook would be in any classroom. It was presented as an accurate historical account of the 'Alpha Civilisation'.

There were no other teaching resources apparent which included a Christian perspective.

Student Workbooks

Although there has been a great deal of evidence of the Christian perspective in almost every part of this case, the student workbooks don't necessarily present this directly. The work for the unit this class was studying covered the 'Alpha civilisation'. This civilisation was referred to in the Bible as has been seen in the observations etc. However, when the students' workbooks are looked at there is no direct evidence of the Christian perspective. All of the work in the students' workbooks could relate to a study of any civilisation, irrespective of a Christian basis or not.

Analysis of Case Number Four

Summary of Case Number Four

Documentation for this case had a great deal to say about the way in which the Christian perspective would be included in the classroom. This was due in part to the topic being taught, that of creation and evolution.

As a result of the topic there was of course a great deal of evidence of a Christian perspective being included in the classroom. The students were looking at a part of the evidence for creation and evolution and then presenting this to the class as a seminar. The Bible was in the class and then scientific evidence would be used to support what the Bible said.

Students were left with the evidence for both creation and evolution and will use this in time to formulate their own views on this issue. A few of the students had already formulated their own ideas, some of which included a Biblical view.

Class Observed

Case Number Four is a Year 10 Science class. This is a core (non elective) subject, which these students study for the entire year, for six, forty minute periods per week.

Teacher Background

Teacher number four is female. She is married with three children. Currently, she teaches Science to Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10, and has a Year 10 Roll Call Class (pastoral care). She is also the coordinator for the Peer Support Program and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

Qualifications

Her tertiary qualifications are:

Bachelor of Science (Hons.) in Biochemistry & Zoology (Australian National University)

Graduate Diploma in Education (Canberra College of Advanced Education)

Teaching Experience

1987 - present

Trinity Christian School - this is the only school she has been employed at.

Reason for Teaching in a Christian School

When she graduated as a teacher, the Australian Capital Territory Schools Authority would only employ people under thirty five years. As a result she could not be employed by them. She applied for the job at Trinity thinking that because she was a Christian it would be very interesting to teach in a Christian school.

Curriculum Statement

In the *Rationale* it is stated that science is an "... attempt to describe what it is, how things are, what things are like, how they change and how they interrelate.". All of this

"... leads to new understandings about our world and the universe, (and) the glory of God is displayed in the beauty, complexity and balance of creation. Each new understanding also seems to emphasise the limits of our knowledge and how much more there is to know, alluding to the mystery of God Himself and fuelling our wonder and praise of him."

(Trinity Christian School, *Science Curriculum Statement*, p. 3)

With the *Rationale* as the reason for Science, the *Goals* then go on to explain the desired outcome. From a Christian perspective, by the end of Year 10, students should

- "• Appreciate the wonder and complexity of creation and recognise God for His power and wisdom.
- Develop a lively interest in understanding the nature and behaviour of people, their physical and biological environment and their inter-relationships within God's creation.
- ...
- Be able to identify Christian perspectives as they relate to science."

(Trinity Christian School, *Science Curriculum Statement*, p. 5)

Under the area of *Content*, one entire section looks at a Christian perspective. That is the section headed "Origins and the Geological History of the Earth". There are three

areas of study which the students will look at under this and they are: "Christian world view; Creationism; and Evolution".

In the remaining areas of the *Science Curriculum Statement*, those of, *Learning and Teaching Strategies; Assessment; and Evaluation*, there is no reference made to the Christian perspective.

Christian Perspectives Outline

The study of Science should enable the students:

- To see the beauty, wonder and harmony of God's Creation and appreciate their mighty and loving Creator and hence the character of God, by having a greater understanding of:

- the laws that govern the physical world
- the diversity, complexity and inter-relationships of God's Creation
- the complexity and order of the materials that make up our physical world and yet realise the limits of our knowledge and the remaining mystery of God and His ways.

...

- To be more equipped to take up their God-given responsibility to manage the earth (Genesis 1: 28-30) and so be responsible stewards of the earth's resources and hence be prepared for a life of service to God and the community with a desire to be honouring to Christ ..."

(Trinity Christian School, *Christian Perspectives in Year 9 - 10 Courses*, 1994)

These statements outline the full extent of the Christian perspective from this document, and conclude that all of the area of science should be studied "... in the light of the Biblical world view and the scientific method."

Teaching Programs

The teaching program or 'Origins Course Outline' written by the class teacher outlines the scientific method to be used by the students when looking at both the 'Creation Theory' and 'Evolution Theory'.

A summary of Creation is listed after the same has been done for Evolution. The summary of Creation as given by the teacher is as follows:

- "1. Creation according to a specific design.
2. Creation of life forms according to their types.
- 3 Complexity breaking down to simplicity according to laws of thermodynamics.
4. Re natural selection: you need genes there before mutation can occur.
5. Refs re age of earth.
6. Catastrophism - flood to explain fossil, stratas, etc."

(from *Origins Course Outline* written by Teacher 4)

All of these topics on Creation are to be covered by the students when they are doing their group research. These groups will then present this information to the whole class so that each student will then have information about all of the topics referred to above.

The teacher makes a statement following on from this summary of Creation which outlines how to view all of this evidence from a Christian point of view.

"Examination of attitudes of both creationists and evolutionists and emotive nature of the topic. Christian has nothing to fear from criticism even if he can't explain something. Slandering each other serves no purpose and is definitely unscientific."

(from *Origins Course Outline* written by Teacher 4)

A list of videos and books to be used are then listed. The resources here which represent the creationist view or a Christian view are: "Creation Science - Ken Ham; Morris and Parker; and the Bible." Each of the books listed here are discussed later in this section with specific references from each given.

Lesson Observations

In the first two lessons on June 7 and June 9 which were observed there is only one reference which indicates the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the class. This occurred at the beginning of the lesson on June 7 when the teacher began the class with prayer before the exam papers were given back. The teacher gave "... thanks to God for the good results in the exams and prayer for those students who didn't do so well in the exams and that they may learn from this."

On June 14 and June 21 the class had begun the unit on the 'Theories of Creation and Evolution' which included a Christian component due to the unit being studied.

In the lesson on June 14 the class were working in small groups on the various research units of work the teacher had prepared. One of the small groups was researching the 'Theory of Evolution' and the 'Theory of Creation'. The teacher had a discussion with his group and made some interesting comments about the Christian perspective in all of this. The students were told to check all "... evidence very carefully." You should be aware that "... sometimes evidence which is being used to support one theory or the other has already been disproved." With all of this as background the students were reminded that these are both "theories, they are not fact" from the evidence which you have.

