

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION AMONG EX-OFFENDERS AND THEIR PERSPECTIVES
ON TURNING TO RELIGION DURING INCARCERATION

By

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To my husband Matthew, who has always been supportive of my goals

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There has been much attention paid to religious programming for incarcerated individuals. This is due in part to research showing lower rates of prison infractions and recidivism rates for inmates who frequently attend religious services during their incarceration. Our study further explored results from Clear and colleagues showing that inmates turn to religious programming for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. Surveys and focus group interviews were used on a sample of 106 formerly incarcerated individuals from both prison and jail, to explore reasons for inmates turning to religion during incarceration and whether inmates who turn to religion for intrinsic versus extrinsic reasons differ in frequency of attendance at religious services or religious importance during incarceration. Binary logistic regression was unable to show significant differences between individuals who attended religious services frequently and individuals who felt religion was important based on an extrinsic scale, an intrinsic scale, and other predictors. Participant responses from the focus group interviews are reported that both agree and contradict the findings noted in the study by Clear and colleagues.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The highest political leader in the United States believes that faith-based programming will reform inmates and help them reenter society more successfully. In January of 2001, President Bush established his Faith-Based and Community Initiative (Bush, 2001a). Since the beginning of this initiative, there have been major expansions in faith-based programming in prison. Faith-based programming in the state of Florida is a good example. Florida was the first state to apply President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative to the prison system. In 2003, former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, who claimed that the only way to achieve real rehabilitation of criminals and reduce recidivism is to "lead them to God", appointed Lawtey Correctional Institution (CI), a male facility housing up to 750 offenders, to be the first faith-based prison in the United States (Jablecki, 2005). Since 2003, two other prisons in Florida, Hillsborough CI and Wakulla CI, were converted to faith-based institutions along with seven other facilities that have developed Faith-Based/Self-Improvement Dorms (FB/SIDS) (Florida Department of Corrections). Together these programs allow over 3,500 inmates in Florida to participate in strictly faith-based programming. The faith-based institutions and FB/SIDS are not the only prisons to offer religious programming. All of the major DOC institutions in Florida offer Chaplaincy Services including providing religious services, religious libraries, religious education programs, and spiritual and crisis counseling for inmates adjusting to institutional life (Florida Department of Corrections).

A number of studies suggest that religious involvement reduces levels of delinquency and also that religious participation while incarcerated can reduce the number of infractions received in prison and reduce recidivism upon release. However, an understudied area of the religion and prison research is why inmates choose to turn to religious programming while incarcerated.

Understanding why inmates turn to religion in prison is an important step in deciphering the results showing that participation in religious programming is effective in reducing recidivism and in adapting to the prison culture (or reducing the “pains of imprisonment”). A key question is whether inmates are participating in religious programs because they feel that religion and a closer connection to God is the way to reform or because religious programming is one of the only options for them that provides an outlet where they can cope with the deprivations of prison life and receive extra privileges. One study by Clear et al. (2000) measured inmate perspectives on the value of religion in prison. The themes that emerged in this article indicate that inmates turn to religion for both intrinsic reasons such as finding a new way of living and dealing with the loss of their freedom, and extrinsic reasons, such as gaining access to outsiders and receiving extra privileges.

Religious services in prison, however, are not without controversy. A lawsuit emerged in 2003 that brought forward opinions that some religious programming is unconstitutional and possibly encourages inmates to participate in religious activities to gain access to incentives not available to non-religious inmates. In 2003, the Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU) brought a lawsuit against the Prison Fellowship Ministries for its InnerChange Freedom Initiative operating in an Iowa prison facility since 1999. InnerChange was also operated in part by a contract with the Iowa Department of Corrections. InnerChange is a faith-based rehabilitation program (which also has programs in Texas, Kansas and Minnesota) that is aimed at reducing recidivism in prisoners (Wilson, 2003). In the complaint, AU alleged a state-supported religious transformation, preference for those inmates who were receptive to the Evangelical Christian message of InnerChange, and material advantages for participants which also gives inmates incentives to subject themselves to religious indoctrination (Lupu and Tuttle,

2006). The main issue in this case was whether the contract between the state of Iowa Department of Corrections and Innerchange Freedom Initiative wrongfully involved the state in the unconstitutional promotion of religion which was in violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment (*Americans United for Separation of Church and State v. Prison Fellowship Ministries* Memorandum Opinion by District Court, 2006). Judge Robert Pratt of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa found that InnerChange was unlawful, ordered the program to cease operation, and also ordered them to repay the \$1.5 million in state funds that had already been spent in the program (Lupu and Tuttle, 2006:33). However, this decision was overturned by the United States Court of Appeals late in 2007. An InnerChange Freedom Initiative News Release indicated that on December 3, 2007, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned Judge Robert Pratt's initial ruling in favor of AU to shut down InnerChange and repay \$1.5 million to the state of Iowa (*Americans United for Separation of Church and State, et al., v. Prison Fellowship Ministries, Inc., et al., 2007*).

It is important to find out if inmates are turning to religion for reasons other than sincerely religious beliefs and if so, if inmates who turn to religion for intrinsic reasons differ from those who turn to religion for extrinsic reasons. Often, religion is introduced into a person's life to meet a particular need at a specific time (Johnson, 2004:332). In the attempt to shed light on some of these issues, this study addresses the following two research questions:

- For what reasons do inmates turn to religion during incarceration?
- Do inmates who turn to religion for intrinsic versus extrinsic reasons differ in the frequency of attendance at religious services or religious importance during incarceration?

The goal of the first research question is to test Todd Clear and his associates' conclusions about the reasons why inmates turn to religion during incarceration (2000). The goal of the second research question is to see if there are differences between inmates who turn to religion in order

to build or strengthen their relationship with God and those that turn to religion in order to receive privileges that they would not have otherwise. By reporting the results of focus group interviews and survey data from ex-offenders who were in both prison and jail, this study will contribute to the small amount of literature dedicated to this issue. Ex-offenders are a good sample to use for this study because they are uniquely able to look back at their incarceration and determine if their reasons of turning to religion were to become closer to God or if they were in order to survive the prison experience.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the fact that there is only a small amount of literature on the meaning of religion to inmates, this literature review discusses more generally the effect of religion on these offenders. First, this review will discuss what part religious programming has in the prison system and studies showing the effect of religious participation in prison on prison adjustment and recidivism. Then, the review will discuss two studies in depth that show that inmates turn to religion for both intrinsic reasons (to find a new way of living and change their behavior) and extrinsic reasons (to deal with the deprivation they face in prison). An understanding of these areas of literature will help clarify the different reasons why inmates that are both sincere and insincere in their religious beliefs turn to religion while incarcerated.

