CONTRIBUTIONS OF W. A. CRISWELL TO THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRISWELL COLLEGE

Gloria Cowan, B.S., M.A.

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APPROVED:

Barry Lumsden, Major Professor
Henry Harris, Committee Member
Ron Newsom, Committee Member
V. Barbara Bush, Program Coordinator for Higher Education
Michael Altekruse, Chair of the Department of Counseling, Development, and Higher Education
M. Jean Keller, Dean of the College of Education
Sandra L. Terrell, Interim Dean of the Robert B. Toulouse School of Graduate Studies
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This study researched the role of W. A. Criswell as Chancellor of The Criswell
College and his involvement in the areas of development, facilities acquisitions,
personnel, and academics. This qualitative historical research was taken from Criswell’s
personal files from 1968 through 2001. W. A. Criswell gave written approval for this
review and publication in November 2001. Included in Criswell’s files were primary and
secondary sources including copies of letters, board meeting minutes, personal notes,
catalogs, newspaper articles, sermons, speeches, and other printed forms of
communication. All documents pertaining to Criswell’s involvement in these four
categories were copied and the documents organized in chronological order, by the
decade of the 1970s, the 1980s, and 1990s. Primary sources also included personal
interviews and telephone interviews with eyewitnesses who were present at the events
described, and board meeting minutes. Secondary sources included newspaper articles,
magazine articles, national Christian magazines, and journals.

Findings were summarized, evaluated and the following research questions
answered (1) What was the purpose for establishing a Christian institution of higher
education sponsored by First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas? (2) What was the rationale
for establishing a Christian institution of higher education in an area where a high density
of Christian colleges already existed? (3) What was Chancellor Criswell’s vision for a
Christian institution of higher education in its infancy? (4) Do alumni survey results in 1999 reflect the vision Criswell had for The Criswell College? (5) How did Chancellor Criswell develop endowment for The Criswell College? (6) What involvement did Chancellor Criswell have in the acquisition of physical facilities for The Criswell College? (7) What influence did Chancellor Criswell have over the curriculum development process in the history of The Criswell College? (8) Were there changes in the gender and diversity make-up of student enrollment at The Criswell College during Criswell’s tenure as chancellor? Conclusions were that Criswell significantly influenced the education of the next generation of Christian leaders.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

W. A. Criswell was born December 19, 1909 in Eldorado, Oklahoma and died January 10, 2002. He served for 50 years as senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas with over 26,000 members. In January 1995 he became pastor emeritus of the church. In 1969 he announced to his congregation that he wanted to begin a bible institute for lay people and pastors who could not afford to attend a seminary. In 1971 he became chancellor of The Criswell College and held that position until his death. First Baptist Academy and KCBI Radio station were started under his leadership in the 1970s.

Criswell received his B.A. degree from Baylor University in 1931, his Th.M. degree and Ph.D. degree in Philosophy from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He authored fifty-four books (see Appendix A) and had eight honorary doctorates (see Appendix B) bestowed upon him.

Criswell served on the board of trustees of Baylor University, Baylor Health Care System, Dallas Baptist University, and The Baptist Standard. He served as a member of the Annuity Board and Chairman of the Trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1968 and 1969 he served as president for the twelve
million members of the Southern Baptist Convention.

On any given Sunday, Criswell’s congregation included wealthy business people, professionals, professors, and street people. He preached to presidents, famous athletes, and dignitaries from around the world. Criswell was called The Baptist Pope (Blow, 1984), Mr. Baptist (Unknown, 1984), the crying preacher, and the greatest pastor of the twentieth century (Graham, 1978). He was also referred to as a dictator (Blow, 1984), a segregationist, and a preacher who had no tolerance of gays, abortionists and women (Seigal, 2002). His book, *Why I Believe That the Bible Is Literally True* published by Broadman Press in 1969, was opposed by the ABPR (Association of Baptist Professors in Religion). *Newsweek* magazine printed the following regarding this event:

To Southern Baptist scholars schooled in textual criticism, Criswell’s fundamentalist tract was more than they could swallow. At a meeting last March, the Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, which includes 130 teachers from the Southeast, criticized the SBC’s (Southern Baptist Convention) Sunday School Board for pushing the book in an advertising campaign that “clearly suggests that the position espoused in this book is the official position of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.” What’s more, the 64 members present unanimously charged that liberals teaching in Southern Baptist seminaries face “a specter of harassment, biblicism and witch-hunting….It was a
book by Criswell that touched off the liberal challenge. In it, Criswell defends every word of Scripture as directly inspired by God and to be accepted as such by readers. (Unknown, 1969, p. 96)

Chancellor Criswell was an enthusiastic advocate of Christian higher education and outlined his stance on Christian education in an address to Liberty University.

Christian education is the pursuit of learning guided toward the knowledge of God. Christian education is education in an environment and in an administration that is dominantly Christian, where the chancellor, president, faculty and most of the student body are Christians. It is also education that interprets the phenomena of history and all creation in the mind of Christ as the Lord has made us and the great purposes for which He created us. When all history is His-story. When all creation magnifies and glorifies the marvelous permanence of God.

In geology, God is presented as the Rock of Ages. In astronomy, He is the Bright and the Morning Star. In anthropology, He is the God-man. In zoology, He is the lion of the tribe of Judah. In botany, He is the great and reigning Judge, and in eschatology, He is our coming King and our everlasting Lord. That is Christian education. (Criswell, 1987, p. 25)

In his speech at Liberty College Chancellor Criswell answered the question, why Christian schools:
They are the foundation of our democratic republic. I had great difficulty beginning the schools in our dear church. I have preached many times in the Eastern European communist states of the continent and several times in Russia. Why is it that in those communist lands there is no Sunday school, no seminary, no Christian college? It is denied to the Christian people. Why? Because you can’t have a totalitarian state and not control the education and the minds of the children and the young people. We need the Christian school and if our democracy is to exist we must have a school as its foundation.

Christian schools provide the foundational basis for moral leadership of our nation. Education in itself doesn’t make a man right or Godly. Education to glorify God and to bless the people must be first of all and fundamentally Christian.

Why Christian schools? The very existence of our nation depends upon it. America has been slowly moving away from the moral values that made our country the most admired and respected in history. No people have ever been able to develop a strong nation without religious and moral values. There are certain values which cannot be forfeited in our country and still have the same America we have known for two hundred years. (Criswell, 1987, p. 25)

As chancellor of The Criswell College, controversy continued to encircle
Criswell. In 1990 Paige Patterson, who had served as president for sixteen years, came under pressure from the board of trustees of The Criswell College to curtail his travel schedule on behalf of The Southern Baptist Convention. Regents of The Criswell College, who were primarily pastors throughout the Southern Baptist Convention, flew into Dallas Fort Worth airport for an emergency meeting and challenged the board of trustees and Criswell in their decision to move Patterson into an Assistant to the Chancellor position. Patterson considered this as a move to just “bump him upstairs.”

In later years Chancellor Criswell would recall this meeting as one of the most difficult times in his tenure as chancellor. Twenty-four of the college’s thirty regents resigned en masse November 1, 1991 to protest Patterson’s dismissal (Parmley, 1991). Patterson’s successor Richard Melick resigned four years later after an interview with Criswell revealed that they differed on the issue of pre-millennialism.

Chancellor W. A. Criswell’s establishment and development of an institution of Christian higher education in Dallas may serve as a model for others or discourage other pastors, academicians or practitioners in such an enterprise. This study attempted to present the successes and failures of one chancellor’s efforts to build a Christian College.

Rationale for the Study

While five dissertations have been dedicated to facets of Criswell’s ministry, there has not been an in-depth study of his tenure as Chancellor. The focus of this study was
on Criswell’s role as chancellor and delineates what influence he had on the establishment and development of a Christian institution of higher education.

Statement of the Problem

This study researched the role of W. A. Criswell as Chancellor of The Criswell College and his involvement in the areas of development, facilities acquisitions, personnel, and academics. These issues and their relationship to one another, influenced The Criswell College’s past, they influence the present, and they will influence the college’s future. Criswell's ideas and authority, as chancellor, shaped the successes and failures of this Christian institution of higher education. This study bears witness to Criswell’s contributions defined as follows.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this qualitative historical study are to:

1. Determine the purposes for establishing a Christian institution of higher education sponsored by First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas.
2. Determine the rationale for establishing a Christian institution of higher education in an area where a high density of Christian colleges already existed.
3. Articulate the vision Criswell had for a Christian institution of higher education.
4. Establish whether The Criswell College achieved the vision of Chancellor
Criswell thirty years after the institution was founded.

5 Discover what means Chancellor Criswell used in establishing endowment for a Christian institution of higher education.

6 Ascertain the involvement of Chancellor Criswell in the acquisition of physical facilities for a Christian institution of higher education.

7 Determine the influence Chancellor Criswell had over the curriculum development process in the history of The Criswell College?

8 Determine whether gender and diversity enrollment statistics changed at The Criswell College during Chancellor Criswell’s tenure.

Research Questions

1 What was the purpose for establishing a Christian institution of higher education sponsored by First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas?

2 What was the rationale for establishing a Christian institution of higher education in an area where a high density of Christian colleges already existed?

3 What was Chancellor Criswell’s vision for a Christian institution of higher education in its infancy?

4 Do alumni survey results in 1999 reflect the vision Criswell had for The Criswell College?
5 How did Chancellor Criswell develop endowment for The Criswell College?

6 What involvement did Chancellor Criswell have in the acquisition of physical facilities for The Criswell College?

7 What influence did Chancellor Criswell have over the curriculum development process in the history of The Criswell College?

8 Were there changes in the gender and diversity figures of student enrollment at The Criswell College during Criswell’s tenure as chancellor?

Significance of the Study

The Criswell College was solely a First Baptist Church of Dallas endeavor, without financial support from the Southern Baptist Convention or through state and federal agencies. This study may serve as a guide for pastors, academicians and other practitioners who seek to start institutions of Christian higher education.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1970). Additionally, there has been one dissertation dedicated to the history of The Criswell College: “The History and Development of the Criswell College” by Paul D. Jacobs (unpublished doctoral dissertation; University of North Texas, 1991). None of these dissertations however, have dealt with W. A. Criswell’s thirty-year tenure as Chancellor of The Criswell College.

Two books have been published in addition to Robert Rohm’s dissertation on the life of W. A. Criswell: *W. A. Criswell: The Authorized Biography* and *Standing on the Promises: The Autobiography of W. A. Criswell*. No journal articles have been published regarding W. A. Criswell.

Biographical Information

Early on Sunday morning, December 19, 1909 in Eldorado, Oklahoma a boy was born to Wallie Amos and Anna Currie Criswell. His parents registered him as W. A. Criswell, Jr. Although it is commonly thought his initials stand for Wallie Amos, his parents intended to give him initials only, and it was long years afterward, prompted by the insistence from government immigration officials that W. A. officially took the name Wallie Amos (Keith, 1973). A few years after W. A. Criswell’s birth, his father who had been a cowboy and a barber moved his family from Eldorado to Texline, located on the state line between New Mexico and Texas, where he filed for a homestead.

Little W. A. and twenty other plains children entered the second grade in Texline. He drove a small buggy and a horse named Trixie the five miles to and from school.
Because of the extreme weather, which caused W. A. to fail a year in school, Anna Currie Criswell decided the family should move into Texline. They left the farm, concluding it was not worth the taxes it cost (Keith, 1973). There his father took up barbering again as an occupation and W. A. began to excel in his studies.

Outside of school, church, and studying elocution, there was very little to occupy W. A.’s time. Anna Criswell discouraged her son from hunting, swimming, and bonding with other boys for fear of their influence. She persuaded her son to read. He quickly became an avid reader of books such as the Horatio Alger stories. While his friends played outdoors, W. A. became obsessed with reading.

When W. A. was ten years old an occurrence in his life sent him in a direction that was to become his lifelong pursuit. Reverend John Hicks, pastor of a Baptist church in Dalhart, Texas, preached a revival meeting in Texline and in a ten o’clock morning service, W. A. went forward and publicly acknowledged Christ as his Savior. During this two-week revival, Reverend Hicks stayed in the home of Wallie Amos and Anna Criswell. The young W. A. confided in the old pastor that he had felt God calling him to preach since the age of six.

Anna Criswell encouraged her son to become a medical doctor like her father who was a physician in the Civil War. W. A. never wavered from the calling he felt God put on his life to preach at the tender age of six. As he drew near to his teenage years, he accompanied his pastor to area Baptist encampments in the Oklahoma Panhandle. He
attended the classes for pastors on theology and asked probing questions of the leaders. It was during these years that W. A. identified the men whom he most wanted to emulate. His role models were preachers such as George W. Truett, pastor of The First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas and L. R. Scarborough, the vibrant president of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. In his pursuit to emulate these men, he read books of biography and became conversant with the acts and ideas of such men as Hannibal, Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, Aristotle, and a host of others (Keith, 1973).

Anna Criswell came from a prominent social and educational background and believed strongly that her children should have the benefit of the best education possible. As W. A. approached his high school years; Anna Criswell was confronted with a dilemma. She wanted W. A. and his brother Currie to attend college; however, the high school in Texline was not accredited. Mrs. Criswell did what must have been a shocking thing for a married woman in 1922; she moved with her two sons, seventy miles to Amarillo, Texas where both boys could attend an accredited high school. W. A.’s father remained in Texline as a barber and sent as much money as possible to help realize Anna’s dreams for her sons.

Anna Criswell rented a house in Amarillo, and sublet rooms to pay the rent. She increased their income by baking pies and selling them at a lunch counter in a drugstore. She took in sewing and W. A. found a job delivering groceries.
W. A. excelled in academics at Amarillo High School. He loved debate and became the school’s top debater. As a result, he was invited to address the local Kiwanis clubs and Rotary Clubs. He also learned to play the trombone and was a member of the high school band. His passion, though, became the study of English. He graduated with the grade of A in all his courses.

During these high school years, Anna Criswell knew that her son wanted to be a preacher, but continued to encourage him to think in terms of becoming a doctor. At age sixteen, W. A. was licensed to preach by the First Baptist Church in Amarillo, Texas. As graduation approached for W. A., his mother set out to find the best institution of higher education in Texas. Once again she demonstrated her tenacious spirit and visited a dozen schools across the state. She talked to the presidents and the faculty members, poured over the curricula, and then decided Baylor Baptist University was the place for W. A. The Baptist Convention of Texas offered tuition scholarships to any student preparing for the ministry.

Just after W. A. graduated from Amarillo High School, his father moved the rest of the family to Amarillo and joined Anna, W. A., and Currie, his younger brother. They were together as a family for only a short time. In August, 1927, Anna Criswell decided to move to Waco and rent a large house, sublet rooms, and provide a place for W. A. to live while attending Baylor. W. A. was seventeen years old when they moved to Waco. He was not allowed to work. Rather he was to study, while she resumed making and
sitting pies and taking in sewing to supplement their income. At the end of that first year, W. A. and his mother returned to Amarillo. In August, when it came time to return to Baylor, Anna Criswell stayed behind and sent W. A. to Waco by himself. Within a few weeks, W. A. received a call asking him to become the part-time pastor in Marlow, Texas, fifty miles south of Waco. His salary was seventy-five dollars a month.

W. A. majored in English with minors in philosophy, psychology, and Greek. A. J. Armstrong, a professor at Baylor and a Browning scholar, mentored W. A. and helped to instill a love in him for English and American Literature. He soon made friends with many of the young campus philosophers. Some of them speculated W. A. was too intellectual for the ministry and would not stay with it (Keith, 1973).

Professor Armstrong was an intellectual and considered at the top of his field, but he was a humble Christian man. He encouraged W. A. to remain faithful to God’s Word, even when it was easy to become mixed up while studying philosophy and metaphysics, along with the latest theological persuasions.