There was a brief reference at the end of this discussion about the "... virgin birth of Jesus and how some plants and animals can self fertilise." The teacher said "... whether this was the case here I don't know, the Catholic faith concentrate much more on this (particular) aspect of Christianity."

The Bible was used as evidence of the 'Creation Theory' in the lessons on June 14 and June 21. On June 14 a student was "... talking about being able to use the Bible as evidence of creation." Then in the lesson on June 21 a student was using the Bible in their presentation on the two 'Theories of Creation and Evolution'. They read "... from the Bible to begin the talk on creation. The reading is from the beginning of Genesis where we are told how the world was created." The student spoke "... of the different interpretations of the amount of time in which the earth was created by God." In relation to the interpretation of time they said "... whether these are literal times or just a poetic description of the process, both are acceptable."

Teacher Interviews

On June 9 when the teacher was interviewed she was giving a justification as to why this lesson was important as a lead up to "... the next unit of work which is Creation and Evolution." She was then asked to explain what has been planned for this unit of work.

The teacher responded by first giving a justification for the unit being taught.

"The next unit of work we do because we are a Christian school and I believe that the students need to hear all of the evidence for both of these theories before they go to College next year. At College in biology it is taught from a very evolutionistic view. It exposes them to the fact that there are often different ways of interpreting the evidence. In the government schools only the theory of evolution is taught. The textbook concentrates on the idea that the world was created and mentions creation is a disparaging way."

(from interview with Teacher 4 on June 9)

From a purely scientific point of view it is important the students do this unit for the following reasons according to the teacher.

"There are a variety of skills they will cover:

- extracting and interpreting information
- summarising effectively
- compare and contrast different points of view and ways of interpreting data
- understanding scientific method use and abuse
- knowledge of both evolution and creation theory."

(from interview with Teacher 4 on June 9)

In the interview on June 14 the teacher gave some further reasons why this unit should be taught in the school. These are that

"... as a Christian school it is important that all cases for and against an argument are put forward so that (the students) then have the information on which to base (their) own decisions. This is how our school operates, we aren't trying to hide them or protect them just present all the facts."

(from interview with Teacher 4 on June 14)

The teacher also included "... a brief discussion about why these are only theories ... and the importance (of looking) at the evidence to support these theories."

In the interview on June 21 the teacher discussed how the first group went when giving their presentation on the evidence for the theories of Creation and Evolution. The teacher made the following comments about this presentation.

"The first group I knew was one of the best groups in the class - I chose them so that the rest of the class would know exactly what was expected of them. The information they presented on the theories of creation and evolution was done very well - however they were not looking at evidence so much as the interpretation of it. As a result the class were simply asked to change the heading from 'evidence' to 'interpretation of evidence'. This is a problem the students are having with this work and that is to see what the evidence is and then what the interpretation of the evidence is. I was impressed with the depth to which they had gone into to look at both theories and not make any judgment on either of these to the rest of the class. The use of the Bible as a source of information was also good as it was their own initiative and says a lot to me about their walk with the Lord. The rest of the class seemed to accept this use of the Bible as appropriate - although I know that not all of the students would necessarily believe it as true evidence."

(from interview with Teacher 4 on June 21)

Student Interviews

Many of the comments made by the students relate to the Christian perspective being included in the curriculum. They relate to this so much in this class because the unit of work is 'Creation and Evolution Theories'.

The first comment made by a student to indicate that a Christian perspective is being included actually referred to the teacher beginning the class with prayer. Student 2 on June 7 said that "... there was a prayer said which always happens at the beginning (of the lesson) with this teacher." They also said that the prayers are "... to help us understand (and to) help those who struggle." The class responds in one of two ways. "A large number of students who are Christians obviously appreciate the prayers." Whilst those students who aren't "... Christians seem to respect the others and are quiet whilst the prayers are being said."

The remainder of this section includes all of the comments which the students made about the unit on 'Creation and Evolution Theories'. These comments indicate how the students respond to the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the curriculum and also what their views are on the two theories.

Student 1 on June 14 said "it doesn't seem as though evolution could be the only theory, that is with things always changing." They can see how the earth may have been "... created by a chemical spark but (they) can't see how life could be created the same way." As a result of this it must have been "... God or some other super-natural being that created life." This student had difficulty with how the teacher must view all of this though when they said that "... the teacher can see evidence of evolution but believes in God and therefore creation. I don't yet know how she puts all of these together as a scientist."

Student 2 on June 14 made some interesting comments about how they viewed the evidence and how they formulated their own ideas. They "... don't believe everything. How can we be compared to fish and birds" which is what the theory of evolution does. This student formulates their own ideas by: "looking at all of the evidence; listening to what dad has to say about this; ... (and drawing).on things I heard when we used to go to church every Sunday." The final comment they made was an insight into how this student views the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the curriculum. They "... think that the school turns (them) off Christianity by making (them) look at these issues so much and just by having God and the Bible discussed so much."

On June 21 Student 1 expressed their views about the two theories in the following ways. "I believe the evolutionists more than the creationists, there is so much more evidence for this (theory). The creationists seem to use only the Bible." They did say though that "... it has been useful to look at the evidence for both sides much more closely, ... that way we can come up with our own ideas."

As to why this unit of work is being studied, Student 2 on June 21 said that they "...had been doing genetics, this unit of work helps explain why we are like we are and how we came to be." The class has been "... looking at the different interpretations of evidence and how they are used to support the theories of creation and evolution."

By looking at all of the evidence Student 3 on June 21 believes that "... it helps (them) to understand the other point of view more clearly." They are appreciative of the fact that they "... are given a choice about which of these two theories (they) believe in rather than having one view only presented as the right answer." They tend towards "... evolution more, (they) believe in change but not all of the evolution theories."

Teaching Resources

For the unit of work the students were doing in this class on 'Creation and Evolution Theory' there were six sets of notes on each of the topics. The class was divided into six groups with each group being given the task of summarising the notes and presenting this summary to the rest of the class. These topics, which will be looked at individually for evidence of the inclusion of the Christian perspective are: The Fossil Sequence; Embryology and Comparative Anatomy; Energy Laws and Probability; Theory of Evolution and the Creation Model; Change and Variation; and Catastrophism and the Age of the Earth.

The teacher had prepared a guide for each of the topics to assist the students in their summaries for each set of readings. These guides included a series of key questions which they should answer in relation to each of the topics. They also included a few points on how the topic could be presented to the rest of the class.

As there is a great deal of information contained in each set of readings for the purposes of this study only a sample of the information relating to the Christian perspective will be presented. The justification for this being, that this study is looking for some evidence of the inclusion of the Christian perspective. In the information provided to the students on the 'Theories of Creation and Evolution' it can be assumed that the Christian perspective must be presented as the 'Theory of Creation' is a Christian belief.