Religion in Prison

Clear et al. (1992b:1) suggested that “religious programming is easily the most common and pervasive form of correctional rehabilitation available to prisoners.” A survey by the American Correctional Association revealed the large amount of religious resources accessible to inmates in the U.S. and Canada (1998). In addition to chapels, the survey reported that most jurisdictions allowed additional areas of the prison to be available for religious study or activities and most jurisdictions used technology to present supplemental religious experiences through the use of cable television, videos or satellite down links. Research shows that religious programs draw the most participation of the personal development programs offered in prison (Johnson et al., 1997). A national survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice showed that about 32 percent of sampled inmates participate in religious activities such as Bible studies and church services (1993). Religious programming is often beneficial to both the inmates and the prisons. For inmates, in addition to a religious component, many programs teach life skills, such as

reading, budgetary planning, and managing family relations (Lupu and Tuttle, 2006). The Florida Department of Corrections reported that 81% of the inmates involved in the Chaplaincy program in Florida answered survey questions rating the effectiveness of the program. On a scale of 1-6, with 6 being the most effective, the inmates rated the effectiveness of the program a 5.3, with the closest other program in effectiveness being Education (4.4). A statement by the Florida Department of Corrections explains why religious programming is also beneficial to prisons in that “religious programming not only is an essential element to control inmate idleness, it is a cost effective means in providing a safer, more manageable environment both in the prisons and in the communities to which inmates are released” (Correctional Compass, 2002:12). Burnside et al. found in their study of prisoners at Kainos, a faith-based therapeutic program, that the program provided a calmer and quieter atmosphere than other areas and that the staff-prisoner relationships were universally positive (Burnside et al., 2001). O’Conner and Perreyclear (2002) explained that the cost of programming is much less expensive than other effective programming, at a cost of \$150-\$250 for religious services per year for each inmate in a medium/maximum security prison in South Carolina. Costs in other states are comparable, with religious services in the Oregon Department of Corrections costing \$230 per inmate in 2005 (O’Conner et al., 2006). These figures compare to \$12,000-\$14,000 per inmate each year for quality correctional programs that reduce recidivism (Petersilia, 1995).

Religion and Recidivism

The attention paid to religious programming in prison is in large part because it is a constitutional right to practice one’s religion, but also due to research showing that participation in faith-based activities reduces recidivism and also reduces the number of infractions in prison. Clear et al. (1992a) studied religion in prison among inmates in 20 different prisons across 12 states. After administering surveys, focus-group interviews with both religious and non-religious

inmates, and interviews with chaplains, administrators, and correctional officers, Clear et al. found a significant inverse relationship between religiousness and institutional infractions. Their finding that religiosity was also related to improved prison adjustment was no longer significant when controlling for age, race, and self-esteem. Johnson conducted a study comparing the recidivism rates of prisoners in two Brazilian prisons, one which focused on vocational training and prison industry, and the other was managed by faith-based religious volunteers (2002). Johnson found that although both prisons had extremely low recidivism rates, the rate was significantly lower among prisoners from the faith-based prison (36% for the vocational prison and 16% for the faith-based prison). Aos et al. (2006) reviewed six faith-based studies that had strong methodology in their report of what works and what does not work in adult corrections programs and found that though some showed evidence of a positive program effect, five of the studies did not produce a significant reduction in recidivism (Burnside et al., 2001; Johnson, 2004; O'Connor et al., 1997a; Trusty and Eisenberg, 2003; Wilson et al., 2005a). The sixth study was of a faith-based program called Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) that focused on connecting sex offenders with a community support group and showed a 32% reduction in recidivism (Wilson et al., 2005b).

Several researchers have found that the amount of attendance at religious services is an important measure affecting the number of prison infractions received and recidivism rates. In their study of inmates housed in a medium/maximum security prison in South Carolina, O'Conner and Perreyclear (2002) found that there was no difference in the tendency to have prison infractions between the religious inmates and the non-religious inmates (classified as those who attended services and those that did not). However, the more religious sessions an inmate attended, the less likely he was to have an infraction. The researchers concluded that the

“intensity of involvement seems to be a crucial factor in whether or not it has an impact on offender rehabilitation” (O’Conner and Perreyclear, 2002:17). Johnson et al. (1997) also found that the amount of religious attendance made a difference in their study of inmates in four adult male prisons in New York. The researchers found that inmates classified as high participation inmates in Prison Fellowship activities, attending 10 or more bible study sessions in a one-year period, were significantly less likely than those not participating, as well as those classified as medium and low participants, to be rearrested after one year (Johnson et al., 1997). When measuring the recidivism rates for 8 years after the inmates’ release, Johnson et al. reported that the significant reduction in recidivism rates could be seen for up to 3 years after being released, however, the reduction was no longer significant from 4-8 years (Johnson et al., 2004). When determining the impact of inmate participation in chaplaincy programs, the Florida Department of Corrections (as of Dec 31, 2004) stated that for inmates attending 10 or more “sign-in chapel programs” each month that were released in the fiscal year 2001-2002, the recommitment rate was 26% less than the recommitment rate for those who did not attend any chapel programs. The report also noted that the more the inmates attended the chapel program, the smaller the recommitment rate and rate of disciplinary reports.

The level of religious involvement may be a better predictor of recidivism than religious salience (or religious importance). In testing the relationship between faith and program outcomes for a faith-based program in Nevada, researchers found that clients’ religiosity and spirituality as measured by their religious preference, salience, general religiosity/spirituality, and spiritual experiences was not able to predict program outcomes (Roman et al; 2007).

Turning to Religion

As noted in the previous section, some literature on religious involvement in prison has shown that high levels of attendance at religious services reduces recidivism. Religious salience

may not show an effect because religion is often important to inmates regardless of the reasons they become involved in religious activities. It is possible that there would be more of an effect on infractions and recidivism if inmates who were involved in religious activities for sincere reasons and insincere reasons were separated for comparison. Dammer (2002:56) suggested that it is important to know why inmates turn to religion because it can better “assist the correctional administrator in making more informed decisions (about programming) during difficult financial times.” A few early researchers have briefly examined the issue of the value of religion to inmates. These scholars noted that there is a prevalence of insincere religious behavior among prison inmates (Falk, 1961; Clemmer, 1958). Clemmer (1958:51) reported that “inmates often attend religious services to achieve a break in the monotonous routine of their lives and to use the services as ‘recreation’.” Others have examined the issue by indicating two types of reasons that individuals turn to religion. Involvement in religious activities as part of an individual’s life purpose is thought to be intrinsic, while involvement for social or utilitarian purposes is extrinsic (Allport, 1960; Hoge, 1972). The degree of religious commitment for individuals can differ greatly but look one and the same on such a traditional measure of religiosity as frequency of church attendance. Allport noted the difference between the intrinsically religious person (who is more devout, honest, and caring) and the extrinsically religious person (whose religion is self-serving, immature, and narrow in scope) by saying that “...the extrinsically motivated person uses his religion, whereas the intrinsically motivated lives his religion” (Allport, 1956:455). Dammer (2002) also distinguished motives of turning to religion by separating inmates in his study on the reasons for religious involvement into those that are involved in religion for sincere purposes and those that are involved for insincere purposes. The researcher explained that the sincerely religious inmates are more legitimate or genuine in their religious beliefs and practices

and found religion a motivating factor for their lives while insincere inmates were more likely to participate in religion for scheming purposes and their behavior did not “reflect the rules or norms of any formal religion although they might claim to be religious inmates” (Dammer, 2002:38).