W. A. was also very aware of the perception that many people held of Christianity. If you were a Christian, you must have no sense, little intelligence and lack an understanding of science. As a result W. A.’s resolve to excel in all his studies was intensified. He made A’s in all his courses.

The little Baptist churches in Pecan Grove and White Mound continued to pay W. A. seventy-five dollars a month even after the stock market crash of October 24,
1929. Thus he spent his weekends ministering to the people in these communities.

W. A. wrote about an incident in his college years that embodied his philosophy regarding higher education’s significance for preparing him for his calling as a preacher. A professor, after returning to his class one Monday morning, inquired of W. A. whether he had completed his homework, since he spent his entire weekend ministering to the people in his part-time churches. With his homework in hand, W. A. responded: “I respect you for driving me to the library, but it’s the people in my little churches in Pecan Grove and White Mound who drive me to my knees. I need professors and books and libraries to stimulate my brain, but I need those humble people of Coryell County to keep my heart warm and my eyes fixed on Jesus” (Criswell, 1990).

The Great Depression ravaged not only businesses but also institutions of higher education, including Baylor University, whose professors were issued script for their salaries. The script the professors received had proven to be almost worthless. Since support for Baylor was dwindling, the first Sunday of every month, W. A. took an offering for Baylor University from the poor farmers and ranchers in his part-time churches.

The Rockefeller Foundation offered a gift of five hundred thousand dollars to Baylor University if the people of Texas matched its gift. W. A. quickly appealed to the members of his churches to contribute. Thirty dollars for the Baylor Campaign was forwarded to Carr Collins, president of the Fidelity Union Life Insurance Company and
the Baylor Campaign chairman. As a result of his rapid response, W. A. was asked to assist Carr Collins in appealing to churches and university groups for contributions.

W. A. proclaimed to the trustees, faculty, and students, during a Baylor University chapel meeting:

These may be the years of the Great Depression, but the kingdom of God is not depressed. God still reigns. His hand controls the sun by day and a billion stars by night. His angels and His saints still wait to do His bidding. How can we doubt God’s power or God’s love for us and for this great university? With your faith and God’s power, the five hundred thousand dollars will be raised and our million-dollar goal will be accomplished. (Criswell, 1990, p. 117)

W. A.’s role in raising five hundred thousand dollars for the Baylor Campaign in the midst of the Great Depression acquainted him with the perpetual needs of institutions of higher education for funding and their dependence on the gifts of donors to survive.

In May 1931, W. A. graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in English from Baylor University. Wallie Amos and Anna Criswell watched as their son walked across the stage and received his diploma and was graduated with honors.

During the summer following his graduation, W. A. evaluated his choices for graduate school. He had been accepted at Brown and Yale. He later expressed his thoughts concerning this decision when he wrote:
I longed for the exhaustive libraries and demanding classes of those historic eastern universities, and on the surface it looked as though God had cleared the way…. In those days, I was still a little defensive about some people’s view of preaching as a vocation. I was tired of having people think that all preachers are boneheads. I was tired of people asking why I would go into the ministry when I could be a doctor a lawyer, a teacher, or in some other legitimate profession. (Criswell, 1990, p. 126)

After much deliberation and prayer, W. A. decided to attend Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky on a Baptist Scholarship. He arrived at the height of The Great Depression when four million Americans were unemployed and long lines at soup kitchens were common. Upon his arrival, he received sixty-seven dollars from his church in Texas, enough to cover his expenses for about six weeks. Within three weeks he was asked to pastor the church at Mount Washington three Sundays a month and the other Sunday at Oakland, Kentucky. These churches provided the income for W. A. to complete his graduate and doctoral work.

While preaching in Mount Washington, Kentucky, W. A. met Bessie Marie Harris. On February 14, 1935, they were married. Two years later W. A. graduated from Southern Seminary with his Ph.D. degree in philosophy and Bessie Marie completed her degree at Western Kentucky State Teachers College. Prior to graduation they made a
prayer covenant with the Lord that they would accept the first church that called W. A. to be their full-time pastor.

W. A. graduated from Southern Seminary in May 1937 and within weeks, the First Baptist Church of Chickasha, Oklahoma called him to be pastor of their two thousand member church. Two years later on June 28, 1939, Bessie Marie gave birth to Mabel Ann Criswell.

After the death of their pastor, the pulpit committee of the First Baptist Church of Muskogee, Oklahoma voted unanimously to call W. A. as pastor. In March 1940, W. A. moved his family to Muskogee in the heart of Cherokee country. In the face of the harsh realities of World War II, the church was experiencing unprecedented growth. New buildings were needed, but the plans were deferred due to the war effort.

On July 7, 1944, the pastor of the First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, George W. Truett, died. He had been ill for several years. He had been pastor of the church for forty-seven years.

The funeral was perhaps the most widely attended event in Dallas history until that time. Flags were lowered to half-mast. On that Monday all county work stopped at 3:00 p.m. by order of the Commissioners Court to allow county employees to attend the funeral. The city virtually came to a stand still to pay tribute to Dr. Truett. (Keith, 1973, p.19)
In August 1944, the pulpit committee of First Baptist Church invited W. A. to preach. The church and particularly the pulpit committee were more impressed with Criswell than anyone they had heard. (Keith, 1973) On September 27, 1944 the congregation accepted the committee’s recommendation and voted to call Criswell as their next pastor. …After the committee agreed on all the points, W. A. accepted the call and promised to begin his ministry in November (Keith, 1973). W. A. recalled his first Sunday as follows:

On October 6, 1944, I sat in George Truett’s high-backed chair, waiting to preach my first sermon as pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas….I walked to the pulpit, opened God’s Word and began to read. My hands trembled and my heart beat wildly as I read the morning’s text….After explaining the biblical text to the best of my ability, I put down the Bible and shared my heart with the people….Then I quoted Truett’s own words, “God buries the workman, but the work goes on!” (Criswell, 1990, p. 117)

For the next fifty years, W. A. led the congregation of First Baptist Church as it grew to become the largest in the Southern Baptist Convention with 26,000 members. The years from 1967 to 1970 were turbulent years for W. A. Leaders of Southern Baptist seminaries were moving towards training preachers to preach topical sermons on social issues. W. A. had just completed seventeen years of preaching through the bible and
highly favored expository preaching: that is, preaching verse by verse through a passage and expounding the meaning of the Greek and Hebrew words.

W. A. traveled the country as president of the twelve million member Southern Baptist Convention from 1968 to 1969. He became excruciatingly aware of the change in the curricula of Baptist seminaries. On October 5, 1969, his twenty-fifth anniversary as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Dallas, he presented to the church his vision for an institution of higher education that would provide biblical teaching that was both intellectually and spiritually sound. W. A. felt an overwhelming need to train the Sunday School teachers in his burgeoning church and the many Southern Baptist pastors who had not had the opportunity to finish or even begin college. James W. Bryant, W. A.’s assistant pastor, was assigned the task of determining the possibility of beginning a Bible Institute.

October 5, 1970, after a six-month study, a report was presented to the deacons: “Our church should establish an institute for intensive bible study, based on conservative evangelical Christianity, as preached and practiced in our church.” (Committee, 1970) The church members enthusiastically approved the recommendation on October 7, 1970.

“Against W. A.’s wishes, the Criswell name was attached to what was initially called the Criswell Bible Institute” (Bryant, 2003). The trustees subsequently elected W. A. as president and James W. Bryant as academic dean. H. Leo Eddleman became the first full-time president in July 1972, and W. A. was named chancellor.
Governance and Administration – The Chancellor

Webster’s dictionary (1991) gives the following definitions of chancellor, in relation to higher education: (1) the titular head of a British university (2) a university president or (3) the chief executive officer in some state system of higher education. A review of the literature revealed that the job description for chancellor in universities and colleges ranges from that of a president (Trustees, 2003) to a role of being responsible to the president. (Trustees, 2002) The role of chancellor for The Criswell Center For Biblical Studies was defined in the bylaws approved by the trustees June 26, 1972.
CHAPTER 3  
PROCEDURES FOR THE COLLECTION OF DATA ANALYSIS

Research Design

Qualitative historical research in education differs from other types of educational research.

Positivist (quantitative) research is grounded in the assumption that features of the social environment constitute an independent reality and are relatively constant across time and settings. Positivist researchers develop knowledge by collecting numerical data on observable behaviors of samples and then subjecting these data to numerical analysis. Postpositivist (qualitative) research is grounded in the assumption that features of the social environment are constructed as interpretations by individuals and that these interpretations tend to be transitory and situational. Post positivist researchers develop knowledge by collection of primarily verbal data through the intensive study of cases and then subjecting these data to analytic induction. (Borg & Gall, 1996, p. 28)

The essential steps involved in doing an historical research project are as follows:

“(1) identifying a problem of study, (2) searching for sources of historical data,
(3) evaluating historical data for authenticity and accuracy, and (4) synthesizing historical data into meaningful chronological and thematic patterns” (Borg & Gall, 1996, p. 643).

The use of Criswell’s personal files from 1968 through 2001, for this dissertation was approved for review and publication by W. A. Criswell and Jack Pogue in November of 2000. (See Appendix F.) After a cursory review of all files related to Criswell’s thirty year tenure as chancellor, four areas of influence emerged: (1) personnel relationships (2) academic curriculum (3) facilities acquisitions and (4) development of funding and endowment. Eight research questions were established for this study.

Research questions regarding Criswell’s purpose, rationale, and vision for The Criswell College were: (1) What was the purpose for establishing a Christian institution of higher education sponsored by First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas? (2) What was the rationale for establishing a Christian institution of higher education in an area where a high density of Christian colleges already existed? (3) What was Chancellor Criswell’s vision for a Christian institution of higher education in its infancy?

Research questions associated with academics and students were: (4) Do alumni survey results in 1999 reflect the vision Criswell had for The Criswell College? (7) What influence did Chancellor Criswell have over the curriculum development process in the history of The Criswell College? (8) Were there changes in the gender and diversity make-up of student enrollment at The Criswell College during Criswell’s tenure as chancellor?
Facilities research was question number (6) What involvement did Chancellor Criswell have in the acquisition of physical facilities for The Criswell College? And the area of influence in endowment development was research question number (7) How did Chancellor Criswell develop endowment for The Criswell College?

Included in Criswell’s files were primary and secondary sources including copies of letters, board meeting minutes, personal notes, catalogs, newspaper articles, sermons, speeches, and other printed forms of communication. Primary sources included personal interviews and telephone interviews with eyewitnesses (See Appendix G.) who were present at the events described, and board meeting minutes.

Secondary sources included the testimony of anyone who was not an eyewitness or present at the events described (Gottschalk, 1967). Secondary sources used in this research study included newspaper articles, magazine articles, national Christian magazines, and journals.

The third step in the process of this study was to discover the relationship between primary source documents and interviews compared to secondary sources such as newspaper articles in order to establish triangulation. Triangulation refers to the use of different data sources, time periods, and data collection methods that result in similar findings (McMillan & Wergin, 2002). Findings were summarized and evaluated and the pertinent facts presented within the framework of the four areas of influence and then placed in a meaningful sequence for readers.
The historical research performed in this study attempted to avoid “presentism” or the application of modern thought patterns and interpretation upon the events of a different era. For example, some women have viewed Thomas Jefferson as a sexist, even though the view of complete equality between the sexes would have been extraordinary in his time.

Efforts were made to record information as found. In order to deal with bias on the part of the researcher, a trustee of The Criswell College who served for thirty years and a professor of Greek studies serving on the faculty since 1976 (See Appendix H.) were asked to review the findings. Their verification of the facts and interpretation of material served to control the bias of the researcher.
CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The Decade of the 1970s

Introduction

On October 7, 1970, The Criswell Bible Institute was established as a non-profit incorporated organization. The members of the First Baptist Church in Dallas (FBCD) were the members of the corporation. They elected twelve trustees for three-year terms, who were to govern the affairs of the Institute. The Institute initially met in the facilities of the First Baptist Church in downtown Dallas. The first Board of Trustees of The Criswell Bible Institute were: (Trustees, March 14, 1971)

- William C. McCord (Chairman) - President of Lone Star Gas Company
- Jack Brady - Attorney, Brady, Drake, and Wilson
- Mart Cutrell - Plant Engineer, Proctor and Gamble Co.
- George Shearin - Attorney and Associate Executive Secretary, Baptist Foundation of Texas
- Lee Slaughter; Jr. - President, L. R. Slaughter Lumber Company
- William J. Sims - Lone Star Plywood & Door
- Louis Moore - Attorney
- Clifford E. Winkler - Southwestern Typographics
- Richard Kearley - President, DK Television Corporation
- Lawson Ridgeway - Chairman of the Board, Centennial Homes
- Dr. Charles Tandy - Anesthesiologist, Methodist Hospital
- Phil Simpson - Chairman of the Board, Republic Housing
The opening of The Criswell Bible Institute in 1970 drew the attention of other Baptist educators and executives in the area. The school was operating and prospering outside the control of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Texas. It was totally a First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas operation. Paige Patterson commented on the rationale for establishing a Christian institution of higher education in an area where a high density of Christian colleges and seminaries already existed when he granted the following interview six years after the Criswell Bible Institute was founded:

We’re not really trying to be competitive with our Baptist schools, but other educational institutions are anywhere from “curious to antagonistic” toward the school. Baptist colleges and universities in Texas are liberal arts schools where students can only elect to major in religion, theology or Christian studies. First Baptist’s college, on the other hand, is totally a Bible school, where students earning a four-year bachelor’s degree spend their one hundred twenty eight semester hours studying the Bible or Bible-related subjects like Hebrew and Greek. (Moore, 1976)

Personnel

In 1970, the trustees elected Criswell as President of The Criswell Bible Institute, James W. Bryant as Academic Dean, Lee Roy Till as Dean of the Conservatory of Music, and Roy Ramsour as Secretary-Treasurer of the Corporation (Institute, 1972).
H. Leo Eddleman became the first full-time President and on June 26, 1972 Criswell was named Chancellor of The Criswell Bible Institute. The by-laws reflect the following concerning the position of chancellor:

Section 1. a. Qualifications. The Chancellor shall be a man of Christian stature and integrity. He shall be in complete accord with the objectives of the school and with the Bible Institute philosophy of education. He must freely subscribe to the Articles of Faith adopted by the First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, believing without reservation in the infallibility and authority of the Scriptures.
b. Duties. The Chancellor shall by agreement with the President, act as Chief Executive Officer of the Institute on ceremonial and official occasions. He shall perform such other duties and functions as the board of trustees may from time to time assign to him.

Section 5.2 Powers and Duties of Officers, subpoint (c): Chancellor - The Chancellor (and the Chancellor Elect if that office is occupied) shall meet with the Board of Trustees at their various meetings and provide advice and recommendations for the operation of the Corporation. The counsel of the Chancellor (and the Chancellor Elect if that office is occupied) shall be sought with regard to the mission and call of the Corporation in providing biblical education and training for its students. (Trustees, 1971)
The trustees of The Criswell Bible Institute, together with Billy Graham, announced the appointment of H. Leo Eddleman as its full-time president. He was to assume his duties on July 1, 1972. As president of the Bible Institute, Eddleman was to work closely with Criswell, pastor of the 16,000 member First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, in whose facilities the institute would meet (Bird, 1972).

H. Leo Eddleman was a native of Mississippi, a graduate of Mississippi College, and held two degrees from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, where he earned the Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1942. For five years he served as President of Georgetown College. He subsequently served as President of the New Orleans Baptist Seminary for 11 years (Bird, 1972).