There is equal evidence in the information provided to the students which supports the 'Theory of Evolution'. The evidence to dispute some of the 'Theory of Creation' is also provided. None of this is discussed here because of its irrelevance to this study.

In the information provided on the 'Fossil Sequence' the first evidence against the 'Theory of Evolution' presented is that of the "Lewis Overthrust" (The Primeval World, p48). At his site in Arizona there are two distinct rock layers which have been classified by age due to the fossils found each.

"They have been classified Permian and Cretaceous on the basis of their fossil content. The wavy contact surface (between the two layers) precludes thrust movement, and there is no layer of ... ground-up composite rock from the two layers between the two beds. Thus, 100 million years of supposed geological history are wiped out, and the strata and fossils are ... 'up-side-down', to the tune of about 150 million years. This field evidence, therefore, shows that the assumed evolutionary order of the fossils is invalid and that the uniformitarian historical geology, which is dependent upon the fossil sequence, is likewise erroneous."

(see reference 1 Case 4 Data)

This evidence therefore supports the 'Theory of Creation' and it disproves evidence of the time and order in which the fossils have evolved. Another way in which evidence is given to support the 'Theory of Creation' is to prove parts of the Bible correct.

According to the account of the earth being flooded in the Bible the actual remains of the ark are on Mount Ararat in Eastern Turkey. For this to be so Mount Ararat would have had to be submerged in water at some stage.

"It is evident ... that Ararat was submerged in water at least up to the 14,000-foot level. This is confirmed by deposits of sedimentary rocks on the mountain at the 13,500-foot level. These and other striking facts about the geology of the mountain and the surrounding terrain agree ... with the Genesis record of a global flood. Since water seeks its own level, the water which submerged Ararat must have covered the entire world."

(see reference 1 Case 4 Data)

'Embryology and Comparative Anatomy' provides evidence for the 'Theory of Creation' in the following ways. The bone structure of many animals have a similar pattern. One explanation of this is that it is "... *creation according to a common design*. That's why Fords and Chevrolets have more in common than Fords and sailboats. They share more design features in common." (see reference 2 Case 4 Data)

The other part of this topic looks at 'Embryology'. In this the evolutionists question the purpose of some of the human organs and suggest that they are left over from the evolutionary process and are no longer required.

"Fortunately, other scientists didn't take that view. Sure enough, studies have shown that essentially all 180 organs once listed as evolutionary vestiges have quite important functions in human beings."

(see reference 2 Case 4 Data)

'Energy Laws and Probability' offers some interesting evidence to disprove the 'Theory of Evolution'. In the area of probability there is some discussion about the chance of life being able to appear by a number of particles coming together

"... in a system containing enough order to enable it to make a copy of itself. This system must be produced by chance, of course, since presumably no Creator is available to plan and direct the assemblage of this information."

(see reference 3 Case 4 Data)

There is a series of calculations which look at the probability of this occurring. "... it is concluded that the chance origin of life is absolutely impossible. Life can only be explained by creation." (see reference 3 Case 4 Data)

The other evidence in this section comes from the laws of energy. One such argument is that

"... the First and Second Laws of Thermodynamics, can legitimately be regarded as direct predictions from the creation model, speaking of a cosmos which is being conserved quantitatively, but which is decaying qualitatively. Not only do these laws point directly to a primeval creation, but also they seem to preclude any significant amount of "upward" evolution at any stage of history ..."

(see reference 4 Case 4 Data)

The topic 'Theory Evolution and the Creation Model' explains key aspects of each of the models. To summarise the 'Creation Theory' there are three differences in principles when comparing the two models. For creation these are: Completed supernatural origin; Net present decrease in complexity; and Earth history dominated by

catastrophism. (see reference 5 Case 4 Data) The information provided then goes on to expand on each of these principles in support of the 'Theory of Creation'.

Part of the topic 'Change and Variation' presents information on mutations and how these are

"... going the wrong way as far as evolution is concerned. Almost every mutation we know of is identified by the disease or abnormality that it causes. Creationists use mutations to explain the origin of parasites and diseases, the origin of hereditary defects, and the loss of traits. In other words, time, chance and random changes ... tear things up and make matters worse. Using mutations to explain the *breakdown* of existing genetic order (creation) is quite the opposite of using mutations to explain the *build up* of genetic order (evolution)."

(see reference 6 Case 4 Data))

The final topic of 'Catastrophism and the Age of the Earth' presents a great deal of evidence to the reader. The whole basis on which the geologic column is based is brought into question. This relates to both the age of the earth and the evidence of a great deal of catastrophism. Questions such as the following are asked:

"What is the meaning of the billions of fossils buried in the sedimentary rocks of the earth's crust? How come there are different types of life forms in the different geologic ages if there is no fossil evidence that any one group evolved into any other group? How are these different ages recognised in the first place, since they all antedate any historical records by alleged millions and billions of years?"

(see reference 7 Case 4 Data)

These questions are then answered in support of the 'Theory of Creation' and suggest that the geologic column cannot be supported by evidence of evolution. The geologic column can only be supported by creation.

It can be seen from the sample of the evidence presented in this section that the Christian perspective has been included in this particular class. This is due largely to the unit being studied. It is worth remembering though that the teacher of this class said that the 'Evolution and Creation Theory' unit is done "... because we are a Christian school ..." (from the interview with Teacher 4 on June 9)

Student Workbooks

The student workbooks had a great deal of evidence of the Christian perspective being included. This is in line with all of the evidence discussed in the preceding sections for this class. Each unit had been presented to the class by one of the six groups. As part of the presentation a summary of the unit was provided to the rest of the class. The summaries presented both the 'Theory of Creation' and the 'Theory of Evolution' to the class. As each theory was presented the Christian perspective was included when there was evidence to support the 'Theory of Creation' or to dispute the 'Theory of Evolution'.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom was studied using a variety of data sources. Within each case there is some consistency between the documentation and the actuality of the classroom in relation to the inclusion of the Christian perspective. There is some variation between the cases in: the way this Christian perspective has been included; the actual content of this inclusion ; and the extent to which it has been included.

In research similar to this study there has been evidence to show how the Christian perspective has been included in the curriculum of the school. What this study does is to go one step further and to look at the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom as well.

Consistency Within The Four Case Studies

In all of the cases studied there was evidence to support the inclusion of the Christian perspective within the classroom. The degree to which the Christian perspective was included did vary though. In this section the focus is to look at the consistency between the documentation and the classroom practice in each of the four cases. The findings of other research in this field are also discussed as they relate to various aspects of this study.