Religion and Deprivation Theory

In order to more fully understand why inmates would turn to religion during incarceration for reasons other than that they are genuinely religious, it is important to briefly review an important theory seen in corrections literature, deprivation theory. Deprivation theory came about because of Clemmer’s work on inmate subcultures and his term *prisonization*, which refers to the adoption of the folkways, mores, customs, and general culture of the inmate subculture (Clemmer, 1940). The deprivation model, argues that the prison setting promotes the process of *prisonization* through the adjustment to the “pains of imprisonment” (Sykes, 1958; Sykes and Messinger, 1960) experienced by inmates in the prison system, including the deprivation of liberty, goods and services, autonomy, security, and heterosexual relationships (Sykes, 1958). These deprivations then account for the formation of prison countercultures which become oppositional to staff and foster aggression (Paterline and Petersen, 1999; Jiang and Fisher-Giorlando, 2002). Some researchers criticize the deprivation model because not every inmate becomes prisonized and they generally advocate the importation model which suggests that a person’s experiences prior to incarceration, especially those that involve the adoption of criminal values and personal characteristics of the inmates affect how much they will assimilate into the inmate subculture (Thomas and Petersen, 1977; Irwin and Cressey 1962; Irwin, 1970).

Two articles (derived from the same data) that are helpful in showing the meaning of religion from the point of view of the inmate find that some inmates turn to religion at least partly because of prison deprivation (Dammer, 2002; Clear et al., 2000). In one article, Dammer

pointed out that the inmates' responses about the reasons they turned to religion have links to Syke's explanation of five types of deprivation in prisons, including deprivation of liberty, deprivation of goods and services, deprivation of autonomy, deprivation of security, and deprivation of heterosexual relationships. Clear et al. relied on both the deprivation and importation perspectives and assumed that religion in the prison is affected by the prison culture, which results from the deprivations of the prison and imported social values (importation theory). Clear and Sumter (2002) added that differences in the way each prison deprives the inmate of what he wants will change the type of religious response that happens in that prison. For example, the researchers pointed out that in prisons with younger, less experienced prisoners, religious commitment seems to reduce depression and provide the support needed to counteract the strains of a hostile environment. In other prisons where there are older inmates that are more experienced, religious programs tend to provide the type of support men need to stay out of trouble.

Looking more at how Dammer (2002) and Clear et al. (2000) related their findings to the types of prison deprivation experienced in prison described by Sykes (1958) will allow a fuller understanding of why inmates turn to religion during incarceration, because they are two of the few studies that do this. The first type of deprivation Sykes referred to is the deprivation of liberty, or the immediate loss of the inmates' freedom of movement and separation from family, relatives, and friends (1958). Dammer's research indicated that inmates are most likely to occupy themselves with religion not long after being incarcerated (2002:53), supposedly because of the "immediate deprivation of liberty and the serious nature of their current condition in life." Clear et al. (2000) related that faith is significant to inmates because it provides a type of freedom within the prison. The researchers explained that the freedom inmates refer to comes by means of

a personal sense of peace, and that as an extrinsic motive, “the desire for freedom is poorly served by religious practice” (Clear et al., 2000:63). However, the fact that involvement in religious activities allows inmates to build relationships with other inmates and possibly with their families is attractive to both inmates that are sincere in their religious participation and those that are not. The second type of deprivation described by Sykes is the deprivation of goods and services, including a variety of food, clothes, furniture and extra amenities such as cigarettes and liquor (1958). Dammer argued that with involvement in religious activities, the deprivation of goods and services is lessened because inmates who attend receive benefits, such as food, coffee, and musical instruments (2002). This was apparent in his study of inmates because attendance was largest when food was provided. Clear et al. (2000) added that in each of the prisons in their sample material advantages were available for the inmates that participated in religious activities, including extra phone calls and extra postage for letters. Another reason that inmates turn to religion, and the third type of deprivation described by Sykes, is heterosexual relationships (Sykes, 1958). Participating in religious activities allowed the inmates in Dammer and Clear et al.’s study to meet and interact with women volunteers (Dammer, 2002; Clear et al, 2000). Clear et al. note that having an outsider to communicate with can reduce the feeling within prisoners that society has forgotten them. The next form of deprivation felt by inmates is that of autonomy. In prison, the heavy restriction on inmates’ ability to make simple choices often strips away their self-determination (Sykes, 1958). Turning to religion may link to the deprivation of autonomy because “inmates obtain psychological relief from religion in prison. Religion allows the inmates to have meaning in their lives and improve their self-esteem (Dammer, 2002:54). Clear et al. said that some inmates reported a change in their sense of personal power that enables them to better handle the pressures of life in prison with the help of

religion (Clear et al., 2000). The last form of deprivation is that of security, where Sykes explains that every inmate is aware that eventually “he must be prepared to fight for the safety of his person and his possessions” (Sykes, 1958:424). Dammer (2002) reported that in his study, both formal and informal interviews with inmates indicated that protection was the most important reason that insincere inmates participated in religious activities. Inmates who are not sincere about their religious beliefs may turn to religion in order to belong to a group, which would help protect them against physical altercations with other inmates. Dammer found also that Muslim inmates practiced religion for protection more so than prisoners of other denominations (reported by both Muslim and other inmates). In addition, offenders convicted of sex offenses, homosexuals, and inmates with HIV (AIDS) typically turned to religion more for protection (Dammer, 2002). Clear et al. (2000) add that protection was especially important for prisoners who are physically weak or effeminate.

Conclusion

In 1961, Falk (pg 161) noted that research has began to call into question old belief's that “religion can only have an effect on the reduction of crime and delinquency if the criminal has accepted the church and its teachings as an integrated part of his whole personality.” With studies showing that a high level of religious involvement in prison can reduce recidivism, in order to get more telling results, it may become important to distinguish between inmates who turn to religion for sincere purposes and those that turn to religion to deal with their loss of freedom, security, and other deprivations. The purpose of this review was to better understand the place of religion in the lives of inmates and to understand that there are many reasons for which inmates turn to religion other reasons than that they are highly religious. This study attempts to answer the following research questions based on the findings represented in Clear et al. (2000):

- For what reasons do inmates turn to religion during incarceration?
- Do inmates who turn to religion for intrinsic versus extrinsic reasons differ in the frequency of attendance at religious services or religious importance during incarceration?

CHAPTER 3 STUDY METHODS

This section will discuss the methodology used for this study. First, a description of each location where the sample came from will be discussed. Then, the target sample will be explained including a description of the demographics for each group within the sample. Following, details of the data collection methods will be given which will include a description of the two measures used, including a survey questionnaire and focus group interview questions.