Billy Graham, world evangelist and member of First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, commented on the capabilities of Eddleman:

Eddleman had been my first choice for the presidency of a university I had once considered organizing but finally decided against. What you're doing is a very important and strategic move. The greatest vacuum in this country is in the area of Bible teaching. One of the dangers of this generation is that the thousands of young people accepting Christ will not be rooted in the Scripture. (Unknown, 1972)

In late 1974, Eddleman advised the trustees of his desire to retire. On December 12, 1974, the Board of Trustees of The Criswell Bible Institute met with Paige
Patterson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas, about the possibility of coming to Dallas as president. In a letter to Criswell dated December 13, 1974, Patterson wrote: “I am really struggling over the possibility of leaving the pastorate. However, I am also keenly aware that one might be able to accomplish more for the cause of the local church by preparing young pastors for ministry” (Patterson, 1974). Criswell responded with a personal note written on the bottom of Patterson’s letter: “Paige, it seems to me that the Holy Spirit is definitely moving, both here in Dallas and there in your heart. You’ll be hearing from our men soon. We love you always and thank God for you ever” (Patterson, 1974). Subsequently, Patterson accepted the invitation from the trustees of the institute and on February 24, 1975 became the third President of The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies (Institute, 1976).

Academics

On January 12, 1971, adjunct professors for the Criswell Bible Institute were drawn largely from the faculties of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS), Dallas Baptist College (DBC), and Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS). The first semester opened with eight Bible courses offered at two separate times each on Tuesday evenings, and three classes in the Conservatory of Music. “When registration closed, 329 students had enrolled. God had blessed the beginning of The Criswell Bible Institute far beyond human expectations” (Trustees, 1971). The Analysis of the first Spring Semester Student Body listed in the trustee report reflects the courses offered with
enrollment figures and the church affiliation of those enrolled. (See Table 1.) A special Summer Session was scheduled for seven weeks starting June 1, 1971. Six classes met for two hours each Tuesday; tuition was $20 for the session. Through July 1, 1972, The Criswell Bible Institute offered only an evening school, utilizing its adjunct faculty. The highest enrollment was five hundred and fifty-one students, enrolled in the Spring Semester of 1972. The summer school enrollment reached one hundred and fifty students (Bird, 1972). When the trustees announced H. Leo Eddleman as president, they also publicized the expansion of both the level and the amount of curriculum that was to be offered. Permanent professors were to be secured, daytime classes were to be offered, and accreditation would be sought (Bird, 1972).

By the fall of 1972, the Criswell Bible Institute catalog stated that two Certificates of Completion were offered, the Basic Bible Student’s Certificate and the Basic Music Student’s Certificate. Requirements for these certificates are listed below: (Trustees, March 14, 1971).
BASIC MUSIC COURSE
A student must complete with passing grades at least 12 semester hours of study in order to qualify for The Basic Music Student’s Certificate of Completion. The prescribed course of study includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THEORY</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD TESTAMENT</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSIC ELECTIVE</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONDUCTING</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>12 hrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Course Certificates

BASIC BIBLE COURSE
A student must complete with passing grades at least 12 semester hours of study in order to qualify for The Basic Bible Certificate of Completion. The prescribed course study includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD TESTAMENT</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW TESTAMENT</td>
<td>6 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTIVES</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>12 hrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPRING 1971
COURSE ENROLLMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total enrollment 329</th>
<th>1st hour</th>
<th>2nd hour</th>
<th>Professor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOD AND THE BIBLE</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Dr. Larry Walker, Professor SWBTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Dr. Bruce Waltke, Professor DTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHRISTOLOGY ACCORDING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. William E. Bell, Jr. Asst. Prof. DBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO JOHN’S GOSPEL</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Dr. Weldon L. Estes, Asst. Prof. DBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LIFE OF JESUS</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Dr. John W. Reed, Assoc. Prof. DTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE HOLY SPIRIT</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Dr. Tim Trammell, Asst. Prof. DBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Rev. Maurice Markham, M.A. Camb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEGINNER’S GREEK</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Haddon W. Robinson, Assoc.Prof. DTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLICAL PREACHING</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Mrs. Robert Mitz, Instr. of Piano, DBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC MUSIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Jack Terrell, M.M. SMU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LADIES’ CLASS VOICE</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Forbes Woods, M.M. U.T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEN’S CLASS VOICE</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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CHURCH AFFILIATION

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<tr>
<td>Other Baptist Churches</td>
<td>155</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other denominations:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-denominational</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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</table>

PROFESSIONAL VOCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physicians and Dentists</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Staff Members</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewives</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Course Certificates

(Trustees, March 14, 1971)
The registration fee for each semester was $10. Tuition was $15 per course hour. Parking and child-care were provided without charge. Books could be purchased at the Baptist Book Store located in the First Baptist Church. Grading was either pass, fail or incomplete (Institute, 1972).

A milestone was reached on January 8, 1973, when day classes were inaugurated with approximately thirty-two students. The three-year diploma in Biblical Studies was initiated in 1974. Additionally, the trustees of the Criswell Bible Institute, all members of First Baptist Church, Dallas insisted that any professor who taught be able to sign the Statement of Faith, adopted by the church in 1970. The statement is a revised version of the “Baptist Faith and Message” adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in 1962 (Moore, 1976). Unlike the SBC statement, the revised statement stated specifically that the Bible in its original manuscripts was the inerrant, infallible, verbally-inspired Word of God. This meant that the Bible is totally without error, will not lead a person into error, and contains words specifically chosen by God.

Academic freedom at The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, was defined by the twelfth article of the Articles of Faith listed below:

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus
Christ, by the authoritative nature of the scripture, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists. (Catalog, 1991)

The fall 1975 catalogue introduced along side the Diploma degree a four-year B.A. Degree with a major in Bible. Since the term “institute” was not thought appropriate for a degree-granting body, a change of name was deemed necessary. On February 5, 1976, the Board of Trustees unanimously adopted the name “Criswell Center for Biblical Studies” for the whole institution, within which there were to be two distinct divisions called “Criswell Bible College” and “Criswell Bible Institute.” Criswell Bible College was to grant the four-year B.A. Degree with a major in Bible, while Criswell Bible Institute would be responsible for the three-year Diploma in Biblical Studies, the one-year Certificate in Biblical Discipleship, and the programs of the evening curriculum. The term “Center” was chosen to indicate the exceptionally broad range of those who gather together for study, and also to denote the critical link between the academic pursuits and the practical application of them, especially within the unique setting of the First Baptist Church. By the spring semester of 1976, there were some 130 full-time day students, taught by ten professors (Studies, 1976).

In 1976, the first graduating class of The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies went through their commencement exercises in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church, Dallas. Twelve graduates were presented. Ten graduates were from Texas, one from Oklahoma, and one from Pennsylvania (C. C. f. B. Studies, 1976).
In November 1975, the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies was granted full membership in the Southern Accrediting Association of Bible Institutes, Bible Colleges, and Bible Seminaries. Several major evangelical seminaries had already recognized the B.A. Degree from Criswell by according full probationary admission to students desiring to pursue graduate studies in the biblical field (Studies, 1976). In July 1977, Patterson advised Criswell that the State of Texas Coordinating Board voted unanimously, 12 to nothing, to approve the master of ministry degree proposed by the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies (Patterson, 1977).

A letter sent to Criswell dated February 2, 1979 from Patterson notified him that the American Association of Bible Colleges Accrediting Agency Self-Study had been completed. According to Patterson, this mammoth and painstaking piece of labor would result in full accreditation by October 1979. Patterson argued for the benefits of obtaining such accreditation noting that this would make it possible for students to go anywhere they desired for graduate studies, plus matching monies through various corporations would become available to CBI (Patterson, 1979).

Book acquisitions for an adequate library was also an issue of great importance in the decades of the 1970s. Patterson wrote Criswell in October of 1979:

As you are doubtless aware, we have succeeded in purchasing a library of 35,000 volumes from what was formerly the American Christian College in Tulsa, Oklahoma….In addition to this, we have also secured an additional 5,000 copies
of Baptist histories and theologies, the value of which is almost unbelievable. I would say probably 1,500 of those volumes are available only in England, and any scholar wishing to peruse them on this continent will have to come here in order to examine them. In the educational field, of course, this provides almost unbelievable leverage with accrediting associations and with general recognition in these areas. (Patterson, 1979)

Perhaps one of the greatest contributions Criswell made to Adult Education in the decade of the 1970s was the School of the Prophets begun on March 19, 1971. Pastors from across America were invited to enroll. Criswell wrote in the first brochure mailed to pastors announcing the School of the Prophets:

So many of you have asked if you could come with your staff to our church and look at our program through which God has blessed us. From time to time you have come in increasing numbers. We always feel that we have not given you either the time or the attention you deserve. Therefore, we are setting aside one week a year to devote to you and your colleagues….for our first annual School of the Prophets. Six of the twenty hours of study will be led by me, personally, outlining for you my study habits, sermon preparation, approach to staff-relationships, counseling techniques, soul-winning, sermon delivery, pastoral convictions, etc. The remaining fourteen sessions will be conducted by our staff. A thick syllabus of printed materials outlining our church program in detail will
be given to each person enrolling in the school. (Criswell, 1971)

Four hundred and ninety-four men and forty-seven wives from thirty
different states attended the first School of the Prophets (Criswell, 1971). Wrey Ivey,
pastor of Pine Lake Baptist Church in Pine Lake, Georgia wrote the following letter to
Jack Harwell, Editor of the Christian Index in Atlanta, Georgia:

I have witnessed the most unique experience of my life….I saw for the first time
in my life what happens when God dominates a church….In awe and amazement
it was our privilege to attend the School of the Prophets and observe a staff who
loved God and expressed it, who loved each other and expressed it, worked

Eddie Weber, Pastor, First Baptist Church, El Dorado, Kansas wrote regarding his

experience at this first School of the Prophets:

Earlier in the week, I had sought and gotten a personal interview with Dr.

Criswell. As I asked him about the secret of his usefulness, he had told me with

emphatic deliberateness, “I study….all the time!”  This soon became evident in

his preaching.  His eyes sparkled and hands waved as he punched home point

after point backed with relevant fact upon fact! (Weber, 1971)

The School of the Prophets continued to be offered annually throughout the
decade of the 1970s and served as a tool for continuing education for pastors across
America until March of 1988, when attendance began to decline (Jacobs, 1991).

As the first decade for The Criswell Center of Biblical Studies lapsed, tension between Chancellor Criswell and President Patterson emerged. Patterson wrote Criswell in 1979 concerning two issues:

Please accept my apology for failure to be here during your staff meeting. I would have sent someone else (to Hawaii) but I was afraid that they could not make the press, government, and hotel contacts….We are trying to win outside support and friends for our school, and this forces my absence more than I enjoy….One other matter. My folks do have some limits, pastor. We have now accepted or been given over 100 Action packets. That is a ratio of 1 packet to every 2.5 total people involved (students, faculty, and staff). Since this is a Sunday School program (in the church), I wonder if any division is doing even 1 to 5? This is also the toughest time for us. We have to (1) prepare for School of the Prophets, (2) prepare for Hawaii, (3) meet deadlines on Criswell Reference Bible (tremendous pressure here) and (4) run a school. Preacher, I’m not complaining, and we’ll do all we can. All I am saying is that I’m beginning to
encounter morale problems due to sheer exhaustion. We feel that we are doing and have done our part. (Patterson, 1978)

Patterson also expressed trepidation regarding governance issues when he sent the following letter to Criswell regarding discussions involving audits and bookkeeping issues:

The elected trustees exclusively should govern CCBS (Criswell Center for Biblical Studies). This includes the accounting department and the annual audit….The deacons are not close enough to the operation of the Center to make its decisions and should leave the entire operation of the school to the trustees. (Patterson, 1978)

A First Baptist Church, Dallas (FBCD) report of the Special Committee on Planning for the Future dated February 13, 1978 indicated a recognition of the issue of governance, when the Long-Range Plan for the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies included establishing the Criswell Center as an autonomous educational institution separate from the First Baptist Church and elect members of the Board from other than the First Baptist Church (Committee, 1978).

Facilities

The Criswell Bible Institute initially met in the facilities of the First Baptist Church in Dallas. By 1972 it was reported:
The institute has already outgrown a renovated office building in the three square-block complex of buildings owned by First Baptist Church in downtown Dallas. Enrollment of pastors and laymen increased from 450 last fall (1971) to more than 550 this spring. Criswell said the institute will move into the church's new $3 million education plant, which will be completed by the fall of 1973.

Eddleman and Criswell emphasized that the Criswell Bible Institute was not a college or seminary and would supplement, not compete, with such an institution.

In response to a question, Eddleman said the school will seek eventual accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities.

(Unknown, 1972)

Facilities needed for the growing congregation of First Baptist Church were high priorities for Criswell in 1973. On January 31, 1974, property totaling 46,270 square feet was purchased for $1.6 million from Southern Union Pipe Co. for what would become the five-level Ross Avenue parking garage (Pogue, 2003).

In February of 1975, one of Patterson’s first concerns was the need for additional space for the growing student enrollment, faculty and staff. Enrollment for 1974 reflected 793 evening students and 42 day-curriculum students (Eddleman, 1974). Patterson wrote Criswell regarding this concern recommending two preferred options. The best option seemed to be the first floor of the Christian Education Building on the campus of FBCD. The ground level access would provide accessibility to potential
students coming in to enroll and contribute to the general efficiency of the whole
operation. Patterson also wrote that the accessibility to the library was mandatory for an
institution of higher learning (Patterson, 1975). The second option was to go to the Burt
building, another part of the FBCD complex, and remodel the entire second floor.

Three months later Patterson wrote Criswell regarding the availability of the
Easterwood Building across the street from FBCD, which housed Southern Methodist
University’s (SMU) night school. Patterson wrote that he wanted to pursue the possibility
of working out a five-year lease with SMU. Criswell responded to this letter and
suggested Patterson meet with Jack Pogue, a wealthy commercial realtor and member of
FBCD (Criswell, 1975).

Prior to the beginning of the fall 1975 classes, Patterson once again wrote
Criswell concerning classroom circumstances and described them as severe. He noted
that 130 to 160 students were coming in the fall and there was no place to put them. He
described the space for professors’ offices, and the registrar’s facilities as disastrous. He
proposed that for one year the Institute make use of the office facilities in the northeast
corner of the ground floor of the nine story Spurgeon-Harris Building located directly
across N. Ervay from FBCD. This area would give them 2400 square feet. Patterson did
note that due to extensive budget increases, paying rent for this area would be
exceedingly burdensome, if not impossible (Patterson, 1975).
On August 8, 1975 Patterson wrote Criswell concerning the possible purchase of the SMU Easterwood Building. The price was $800,000 to $1,000,000. He listed the benefits of purchasing this building as (1) a home for Criswell Bible Institute (CBI), caring for up to 500 students and all the faculty that would be needed in the foreseeable future (2) no extensive remodeling cost (3) two equipped laboratories for high school (4) expanded library facilities for a collection of 30,000 volumes (Patterson, 1975). He also pointed out that this would give him a year to secure a donation to purchase the SMU Building.

On January 19, 1976, FBCD purchased the Easterwood building from SMU for $850,000. Prior to the fall semester of 1977, lectures were held in the Christian Education Building of the FBCD, which was a well-equipped building opened in 1973. The administrative offices were across the street on the corner of Ervay and Patterson in downtown Dallas. Some of the professors had offices in the same location, while the others were in the Criswell Building on San Jacinto Street (C. C. F. B. Studies, 1976). The Easterwood building then became the home of The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies. After this acquisition, the FBCD owned more downtown property than any other religious or business institution. Only the City of Dallas owned more (Blow, 1976).