As seen in this study there has certainly been a great deal of evidence to indicate that the Christian perspective as outlined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* is being included in the classroom.

This study has begun the process of investigating the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom. In each of the four cases here there was evidence for this Christian perspective in the classroom. However, the documentation and classroom practice were not always consistent.

Case One

The inclusion of the Christian perspective within Case One could be said to be consistent within the classroom throughout the course of this study. This consistency was not apparent though between the classroom and any of : the Curriculum Statement; the Christian Perspectives Outline; or the Teaching Programs.

Both the Curriculum Statement and the Christian Perspectives Outline provided a Christian rationale for this subject. The key points given in the *Mathematics Curriculum Statement* are that "... mathematics has its roots in God's world ...". It is "... experienced by children in their everyday "... contact with concrete objects and by analysing the spatial and arithmetic aspects of everyday experience." As a result of this mathematics should be taught by drawing "... the mathematical aspect from everyday situations." A principal activity in mathematics is to apply mathematical concepts to the understanding of God's world "... in many different areas science, the arts and technology."

The final aspect discussed in the *Mathematics Curriculum Statement* is that of the students using their God given mathematical ability "... in a variety of settings and problems. By studying proper and improper uses of mathematics and by realising its power as well as its limits ..." mathematics can lead students to responsible actions which are "... pleasing to Jesus."

The preceding paragraphs outlined the Christian perspective as given in the curriculum statement. This was not observed in the classroom though. Instead, aspects of the Christian perspective as outlined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* were observed.

By far the predominant Christian perspective to be included within this classroom was that of treating the students as individuals. This is derived from the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* where it states that teachers are "... to cater for individual

differences." Examples of this were observed throughout the course of the study in Case One through classroom observations and from both teacher and student interviews.

"Students help each other and discuss various problems with each other and discuss solutions. There are a great many students discussing their work with each other, some get out of their seats to discuss this with other students."

(field notes of Case 1, June 7)

The field notes of June 9 also give an example of this when it was noted that various students were taking time to help each other with their work, sometimes by moving around the class. In this situation they were being treated as individuals with particular strengths. These strengths were then being used to assist others in the class who were having difficulty with some of their work. Also in the lesson on June 7 the teacher was encouraging the highest level students to continue working at their current rapid pace. The students were told that this amount of work was set for bright students like them.

In the teacher interviews it was stated a number of times that a key focus for this teacher was to treat all of the students as individuals. Comments made in the interviews on June 7 and June 9 support this. Students were also aware of being treated as individuals as was stated by a number students including: Students 2 and 3 on June 7; Students 1 and 2 on June 9; and Students 1 and 3 on June 14.

Case Two

In Case Two the inclusion of the Christian perspective within the classroom was not apparent in many instances. The Curriculum Statement and Christian Perspectives Outline did give some detail of the way in which a Christian perspective would be included though. The observations and interviews in Case Two were not consistent with the Christian perspective detailed in these documents.

The following statement from the Curriculum Statement summarises the Christian rationale for this subject.

"Language is one of the most powerful aspects of human experience. It is most powerful because:

- it is a gift from God the creator and it is the primary means by which we become aware of God, and our role in His created world ..."

(Trinity Christian School - *English Curriculum Statement*)

In the Teacher Interviews for Case Two the teacher spoke of the reasons for teaching the unit of work being observed. The reasons given by the teacher support the need "... to cater for individual differences." (Trinity Christian School, 1991) This of course comes from the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* but the teacher did not make this connection.

The key example of this was that individual differences were identified by some of the students. Not by the teacher of this class. Many of the students were assisting Primary students with their reading. They are mainly helping one to one to listen to the students read. This was the comment made by the teacher on June 14.

In the lesson observations for Case Two the only example of the students being treated as individuals was in the lesson on June 14 when the teacher was encouraging individual students in the reading of their books to Primary students. The teacher would read the student's story and then talk to the students about a specific year group for their story depending on the language used in the story. (field notes, Case 2, June 14) This was very encouraging for individual students as it was obvious that all of their stories would appeal to at least some of the Primary students.

In the student interviews there were some comments made by the students which indicated they were being treated as individuals. Student 2 on June 9 said that they don't like reading aloud but the teacher is good about this because we don't have to read it out if we don't want to.

Further to the teacher recognising individual differences, students were also doing the same. The idea of recognising something special in every person was mentioned by Student 3. They were saying that each Thursday the best student gets an award. Over the term each student will get an award. This was explained further by the comment

that every student was getting better and all of them had done something to get an award.

Case Three

Within Case Three there is a great deal of consistency in relation to the Christian perspective between: the Curriculum Statement; the Christian Perspective Outline; Teaching Program; and what actually took place in the classroom.

Perhaps the statement which best summarises the Christian perspective for Case Three is that the subject History is

"... a subject which analyses the people, events and ideas which have made our world (and is therefore) essential for the well rounded education of any individual, and indispensable for the development of mature, clear-thinking, well-equipped Christians in the modern world."

(Trinity Christian School, Christian Perspectives in Year 7 - 8 Courses, 1994)

The teaching program for this unit of work only refers to the topic of the 'Alpha Civilisation', and not the actual Christian perspective to be included. The very nature of this topic, that of studying the Sumerian civilisation which is written about in the Bible, is in support of the Christian perspective outlined above. One direct reference is made to the Bible being used in the class to support some information about a map of the region as it was in Biblical times.

Throughout the lessons observed for Case Three there were many references made to the Bible and also to the Christian perspective as it related to the issues being discussed. These issues included the destruction of cities and the use of the Bible as a historical record of the civilisation being studied and how this can be related to our own lives.

There were a number of references made to the destruction, by God, of various cities because they had disobeyed his laws. Examples of these are from the lesson observed. This reference comes from the lesson observation of Case Two, June 9. The teacher said the people of Ninevah were terrible people they were murderers and would put up their victims skins to dry. An explanation of what Jonah did was then given. The

students were told that Jonah came to Ninevah to clean up the city which did work to begin with but they reverted to their old ways. Ninevah no longer exists.

Also from the lesson observation of Case Two, June 9. Another city marked on the map is Babylon was talked about by the teacher. It is mentioned in the Bible also, there is a prophecy that it would be destroyed and never be re-built" because the people here were also disobedient to God. This did occur, if it was ever re-built the gates would be built first and the first born son would die, this has also come true.

In the lesson on June 9 the teacher challenged the students to consider if we are living out God's plan by living in cities and how we can relate this to the society in which we now live. He did this with the following statement: One of the things we have been told about a civilisation is that it must have rules and laws - this is because we are generally not very nice to each other. I sometimes wonder if God really meant us to live in cities.