Study Locations

The participants for this study were recruited by two means. First, the researchers searched via the Internet to find half-way houses or transitional homes for ex-offenders located in Florida within 3 hours driving distance from the University of Florida in Gainesville. This perimeter was set for the convenience of data collection. Half-way houses were used because it allowed the researchers to connect with individuals who generally have been released from incarceration for only a short amount of time, therefore making them better able to recall their experiences during incarceration. The researchers searched for homes and programs that had varying levels of faith-based activities from no religious requirement to daily bible study activities. The researchers wanted to gather samples from homes with varying degrees of religious activities in order to gain insight from participants who were heavily involved in religious activities and those who were not. After locating the programs, one of the researchers contacted each program and asked to speak with the director. They then explained to each director that they were graduate students at the University of Florida who were conducting a two-part study that hoped to measure ex-offender perceptions of informal social control experienced while incarcerated and also the importance of religion in the lives of ex-offenders before, during, and after incarceration including why they turned to religion during their

incarceration.¹ Some of the directors requested that the survey and consent forms be faxed to them before they would agree to participate. The directors were the main contact for each program and after they approved the study, they arranged a time for the researcher to administer the survey and conduct the interviews. After one experience of miscommunication between the researchers and a program director², the researchers informed the directors on the phone that having them absent from the room when the interview took place was necessary and all gave their consent to this method. Usually, the interviews occurred at a time where all of the program clients were there for a required Bible study or another meeting. At one of the homes, the interview took place during the middle of the day and the clients were permitted to break from their work to participate if they chose to. At each location, the researchers asked the director if he/she knew of any other programs to contact and in two cases, the researchers were given the contact information of the director of another program. The data for this study were gathered at six locations in Florida (Table 3-1). Each of the faith-based programs required varying levels of commitment to religious or spiritual activities from their participants. Although it was the intention of the researchers to collect an equal representation of data from both faith-based and non-faith-based programs, only the county run re-entry program (PERC) can be considered non-faith-based. To show the difference in each program where the sample was gathered, a description of each will follow including who the program accepts, what is expected of each individual participating, and what the program provides for each individual.

¹ Two graduate student researchers conducted this study. This paper will focus only on the religious component of the study. In the methodology section, the word “researchers” will be used to note that there were two people conducting the study. Later, “researcher” will be used to refer to the researcher who will analyze the data.

² At the first program where data were collected, the researcher assumed that it would be acceptable to the director that the director be absent from the room when the interview was taking place. Unfortunately, the director became upset at the researcher because he felt that the ex-offenders would not hide any information from him and did not feel that he should be kept in the dark. With assurance that this was for the benefit of anonymity for the ex-offenders participating in the project, this director agreed to stay out of the room but then refused to set up future meetings.

Table 3-1. Focus Group Locations

Focus Group	Religious Requirement	City	Number of Participants (All Male)	Age Range	Racial Distribution		
					Black	White	Other
1. House of Hope	Active participation in church; Bible study and spiritual counseling	Gainesville	4	32- 46	3	1	
2. Salvation Army: Red Shield Lodge	Group Bible study and prayer sessions	Jacksonville	9	38- 56	7	2	
3. Prisoners of Christ	Program heavily urges attendance at worship service	Jacksonville	12	30- 62	4	7	1
4. Prisoners of Christ	Program heavily urges attendance at worship service	Jacksonville	5	38– 67	4	1	
5. Salvation Army: Red Shield Lodge*	Group Bible study and prayer sessions	Jacksonville	7	31-59	6	1	
6. Prisoners of Christ	Program heavily urges attendance at worship service	Jacksonville	6	30-58	3	3	
7. THORM Inc. Ministries	Christian 12 Step and Bible study	Jacksonville	5	31-45	4		1
8. Center of Hope	Church attendance 3 times per week, complete discipleship workbooks, and religious classes daily	Clearwater	3	45-57		3	
9. Pinellas Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition*	No religious requirement	Clearwater	49	18-49	20	26	3
10. Prisoners of Christ	Group Bible study and prayer sessions	Jacksonville	7	38-46	2	5	

*Groups participated in survey only. Group 5 did not participate in a focus group because they reported being tired and would not participate without compensation. Group 9 did not participate in a focus group because there was no private area to conduct the interview. All other groups participated in both focus group interviews and surveys.

House of Hope

The first site where data were collected was the House of Hope, a halfway house located in Gainesville, Florida. The house is located in a residential neighborhood on the east side of Gainesville, and is run by a reformed ex-offender and his wife (who runs a halfway house for women nearby), who are heavily involved in the religious community in the area. The House of Hope is a volunteer driven, privately funded, faith-based support program for Christians recently released from incarceration. The individuals participating in this program were referred by a prison chaplain and submitted an application that was screened for various things such as their behavior during incarceration, Chapel and Bible study attendance, and participation in treatment and educational programs. Sex offenders or individuals who are unable to work are rejected from participating in this program. Once the clients are accepted into the program, they must commit to stay for a minimum of 3-6 months. During this time, they are required to actively participate in church, Bible study and spiritual counseling sessions, perform community service, pay rent and perform chores at the house, and stay alcohol and drug free. They must also obtain and continue gainful employment. The program assists with this by maintaining relationships with businesses in the community that are willing to hire program participants. The only restriction on employment is that it can not be on Sundays or evenings, to ensure that they can participate in programs at the house.

Salvation Army: Red Shield Lodge

The researchers conducted three separate groups (Groups 2, 5, and 10) to collect data at the Red Shield Lodge run by the Salvation Army in Jacksonville, Florida. This program is located in downtown Jacksonville in a fairly large facility with a cafeteria and multiple meeting rooms. The Red Shield Lodge is a faith-based substance abuse program that offers substance abuse treatment and counseling along with life skills and bible study groups. Like the House of

Hope, participants enter the program straight from incarceration or within the first five days of their release by referral from within the prison. Also like the House of Hope, the Red Shield Lodge denies access to sex offenders. Participants stay in the program for up to one year and are required to come to group bible study/prayer sessions and to find a job. The program does help find job placement simply by calling local business on behalf of the participant. According to the program director, most of the participants find job employment at local construction companies.