By 1979 the Easterwood building could not accommodate the Criswell Center’s library needs. Patterson wrote Criswell regarding the need for additional space after
committing to purchase 35,000 volumes from what was formerly the American Christian College in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The purpose of this memorandum is simply to request your support and assistance for us in using all of the tenth floor (Spurgeon Harris building) necessary in order to house this library….We have had architectural assistance to tell us where we can put the books without being much of a load on the structure and by following these architectural suggestions, we will not displace anyone at this time.

(Patterson, 1979)

The Easterwood building was the primary location for the Criswell Center until 1981, when the property was sold for $2 million to Metropolitan Life and Lincoln Properities for a planned 41-story office tower.

Two years after the purchase of the Easterwood Building, the 19,342 square foot YMCA building came up for sale. This building was adjacent to the Easterwood Building and also directly across the street from FBCD. Patterson once again enlisted the support of Criswell:

The YMCA becomes potentially very attractive. Daily it becomes more obvious to me that we cannot share space with the Sunday School. It is no problem to us but it is to them. If the YMCA could be the Criswell Center Building, we could make it suffice for classrooms, offices, dormitory, cafeteria, and recreational
facilities. Pastor, I say this not selfishly, but of necessity, we would need to control it to make it work. (Patterson, 1978)

Additionally Patterson later reminded Criswell of another pressing issue:
Just a brief note to remind you once again that amid all of the negotiations concerning the building fund, debt retirement, and the building of the new garage, we must also not forget the necessity for providing some sort of low cost parking for students. If we do not do this, we must face two inevitable realities. (1) We cannot move the students that we need to move into the YMCA for housing since there would be no place for them to park their automobiles. (2) More serious is the fact that our school cannot grow very much more until we provide the kind of parking that is needed. (Patterson, 1979)

Jack Pogue, owner of Jack Pogue and Company, was instrumental in establishing The W. A. Criswell Foundation in 1973. He approached the board of directors of the Criswell Foundation on November 10, 1978 and asked them to approve a $25,000 option to purchase the YMCA building for The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies.

The purchase price of the YMCA property was $40 per square foot or $772,000. The contract could not be closed until the YMCA could be moved to a new location, which would be one to two years. The board of directors of The W. A. Criswell Foundation approved the purchase of this $25,000 option. In 1981 this option was sold to Metropolitan Life and Lincoln Properties for $4.2 million (Directors, 1978). Proceeds
from this sale were deposited into the Causes for Christ Endowment in the W. A. Criswell Foundation (Pogue, 2003). By 1981, FBCD was $7.5 million in debt as a result of the purchase of property and construction of the Ross Avenue Parking Garage. Lincoln Properties agreed to purchase the Easterwood building and the Ross Ave Garage for $7.5 million with proceeds from parking fees to go to the FBCD. Subsequently, this amounted to nearly $1 million dollars annually for FBCD and provided free parking for the FBCD congregation on weekends and Wednesday evenings.

Facility acquisitions in the early 1970s included an application for a small FM radio station to serve the Christian community from a downtown location. This application was made in the name of the Criswell Bible Institute, thus the call letters K “CBI.” After the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) granted the application, the work of accumulating the funds needed for construction began in earnest. On September 11, 1975 The Criswell Foundation Board meeting minutes reflect the following concerning this financing:

….a request from Criswell Bible Institute for $75,000. Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Bible Institute, sent this letter of request to the W. A. Criswell Foundation, the (FBCD) Budget Control Committee and the Wills & Trusts Committee. In his letter he said that this $75,000 was to be used by Criswell Bible Institute to purchase an FM radio station. The annual operating expenses are to be met by donations sent in by listeners. Jack Pogue reported that he had discussed
this request with Lynn Craft of the Budget Control Committee and with Ed Drake of The Wills & Trusts Committee. Craft said that the Budget Control Committee had voted to recommend to the Deacons that $25,000 be put in the budget for this purpose. Ed Drake said that he had a source from which he felt that he could obtain $25,000. Since the Directors of the Criswell Foundation voted to give $25,000, CBI will receive $75,000 provided these other two committees give $25,000 each. It was reported that Richard Kearley had been chosen to head the project of obtaining the radio station. The Directors of the Foundation expressed their confidence in the ability and leadership of Kearley. (Board of Directors, 1975)

In May 1976, the first of the “Sounds of Sonshine” were aired in Dallas on a 1500-watt station” (Geiger, 1989). The small budget for studio and transmitter equipment left very little room for paid staff so volunteers performed most of the operations in the first year. Carl Singer joined KCBI in the fall of 1978 as station manager. His first few months were a time of major changes in the program schedule to include such names as Charles Swindoll, James Dobson, John McArthur and an easy listening format of current Christian music (Geiger, 1989).

A major milestone was reached in 1980 when the Federal Communication Council approved an application for KCBI to increase power from 3,000 to 9,700 watts. It was on August 6, 1980 that the power increase became effective and listeners in most
every part of Dallas were able to receive a consistent signal, and many in Fort Worth discovered the “Sounds of Sonshine” for the first time (Geiger, 1989).

Development

The Board of Trustees reported on March 14, 1971 the Criswell Bible Institute Financial Summary for October 7, 1970 to February 28, 1971. “The Institute carried its own weight financially with receipts from tuition and gifts in the amount of $19,502 through February 1971. This revenue exceeded the total expenditures for all purposes, including salaries, and promotion by almost $12,000. With the excellent beginning, the continued operation of the Institute was on a sound financial basis” (Trustees, March 14, 1971).

In December 1971, Criswell serving as President of the Institute, appointed a Development Board consisting initially of eight persons, including Bill Grubbs, a member of FBCD, as Chairman. He was to develop and implement comprehensive and long-range plans to obtain gift support for the Institute. On December 21, 1971, a motion was made and passed in the Board of Trustees meeting to ratify and approve Criswell’s action. W. C. McCord, chairman of the board of trustees, appointed a committee of trustees to meet with Grubbs to formulate the Development Board’s objectives, plan of organization, and methods of operation. As a result of that meeting the following objectives were adopted: (Grubbs, 1972)
1. To secure from sources acceptable to Board of Trustees the financial support designated by Board of Trustees as being necessary.

2. To build an appealing case for financial support of the Criswell Bible Institute.

3. To maintain a program of information and cultivation through all available media to spread information to identifiable giving constituency.

4. To establish programs for implementation in fund raising.

5. To recruit volunteer workers to serve on action committees.

The Institute Development Program functioned through the following organization: (1) Key individual donors (2) Key institution donors (3) Backboner program; small gifts from individuals (4) Company donors (5) Others to be designated.

The first members of The Criswell Bible Institute Development Board were: Bill Grubbs; Mary Crowley, President of Home Interiors; Lawson Ridgeway, Chairman of Centennial Homes; Doris Williams; Joe Smallwood; Fulton Murray; Earl Williams; and George Sibley. (Grubbs, 1972)

In 1973, in order to help finance the Bible Institute, Criswell formed the W. A. Criswell Foundation. The first fifteen thousand dollars was gifted by Jack Pogue of Jack Pogue and Co., a commercial realtor who was a Christian and member of FBCD. Criswell described the purpose and organization of the Foundation as follows:

While the foundation is set up to help support any endeavor of the church (FBCD), its main objective is to help provide for the long term financial needs of
our Bible Institute, First Baptist Church School, School of the Prophets, British Intern Program and Way of life Movement….From an initial gift of $15,000, it has grown so that it has a 1975 net worth value in excess of $750,000. The Foundation is owned by the First Baptist Church in Dallas. Its activities are governed by a Board of eleven Directors elected annually by the members of the Church in an open meeting. The Board is served by two advisory committees one being the Distribution Advisory committee and the other being the investment Advisory Committee. (Criswell, 1976)

Criswell served as president of the W. A. Criswell Foundation with two vice presidents; Harold Dunaway and Darrell Lafitte. The remaining trustees of the new foundation were: Louis Nichols, Lee Slaughter, George Sibley, John Haney, George Busiek, Ed Sammons, Blake Tucker, Kenneth Cooper (Directors, 1974). The Foundation is an exempt organization under Section 501 C (3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code as a religious organization. The books and records of the foundation are maintained under the principles of fund accounting. There are three types of funds in use at the Foundation: unrestricted, restricted and endowment (Ashley, 1988).

The Decade of the 1980s

Personnel

Patterson became President of the institute in 1975 and guided it for the next seventeen years. However, Patterson was not without critics during his tenure before
leaving for Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Patterson wrote Criswell in 1980 regarding his feelings:

Please accept this very limited expression of my appreciation to you for the joint statement that you issued with regard to the ministry of the Criswell Center and its president. I am well aware that it would have been a simple matter for you to simply do nothing, and this doubtless would have made life easier for you. Therefore, as usual, I am your debtor….Pastor, for every moment of trouble that I have been to you, I apologize. My prayer to God is that somehow I could have been worth ten times more happiness and joy to you in order to overcome those moments of sorrow. That, I suppose, we will have to leave as a judgment with you and the Lord, but we love you and thank God for you in any case. (Patterson, 1980)

Additionally, in 1981 it appeared the overall morale of The Criswell Center faculty and staff was an issue of overriding concern to Patterson. He expressed his trepidation in a letter to Criswell:

Have you ever noticed how the old dog, sitting by the fireplace, likes to hear his name called once in awhile and feel the master scratch his head? Well, I just wanted you to know that your faithful friend, the Criswell Center, really appreciates the scratch of the head on yesterday in the Cabinet Meeting….We realize that it is unreasonable and probably illogical to need the scratch on the
head occasionally. But by the same token, we would be very ungrateful if we did not express to you our deepest appreciation for the scratch. Believe me, you did more to help yesterday than you can possibly imagine, and I just want to express my appreciation to you for it. (Patterson, 1981)

Patterson later portrayed the relationship of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies and Chancellor Criswell in the following newspaper interview:

The CCBS is “very tightly tied” to the First Baptist Church, is governed by a board of trustees, said Patterson and is termed a “Center for Biblical Studies” rather than a seminary….Under the “umbrella” of CCBS are the Criswell Bible College, the Criswell Graduate School of Bible, KCBI-FM radio and the “Shophar,” a quarterly publication. The CCBS offers the bachelor’s and master’s degrees and is “very fundamental” in its teachings. It’s a very difficult school,” he said, and due to the Criswell influence, places “very strong emphasis on linguistics.” Students, for example, are required to be able to read the Hebrew of the Old Testament and Greek of the New Testament. He said Criswell sought “top-flight” biblical instruction and an intellectual approach to biblical studies. (Todd, 1983)

The year 1983 was also the year USA Today newspaper reported Criswell was considering retiring:

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But Criswell or “the Pastor,” as he’s known at First Baptist – has started to ponder retirement following a heart attack two years ago. The white-haired clergyman considered broaching the subject in Sunday’s sermon, but decided it would create too much consternation. (McCave, 1983)

Patterson responded to the possible retirement of Criswell and expressed his concerns about the chancellor’s decision:

…I have heard of some recent pressure on you to retire. I only have two things to say about that. First, please, under no circumstances, retire from the present ministry to accept a new one under duress laid upon you by men who are not noted for their godly and spiritual counsel….I want to be clear that our personal desire and the desire of our entire faculty and staff is that you be involved just as extensively as possible. (Patterson, 1984)

Criswell ultimately decided not to retire and continued to be senior pastor of FBCD for another ten years and served an additional eighteen years as chancellor of the college.

However, the relationship between Chancellor Criswell and the faculty and staff of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies appeared to be strained in the middle of the decade. In 1984, Criswell wrote Patterson delineating those concerns:

It is unthinkable and unimaginable to me that our staff leadership does not attend the services of the church every time the door is open. However other things may
be in organizational life, the church service is the heartbeat of everything Christianity is about. The Christian faith can be defined by the word, “church.”

Search your own soul. Do you faithfully attend the services of the church? How long has it been since you came down to the front with a soul you had won to the Lord, or a family you had won to the church? It seems to me that out of all the people in the church some of our staff take the smallest and littlest and paltriest interest in it. I am sure that you are there more often than I think, but I tell you another fact. There are some of you that I do not see in attendance in the church for months at a time. (Criswell, 1984)

Patterson weathered-the-storms of criticism from Criswell and later wrote about the chancellor’s ability to handle crisis situations:

Perhaps one of the most productive qualities in Criswell’s churchmanship is a quality of elasticity….In facing crisis moments in the church, the denomination, and elsewhere, Criswell has always recognized the importance of time. Though on occasion quick and thorough action may be taken, more often than not Criswell allows a thing to play itself out, believing that if it is of men it will perish, and if it is of God it will prosper, because, after all, these things are ‘in the imponderables of Almighty God.’ (Patterson, 1986)
Patterson would come to appreciate this attribute in Criswell even more, when a few years later, Criswell asked the trustees to give Patterson six months in which to find another position.

Academics

In the spring of 1980, The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies launched its first publication of the SHOPHAR PAPERS. Patterson wrote concerning the response to the first release:

In the past weeks I have received comments from many of you concerning *The Issue is Truth*, the first of the SHOPHAR PAPERS. As we have entered into this decade of decision, world affairs seem to be pointing more clearly than ever to the eminent return of our Lord. As Christians it behooves us to look ever more closely to the way in which we approach the word of God. We must examine very carefully our own religious traditions and be able and willing to cast them aside should we find that they are at variance with the Holy Scriptures. (Patterson, 1980)

The SHOPHAR PAPERS continue to serve as a vehicle of communication between The Criswell College and its stakeholders.

In a letter to Criswell in the spring of 1980, Patterson mentioned the status of the Library holdings entering the decade of the 1980s:
Very little needs to be added to what you have already seen (Library). The library is paid for, although some of the necessary remodeling costs are still not completed....Altogether, we have spent a quarter of a million dollars putting this library together and getting it housed. Since this was not part of our budget for the year, it has put pressure on us, but we are grateful that the Lord has shown the way. (Patterson, 1980)

The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies continued to add programs of study as described by Patterson in a letter to Criswell in June of 1983:

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that this fall the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies is inaugurating two additional programs of study. One course of study will lead to an Associate of Arts Degree which, since it is a fully accredited degree, will be transferable to other colleges and universities where students might wish to do the remainder of their academic program. The second course of study includes a new option in the baccalaureate program enabling a student to minor in counseling....This program will, in a year or so, become an additional major. (Patterson, 1983)

Criswell responded with an added suggestion five weeks after receiving Patterson’s letter:

One of the best and finest things we can do for those young pastors over there is that all of them be taught correct conversational-speaking English, and they ought
to pass that course before they are graduated. What do you think about that?

(Criswell, 1983)

Patterson replied the next day with the following letter:

Thank you for your call about young pastors being taught correct conversational English. We have a very heavy emphasis on this at the present time. Upon arrival at the school, every new student must take an English proficiency examination. If he fails that examination, then he must take a beginning English grammar course, which is non-credit. Once he has finished the non-credit English grammar course, he must then take the credit English grammar course….Now, Pastor, as you know from experience, some who know better have such bad habits that we are not able to guarantee absolutely that they will not continue to use unfortunate grammar, but we do our very best and have very strict requirements in this area. As a matter of fact, we are doing more in this area of English at the present time than any other college or university I know. It is simply no longer pressed at most of the universities. (Patterson, 1983)

Following the recommendation of The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation agency (SACS), in 1985, the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies became the name of the umbrella organization, which included the college and other, related entities such as radio station KCBI and the Criswell Bookstore. "The Criswell College" was adopted as the name of the degree granting entity of the Criswell Center,
named after its founder and current Chancellor, W. A. Criswell, Senior Pastor of the FBCD since 1944.