Throughout this unit the Bible was being used as a textbook to explain both the culture and the geography of this region in Biblical times. The culture has been discussed above whilst an example of the geography come from the lesson on June 9. Examples of these are when the teacher pointed out to the students various points on the geography of the region related to the Bible and where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and travelled to Canaan. Another example is when the students are asked where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers are first mentioned in the Bible.

The teacher was also concerned to get across to the students the accuracy of the Bible when he said that archaeologists have concluded from evidence they have collected that civilisation began in this region as the Bible says.

When interviewing Teacher Three on June 9 it became even more apparent how the Christian perspective was being included in the classroom. However, it is important from the teacher's point of view to ensure that he doesn't get over Bible centred, just weave it into the course. This can be done especially when looking at evidence.

In the interview on June 16 the teacher made another reference to the how the Bible was used in the class, thus bringing in the Christian perspective. This was a spontaneous response made by the teacher as he was not asked how the Bible was included in the classroom. He said that many of the activities we are doing in class today are mentioned in the Bible and so he uses this as one of the sources of information for the students. The activities spoken of here related to the way the people lived and their agricultural practices. This was of the Mesopotamian civilisation which the students were studying on June 16.

Also in the teacher interview on June 16 these comments came forward. Throughout the lessons the teacher likes to throw out challenges to the students. The history books tell us how good cities are, he get students to think about and challenge this idea. In the history lessons the teacher likes to turn around the world's view and challenge them with the Christian perspective.

All references the students made to the inclusion of the Christian perspective related to the use of the Bible. Student 2 on June 9 said that the Bible was used to prove a few things that the teacher spoke about. Examples given by Student 1 on June 9 of this use were that the Bible was used to tell us of the history of the area. The class was told of how Ninevah fell. How Israel fell but that it was rebuilt. Student 2 mentioned that Babylon was used as an example of a city which didn't listen to what God was telling them to do and fell as result of this.

Case Four

As in Case Three, consistency occurred between the documentation and classroom practice. The two key statements from the documentation which were acted upon by the teacher in the classroom are from the Curriculum Statement and the Christian Perspectives Outline. From the Curriculum Statement, "Students should ... be able to identify Christian perspectives as they relate to science." Then from the Christian Perspective Outline, the area of science should be studied "... in the light of the Biblical

world view and scientific method." This case was similar to the second school, from Van Brummelen (1988) in which the teachers were required to list in their yearly programs how they incorporated Biblical principles within their classes. Also many of the textbooks used in that school were produced for Christian education, as some of the references given to the students in this case were. Examples of this can be seen in the teaching resources used in Case Four.

The unit being studied in the class at the time of this study was that of the theories of creation and evolution which would very obviously include a Christian perspective. In the interviews with the teacher on June 9 and June 14 the reasons for this unit being taught were given. First, that as a Christian school we present all of the facts so the students can make their own decisions. Then second, that at non-Christian schools only the evolutionistic view is presented, not the creationist view as well.

When interviewed, the students made many comments about the Christian perspective in this unit and also generally about the school. All of these comments made by the students were spontaneous as no questions were asked of the students which asked for the Christian perspective. One such comment made on June 14 by Student 1 was that it doesn't seem as though evolution could be the only theory, that is with things always changing. They can see how the earth may have been created by a chemical spark but they can't see how life could be created the same way. As a result of this it must have been God or some other super-natural being that created life. This student had difficulty with how the teacher must view all of this though when they said that the teacher can see evidence of evolution but believes in God and therefore creation. I don't yet know how she puts all of these together as a scientist.

One final comment from Student 2 on June 14 was interesting to note. They think that the school turns them off Christianity by making them look at these issues so much and just by having God and the Bible discussed so much. Certainly from this student's point of view, the Christian perspective is being included a great deal within the classroom across the entire school.

Consistency Between The Four Case Studies

Consistency between each of the four case studies can be referred to in terms of the fact that there was some evidence of the Christian perspective being included in all cases. There is also some evidence of consistency with other research in this field. This section will focus only on the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom across the four cases and also as it relates to other research in this field.

Much of the research discussed in Chapter Two of this study refers to the methodology adopted for similar research. There is also some discussion, especially from Van Brummelen (1988), which discusses the inclusion of the Christian perspective. It is this aspect which will be discussed in detail in relation this study and how it has observed the Christian perspective to be included in the classroom.

Firstly though, the need for the Christian perspective to be included in the classroom is supported by a number of other studies. Holmes & Hiatt (1984) found that 71% of parents said the prime reason they sent their children to a Christian school was so they would receive a Christ-centred education. Ascher (1985) spoke of the need for schools to have a set of clear and strong beliefs and values, pointing to the success of the Catholic schools to support this. Turner (1981) found that Christian school administrators believed these schools existed to provide moral and spiritual instruction. Certainly the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* supports all of these comments. The best summary to support this comes from within the *School Purpose* section where it states the school was established to provide a "Christian dimension".

Cases Three and Four were able to include a Christian perspective far more readily as a result of the units of work being studied. Case Three was studying a civilisation which was included in the Bible. Whilst Case Four was looking at the theories of creation and evolution. The first of these being a Christian perspective in its own right.

The *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* does not differentiate between subjects or units of work in relation to how the Christian perspective will be included. The nature

of some units of work will make the task of including a Christian perspective within the classroom far more difficult. As has been the situation with Cases One and Two of this study where the units of work were not related directly to any particular Christian teaching.

At Trinity Christian School it is expected that the Christian perspective will be included. Not just in the curriculum but it is to be planned for by the teachers in their teaching programs as outlined in *Secondary Programming* (1994). Van Brummelen (1988) discusses a variety of ways in which schools in his study attempted to ensure that the Christian perspective was included in the classroom. In particular the study looked at how the Christian perspective was included in the curriculum. He did not study how this was then put into practice in the classrooms though.

The last school in Van Brummelen's (1988, p. 22) study was attempting to be "integrally Christian" in the classroom. It was to achieve this by using units of work which had been developed by a provincial association of Christian schools but with the use of government supplied textbooks. This was the only school to do so. The leaders of this school wanted to "... emphasise a Christian worldview that looked beyond legalistic personal morality." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 26) It is this school which bears the most resemblance to Trinity Christian School as can be seen in each of the four Cases in this study especially in the area of curriculum. Trinity Christian School does not have a curriculum developed by a group of Christian schools but instead develops its own, as is done throughout the Australian Capital Territory.