Prisoners of Christ

Another location where multiple groups were surveyed and interviewed for data was with the Prisoners of Christ program in Jacksonville, Florida. Three groups were conducted with the program (Groups 3, 4 and 6), one which occurred at a local church where the participants have their Alcoholics Anonymous group, and two times at the program office in the kitchen. This program is different from the other programs mentioned because it has an office where the program staff (9 people including part-time workers) work and where program meetings take place which is separate from housing for the participants. According to the program director, the Prisoners of Christ program is well known throughout the prisons near Jacksonville and inmates find out about the program through the prison Chaplains and classification officers. Participants apply for the program by filling out a short application. The program accepts both faith and non-faith male participants but screens inmates to exclude sexual predators (they do accept sex offenders) because of a childcare facility nearby the program, and inmates who take medications for clinical depression, acute anxiety, and bipolar disorder because the program would be unable to meet the needs of those individuals. The program staff picks up the released ex-offenders from prison and provides them with clothing, food, and housing, and assists them with registration at the Sheriff's office, getting Florida identification, and reporting to their probation

officers. The participants are first moved into transitional housing (residential housing with 5 men in each unit) for a period of 10 weeks, with no payment required. Then, the participants have the option of living in the program's furnished apartments (called Second Change Apartments) for \$75 per week for up to 8 months where the program will continue assisting the participants with medical care and transportation or leaving the program to go out on their own. The program requires its participants to attend the programs Alcohol Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous meetings along with at least 1 "street meeting" (AA/NA meetings offered within the community) per week. The participants are heavily urged to attend worship services of their choice, but this is not an official requirement to stay in the program. Also, the program assists the participants with employment through its relationships with business in the community.

Thorm Inc. Ministries

One group of participants were surveyed and interviewed at Thorm Inc. Ministries in Jacksonville, Florida. Like the House of Hope, this program is a halfway house located in a residential neighborhood and run by a husband and wife. The participants are accepted into the house after filling out an application and interviewing with the program director. The director looks at each participant's voluntary participation in classes in prison, incarceration history, substance abuse history, and recommendations from the classification officer or chaplain within the prison. The program directors do not accept participants who they feel are not ready for reentry into the community. This is a subjective decision based on the offender's answers to interview questions. When accepted into Thorm Inc. Ministries, the participants are allowed to stay in the house for up to 12 months. During this period, the program offers "Pastoral Care" and refers the participants to substance abuse treatment at an outside organization called River Region. The participants are required to attend a Christian Twelve Step program and bible study classes called Spiritual Enrichment (open to all religions). They are also required to obtain

employment within two weeks of starting the program. One program director stated that “employment is very easy to find in Jacksonville and if they do not have a job within that time period, they usually are not looking and have begun other drug/alcohol/sexual habits.” Like the program director at the Red Shield Lodge, she noted that getting work at construction sites is easy employment opportunity for the participants. If the participants are unable to obtain employment because they are disabled or suffer from HIV, the program assists them by getting them to legal services that help them with social security application. Participants are referred to mental health treatment and occasionally are moved to an adult living facility if the program is unable to meet their needs.

Center of Hope

Group 8 was conducted at the Center of Hope in Clearwater, Florida. Unlike some of the other programs, participants are accepted into the program after their release from incarceration and even if they have not been incarcerated. According to the Pastor of the program, participants are referred from a local detoxification center, churches, the Pasco Pinellas County Jail, prisons around the state, and by word of mouth. A few restrictions limit certain people from participating in the program. The Center of Hope does not accept individuals who have violent charges, sexual predators, or homosexuals. The program asks the participants for a 6 month commitment, but suggests that they stay for 1 year to receive all that the program has to offer. During the program, the participants are required to attend church 3 times per week, complete 3 discipleship workbooks, attend classes every night, and complete the STARS employment program. The individuals are not allowed to obtain employment for a minimum of 1 month, and afterward, may only work hours that allow full participation in the program. The Center of Hope does not offer substance abuse treatment or counseling, but instead believes that when an individual focuses on his relationship with Christ, his addictions will “fall away”.

Pinellas Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition (PERC)

A large portion of the sample (46%) participated in the Pinellas Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition (PERC). This program in Pinellas County, Florida was initiated in April 1988 based on a “Needs at Release Survey” done by the Pinellas County Jail. The individuals enter the program by referral from the Pinellas County Jail, or are court recommended or court ordered. Many of the participants in this program were involved in Project New Attitudes, a life skills program for inmates in the Pinellas County Jail. PERC links ex-offenders from the Department of Corrections and the Pinellas County Jail to multiple services in the community. The requirements for PERC clients are individually tailored due to the program often being court ordered (for example, as a condition of the offender’s probation). PERC clients are required to attend monthly meetings for 1 year, but the program will continue to offer services such as counseling, classes, case management, and job placement, as long as the client continues to come to the meetings. There is not a mandatory religious component to the PERC program. According to the director of the program, there are faith-based partners for PERC who offer assistance under the umbrella of case management.

Sample

The intended target sample population was males living in halfway or transitional houses that had been released from a state-run correctional institution within the past 5 years. The time limit of 5 years was set to ensure that the ex-offenders’ perceptions of their time during incarceration were still fairly accurate. The researchers also hoped to make contact with and collect data from former halfway house or program residents who had been released within the 5 year time limit. It was hoped that contact with the former residents through the program director and set up a time for up to 12 former program clients to meet to administer the focus group interview and survey. During the course of data collection, the sample was adjusted due to the

limited availability of programs in Gainesville, Florida and the surrounding areas offering transitional housing or programs for ex-offenders released from the Department of Corrections. Also, reaching former halfway house residents or program clients was difficult because many of them did not update their contact information with the program directors.³ The sample gathered consisted of two groups of participants, those who had served time in a state or federal prison and those who had been in a county jail. The sample is split into several groups to explain their demographic characteristics and for comparison purposes (Table 3-2). First the total sample will be described, including the individuals who had been incarcerated in both prison and jail. Next, the “prison participants” who had been incarcerated by the Department of Corrections will be discussed, followed by the “jail participants”, who only served time in the Pinellas County Jail, in Tampa, Florida. A large portion of the prison participant sample participated in focus group interviews. This sample will be called “focus group participants”. Their demographics will be discussed, ending with a description of the prison participants who were not involved in the focus group interviews. None of the participants who were incarcerated in jail only participated in the focus group interviews, but all of them completed the survey. This is because the director of the PERC program (where all of the jail participants came from) was unable to secure the researchers a private room to conduct the focus group interviews.

Total Sample

The entire sample included 106 male ex-offenders from either prison or jail (Table 3-2). The sample ranged in age from 18 to 67, with an average age of 38 years. There was a similar number of white and black participants, with 49 (47%) and 52 (50%) respectively, and four

³ The director of the Reentry Coalition in Ocala, Florida sent an email to all the former offender contacts he had asking for volunteers to participate in the study. Only 1 individual responded and he had been released from prison more than 5 years prior.

individuals coded as other (Hispanic and Asian). The number of years of education gained by the sample ranged from 2 to 16 (2nd grade to a Bachelor's degree), with an average of 11.7 years. The majority of the group, 57 out of 103 (3 missing) graduated High School or obtained a General Equivalency Diploma (GED). There was wide variation in how long since the participants had been released from prison or jail, ranging from 1 day to 17 years (204 months). The average amount of time since being released was almost 12 months. However, when excluding the 6 participants that had been released from prison or jail more than 5 years before the study, the average was a much lower 5.8 months. The average length of incarceration for all the participants was 61 months, or just over 5 years, with a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 336 months (28 years). All but 7 of the participants were incarcerated in Florida exclusively, and only one participant did not list Florida as a state in which he had been incarcerated. The sample was broken down into 25% drug offenders (26 individuals), 31% property offenders (32 individuals), 25% violent offenders (26 individuals), 12% violators of probation or parole (13 individuals), and 8% other (8 individuals) including traffic offenses (driving with a suspended license, driving under the influence, and leaving the scene of an accident with injury), fleeing or eluding a police officer, molestation, arson, failure to appear at a court date, and gun possession. Participants' self-reporting indicated that the sample was comprised of 24% Christians (21 individuals), 28% Protestants (25 individuals with Protestant including Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal and 7th Day Adventist), 11% Catholics (10 individuals), 3% Islamics (3 individuals), 24% indicating no religious denomination (21 individuals), and 10% indicating other denominations (9 individuals including those reporting Agnostic, Open, and other but not indicating a specific denomination).