Two of the forty-one recommendations that SACS stipulated in 1985 were covered in correspondence to two trustees from Criswell:

(1) The concern that colleges associated with churches always allows for the possibility of a rift developing between a new administration in the church and the school. Therefore the accrediting association asked that the school have on file a paper guaranteeing a certain amount of notice be given to the school before eviction from the premises could occur. A minimum of a three-year notice would meet the criteria. (Criswell, 1984)

(2) The accreditation association specified that there must be additional space made available for a genuinely functional bookroom for the school. Criswell suggested two possible locations and asked Jim Ray Smith, one of the trustees, to follow this through. (Criswell, 1984)

SACS accredited the Criswell College for five years in 1985 and in 1990 for ten years, following another Self-Study.

In 1986, a non-refereed journal, *Criswell Theological Review*, was released. The theological journal was issued twice a year and included articles by leading evangelical scholars on timely topics. Many of the articles accepted for publication were the printed texts of leading scholars who had been invited by The Criswell College for the
Distinguished Lectureship series. Publication of the Criswell Review continued through 1994 and then was discontinued. A new Criswell Review will be released in 2004.

Facilities

Adequate facilities and space for a library continued to be an issue in 1979. On February 11, 1980, Patterson wrote Criswell a memo concerning a proposal of Robert Witty that the Luther Rice Seminary be given as an outright gift to the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies. Patterson had just returned from meeting with the Board of Regents of Luther Rice. He had been elected to the Board of Regents of Luther Rice while at this meeting. They requested that CBI submit a formal plan for the subsuming of the Luther Rice Seminary. Patterson wrote the following facts:

(1) Total assets of Luther Rice Seminary were about $1.7 million
(2) They owned some critical property in Jacksonville, FL
(3) CBI would probably operate the Luther Rice campus as a junior college campus, having a two-year program with the last two years to be done in Dallas.
(4) For the last 20 years Luther Rice had operated in the black.
(5) There would be no financial obligation on CBI’s part, any investment would be covered by the value of the property. (Patterson, 1980)

Nine months later on February 11, 1980 Patterson wrote Criswell “the administration has doubts that the merger will go through. They have concerns about
CBI identifying with what is considered a degree mill.” Also Witty had decided for the fourth time that he was not ready to step down and make disposition of the school. Patterson then wrote that he did not think the merger was plausible (Patterson, 1980). Thus an opportunity to expand CBI by merging with Luther Rice was not to be a viable option for more space or a separate campus.

In the spring of 1980, Patterson once again updated Criswell on the problem of parking for students and faculty:

The most severe problem that we continue to have is student parking. If we cannot find a solution to this soon, it is going to begin to hurt us significantly. This last year this alone kept us from being the fastest growing college in America. As it is, we were third in percentage growth, but we could have been first had we not had such an unbearable situation for students to have to struggle with parking. This next year will cost us 40 to 50 students if we do not get it solved. (Patterson, 1980b)

A temporary solution to the acute parking situation still was not without problems as Patterson outlined to Criswell seven months later in a letter:

Some months ago when parking problems were acute and we were informed that there was simply no place for students to park at the time but that there would be places in the future, we worked out a deal with Gaston Avenue Baptist Church whereby a number of our students could use their lot for parking and we would
run shuttles to Gaston Avenue to pick them up. At that time the church was elated with this decision and agreed that we could run the church vans to pick them up and take them back, and that the drivers of the vans would also have a place to park their cars so that they could have quick access to the vans and the delivery of the students. This, of course has saved a lot of money on parking. Then things began to change. We were first of all informed that we would be charged for the use of the vans. Then we were informed that we could no longer have parking places for the students driving the vans. The latest hassle concerns mileage charges…All of this money is not budgeted and is money I have to raise at the appropriate time. Sorry to bother you with this, but I just think you need to know what is happening. (Patterson, 1981)

By 1981 FBCD had sold the Easterwood Building and its Ross Ave garage to pay off its $7.5 million debt. The Criswell Foundation had sold their option on the YMCA building, which had been considered by Criswell and Patterson to be suitable to house The Criswell College. But once again it was not to become a reality.

In the early eighties Criswell was asked to become a member of the board of trustees of Dallas Baptist College in Dallas to assist in raising funds to alleviate a continuing debt (Pogue, 2003). In May of 1982, Criswell was chairman of the Board of Trustees of DBC. The financial crisis at DBC had reached a climax. Criswell made a most extraordinary proposal to solve the problem. In a letter to Marvin Watson, president
of DBC and sixty-nine other convention leaders, on May 7, 1982, Criswell wrote a one-sentence proposal. He said, “Would you let me have Dallas Baptist College if I assumed all its indebtedness” (Williams, 1998)? According to a newspaper article in *The Dallas Morning News*:

> Trustees of the financially beleaguered school had decided that week to appear before the executive board of the Baptist General Convention (BGCT) of Texas on June 8, 1982 to seek a $3 million loan to help alleviate the school’s $6.5 million indebtedness. The meeting was to be the third time the school had asked the organization for help out of a financial crisis. Some Baptist said that prospects of another loan were bleak because it would deprive other Baptist colleges and universities of funds. If the BGCT decided against keeping the Dallas Baptist College as a Texas institution, Criswell said he would like to buy the school. Criswell said he envisioned converting the school into a nondenominational conservative center of the evangelical faith and the Bible. (Parmley, 1982)

Eventually the trustees of DBC agreed that Criswell’s proposal was not a possibility until the decision was made to close the college. Ultimately a $3 million loan and gift package from the BGCT alleviated the immediate concerns for financing (Williams, 1998). In an interview, Criswell stated he had planned to combine the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies and DBC (Criswell, 2000).
It was in the fall of 1979 that a chance remark by Richard Kearly, a member of the Board of Trustees for The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, set the stage for a major change in the operation of KCBI radio station. Kearly noted that there was a non-commercial frequency assigned to the Dallas area which was not being used. This frequency had the potential for a power output of 100,000 watts. The investigation into that opportunity ultimately led to the FCC decision of 1987, which provided for KCBI to move to 90.9 (MHz) and increase power to 100,000 watts (Geiger, 1989).

The acquisition of a much more powerful transmitter reflected the efforts to create the Criswell Radio Network, or CRN, which was implemented in June of 1984. This expanded the reach of KCBI into four additional Texas communities. Radio stations were built and began operating, each using the basic programming from KCBI. These were located in Weatherford, Brownwood, Abilene, and Palestine, TX.

On September 14, 1989 a press release stated that Criswell, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas and chancellor of The Criswell College, announced a gift of $3 million from the Ruth Ray Hunt Philanthropic Fund of the Communities Foundation of Texas. The gift was to be used to purchase the property of the historic Gaston Avenue Baptist Church, located at the corner of Gaston and Haskell in east Dallas. This would become the home of The Criswell College. The Gaston Avenue congregation would be moving to a new location (Criswell, 1989).
As early as 1978, there was documentation that the First Baptist Church could have purchased this property for $1.5 million. Patterson wrote Criswell:

The purchase would solve numerous problems for Criswell Bible College. Office space was still a perpetual fight with educational directors of the church, parking had become a more serious problem with each passing day and a separate campus would satisfy the continual complaints of the accrediting people. The biggest liability would be upkeep and utility expense of a separate campus. (Patterson, 1978)

In December of 1981, Criswell wrote Noble Hurley, a member of the Gaston Avenue church and asked that he talk to the leaders of the church about opening their doors to make the church the home for The Criswell Bible College (Criswell, 1981). However, it was not to become a reality until 1989 when Ruth Hunt and her son Ray Hunt, owner of Hunt Oil Company, offered to purchase the Gaston property to fulfill the dream. Criswell in a letter to Ray Hunt of Hunt Oil Co. wrote on June 23, 1989:

The time had come, and I represent to you that if the Gaston Avenue Baptist Church property is acquired that I will assume the responsibilities of Chief Executive Officer of the College no later than January 2, 1990. This means that the First Church in Dallas must call another pastor, and it also means that I will pour the strength of my life into the college. (Criswell, 1989)
In 1980, after The W. A. Criswell Foundation put up $80,000 with Thomas Nelson Publishers, The Criswell Study Bible was published. The bible was advertised in the April issue of the SHOPHAR PAPERS as an effort to raise funds for The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies (Pogue, 2003). The full-page advertisement indicated that for $35 or more a copy of The Criswell Study Bible and a record album by Mary Crowley of Home Interiors would be sent to the donor (Patterson, 1980). There were also 1,000 numbered and autographed leather editions printed, which were given to donors who gave gifts of $1,000.00 or more to the Criswell College.

The Criswell Study Bible was an annotated reference Bible… Paige Patterson served as the Managing Editor, Mallory Chamberlin and Dorothy Kelly Patterson served as Assistant Editors. Jack Pogue served as Lay Editor. W. A. Criswell served as Editor… The Criswell Study Bible’s most striking features are the hundreds of footnotes providing commentary and explanation of difficult passages… The Criswell Study Bible was published in cloth-back versions, as well as the more expensive leather covered editions, which sold for $70.00. All editions were in the King James Version of the bible. (Jacobs, 1991)

Subsequently, in 1991, the Criswell Study Bible was republished in the New King James Version under the name of The Believer’s Study Bible and remains in print as of 2003 as The Baptist Bible.
In the spring of 1980, Patterson wrote Criswell and updated him on the finances of the Center for Biblical Studies:

In terms of endowment, we continue to make good progress. I would estimate at this point that the total committed endowment is about $1.5 million. If we could figure out a way to mount a campaign to sell the remaining 690 special edition Bibles, we would have a total endowment of about $2.3 million. In addition to that, there are about three other pretty sizeable gifts pending, most of which will become available fairly soon. Our hopeful goal for an endowment would be about $4 million by no later than 1982. Of course the real problem, as usual, is cash flow for day-by-day operations. The trouble here, of course, is that people do not give as readily to that. The dark side is that we live under immense pressure day after day to see whether or not we will have the money to pay the faculty. The bright side is that somehow the Lord has always provided it, and we have yet to miss payday. Basically, we are up on all of our bills, and in all, we are operating as effectively as any private college and much more efficiently than most.

(Patterson, 1980b)

In 1981 the Easterwood building and the Ross Ave garage, owned by First Baptist Church, were sold for $7.5 million to Lincoln Properties for a planned 41-story office tower. Thus a profit of $7.5 million dollars paid off the church debt. At this time the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies moved to the ninth floor of the Spurgeon Harris
Building, a building owned by FBCD with a parking garage attached. This would be their permanent location until 1989. However, this would not be the end to problems associated with a downtown location. By 1983, parking for students was too expensive and many were parking several blocks from the church.

As renovation of the Gaston Avenue Church for The Criswell College began in September of 1989, storm clouds were forming over The Criswell College (TCC). Ed Rawls, an Architect and Chairman of the Trustees of The Criswell College wrote Del Rogers, a fellow trustee on September 22, 1989, “the fall semester for TCC started with more students than ever before.” He expressed deep gratitude to Ruth Hunt and her family for their vision and gift toward the new campus. In recapping the events of the previous board meeting, Rawls stated that a loan of $700,000 from the Hunt family to the Criswell Foundation had been made in order to pay off the school’s debt. This meant that distributions from earnings from the foundation to the school over the next 12 months would go towards paying the loan back. The trustees would have to raise about $800,000 more this year than a normal year to avoid another financial crisis (Rawls, 1989).

Three days later Rawls sent the following letter to all trustee members including Criswell and Patterson, requesting a leave of absence:

It is with deepest regrets that I am requesting a leave of absence from the Board of Trustees of Criswell College. The church appointed committee to select an architect for the Gaston Avenue property has taken the position that my firm can
not be considered for that job if I am an active trustee….For a number of years I have provided architectural services for small projects at the school without charge; however, this one is a significant job and will involve a fee even though I will propose one below market. My firm desperately needs work and we have already invested considerable cost toward the job, which we need to try to recover. I have been working on the campus plans since 1981, when we drew renovation plans for the old YMCA before it was imploded and the site sold….I firmly believe that the school will be better served by an architect so thoroughly familiar with the needs of each area, rather than an outsider who doesn’t really know us….We have worked hard over the last eight months to understand our budget history and process. It is my persuasion that 1989-90 is a very critical year financially, as we look at ways to overcome an $800,000 shortage, plus a new plan to balance our budget in four years, which we adopted at the August board meeting. (Rawls, 1989)

Three months later, on December 8, 1989, a letter from Patterson to Criswell noted the impact of the budget restraints:

The budget restraints have been rather severe, and as a result we have reduced our budget by $307,000 for the year and that includes a cut in salary for the president, however no other personnel were laid off….On two different occasions in speaking to the church staff and the deacons, you have implied reckless and
financial irresponsibility on the part of the college. There simply is no fat and no waste on our side of the street. (Patterson, 1989)

The Decade Of The 1990s

The dawning of the decade of the 1990s began the transition process for Criswell. After a 27 month search for a pastor, the congregation of First Baptist Church called Joel Gregory to become Pastor in November, 1990. He assumed that responsibility January 1, 1991.

In December 1990 a letter from Criswell was sent to numerous Southern Baptist Leaders across the nation. His purpose in writing the following letter was to request that each of these pastors serve on a Board of Regents to advise him on matters concerning The Criswell College. Criswell clearly articulated his assessment of the genesis of The Criswell College as well as his vision for its future.

About twenty-five years ago, I began to pray about the possibility of establishing a very conservative institution of higher learning in Dallas. In the beginning, I considered an institution that would be similar to Moody Bible Institute. I had long admired the Moody people and programs. It seemed to me that another such institution that could serve the southern tier of our country and beyond might be helpful. In time, the Criswell Center was established in Dallas. Though the formula for this new institution had some of its stirrings from Moody, we wanted an institution that was clearly distinctive, and we believe that we have done that.
Thus, we have established this institution uniquely to prepare pastors and religious vocation workers for our churches. ... Eagerly do I want to form a board of Regents which would be composed of convention leaders across our country who would be available to me for advice and counsel. This board would be advisory and would meet annually at the Southern Baptist Convention. (Criswell, 1990)

Within eighteen months thirty regents (See Appendix C.) were serving in an advisory capacity. Patterson clarified the role of the new regents in a letter to one of these regents:

As you know, major changes are taking place here at the church and school (Criswell College) with the coming of Joel Gregory to be pastor. This means that Dr. Criswell is coming to be with us at the school, and one of the first things that he wanted to do was to organize two councils: one a smaller council and one a larger council. The smaller, called The Board of Regents will be chiefly an advisory council for Dr. Criswell. It consists of about 25 of the most prominent pastors in Southern Baptist life. ... He felt that, if he could enlist 25 such men to meet with him on an annual basis either here at the new campus or else at the Southern Baptist Convention and share with him honestly and forthrightly their perspectives on theological education and on the general direction that our school needs to go, it would be a council meeting well worthwhile each year. I think he
would plan as Chancellor and CEO of the institution to give you an update on what is happening and then seek the perspectives of the remainder of the Board of Regents. The Board of Trustees will continue to be the major operating board. (Patterson, 1990)

By February 1991, Criswell set down a more detailed vision for The Criswell College after moving to its new campus in East Dallas:

1. It is our prayerful hope that the College will grow to a campus enrollment of between 800 and 1000 students.

2. We are working toward the financial undergirding of the College to support not only the present but also its future enrollment.