Of the three schools in Van Brummelen (1988), the third school is very similar to Trinity Christian School. The first two schools used Christian textbooks, at least in part. It was through the use of these textbooks that they believed the Christian perspective would be included in the classroom. In the third school however, the curriculum was developed by Christians but the textbooks were unlikely to include a Christian perspective as they were supplied by the government. This also the case at Trinity Christian School.

Van Brummelen (1988) made only reference to evidence which supported the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom at the third school. That was, that some of the student's own writing included "religious motifs." This is not surprising though, as he was studying the curriculum not necessarily what was being included in the classroom. In all of the cases in this study there was evidence in the classroom of this occurring. This study went beyond looking only at the curriculum to explore all of the areas in which the Christian perspective could be included.

The key feature which was adopted in part for this study from Van Brummelen (1988) is his recommendations for future study. After having completed a study into the curriculum of these Christian schools he suggests that it is now time to study if the students leaving these schools are different from those who did not attend a Christian school. Part of such a study would need to address the issue of the Christian perspective being included in the classroom. It would only be after this has been established that a study could truly look for any differences between students who had attended a Christian school and those who had not.

Variation In The Inclusion Of The Christian Perspective

Each of the four cases studied was unique in how the Christian perspective was included in the classroom. The emphasis placed on this inclusion by the individual teachers also varied. It could be suggested that this variation could be due in part to the variety of classes and topics being studied at the time of this study.

Another possible reason for this variation could be the depth of understanding that individual teachers had of including a Christian perspective within the classroom. Certainly in Cases One, Two and Three there was little or no reference made to the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the teaching programs. However, the Christian perspective was included in the teaching programs in Case Four. In the classroom there was evidence for the inclusion of the Christian perspective in all cases. There could be a lack of congruence brought about because of the lack of documentation as the teachers

have not actually planned for the inclusion of the Christian perspective in their classroom according to their teaching programs. It is possible from this evidence to suggest then the planning is done in a less formal manner and therefore some opportunities for the inclusion of the Christian perspective could be missed. There could also be opportunities arise which are used spontaneously by the teacher which could not have been planned for.

Perhaps a further reason for the variation could be the way in which each of the curriculum documents address the inclusion of the Christian perspective in different ways. Teachers are then working from various curriculum documents to ascertain how the Christian perspective will be included in that subject and not from the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* directly.

In Cases One and Two the Christian perspective included in the classroom was that of "cater(ing) for individual differences." (Trinity Christian School, 1991) Neither of the units of work being studied in these cases was Christian in nature. As a result some aspects of the Christian perspective may be difficult to include in the classroom. Within the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* there may be a justification for this when it states that " the curriculum will offer reasonable subject variety and choice, but will also ensure time to permit depth and excellence in all offered subjects."

At times, for teachers to include this "depth and excellence" in the area of content, it could be suggested that there is every chance that the inclusion of a Christian perspective within the classroom is overlooked. Quite possibly, there is also insufficient time to include the Christian perspective as well as all of the content. Especially, if you consider the fact that in a non-Christian school the same content is likely to be included but without the need to include a Christian perspective as well.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The data collected for this study has certainly shown that the Christian perspective is included in the classroom. Questions need to be asked though about how else the Christian perspective might be included in the classroom. Surely the focus on the area curriculum is not the only way in which the Christian perspective can be seen to be included in the classroom.

There has been a problem of consistency of documentation which needs to be addressed. If this can be done then perhaps this will further enhance the inclusion of the Christian perspective. Continuing on from this is the need for further research into how this Christian perspective is included with different ages of children. Then finally, does the Christian school make a difference to the students who leave a Christian school at the end of Year 10 or Year 12?

Findings

The inclusion of the Christian perspective by the teachers in the classroom at Trinity Christian School was evident in all of the classes included in this study. The four cases in this study included a variety of aspects of the Christian perspective as outlined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

In Cases One and Two the students were very obviously being treated as individuals with each of their gifts being recognised as something very special. The evidence for this came from: classroom observations; teacher interviews; and student interviews.

Case Three used the Bible as one of their textbooks in the study of an ancient civilisation which was recorded in the Bible. By using the Bible in this manner the students saw it as a source which supported many of the comments made by the teacher. Lesson observations, teacher interviews and student interviews again provided the evidence to support this.

The evidence in Case Four came from: the teaching program; lesson observations; teacher interviews; student interviews; and teaching resources. In this case there was a wealth of evidence to show that the Christian perspective was being included in the

classroom, due largely to the unit of study, that being the theories of creation and evolution. In this case the Bible was again being used as a reference for evidence.

As can be seen there are a variety of methods which teachers have chosen to include the Christian perspective in their classrooms. All of these methods are listed in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

Implications For Trinity Christian School

In the previous chapter there was a discussion about the consistency within each of the four cases in this study. From this analysis it is obvious that in most cases not all of the Christian perspective as outlined in the various Curriculum Statements was observed in this study. This can be explained partly by suggesting that the methodology used in this study did not have a broad enough focus to pick up all of this.

Remembering that the focus of this study was that of the section on Curriculum in the *Trinity Christian Vision Statement*, there are six other sections which were not included in this focus. The reason for this was to make this study manageable for the purposes for which it was undertaken.

Only if the focus was much broader could all of the Christian perspective which is included in the classroom be reported in detail. These points aside, there does appear to be a few missing links in relation to the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* being included in curriculum statements through to classroom practice.

For instance, in many cases there was a lack of consistency between the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* and the curriculum statements. That is, how the Christian perspective is to be included in the specific areas of the curriculum is often neglected. This may mean that there is little or know reference to the Christian perspective in each of the areas of: Goals; Content; Learning and Teaching Strategies; and Assessment.

From this then, the teachers are expected to write their personal teaching programs. Right from the start of this process they are often lacking what the Christian perspective

is or could be for each of the areas they refer to in the curriculum statement. It is often only in the Rationale where some idea of what the Christian perspective should relate to is detailed. As a result, the teacher is being expected to interpret the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* as it relates to each of the units they are writing a teaching program for.

The teaching programs in each of these cases were very limited in their discussion of the Christian perspective as it applied to that unit of work. One exception to this was in Case Four. This could be due to the fact that it was a unit of work on the 'Theory of Creation and Evolution'. This is to be expected though when you take into account the notion that for each of the units a teacher is to teach they are to go back to the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* to work out the Christian perspective as it applies to that unit. The reason for this is, that it often does not appear in the Curriculum Statement.

Despite this inconsistency which has been discussed, there was, as has been seen, a great deal of evidence to show that the Christian perspective is being included in the classroom. The documentation for each of the cases shows that there are areas which do not discuss the Christian perspective. The Christian perspective is still being included in the classroom by the teachers, which indicates their understanding of the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement* and their ability to include the Christian perspective within the classroom.