Prison Participants

Of the 106 total participants, 70 had been incarcerated in state or federal prison (Table 3-2). The age of the prison participants ranged from 19 to 67, averaging higher than the total group (38 years old) at 43 years old. The group was comprised of 29 white individuals (41%), 38 black individuals (54%), and 3 Hispanics (4%). This group is composed of slightly more black participants than the total group. Exactly like the total sample, the years of education gained from prison participants ranged from 2 to 16 and averaged 11.7 years (High School diploma or GED). At the time of the study, the average amount of time since the prison participants had been released from prison was almost 15 months. The time since their release ranged from 1 day to 204 months (17 years) like the total sample, but the prison participants had been out of prison 3 months longer on average. The range of time the prison participants had been incarcerated was from 5 months to 336 months (28 years) and averaged 87 months (7.25 years). The prison sample spent over 2 more years incarcerated than the total sample. Most of the prison participants were incarcerated only in Florida, with 4 having been incarcerated in one other state and 2 having been incarcerated in two additional states. One participant had been incarcerated only in West Virginia. The prison participants consisted of 20% drug offenders (14 individuals), 38% property offenders (26 individuals), 28% violent offenders (19 individuals), 9% violators of probation or parole (6 individuals), and 6% other offenders (4 individuals). By self-report, the sample consisted of 22% Christians (14 individuals), 36% Protestants (23 individuals), 8% Catholics (5 individuals), 5% Islamic (3 Individuals), 20% having no religious denomination (13 individuals), and 9% other including those that did not specify (6 individuals).

Jail Participants

Of the total sample, 36 of the participants had been incarcerated in the Pinellas County Jail in Clearwater, Florida and had no prison experience (Table 3-2). All individuals in the jail

sample were incarcerated at that facility only. Because of the difference between jail and prison, this group differed in many respects from the prison group. This group's age ranged from 18 to 46 years old, with an average of 28 years, 10 years younger on average than the prison participants. The only similarity between the prison and jail participants was the amount of education obtained. The amount of education earned ranged from 7 years to 16 years (Bachelors degree) in the jail participants but each group averaged 11.7 years of education, or close to a High School Diploma or GED. On average, the jail participants had been released from jail just over 5 months prior to their involvement in the study, with a range of 2 weeks to 3 years. The amount of time they spent incarcerated spanned from 3 months to 10 months and averaged about 5.8 months in jail. There were more white participants and less black participants in the jail group than in the prison group. The jail participants consisted of 20 white individuals (57.1%), 14 black individuals (40%), and 1 Asian (2.9%). The jail sample included 33% drug offenders (12 individuals), 17% property offenders (6 individuals), 19 % violent offenders and violators of probation or parole (7 individuals each), and 11% other offenders (4 individuals). The sample is comprised of 28% Christians (7 individuals), 8% Protestants (2 individuals), 20% Catholics (5 individuals), 32% with no denomination (8 individuals), and 12% reporting other (3 individuals).

Focus Group Participants

Focus group interviews were conducted with 50 (71%) of the 70 prison participants (Table 3-2). This group's age ranged from 30 to 67, with an average of 45 years old. The group consisted of 22 white participants (44%), 26 black participants (52%), and 2 Hispanic individuals (4%). The focus group participants gained an averaged of about 11.5 years of education (between 11th grade and a High School Diploma or GED), with a range of 2 years to 16 years. The participants had been released from prison just over 5 months on average, with a range from 1 day to 5 years since being released. The group spent an average of 95 months (almost 8 years)

incarcerated, spanning from as little as 5 months to as much as 28 years. Three of the focus group participants had been incarcerated in one other state than Florida, and 1 participant was incarcerated only in West Virginia. The remaining participants served time only in the Florida Department of Corrections. Focus group individuals were convicted of 16% drug offenders (8 individuals), 39% property offenders (19 individuals), 29% violent offenders (14 individuals), and 8% violators of probation or parole and other offenders (4 individuals each). This group was made up of 17% Christians (8 individuals), 43% Protestants (20 individuals), 6% Catholics and Islamic (3 individuals each), 19% with no denomination (9 individuals), and 9% stating other denominations (4 individuals).

Prison Non-Focus Group Participants

For two reasons, a portion of the prison participants did not participate in the focus group interviews (N=20) (Table 3-2). The first reason is that the participants in group 5 (comprised of all prison participants) from the Salvation Army Red Shield Lodge (Table 3-1) chose not to participate in the focus group interviews because they were tired and did not want to participate without compensation. The other prison participants who were not involved in focus group interviews were from Group 9 (PERC – comprised of both jail and prison participants) where the opportunity to interview the group was not available because the director of the program was not able to secure a private room in the courthouse where the data collection took place. These participants were similar to the focus group participants in race, educational obtainment, and offense type, and they differed in age and months since being released prior to the study and the length of time incarcerated. Prison participants who did not participate in focus group interviews had a similar percentage of each race/ethnicity as the focus group participants. This group had 7 white individuals (35%), 12 black individuals (60%), and 1 Hispanic (2%). They also had a

similar average, 12.3 years, of educational obtainment as the total and prison participants, but the minimum years gained was much higher at 11 years (versus 2 years in the total and prison groups). Prison participants who were not involved in the focus groups were similarly convicted of offenses as the focus group participants with the exclusion of two categories. Like the focus group participants, there were 35% property offenders (7 individuals), 25% violent offenders (5 individuals), and 10% violators of probation or parole. Unlike the focus group participants, there were almost twice as many drug offenders (30% or 6 individuals) and zero offenders convicted of other offenses (such as driving under the influence, leaving the scene of an accident, failure to appear, etc.). The age range of prison participants that did not take part in the focus groups was 19 to 59, with an average age of 37. On average, this group was 8 years younger than the prison participants who were involved in the focus group interviews. Non-focus group participants differed from the prison group participants in the amount of time since the individuals had been released from prison prior to the study. The non-focus group prison participants had been released over 3 years (38 months) on average, whereas the focus group prison participants had been released just 5 months on average. Also, the prison participants who did not participate in the focus groups experienced on average 29 months less time incarcerated than the prison participants who did participate. The group's average time incarcerated was 66 months (5 and a half years), very similar to the average for all of the participants in the study (61 months). By self-report, the 20 individuals were made up of 35% Christians (6 individuals), 18% Protestants (3 individuals), 12% Catholics (2 individuals), 24% with no denomination (4 individuals), and 12% with other denominations (2 individuals).