3. We are building a Foundation to support the school and this foundation is not only large but in future years will be one of the largest for a small college in America. (Criswell, 1991)

Personnel

On March 26, 1990, Criswell wrote Patterson the following: “By all means and with all of the pleading of my deepest soul, let me urge you to throw the energies of the College behind the $6 million dollar repayment of debt that we have incurred at the bank and most of which is devoted to our school” (Patterson, 1989). Patterson responded on April 6, 1990 with one paragraph:
Your letter of March 26 is in hand. As you can see by the memorandum sent to
our faculty and trustees, we are prepared not only to meet with you on April 6 but
“to throw the energies of our college back of this six-million dollar repayment of
debt that we have incurred.” You can absolutely count on our willingness to help
in any way that we possibly can. (Patterson, 1990)

On May 3, 1990, Bo Sexton, the new chairman of the trustees wrote Criswell,
copying Patterson and seventeen of the trustees, advising them that:

By the end of the school’s fiscal year in August of 1990, the college will have
generated a $780,000 deficit. This is the situation with the college located at the
church, the demand for operating funds will greatly increase when the move to
Gaston Avenue is complete in the fall….As you know, we have done an in-depth
study of how to cut back even more on our expenses at the college. The resistance
we encounter here from Paige and the council who did the study is that it will
cripple the college, make us lose our accreditation, or rob the institution of its
morale. We do not want to hurt the school, but we do want to operate within our
means. I suggest that you, Paige Patterson and myself, along with a limited
number of key people get together and plan the approach to funding the school
over the next five years….I guess you could consider this letter both good news
and bad news. It is bad in that the school needs money now. This is nothing new.
Most schools need money. They always have, and they always will. The good
news is that this is a great school preparing preachers and churchmen for the future. What we must always do is have sound financial management with vision now, with a vision for the future. (Sexton, 1990)

Eighteen months later on November 1, 1991 Bo Sexton, chairman of the board of trustees (See Appendix D.) faxed a statement to Leo Bradley, V. P. of Administration; Charles Shelby, V. P. Development; and George Davis, Academic Dean. The statement read as follows:

The Trustees of Criswell College in their regularly scheduled meeting of October 28, 1991, made moves to strengthen the administrative and financial aspects of the school. They also acted to place increased efforts on the school’s mission outreach and its long held stand on biblical inerrancy by creating a new position to accomplish this. They are currently in discussion with Dr. Paige Patterson as to his role in this position, which it is anticipated would provide him with greater opportunity to support the conservative movement in the Southern Baptist Convention. Changes in other administrative personnel are not under consideration (Sexton, 1991).

One week later, Patterson was quoted as follows: “Essentially, they think I’m gone too much in pursuit of various things in the Southern Baptist Convention” (Parmley, 1991). The Religious Editor for The Dallas Morning News went on to report that:
Dr. Patterson, 49, was the driving force behind the fundamentalist takeover of the 14.5 million-member Southern Baptist convention. He has been president of the Baptist college since 1975. In removing him from the college presidency, the trustees last week offered him the new post of vice chancellor, but he told the Herald that he had “no idea” whether he would accept the “bump-you-up-stairs type position.” Dr. Patterson returned to Dallas on Monday from a speaking engagement at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA. He met with a committee of Criswell trustees at an undisclosed location Monday afternoon….The board of trustees had agreed to say nothing about the purpose of last week’s meeting until Dr. Patterson had time to consider their offer. But word leaked out, sending shock waves through the denomination. Twenty-four of the college’s 30 regents resigned en masse Friday to protest Dr. Patterson’s dismissal.

Dallas businessman Bo Sexton, chairman of the board of trustees, defended the trustees’ action Monday, saying it was best for the school and best for Dr. Patterson…the school needs to concentrate more on administrative and financial matters….“Paige loves to preach and to teach at Bible conferences and do public relations for the college, everybody has a function, a role to play, in a successful school. We are a group of loving trustees trying to do what’s best for the school.”
One regent reported that the vote to unseat Dr. Patterson was 14 –1, with the lone dissenter being Dallas businessman Brad Ray. A source close to the situation, who asked not to be identified, said Dr. Patterson was being “elevated” to the vice chancellor position at the same salary he is making as president.

Dr. Patterson told the Religious Herald that he is concerned about reports that many students may leave if he is no longer president. “I am concerned about the immediate effect of this, our student body is not happy with this turn of events, and neither are the alumni.” Dr. Patterson said he is “deeply hurt and disappointed” by the trustees’ action. (Parmley, 1991)

After five days of newspaper reports throughout the South, the following press release on November 5, 1991 read as follows:

Dr. W. A. Criswell, Chancellor of Criswell College, and Dr. Joel C. Gregory, Pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, have asked the Trustees to agree to wait on the Lord in connection with any leadership changes at the Criswell College. Dr. Gregory and Dr. Criswell are willing to become involved in bringing an equitable solution to the issues of concern of the Trustees. The Regents in attendance at the meeting held November 5 enthusiastically affirmed their continuing relationship with the College as members of the Board of Regents. This is the full and comprehensive text of the agreement with no additional statements. (Gregory, 1994)
On November 6, 1991 regent Adrian Rogers, one of the regents present at the hastily called meeting said, “We just prayed and came together in the spirit of the Lord” (Jones, 1991).

After returning from the Holiday break, Patterson wrote Criswell and Jack Pogue the following letter after receiving a $227, 243 check from the W. A. Criswell Foundation for The Criswell College:

While I have the opportunity, I also want to apologize to both of you for any heartache that either of you have had to endure with reference to the school. I know there have been many. Not one of them has been one that made me personally happy. With this letter comes my renewed dedication, whatever becomes of me ultimately, to make 1992 a heartache-free year for the two of you as it involves the school. (Patterson, 1992)

Five months later the Dallas Morning News reported the following: Criswell College president Paige Patterson was given six months to find another ministry after school trustees failed in their attempts to dismiss him in November, sources close to trustees said Tuesday. Dr. Patterson announced Tuesday during the twice-a-week chapel service at the East Dallas school that he was resigning to become president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C….Asked whether he had been forced out, the 49 year-old fundamentalist leader, who has been president of Criswell since 1975, said: “They have not tried
to force me to do anything….but they have a direction they want to go in. They may be right and they may be wrong.” (Parmley, 1992)

Criswell stated the following in an interview regarding the circumstances at the time of Patterson’s leaving The Criswell College:

I had a wonderful relationship with Paige, but I was alone in that. I have always loved Paige Patterson and Paige has always loved me. We have had a beautiful relationship through all of the years. But I was practically alone in that. I never had a meeting in all of my life that broke my heart so nearly as the meeting that was held here in Dallas. There were, I would say there were seven of the men who were trustees, (see Appendix D) and they just took advantage of the occasion to lambaste him (Patterson). And that is when it was decided that he would have to give it up. And I pled with them about it, and they agreed to wait until May of the following year to dismiss him. And that gave me time, to find another place for Paige. And I can’t describe to you the feeling of frustration, as I worked through every channel I knew how, to find a place of leadership for Paige. At the last moment, opportunity came for him to head Southeastern Seminary. And he left us to go to that school. There is no doubt that but much absence of Paige Patterson from the school (The Criswell College) hurt everything that was done to build the school. (Criswell, 2000)
On April 14, 1992, the search committee for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) announced a unanimous decision to recommend Patterson as President of SEBTS. On May 14, 1992 the board of trustees of SEBTS approved this recommendation.

On May 28, 1992 members of the Board of Regents for The Criswell College were notified with the following letter:

A Search Committee (see Appendix E) has been formed for the purpose of selecting the new President of Criswell College. Our Search Committee consists of six Trustees, Vice Chairman of the Deacons of First Baptist Church, one student, one alumni (sic), and one professor. Dr. Joel Gregory and Dr. W. A. Criswell are ex-officio members…. Any advice or recommendations you would have for our committee regarding the profile or person(s) we should be seeking is sincerely appreciated. (Baker, 1992)

The Minutes of the Criswell College Presidential Search Committee’s first meeting reflect the following:

Chairman Baker called upon Dr. Gregory for his comments…he believed the school should be viewed as a Bible college and that it should always remain a degree-granting institution. He believes some of the qualities a new president should have are: (1) Administrative abilities (2) Visibility in the denomination for student recruitment (3) Willingness to assist development officers in fund
raising….Dr. Criswell said that we must not regress. He would like for the school to offer some night classes for lay people, but emphasized that the school must not abandon its degree program….It is vital that the new president must be able to work with Dr. Gregory, so that the close relationship of First Baptist Church and the college can be maintained….Jack Pogue said he would like to see the following qualities in a new president: (1) Must be able to attract and recruit students (2) Must be able to have a good relationship with the Criswell College Regents and major pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention (3) Must be willing to be involved in fund raising….The general feeling of the members was that the new president needed to have an earned doctorate (Ph.D or Th.D) and that pastoral experience would be helpful, but not a necessary qualification. (Wicker, 1992)

Six weeks later, Chairman Baker of The Presidential Search Committee, delineated the following in correspondence:

….it is the burning desire of everyone involved with the school, trustees and faculty alike, that the school be totally uninvolved in any type of controversy, political activity, etc, and for its President and leadership to commit their time and effort to the development and training of young men and women for ministry and evangelism. (Baker, 1992)
In September of 1992 Richard Melick Jr., accepted the position as the fourth President of The Criswell College. Melick, a New Testament and Greek scholar, was brought in from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis to replace Paige Patterson, who resigned to become president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. (Service, 1996). He had extensive academic experience at Mid-America Baptist Seminary, where he directed the doctoral program and chaired the New Testament Department.

Criswell was stunned when during the Wednesday evening service at First Baptist Church, Dallas on September 30, 1992, pastor Joel Gregory read his letter of resignation to the congregation and paid two body guards to escort him out of the sanctuary and whisk him away to his car parked several blocks away. (Gregory, 1994)

The Dallas Morning News ran the following account:

Dr. Gregory said he had been led to believe that he would rise to control of the 28,000 member church within a matter of months. But church members desire to see Dr. Criswell remain until his 50th anniversary of service, in 1994, indicating that the succession would take four years….Dr. Criswell allowed Dr. Gregory to handle day-to-day operations of the largest Southern Baptist church. The elder pastor reduced his preaching duties to one service of four on Sundays, and he no longer attended church staff meetings. (Kessler, 1992)
On Monday, October 5, 1992, The Dallas Morning News ran the following account of Criswell’s Sunday morning sermon:

Dr. Criswell never specifically said he was resigning, but announced in his sermon that he would devote himself to the church’s Criswell College and serve the congregation only “as a fellow member of this church.” “I will pour my life and strength and prayers into the building of that wonderful school.” (Freedenthal, 1992)

With Melick acting as president of The Criswell College, Criswell made himself available to teach bible classes on campus. As The Criswell College celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1996, the following article described the impact of Melick:

“Our focus has shifted away from politics to ministry,” said Richard R. Melick Jr., Criswell’s president since 1992. “Paige had involvements that were very broad, and they distracted him from local ministry,” Melick said. “We don’t have the same drive to change things.” In the past two years, officials have started bachelor’s and master’s programs in urban ministry and a master’s in worship leadership. They’ve also designed a part-time master’s program in Christian leadership for lay people who want to teach Sunday school or serve as deacons. And officials have intensified their emphasis on counseling degree programs. Enrollment has increased by 50 percent in the past two years, from a low of 301 in 1993-94 to 452 at the start of the 1995-96 school year; 28 percent are non-
Baptist. They are drawn from 34 states and 38 countries. The number of churches supporting the school has grown from 14 two years ago to 30 this year. And the student body is increasingly diverse; 18 percent are black, 10 percent are Hispanic and 18 percent are women. (Service, 1996)

Melick further articulated his commitment to Christian higher education when he wrote:

I believe in Christian education. In fact, I have given my life to it. For over twenty-two years, I have been involved in preparing young men and women for Christian ministry. Now, as President of The Criswell College, I pray daily that God will enable us to prepare those whom he sends our way for a relevant Christian ministry as we seek to educate the head, the heart and the hand of each student. (Melick, 1995)

On July 3, 1996, Melick announced his resignation. Melick announced that out of respect for W. A. Criswell, in view of his differences regarding the prophetic interpretation of the church and the Great Tribulation that occurs prior to Christ’s Second Coming, he was voluntarily submitting his resignation.

The Chronicle of Higher Education published the following account of the events leading up to Melick’s resignation:

Mr. Melick said he was surprised a few weeks ago when a member of the Board of Trustees asked about his theological differences with Mr. Criswell. When he
was hired the president said, he discussed his views with people on campus, although not with Mr. Criswell. “I thought it was already behind us, and we were moving ahead.” Mr. Melick said. But in talking with the founder in recent weeks, he said he realized that their differing beliefs mattered to Mr. Criswell. Mr. Melick called his decision to resign “very friendly.” “He didn’t ask me to leave,”

the president said. But he said he knew it was important to Mr. Criswell for his views on the Rapture to be shared by the college’s president. “I really respect him,” Mr. Melick said. “I believe this needs to be a school that carries out his theology and goals. If he feels that is important, then it is. After word of the doctrinal dispute surfaced, the trustees strongly supported Mr. Melick, asking him to stay at least two more years. But he said he thought it would be best for the college if he resigned. (Lively, 1996)

On August 6, 1996, a new Presidential Search committee was appointed composed of Chairman; Jack Pogue, Vice Chairman; Curtis Baker, R. E. Lee, Rev. Glenn Meredith, Prof. Rudy Gonzalez, and Ex-Officio; Jack Brady (Brady, 1996).

The board of trustees elected C. Richard Wells, an alumnus, unanimously on December 5, 1996 to become the fifth president of The Criswell College. Wells received the M. Min. degree from The Criswell College in 1979, and in 1982 returned to teach at the college. He later served also as Dean of Student Affairs. In 1988, Wells was a member of the founding faculty of Beeson Divinity School at Sanford University, in
Birmingham, Alabama, where he taught in the areas of homiletics and pastoral counseling until his appointment as the President of The Criswell College. In addition to his many academic credentials, he had extensive experience as a pastor and preacher. His vision was for a generation of men and women inflamed by the glory of God, and superbly prepared to preach, evangelize, counsel and teach.

The Dallas Morning News reported the following concerning the announcement of C. Richard Wells:

Criswell College, where former president Paige Patterson engineered conservatives’ 1980s takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention, has shifted its emphasis away from church politics in recent years and toward academics and urban ministry. Students come from 34 states and 38 countries. The school recently launched a $12 million capital campaign and is buying property in its Old East Dallas neighborhood for future expansion. “I think the college at this point has essentially depoliticized itself,” Dr. Wells said. “I don’t think it’s living in the shadow of those kinds of political movements now. I think it’s beginning to find itself as an institution of higher learning now. (Caldwell, 1996)

By the fall of 1997, enrollment reached 502 students. The following demographic information was published:

Students come from 34 states and 32 countries. Twenty percent of our students are female, thirty-five percent are minority and seven percent are international.
Students range in age from 18-89 with the median age of 32.5. The student instructor ratio is 14.76 to 1. Twenty-three percent of students are serving a church in a paid position; forty-eight percent are serving a church on a volunteer basis. Eighty-seven percent of students are called to full-time Christian service. This includes: Pastor (34.6%); Christian Counseling (11.3%); Youth Ministry (9.2%); Christian Education (6.8%); and Missions (6.1%) (Services, 1998).

In the Spring Convocation Lectures of 1998, Well’s summarized God’s vision for The Criswell College as follows:

So what is God’s vision for the Criswell College? Let me address the question in terms of five key words, then summarize the vision in a statement. The first key word, not surprisingly, is *Word*. The *Word of God* defines The Criswell College vision like nothing else….Our focus on the Word will continue undiminished into the twenty-first century….The second key word is *church*. There are very few schools, especially of this size and with comparably high academic standards, that operate under the direct governance of a church, as The Criswell College operates under the authority of First Baptist Church, Dallas….That is exactly where we ought to be, because we are called to carry out a part of the church’s mission….But, in the end, we are simply doing what God calls the church to do….On the other hand we are serving the churches. The third key word is *gospel*….theological institutions can easily degenerate into swamps, croaking with
theologs who have not the foggiest idea that the gospel is the heart and soul of theology….The fourth key word is on the word *theologia*….When we emphasize *theologia*, lived theology….the measure of our success is how well our graduates live out their theology…*Leadership* is the fifth key to our vision….colleges exist to develop cultural leadership. (Wells, 1998)

As the decade of the 1990s closed Wells continued as president of The Criswell College.