Perhaps then, if the consistency of the documentation could be improved upon then the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom could be provided to challenge the students more than at present. This could be achieved if the Christian perspective were incorporated in many more aspects of the classroom than was observed in this study. In this way the students would have modelled to them the Christian way to live in many more of the situations which arise in the classroom.

By providing the teachers with more consistent documentary resources they could be clearer direction as to how the Christian perspective could be included in the classroom. Ways to achieve this could be to give teachers a greater say in the final Curriculum Statements than occurs at present. There is a great deal of compromise on the part of teachers in the writing of these Curriculum Statements due to the fact that they are developed through the use of a committee. Sometimes the teachers feel they are no longer "... stakeholders with ... (their ideas being) seemingly rejected." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 17) If this comment were acted upon, the professional views of the teaching staff may be included more often in the Curriculum Statements.

Perhaps this comes about because the School Council believes "... that the teachers ... with their (predominantly) public school backgrounds, (are) not discerning enough about spirituality and too easily influenced by secular textbooks and approaches." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 17) If this were the case then it would be very unlikely that the Christian perspective included in the classroom as detailed in this study would have been present, considering the inconsistency within the documentation.

The training of teachers in Christian education could also assist further in this endeavour. As was highlighted, only two of the teachers in the school have a tertiary qualification in theology. How to include a Christian perspective is difficult in itself. What to include as the Christian perspective is often more difficult.

Implications For Further Research

This study has addressed in part the recommendation Van Brummelen made when he stated in part that "future research about Christian schools need to explore whether and how the lives of Christian school graduates differs from their public school counterparts ..." (Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 36). From here however, there appear to be a number of areas in which further research is needed.

The inclusion of the Christian perspective within the whole school context would certainly be of value. Whole school context could be defined in a number of different ways depending upon the type of information being sought.

It could be defined as studying how the inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom changes as the students progress from Kindergarten through to Year 10. A similar methodology to this study could be adopted with the focus still being only on the area of curriculum as defined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*.

The results of this research could be useful for parents so they can see how the Christian perspective is included in the classroom from Kindergarten to Year 10. The changes that take place in how this is presented would also be apparent from the results. At present parents are often concerned that appears to be a lack of any Christian perspective in the secondary school. This is due largely to the fact that it is included a different way than when their child was much younger.

Another way that the whole school context could be defined would be to look at each part of the *Trinity Christian Vision Statement* and to study how it plays a part in adding to the inclusion of the Christian perspective within the classroom.

Obviously to continue this study to compare the lives of students leaving a Christian school and a non-Christian school as Van Brummelen suggests would be a logical step.

In the *Trinity Christian Vision Statement* it states that students will be challenged "... with the reality of the living Christ within a climate of open and positive enquiry." From this the students should be "... lead to acknowledge their need of God." Perhaps all students will not have reached this by the time they leave Trinity Christian School, or any other Christian school. However, if there is no difference between the students of a Christian school and those of a non-Christian school what is the purpose of a Christian school?

Conclusion

If one is to look back over all of the data collected for this study it is very easy to find evidence to demonstrate the teachers' inclusion of the Christian perspective in the classroom at Trinity Christian School. The manner in which this is included varies between cases, much as the teaching style of each individual teacher varies.

How the Christian perspective is included also varies according to the subject and probably even the unit being taught. To include a Christian perspective in the teaching of the 'Theories of Creation and Evolution' in Science is of course going to be far easier than in the teaching of 'Products and Factors' in Mathematics.

Perhaps one question needs to be asked in concluding this study. Does the inclusion of this Christian perspective in the classroom go beyond the area of curriculum as outlined in the *Trinity Christian School Vision Statement*?

From the evidence gained through this research the Christian perspective must go beyond the area of curriculum as defined in this study. The first point in the *School Purpose* is that the school seeks:

- to develop a Christian community for learning, where we claim and demonstrate the relevance of Jesus Christ to all aspects of life by approaching all of the school's activities from a Christian perspective."

(from the Trinity Christian School Vision Statement, 1991)

All of the curriculum statements at Trinity Christian School present a Christian Rationale for their existence. Many of these statements of rationale discuss the importance of study in that particular curriculum area to assist in the understanding of God's created world and how we, as stewards are to look after this world. It appears that many of these views are taught to the students through attitudes rather than formally discussing an issue as a Christian perspective. A reason that this can be done can be found in the fact that all of the staff at Trinity Christian School have signed the school's *Statement of Faith* thus confessing their faith as a Christian. The assumption which can be gained from this is that all " staff will demonstrate, model, and share their

faith and their delight in learning with the students." (Trinity Christian School Vision Statement, 1991)

A comment made by two teachers in one of the schools in Van Brummelen's study sums up how this can be achieved in a Christian school such as Trinity Christian School when they said that the:

"... 'Christian perspective comes about informally through our attitude and discussions on how we as Christians view issues.' Another explained that she would not artificially mention God or Jesus, but tried to engender an attitude of excitement and wonder as well as responsibility."

(Van Brummelen, 1988, p. 23)

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APPENDIX 1

LETTERS TO TEACHERS

Copy of Introductory Letter

***A STUDY OF TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF
WHAT OCCURS IN THE CLASSROOM***

Dear *TEACHER NAME*,

As you are aware I am currently writing my thesis as part of a Master of Education. In this thesis, I am studying the teachers' and students' perceptions of what occurs in the classroom. I am seeking your assistance in allowing me to use one of your classes as part of this study.

I have just completed a pilot study in *TEACHERS' NAME* Year 8 English class and am about to commence the collection of data from a variety of classes across the secondary school. I will need to visit each class for a total of six periods at the most. This will begin next week if this is suitable for those teachers involved and be completed by the end of this term.

The data will be collected in a variety of ways as listed, and described briefly below:

- Classroom observation - sitting in the classroom for an entire lesson taking notes of everything which takes place
- Student interviews - interviewing of some students from each lesson observed, seeking their view on what occurred in the lesson
- Teacher interview - interviewing of the teacher for each lesson observed, seeking their view on what occurred in the lesson
- Student workbooks - use of student workbooks as a record of what work was done in the lessons
- Teacher programs - use of teacher programs to note what work was planned for the unit of work being observed

I would like to be able to include your *CLASS SUBJECT* class in this study. The lessons which I am able to visit are *DAY 1 PERIOD ?* and *DAY 2. PERIOD ?*. Before coming into any classes I would discuss with you the lessons which I would plan to visit.

The purpose of the study is not to make any judgment on the teaching of a unit of work or any other aspect of that which takes place in the lessons. It is simply a study of what does occur in the lessons and how this is perceived by the students and teacher. I would also like to assure you, that you will not be identified in any way and that the results will remain confidential at all times.