Table 3-2. Sample Demographics

	All Participants		Prison Participants						Jail Participants*	
	Total N=106	%	Total N=70	%	Focus Group N=50		Non-Focus Group N=20		Total N=36	%
Age										
Mean	37.9		42.8		45.0		37.4		28.4	
Range	48-67		19-67		30-67		19-59		18-46	
Total Responses	103	97.2	69	98.6	49	98	20	100	36	100
Missing Responses	3	2.8	1	1.4	1	2	0	0	0	0
Race										
White	49	46.7	29	41.4	22	44	7	35	20	57.1
Black	52	49.5	38	54.3	26	52	12	60	14	40
Other	4	3.9	3	4.3	2	4	1	5	1	2.9
Total Responses	105	99.1	70	100	50	100	20	100	35	97.2
Missing Responses	1	0.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.8
Years Education										
Mean	11.7		11.7		11.5		12.3		11.7	
Range	2-16		2-16		2-16		11-16		7-16	
Total Responses	103	97.2	69	98.6	49	98	20	100	34	94.4
Missing Responses	3	2.8	1	1.4	1	2	0	0	2	5.6
Months Since Release										
Mean	11.7		14.7		5.3		38.2		5.4	
Range	0-204		0-204		0-60		0-204		.5-36	
Total Responses	103	97.2	70	100	50	100	20	100	33	91.7
Missing Responses	3	2.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	8.3

*Along with the non-focus group prison participants, the jail participants did not participate in focus group interviews.

Table 3-2 Continued.

	All Participants		Prison Participants				Jail Participants*			
	Total N=106	%	Total N=70	%	Focus Group N=50	%	Non-Focus Group N=20	%	Total N=36	%
Months Incarcerated										
Mean	61		87.1		95.4		66.2		5.8	
Range	3-336		5-336		5-336		12-204		3-10	
Total Responses	103	97.2	70	100	50	100	20	100	33	91.7
Missing Responses	3	2.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	8.3
State of Incarceration										
Florida Only	99	93.4	69	98.6	46	92	17	85	36	100
Florida + 1 Other State	4	3.8	4	5.7	3	6	1	5	0	0
Florida + 2 Other States	2	1.9	2	2.9	0	0	2	10	0	0
Only Another State	1	0.9	1	1.4	1	2	0	0	0	0
Total Responses	106	100	70	100	50	100	20	100	36	100
Missing Responses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Most Serious Offense										
Drug	26	24.8	14	20.3	8	16.3	6	30	12	33.3
Property	32	30.5	26	37.7	19	38.8	7	35	6	16.7
Violent	26	24.8	19	27.5	14	28.6	5	25	7	19.4
Violator of Probation	13	12.4	6	8.7	4	8.2	2	10	7	19.4
Other	8	7.6	4	5.8	4	8.2	0	0	4	11.1
Total Responses	105	99.1	69	98.6	49	98	20	100	36	100
Missing Responses	1	.9	1	1.4	1	2	0	0	0	0

*Along with the non-focus group prison participants, the jail participants did not participate in focus group interviews.

Differences between Groups

When comparing all of the groups in the sample, there are a few demographic variables that are similar among all groups, but in most cases, the sub-samples differ from each other. All groups had very similar educational attainment, with the range among all groups at 11.5 to 12.3 years of education. The average age was also similar between the groups with the exception of the jail participants, who were 10 years younger than total group, 15 years younger than the prison group, 17 years younger than the focus group and 9 years younger than the non focus group prison participants. There was only a maximum difference of 6 years between all groups except the jail participants. As far as the state or states for which the offenders had served their sentences, all of the groups had at least 85 percent of participants that were incarcerated in Florida only.

There are some differences in the racial compositions of the groups. The total participants, prison participants, and focus group participants were similar with a range of 41-47 percent white individuals and 50-54 percent black individuals. However, the jail participants consisted of a higher percentage of white individuals (57%) and a lower percentage of black individuals (40%) and the non focus group prison participants had the opposite, a lower percentage of white individuals (35%) and a higher percentage of black individuals (60%). The percentage of other (Asian and Hispanic) participants in all of the groups was 3-5 percent. The amount of time since each group had been released from prison differed among all groups except for the jail and focus group participants. The total sample had been released 11.7 months on average, the prison group had been released for 14.7 months, the jail and focus group participants had been released 5.4 and 5.3 months on average respectively, and the non focus group prison participants had been released 38.2 months on average, longer than all of the other groups. The amount of time the participants spent incarcerated differed between each group. In order of the

amount of time incarcerated, the focus group participants had been imprisoned for the longest (95 months), then the group prison participants (87 months), the non focus group prison participants (66) months, the total participant group (61 months), and finally a much lower amount of time for the jail participants (almost 6 months). There are also some differences in the percentage of individuals convicted of drug, property, violent, violation of probation (or parole), and other offenses between the groups. The amount of drug offenders in the groups ranged from around 16 percent to 33 percent in the focus group participants and jail participants respectively. Each of the groups were similar in the amount of participants with property offenses, with a range of 31-39 percent among all groups, except the jail group which only had about 17% property offenders. Again, the jail group differed from the rest in violent offenses, with 19 percent compared to the other groups which had about 25-29 percent. Expectedly, the jail group had the largest group of offenders (19%) convicted of a violation of probation or parole, while the other groups ranged from 8-12 percent. The proportion of participants convicted of other offenses (DUI, traffic, resisting an officer, etc.) was also the highest at 11 percent. On the composition of different religious denominations, the total, prison, and jail participants were similar in the amount of self-reported Christians in each group (between 22% and 28%) while there were fewer Christian focus group participants (17%) and more non focus group prison participants (35%). There is a wide range in the proportion of Protestant participants in each group, including 8% of jail participants, 18% of non focus group prison participants, 28% of the total participants, 36% of prison participants, and 43% of focus group participants. All groups except the jail participants, consisting of 20% participants, were similar in the amount of Catholic individuals in the group, ranging from 6-12 percent. Islamic participants were a small percentage of only the total group and the prison participant group (3 and 5 percent respectively).

The groups ranged from 19-24 percent of individuals recording no religious denomination, except the jail participants where 32 percent recorded no religious denomination. Finally, the amount of participants in all of the groups reporting “other” denominations ranged from 9-12 percent.