**Academics**

As the college prepared to move to its new campus in 1991, about 325 students from twenty-one countries and thirty-two states were enrolled the following study programs:

- Associate of Arts (63-hour program in biblical Studies or in Missiology);
- Diploma in Biblical Studies (96-hour non-degree program);
- Bachelor of Arts (129-hour degree program) Majors: Old Testament or New Testament, Theology and History, Pastoral Theology;
- Master of Divinity (90-hour professional degree program);
- Master of Missiology (96-hour professional degree program for missions) (College, 1990).

The last three years of Patterson’s tenure showed a decline in fall enrollment from 383 in 1988 to 322 in 1992. Enrollment continued to decrease until the fall of 1994.
Melick designed a part-time master’s program in Christian Leadership for lay people who wanted to teach Sunday School or serve as deacons. He intensified the emphasis on counseling degree programs. Enrollment increased by 50% from a low of 301 in 1994 to 452 in 1995. Under his leadership 28% of the enrollment were non-Baptist. Students came from 34 states and 38 countries. The diversity of the student population went from 8.4% Black in 1992 to 17.9% Black in 1995, from 5.3% Hispanic in 1992 to 10% Hispanic in 1995 and from 16.3% female in 1992 to 17.9% female in 1995 (Wilson, 2003). As The Criswell College celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1995, 600 graduates claimed the school as their alma mater.

Additionally, Well’s emphasized continuing education when he approved The Counseling Institute, designed to provide on-going training for pastors, church staff members, counselors and chaplains (McGuire, 2000). Also the Jerry Vines Institute was founded to provide training for pastors on how to interpret the bible more accurately, develop intellectually, apply Biblical truths, communicate with freshness and identify and the use of study tools (Allen, 1998).

As chancellor, Criswell devoted his later years to preparing men and women to preach and teach the Word of God. He taught classes or co-taught at The Criswell College. His classes included lectures on the book of Daniel, Revelation, Topics in Theology, and Sermon Preparation. In 1995, Jack Pogue and the directors of The W. A. Criswell Foundation authorized the compilation of 2000 of Criswell’s video and audio
sermons and transcription of these tapes along with his available outlines. Through the technology of video and audio streaming the wacriswell.com web site provides a tool for seminary and college students, pastors, and teachers of the inerrant and infallible Word of God.

The Criswell College, in the fall of 2000, offered 1 Associate of Arts Degree, 5 Bachelor of Arts Degrees, 5 Masters of Arts Degrees and a Diploma Program. There were 15 full-time faculty and more than 12 adjunct faculty professors. Wells wrote in the self-study response to the Southern Association of Colleges regarding the most significant change implemented since his arrival:

In March of 1999, trustees approved, in principle, the development of a cooperative agreement with Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. As originally conceived, it was thought that an agreement could be concluded for implementation by the fall 1999 semester. The agreement would seek to identify areas for cooperation in the development of joint academic programs and the establishment of a Southwestern Seminary extension campus at The Criswell College. In all programs, students develop gifts and hone skills for ministry, as they cultivate a passion for God and a heart for the gospel. (Groat, 2000)

Monday block classes offered by Southwestern Seminary did begin on the Criswell College campus in the fall of 1999. The development of cooperation on joint
programs and on the use of Criswell College faculty teaching some of these classes were concepts that required time to work through.

By the year 2000, The Criswell College had graduated 1,225 students. Bachelors of Arts graduates numbered 810 while Masters Degree graduates numbered three hundred and sixteen (Research, 2000). Additionally enrollment in the fall of 2000 was 424, with the highest level of fall enrollment reached in 1997 with 502. In the spring of 2000, 40% of the students were classified as attending day classes, 30% attending day and night classes, and 30% attending classes at night only (Research, 2000).

Facilities

The decade of the 1990s began with the realization of a separate campus for The Criswell College. In September of 1991, classes began in the $5 million renovated Gaston Avenue facility underwritten by FBCD. The facilities were described in the recruitment brochure as follows:

The Criswell College campus includes the T. A. Patterson World Mission Research Center; Ruth Chapel, a 1,400-seat structure refurbished through a gift from Mrs. Ruth Ray Hunt; The John Jasper Homiletics Laboratory, equipped with video cameras and cassette reorders; The Charles P. Shelby Academic Computer Lab, with 20 Compaq computers; and The Wallace Library, built in 1904 and housing approximately 100,000 volumes, a collection of rare books, and 500 periodical subscriptions. (Services, 1996)
Additionally the parking issue was resolved as described in the Self-Study for The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools:

The campus proper consists of three contiguous buildings, a parking lot on the south side (200 spaces) and a vacant lot across Gaston on the north side. The Robert and Patsy Wallace Library occupies the east end of the campus. The Ruth Chapel auditorium is the center structure and connects to the Nelson and Velma Farry Administration/Classroom Building on the west side, bordering Hill Street. (Groat, 2000)

A tribute to Mrs. Ruth Ray Hunt and her generous support of the acquisition of the new campus read as follows:

Everyone who has met or knows Mrs. Ruth Ray Hunt recognizes within her the qualities of a caring Christian woman and a generous individual. Nowhere have these qualities been more evident than in her faithful support of The Criswell College. The magnanimous spirit of Mrs. Hunt is exemplified from these magnificent edifices to the handsomely landscaped grounds. In these difficult economic times when most respond with fear and a weakness of faith in God’s providence, Mrs. Hunt is a stalwart of the Christian faith, as demonstrated through her comprehensive vision of God’s plans for The Criswell College. All Christians would do well to pursue the aims and visions of Mrs. Hunt. What she has done is not merely for today, but these deeds shall glorify the Lord and His purpose.
through The Criswell College for many generations to come. (College, 1991)

Soon after the move of The Criswell College to its new campus on Gaston Avenue in Dallas, enrollment figures declined instead of increasing. The last three years of Patterson’s tenure showed a decline in fall enrollment from 383 in 1988 to 322 in 1992. Enrollment continued to decrease until the fall of 1994. Criswell began underscoring the need for a residence hall. He regularly reminded donors as well as faculty and staff that if The Criswell College had a residence hall, the enrollment would double overnight.

Melick and Criswell discussed options of either building a residence hall with underground parking on the existing parking lot or the purchase of an existing building. In 1992 a vacant lot directly across Gaston Avenue came up for sale. The Criswell Foundation purchased the property for $202,127. Subsequently the five-story convalescence home next to the vacant lot became available in 1999. However, the price for the building was $8 million. For three years, different buyers considered purchasing this five-story building, but as a result of city code requirements for parking spaces they would also need the vacant lot owned by The Criswell Foundation. Finally in 2002, after heavy negotiations between Jack Pogue of The Criswell Foundation as well as a trustee of the college, a deal was arranged with the owners of the convalescence home to sell the building to The Criswell College for $1.1 million. A construction loan was approved and
the Residence Hall is slated to open to house 200 students in the fall of 2004 (Pogue, 2003).

KCBI radio continued to prosper throughout the decade of the 1990s. Not only did the listening audience increase to over 200,000 a week by the year 2000, but gifts to support the broadcast increased from $353,000 annually in 1993 to $1.2 million in 2000 (Harris, 1993). Under the leadership of Ron Harris, KCBI radio station ranked in the top ten of all religious broadcasting stations in the nation by the end of the decade. The style of broadcasting was designed to appeal to the broadest segment of the evangelical Christian community in the respective service areas.

Various personnel of The Criswell College participated in regularly scheduled KCBI programs through the years. Such appearances provided visibility and stature for the college. These included Richard Land with his commentary, Issues of the Eighties, Alan Streett’s program Street Meeting, and Paige Patterson’s Daily Devotions (Subcommittee, 1993).

Development

As the decade of the 1980s shifted to the decade of the 1990s Criswell witnessed the fruit of his development efforts when Mrs. Ruth Hunt and her son Ray committed to spend $3.0 million dollars to purchase the Gaston Avenue Baptist Church property for the new Criswell College campus. Renovation of the Gaston Avenue Church for The Criswell College began in September of 1989. Ed Rawls, an Architect and
Chairman of the Trustees of The Criswell College wrote Del Rogers stating that a loan of $700,000 from the Hunt family to the Criswell Foundation had been made in order to pay off the school’s debt. This meant that distributions from earnings from the foundation to the school over the next 12 months would go towards paying the loan back. The trustees would have to raise about $800,000 more this year than a normal year to avoid another financial crisis (Rawls, 1989).

Ultimately this deficit contributed to the desire on the part of the board of trustees to move Patterson into the position of Vice-chancellor and replace him as president. As Melick replaced Patterson as president, Criswell began to pick up the public relations on behalf of the college, leaving Melick to administer the college and get an acceptable infrastructure in place. Criswell traveled regularly to speaking engagements throughout the Southern Baptist Convention from 1993 through 1997.

Not only did enrollment fall off the last three years of Patterson’s tenure, but also now an additional $800,000 was needed annually to maintain the operating expenses associated with the new and independent campus. The financial administrator wrote the following concerning the constant struggle for operating funds for The Criswell College:

Gift revenue consistently provides the prime source of operating income for The Criswell College…the timing of cash gifts is unpredictable. A greater portion of cash from tuition and endowment distributions would improve the predictability of cash and improve the ability to execute budgeted plans. The median
contribution of gifts within the college’s peer group is only 35% of total revenue….In 1999, gift income provided 58% of total revenue for The Criswell College. The remaining 65% of the peer group funding is provided by tuition, endowment income and government aid. Since the Criswell College does not accept government funds, tuition and endowment revenue must make up the difference. (Groat, June 2003)

Other struggles surfaced after the departure of Patterson. A reconstruction of a Criswell College database was performed soon after Melick became president, which totaled 1500 names. The database continued to grow from 2,300 in 1994 to over 6,000 in 1997 (Development, 1998). Criswell, Melick and the board of trustees gave specific direction that the database was to be expanded outside the First Baptist Church family so as not to compete for financial support with church related programs. Business luncheons were incorporated into the fundraising event schedules, which included speakers such as: Truett Cathy, of Chick-fil-A; Tom Landry, Coach of The Dallas Cowboys; John Templeton of the Templeton Fund, and many other well known Christian professionals and athletes.

Other changes for TCC were reflected in the Self-Study presentation to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools:

From 1996 through 1999, revenue from all sources increased from $3,456,000 to $4,105,000, a 19% increase. When viewed as a percent of total revenue, net
tuition and fees increased from 16%, to 19%, endowment income rose from 7% to 21%, and gift income declined from 75% to 58%. This shift reflected the desired reduction in the college’s dependence upon private gifts to underwrite daily operations…. The growth in tuition revenue was due entirely to increased rates as tuition per FTE increased from $1,506 to $2,147. However, tuition revenue remained well below the peer group median of $3,503 per FTE and the corresponding 40% of total revenue. This gap with the peer group reflects the Dr. Criswell’s long standing philosophy that tuition levels should not be a barrier to those sensing God’s call into Christian service. (Groat, June 2003)
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

One of the most common techniques used to enhance credibility is triangulation. Triangulation refers to the use of different data sources, time periods, and data collection methods that result in similar findings (McMillan & Wergin, 2002). Primary source documents and secondary source newspaper accounts coincide with interviews of W. A. Criswell, Paige Patterson, and Jack Pogue. Furthermore, Jack Brady, a trustee of The Criswell College for thirty years and Roy Metts, professor of Greek Studies and a member of the faculty since 1976, have analyzed research findings for researcher bias.

Moreover from 1986 to 1995 I served on Criswell’s Senior Business Council for First Baptist Church, Dallas Texas that was renamed The Chancellor’s Council in 1993. This ten to twelve member council was comprised of members of First Baptist Church and other executives that served in senior level positions within their businesses or professions. Members included Erle Nye, CEO TXU; Don Hodges, President First Dallas Securities; Jack Pogue, Jack Pogue and Co.; Ruth Ray Hunt, Hunt Oil; Lee Drain, Senior V. P. Republic Bank; Floy Bourn, V. P. Nations Bank, and Bill McCord, President of Ensearch Corporation. In 1986 I replaced Mary Crowley, President Home Interiors; I
was manager of the Sears, Ross Avenue store in Dallas, Texas. Each month a member of this council hosted a luncheon for council members where Criswell sought advice regarding business issues, personnel issues, and financial issues related to The Criswell College and First Baptist Church. My personal experience during this period also serves to confirm the findings from the research.

Research findings resulted in the following answers to the research questions posed in chapter 1:

1. What was the purpose for establishing a Christian institution of higher education sponsored by First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas? Criswell articulated his assessment of the genesis of The Criswell College as well as his vision for its future in a letter written to regents in 1990.

   About twenty-five years ago, I began to pray about the possibility of establishing a very conservative institution of higher learning in Dallas. In the beginning, I considered an institution that would be similar to Moody Bible Institute. I had long admired the Moody people and programs. It seemed to me that another such institution that could serve the southern tier of our country and beyond might be helpful. In time, the Criswell Center was established in Dallas. Though the formula for this new institution had some of its stirrings from Moody, we wanted an institution that was clearly distinctive, and we believe that we have done that. Thus, we have established this institution uniquely to prepare pastors
and religious vocation workers for our churches. (Criswell, 1990a)

2. What was the rationale for establishing a Christian institution of higher education in an area where a high density of Christian colleges already existed? Paige Patterson, in an interview with a newspaper reporter, commented on the rationale for establishing a Christian institution of higher education in an area where a high density of Christian colleges and seminaries already existed:

We’re not really trying to be competitive with our Baptist schools, but other educational institutions are anywhere from “curious to antagonistic” toward the school. Baptist colleges and universities in Texas are liberal arts schools where students can only elect to major in religion, theology or Christian studies. First Baptist’s college, on the other hand, is totally a Bible school, where students earning a four-year bachelor’s degree spend their one hundred twenty eight semester hours studying the Bible or Bible-related subjects like Hebrew and Greek. (Moore, 1976)

These requirements remain as part of the degree programs today for undergraduate and graduate degrees at The Criswell College.

3. What was Chancellor Criswell’s vision for a Christian institution of higher education in its infancy? Criswell articulated his vision for an institute in his twenty-fifth year anniversary sermon on October 5, 1969:
One of the things that I want us to do -- and I haven’t time to speak of it. I want us to have a Bible Institute in our church. I’ve tried unsuccessfully to have a day school here, a high school, and elementary school. I cannot succeed in it. And, as I think and as others have talked to me, I believe we can have a Bible institute here because of our facilities and they’re vacant and open at night. At least, something we can do and we have the fine, dedicated theological professors and Bible teachers to do it. We start small, of course, but I believe it will grow. And I believe we can build, in this church, using these facilities; just as they are, one of the great Bible Institutes teaching God’s word, one of the great Bible Institutes of the nation; the most effective of ministries. (Criswell, 1969)

Indeed Criswell did use the facilities of First Baptist Church to house the Criswell College. However, this proved to be an ongoing problem for both the college, as well as, First Baptist Church. Patterson, when interviewed for this dissertation, noted that shared facilities always create problems for institutions of higher education (Patterson, 2003).

While the Criswell College does teach God’s word, it remains to be seen as to whether it will be considered a great bible institute. The fact that the college has graduated more than twelve hundred students is an argument for it being an effective ministry.