I would appreciate a response by the end of this week with regard to your preparedness to be involved with this study. If you have any further questions or concerns please raise these with me as I would be only too happy to provide further information.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Ian Hewitt

Copy of Observation Schedule

<i>CLASS NO</i>	<i>CLASS</i>	<i>SUBJECT</i>	<i>7/6</i>	<i>9/6</i>	<i>14/6</i>	<i>15/6</i>	<i>16/6</i>	<i>21/6</i>	<i>23/6</i>
1	9.1	Maths	P3	P2	P3		P2		
2	9.1	English		P7	P1			P1	
3	7.2	History		P1			P1	P8	P1
4	10.2	Science	P1	P4	P2			P2	
5	10A	History	P7		P7	P3		P7	

The table above shows the lessons for which I will observe your class. I will simply sit at the back of the class and take a narrative log all that occurs in that lesson. After the lesson I will select 3 - 4 students to interview. I will also interview you about the lesson soon after the event.

Could you simply indicate to your class the following information:

- that Mr Hewitt will be visiting the class a few times between now and the end of the term
- Mr Hewitt is here to observe a variety of lessons as part of his university work
- Mr Hewitt has no role in the class other than that of observer
- after each lesson Mr Hewitt will randomly select 3 - 4 students to interview about the lesson

If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to ask.

Thank you very much for your assistance

Ian Hewitt

APPENDIX 2

TEACHING STAFF AT TRINITY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Profile of Teachers

<i>NO.</i>	<i>AGE</i>	<i>SEX</i>	<i>YEARS AT TRINITY</i>	<i>YEARS TEACHING</i>	<i>TERTIARY QUALIFICATIONS</i>
1	36	F	5	10	B.Sc., Grad. Dip. Dietetics & Nutrition, M.Ed.
2	47	F	7	10	Dip. Ed., M.Lit.
3	42	M	3	16	B.A.(Hons), Dip. Ed., M.Ed. Psych.
4	43	F	8	8	B.Sc.(Hons), Grad. Dip. Ed.
5	32	M	8	8	B.A.(Hons), Grad. Dip. Ed.
6	23	F	1	1	B.Ed.
7	39	F	5	8	B.Ed.
8	50	F	6	30	Cert. Teach., B.A.
9	46	F	10	17	Dip. Teach.
10	37	M	5	15	B.Ed.
11	39	F	6	6	Dip. Teach.
12	44	F	8	14	Cert. Teach., Dip. Teach., B.A.
13	32	F	2	4	Dip. Teach., B.Ed.
14	44	F	4	13	B.A.(Hons), Dip. Ed., Dip. Teach., Grad. Cert. Ed. (TESOL)
15	44	F	1	21	Dip. Teach., Cert. Teach.
16	52	M	5	11	B.A.(Hons), M.A.(Hons), Dip. Ed
17	48	F	9	19	B.A., Dip. Teach., M.Ed.
18	44	F	5	24	Cert. Teach., Dip. Teach., B.Ed.
19	57	M	9	16	B.A., Th.L.
20	36	F	1	7	Dip. Teach., B.Ed.
21	30	M	7	8	B.Ed.
22	50	F	11	20	Dip. Teach.
23	43	F	1	11	B.Sc., Dip. Ed.
24	31	M	5	7	Dip. Teach, B.Ed.
25	44	F	7	12	B.A., Dip. Ed., M.Ed.
26	23	F	1	1	Dip. Ed., Assoc. T.C.L.
27	24	F	1	1	B.Ed.
28	43	F	8	16	Dip. Teach.

Continued over page

Teachers' Inclusion Of The Christian Perspective In The Classroom

<i>NO.</i>	<i>AGE</i>	<i>SEX</i>	<i>YEARS AT TRINITY</i>	<i>YEARS TEACHING</i>	<i>TERTIARY QUALIFICATIONS</i>
29	43	M	2	23	Cert. Teach., B.Ed.
30	44	M	9	19	B.Sc.(Hons), Dip. Ed., Grad. Dip. Ed. Admin.
31	38	M	5	15	B.A., Dip. Phys. Ed.
32	45	F	2	10	Cert. Teach., Dip. Domestic Arts
33	43	M	6	22	Dip. Teach.
34	33	F	6	6	Dip. Teach.
35	42	M	3	20	B.A., Dip. Ed.
36	33	M	8	8	B. Ed., Dip. Art
37	33	M	8	9	B. Ed.
38	45	F	2	8	B.A.
39	27	F	4	4	B. Ed.
40	40	F	6	11	Dip. Teach.
41	52	F	3	19	B. Ed., Cert. Teach., D. Th.
42	36	M	11	16	Dip. Teach.
43	47	F	10	20	Cert. Teach.
44	30	F	1	5	B. Ed.
45	44	F	8	13	Dip. Ed.
	40		5.5	12.5	AVERAGES

APPENDIX 3

TRINITY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

APPENDIX 4

DESCRIPTION OF DATA VOLUME

Due to the nature of this study the data which has been collected amounts to over three hundred pages. As a result of this, it is contained within a separate Data Volume which can be obtained from the researcher upon request. Below is a list of the data contained within this volume.

List of Data Contained in the Data Volume

Trinity Christian School Documents

- Trinity Christian School Association (1990) *Role of Members*
- Trinity Christian School (1994) *Secondary Programming*
- Trinity Christian School (1989) *Statement of Faith*
- Trinity Christian School (1994) *Whole School Review - Terms of Reference*
- Trinity Christian School Tuggeranong A.C.T. Incorporated (1989) *Constitution*
- *Christian Perspectives in Year 7 - 8 Courses* (1994)
- *Christian Perspectives in Year 9 - 10 Courses* (1994)

Case One Data

- *Trinity Christian School Mathematics Curriculum Statement*
- *Products and Factors Teaching Program*
- *Field Notes*
(classroom observations, student interviews and teacher interviews)
- *Teaching Resources*

Case Two Data

- *Trinity Christian School English Curriculum Statement*
- *Writing a Children's Story Teaching Program*
- *Field Notes*
(classroom observations, student interviews and teacher interviews)

Case Three Data

- *Trinity Christian School Social Science Curriculum Statement*
- *Alpha Civilisation Teaching Program*
- *Field Notes*
(classroom observations, student interviews and teacher interviews)
- *Teaching Resources*

Case Four Data

- *Trinity Christian School Science Curriculum Statement*
- *Origins Teaching Program*
- *Field Notes*
(classroom observations, student interviews and teacher interviews)
- *Teaching Resources*
(this includes a set of seven references which were given to the students)