4. Does The Criswell College reflect that vision thirty years later? Criswell wrote, “We have established this institution uniquely to prepare pastors and religious
vocation workers for our churches.” The following was noted in the self-study prepared for The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1999:

The first issue in our self-study was to determine whether The Criswell College (TCC) was fulfilling it purpose statement in developing men and women for ministry leadership. In May of 1999, an alumni survey was sent to 800 former students who had graduated from TCC with a B.A. degree or M.A. degree. Out of the 800 mailed surveys to graduates from 1985 to 1999 nine per cent responded. The results reflected that 75% of the B. A. degree graduates and 65% of the M. A. degree graduates were in full-time or part-time ministry (Cowan, June 2003). These survey results make a case that indeed the Criswell College reflects the vision of Criswell to develop men and women for ministry leadership.

5. How did Chancellor Criswell develop an endowment for The Criswell College? In 1973, in order to help finance the Bible Institute, Criswell formed the W. A. Criswell Foundation. Jack Pogue of Jack Pogue and Co., a commercial realtor, who was a Christian and member of FBCD, gifted the first fifteen thousand dollars. Criswell described the purpose and organization of the Foundation as follows:

While the foundation is set up to help support any endeavor of the church (FBCD), its main objective is to help provide for the long term financial needs of our Bible Institute, First Baptist Church School, School of the Prophets, British Intern Program and Way of life Movement….From an initial gift of $15,000, it
has grown so that it has a 1975 net worth value in excess of $750,000. The Foundation is owned by the First Baptist Church in Dallas. Its activities are governed by a Board of eleven Directors elected annually by the members of the Church in an open meeting. The Board is served by two advisory committees one being the Distribution Advisory committee and the other being the Investment Advisory Committee. (Criswell, 1976)

In 2003, the W. A. Criswell Foundation has $11 million in assets, which includes forty-six endowments set up by individuals. Approximately ninety percent of the approved earnings each year go to The Criswell College and nearly nine percent annually is distributed to First Baptist Academy. KCBI radio and the Dallas Life Foundation receive the remainder.

6. What involvement did Chancellor Criswell have in the acquisition of physical facilities for The Criswell College? The Criswell Bible Institute initially met in the facilities of the First Baptist Church in Dallas. In 1975 Patterson wrote Criswell regarding the availability of the Easterwood Building across the street from FBCD, which housed Southern Methodist University’s (SMU) night school. Patterson wrote that he wanted to pursue the possibility of working out a five-year lease with SMU. Criswell responded to this letter and suggested Patterson meet with Jack Pogue, a wealthy commercial realtor and member of FBCD (Criswell, 1975).
On August 8, 1975 Patterson wrote Criswell concerning the possible purchase of the SMU Easterwood Building. The price was $800,000 to $1,000,000. He listed the benefits of purchasing this building as (1) a home for Criswell Bible Institute (CBI), caring for up to 500 students and all the faculty that would be needed in the foreseeable future (2) no extensive remodeling cost (3) two equipped laboratories for high school (4) expanded library facilities for a collection of 30,000 volumes (Patterson, 1975). On January 19, 1976, FBCD purchased the Easterwood building from SMU for $850,000. The Easterwood building then became the home of The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies. After this acquisition, the FBCD owned more downtown property than any other religious or business institution. Only the City of Dallas owned more (Blow, 1976).

In May of 1982, Criswell was chairman of the Board of Trustees at Dallas Baptist College (DBC). A financial crisis at DBC had reached a climax. Criswell made a most extraordinary proposal to solve the problem. In a letter to Marvin Watson, president of DBC and sixty-nine other convention leaders, on May 7, 1982, Criswell wrote a one-sentence proposal. He said, “Would you let me have Dallas Baptist College if I assumed all its indebtedness” (Williams, 1998)? In an interview, Criswell stated he had planned to combine the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies and DBC (Criswell, 2000).

The fact that Criswell was serving as chancellor of The Criswell College at the same time he was serving as chairman of the board of trustees of Dallas Baptist College would suggest a conflict of interest. However, an interview with Jack Pogue confirmed
that Criswell was asked to serve on the DBC board because the financial debt had reached the critical sum of $7.5 million. Criswell’s influence with the largest Southern Baptist congregation in America provided an additional pool of financial support.

Criswell continued his efforts to obtain adequate facilities when in December of 1981, he wrote Noble Hurley, a member of the Gaston Avenue Baptist church and asked that he talk to the leaders of the church about opening their doors to make the church the home for The Criswell Bible College (Criswell, 1981).

On September 14, 1989 a press release stated that Criswell, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas and chancellor of The Criswell College, announced a gift of $3 million from the Ruth Ray Hunt Philanthropic Fund of the Communities Foundation of Texas. The gift was to be used to purchase the property of the historic Gaston Avenue Baptist Church, located at the corner of Gaston and Haskell in east Dallas. This would become the home of The Criswell College. The Gaston Avenue congregation would be moving to a new location (Criswell, 1989).

Soon after the move of The Criswell College to its new campus on Gaston Avenue in Dallas, enrollment figures declined instead of increasing. The last three years of Patterson’s tenure showed a decline in fall enrollment from 383 in 1988 to 322 in 1992. Enrollment continued to decrease until the fall of 1994. Criswell began underscoring the need for a residence hall. He regularly reminded donors as well as
faculty and staff that if The Criswell College had a residence hall, the enrollment would double overnight (Criswell, 2000).

In 2002, a five-story building across the street from The Criswell College was purchased to become the residence hall for Criswell College students.

7. What influence did Chancellor Criswell have over the academic curriculum development in the history of The Criswell College? Criswell wrote, “In the beginning, I considered an institution that would be similar to Moody Bible Institute. I had long admired the Moody people and programs (Criswell, 1990). Criswell turned the academic responsibilities over to James W. Bryant, his assistant pastor, with the direction “do whatever you want to do, just make it academically excellent” (Bryant, 2003).

On January 12, 1971, adjunct professors for the Criswell Bible Institute were drawn largely from the faculties of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS), Dallas Baptist College (DBC), and Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS). The first semester opened with eight Bible courses offered at two separate times each on Tuesday evenings, and three classes in the Conservatory of Music. When registration closed, 329 students had enrolled (Trustees, 1971).

Perhaps one of the greatest contributions Criswell made to Adult Education in the decade of the 1970s, was the School of the Prophets begun on March 19, 1971. Pastors from across America were invited to enroll. Criswell articulated his involvement when he wrote:
….for our first annual School of the Prophets. Six of the twenty hours of study will be led by me, personally, outlining for you my study habits, sermon preparation, approach to staff-relationships, counseling techniques, soul-winning, sermon delivery, pastoral convictions, etc. (Criswell, 1971)

The School of the Prophets continued to be offered annually throughout the decade of the 1970s and served as a tool for continuing education for pastors across America until March of 1988, when attendance began to decline.

As chancellor, Criswell devoted his later years to preparing men and women to preach and teach the Word of God. He taught or co-taught classes at The Criswell College. His classes included lectures on the Books of Daniel and Revelation, Topics in Theology, and Sermon Preparation.

Even after his death in 2002, Criswell continues to provide continuing education for millions of people who are pastors, students, Sunday School teachers, and lay people. Nearly 2000 of Criswell’s video and audio sermons and transcriptions of these tapes along with his available notes are accessible through the technology of video and audio streaming at wacriswell.com. This web site has had several million hits since being released on October 7, 2001. Jack Pogue of Jack Pogue & Co. has underwritten the development and continued operation of this web site.
Conclusions

Research results exposed some themes that deserve discussion. Criswell could be perceived to be power-driven and calculating in his offer to assume Dallas Baptist College’s debt and combine The Criswell College and Dallas Baptist College. The CEO of a business organization with a $10 million annual budget, operating a college with a $4 million annual operating budget and a radio station with a $2 million annual operating budget; making such an offer would be viewed as a visionary leader. This divergence in interpretation exists because our culture finds strong administrative skills and aggressive acquisition skills to be inconsistent with our expectations of a pastor or chancellor of a religious institution. Criswell possessed a rare combination of abilities compared to other pastors. He had a pastor’s heart for his congregation, oratory ability to deliver sermons that children as well as scholars could comprehend, and the business acumen to build and lead a multifarious organization.

Also Criswell’s statement that he worked six months and at the eleventh hour found a position for Paige Patterson could also be perceived as mitigating his role in Patterson’s dismissal. However, Patterson’s frequent absence from The Criswell College, due to travel, emerged as an issue with Criswell in the late seventies. Patterson left Criswell with no alternative but to support the actions of the board of trustees in 1991.
In an interview for this dissertation, Paige Patterson gave an account of the events surrounding his leaving The Criswell College:

Unfortunately the 1991 to 1992 time period were the years of the most tragic events for me…The chief concern was not my being gone so much as it was the concern about finances. Mr. Sexton (chairman of the trustees) came to me and wanted me to spend eighty per cent of my time on fundraising. The problem with that was that God didn’t call me to do fundraising and I was not going to start at that point in time. The problem was that other churches saw The Criswell College as a First Baptist Church entity and the college had more money than any other church. Yet there was not money coming from the church institutions to help finance the college. I also felt that spending eighty per cent of my time on fundraising was not what the school needed. I was interested in students’ education.

At that time, I played my hand to the effect that I said I am not going to do that, because when I came to The Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, Criswell said he would raise the funds. The answer to that from the trustees was ‘that was then, this is now, and things have changed. Now this is what you have to do.’ That led to them firing me. I was gone! Whether they were right or I was right is not the issue, the trustee system is what it is. (Patterson, 2003)
When Patterson was asked if he would do anything differently if he had it do over again, he responded after a long pause with the following:

Well, yes I would have prayed more and depended a little less on human ingenuity and strategy. I would obviously have curtailed some of my brash statements. I am fun loving and I answer that way, and it is not always taken that way and I should have been a little more careful with my choice of words. As far as the college is concerned, I do not think I would have done anything any differently. (Patterson, 2003)

We do not know whether Criswell did indeed lead Patterson to believe that he would do all the fundraising. Criswell died prior to this interview with Patterson. One might interpret the events surrounding Patterson’s leaving The Criswell College as God using finances and strife to open the way for Patterson to become president of Southeastern Seminary which experienced great enrollment growth during his tenure.

The contributions of W. A. Criswell to the establishment and development of The Criswell College can be encapsulated in the reality that he was a man totally “sold out” to God. Whether it was in the area of facilities, development, personnel, or academics, he sought to expand God’s kingdom here on earth by educating and training the next generation of Christian leaders. The extent of his commitment to the future of The Criswell College was noted in a regular meeting of the board of directors of the W. A. Criswell Foundation in 1975:
The first order of business was the discussion led by Dr. W. A. Criswell regarding a “Living Trust” fund. Criswell asked the question, “Are we, as an organization, set up so that I can will my properties to the Foundation?” Jack Pogue stated “The Foundation is set up to accept that kind of gift.” Criswell said that he wanted to will everything he had to the Criswell Foundation. (Board of Directors, 1975)

The Criswell College has not shown significant growth in enrollment over thirty years nor has the college been without financial challenges in recent years. Success, according to traditional higher education standards such as increased enrollment has not been attained. Perhaps the residence hall scheduled to open in the fall of 2004 that will house up to 200 students, will indeed double the enrollment as Criswell forecasted. However, over 1,200 students have graduated from Criswell’s school in the past thirty years and it appears many graduates are serving in ministries. The Criswell College has made significant improvements in other traditional areas however. The female student population is now 28% and 36% of the students are non-Baptist. Twenty-one per cent of the students enrolled are African American (Wilson, 2003).

Consideration might be given to whether The Criswell College is strong enough to remain a private independent college or should the board of trustees consider merging The Criswell College with a larger institution of higher education. Perhaps Criswell’s philosophy should be applied in such a decision: “If it is of men it will perish, and if it is
of God it will prosper, because, after all, these things are in the imponderables of Almighty God” (Patterson, 1986).

Criswell’s influence was clearly identifiable throughout the research. I would agree with Timothy George when he noted: “He (Criswell) was an organizational genius, and his way of leading a church became the model for many others. And Rick Warren, whose call to pastoral ministry was confirmed in an encounter with Criswell, expanded on this observation when he said, “Most people think of tradition when they think of Criswell, it only became traditional after everyone copied him” (George, 2002).

The evidence I have recorded when compared to the criteria set down in the by-laws, reflect Criswell exercised appropriate influence and involvement as Chancellor of The Criswell College.

The extent to which these research results will provide insight or be useful in a comparable setting is yet to be determined. I would argue that another pastor or academician, who might consider establishing and developing a Christian institution of higher education, would need the substantial financial support of one individual or group. I agree with Richard Pierard who compiled a list of wealthy patrons, who have always been the mainstays of mass evangelism; Dwight L. Moody had his John Wanamaker and J. P. Morgan; Billy Sunday had his John D. Rockefeller Jr. and S. S. Kresge; Billy Graham had business executives J. Howard Pew and W. Maxey Jarman (Woodard & Barnes, 1976); and W. A. Criswell had Jack Pogue, a wealthy commercial real estate
broker who financially undergirded The Criswell College through the W. A. Criswell Foundation and has willed everything in his estate to the W. A. Criswell Foundation (Pogue, 2003). Criswell also had Mrs. Ruth Ray Hunt of Hunt Oil Co., who made it possible for The Criswell College to have its own campus. I would surmise that God sometimes uses unusual coalitions and friendships to achieve and prolong higher education for those who serve Him.
APPENDIX A
Books by W. A. Criswell


## Honorary Doctorates of W. A. Criswell

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<td>Fred Wolfe</td>
<td>Cottage Hill Baptist Church</td>
<td>Mobile, AL</td>
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<td>Ronnie Floyd</td>
<td>First Baptist Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ron Herrod</td>
<td>Central Baptist Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jerry Vines</td>
<td>First Baptist Church</td>
<td>Jacksonville, FL</td>
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<td>Hayes Wicker</td>
<td>First Baptist Church</td>
<td>Naples, FL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerald Harris</td>
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<td>Clark Hutchinson</td>
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<td>Richard Lee</td>
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<td>Ed Young</td>
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<td>Charles Fuller</td>
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## The Criswell College Board of Trustees

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<th>Mr. James Erwin</th>
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<td>Mr. James Harbin</td>
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<td>Mr. Bradley Ray</td>
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<td>Mr. Andy Horner</td>
<td>Mr. Del Rogers</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Mr. Bo Sexton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Gerald Kumpf</td>
<td>Mr. Jim Ray Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Graham Lacey</td>
<td>Mr. Arthur Thompson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. R. E. Lee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Mark Lovvorn</td>
<td>Mr. Zig Ziglar</td>
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<td>Mr. Aaron Manley</td>
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### 1991-1992

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<td>Mr. Jack Brady</td>
<td>Mr. Paul Martin</td>
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<td>Mr. Louis Cole</td>
<td>Mr. Jack Pogue</td>
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<td>Dr. Royce Laycock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. R. E. Lee</td>
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APPENDIX E
Presidential Search Committee  
May 1992

Curtis A. Baker  
Terra Marine Energy Company

Jack Brady  
Law Offices of Jack E. Brady, P.C.

Andy Horner  
Premier Designs, Inc.

R. W. Lee  
R. E. Lee & Associates

Glen C. Meredith  
Pastor, Midway Road Baptist Church

Jack Pogue  
Jack Pogue & Company

Jim Ray Smith  
Jim Ray Smith Properties, Inc.

John Wainwright  
Criswell College Student

David Wicker  
Market Place Ministries

Dr. B. Paul Wolfe  
The Criswell College

EX-OFFICIO

Dr. Joel Gregory  
First Baptist Church

Dr. W. A. Criswell  
First Baptist Church
On this date 10/22/00 I give Gloria Cowan my permission for access and use of any information in my personal files for publication.

Dr. W. A. Criswell

Witness by:

Date 10/22/00
### Individuals Interviewed

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Brady</td>
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REFERENCES