The differences discussed above among the sub-samples are limitations for the study. Overall, the jail group is much younger and has a larger percentage of white individuals than the other groups. These differences may be qualitative differences in individuals who are incarcerated in jail versus those incarcerated in prison. Younger individuals may feel that they still have plenty of time to turn their lives around and not feel as inclined to turn to religion, possibly as a last resort, in order to change their behavior. Another difference among the groups that may affect the study results is that the focus group prison participants (N=70) had been incarcerated for over 95 months on average where the jail participants had been incarcerated only 5.8 months on average. This difference is largely a result of the qualitative differences between jail and prison. The individuals in jail are younger and committed less serious offenses. The researcher expects different responses to questions regarding the reasons of turning to religion among these two groups that may be the result of these differences. For instance, it seems that if an individual is incarcerated for 95 months (about 8 years), there would be much more of a reason to become involved with religion for both extrinsic and intrinsic reasons. There is a much longer amount of time for individuals to reflect on their lives and what has lead them to prison as well as a longer amount of time to deal with boredom and the loss of privileges. It seems that jail inmates, who are incarcerated less than 6 months and on less serious offenses, may not feel the need to turn to a higher power in order to change their behavior (or may not feel that they need to change their behavior at all) or turn to religious services for privileges that they can

manage without for that amount of time. Also, the individuals that had been incarcerated in jail and the prison participants that participated in the focus group interviews had been released for an average of 5.4 and 5.3 months respectively. The twenty prison participants that did not participate in the focus group interviews had been released from prison for 38.2 months on average. Since the researchers were not able to interview these individuals, the study lost the opportunity to examine religion in the lives of individuals who have been back in society for longer and the qualitative benefits of being involved in religion (where it would have been applicable).

Data Collection

In this study, a combination of focus group interviews and surveys were used to collect data. The focus group interviews help the researchers gather individual perspectives on religious participation during incarceration and to compare this samples' perspectives with the Clear et al. (2000) study , which informed the design of the questions used in this study.. The survey allows the researchers to describe the participants' demographic characteristics including age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, time since being released from prison, length of time in prison, state(s) of incarceration, level of security of incarceration facility, length of time residing in a halfway house (if applicable), convicted offenses, and religious denomination.

A snowball sampling method was used to contact directors of halfway houses and transitional programs starting with a search on the Internet for nearby programs within three hours driving distance from Gainesville. Because this population is hard to reach, the snowball sampling method was the most efficient and effective way to obtain data for this study. As noted above, the directors were the main contact for each program and after they approved the study, they arranged a time for the researcher to conduct the interviews and administer the survey. Upon arriving at the halfway house, transitional home, or program, the researchers introduced

themselves to the director and he or she gathered the ex-offenders in a room that was quiet or separate where the group would have some privacy.⁴ Before the focus group was conducted, the researchers introduced themselves to the participants and handed a large envelope and a pen to each person. It contained the survey and two consent forms, one of which was in a smaller white envelope to be signed and the other was for the participant to keep which had the researcher's office contact information in case he had questions in the future. The survey and consent forms had matching numbers (such as 001, 002, etc.) so that the researcher could match the participants' survey with their consent form for future research on recidivism.⁵ The researchers asked the participants to look over the consent form while they explained the study and asked if anyone had any questions. The participants were each informed that participation was voluntary and that they would receive no compensation for their involvement in the study. If an individual refused to sign the consent form or did not wish to participate, he was thanked and asked politely to leave the room during the study. Before beginning the focus group interview, the researchers set up two tape recorders (in case one failed), which would allow the researcher to transcribe the sessions at a later date. For each group, the focus group interview was conducted first and then the participants completed the survey. Although some individuals did not comply with the request, the participants were asked not to complete the survey until after the focus group interview. Because the focus group interviews covered similar content as the survey, the researchers believed that filling out the survey first may influence the groups' answers to the focus group questions.

⁴ Again, there was another researcher on the project as well. Both researchers conducted the focus groups and administered the survey together.

⁵ In order for the participants' answers to remain confidential, the researcher kept the surveys separate from the consent forms, both of which were kept locked in an office at the University of Florida.

Focus Groups

Traditionally, focus groups consist of participants who are lead in a discussion by a moderator about a topic that is of interest to the researcher and the group (Stewart and Shamdasni, 1994). Focus group sessions can target broad topics as well as very specific topics. In this study, the researcher started by asking general questions and then narrowed them down as the interview progressed. The major advantage of focus groups is that they offer the chance to observe participants engaging in interaction that is concentrated on attitudes and experiences which are of interest to the researcher (Morgan and Spanish, 1984). The researcher believed the environment to be conducive for easy interaction because in most cases (except for the PERC program where information on jail ex-offenders was gathered), the participants lived together and the interviews were conducted in a familiar place (either their home or in a normal meeting place).

The researchers were able to conduct 8 focus groups (Table 3-1). The groups ranged in size from 3 to 12 participants and were usually conducted in a private setting in a common meeting place for the individuals including a living room (House of Hope, THORM Inc Ministries, and Center of Hope), a meeting room (Salvation Army), or the facilities' kitchen (Prisoners of Christ). Group 3, from the Prisoners of Christ, was interviewed after a staff meeting at a local church where their substance abuse meetings were usually held and group 8, at the Center of Hope, was interviewed in the afternoon and the individuals were allowed a break from their chores to participate in the study. The groups were surveyed and interviewed in the evening following dinner, when they usually have their group Bible study. The directors allowed the individuals to participate in the study in replacement of a required meeting if it occurred at the same time. During the focus group sessions, the participants would generally sit in a circle or around a table and the researcher began the group by asking the first question and allowing the

participants to respond at will.⁶ Depending on how many participants there were and how much they had to say, the focus group interviews lasted from about 15 minutes to 45 minutes. One limitation in conducting the focus groups was the researcher's relative lack of control over the course of the discussions. At times it was difficult to keep the ex-offenders on topic.

It was the researchers' intention to conduct focus groups with each of the 10 participant groups. However, 2 groups did not participate in focus group interviews, one because the individuals chose not to and the other because the environment did not allow for the interviews to take place. The first group that chose not to participate was from the Salvation Army Red Shield Lodge (group 5). Seven participants agreed to complete the survey but did not want to be interviewed because they weren't being compensated or because they reported being tired from a long day of work.⁷ The 9th group was the group of jail participants from Pinellas County. The director of the PERC program allowed the researcher access to these ex-offenders at their monthly meeting at the criminal courthouse, where he thought access to a room close to the individuals' meeting room would be available to conduct interviews. Because the ex-offenders have free time while waiting for their turn to meet with the PERC counselors, the researcher was going to conduct multiple interviews with up to 12 individuals at a time. Unfortunately, the director was unable to gain access to a room. This environment was not favorable for conducting the focus group interviews because there was no privacy and it was too loud to make a clear recording. Instead, the ex-offenders were asked if they would fill out the survey.

⁶ One researcher would generally conduct the interview and the other would not participate in the discussion and take notes on the order of participants who spoke in order to assist the researchers in transcribing the interviews at a later date.

⁷ The other researcher on the project conducted this session and recorded this in observation notes.

Surveys

Due to there not being a private room to interview the jail ex-offenders, the researchers set up a table in the hallway of the courthouse where individuals waited to talk to counselors. They asked the male ex-offenders who were waiting if they would be willing to fill out a survey and asked that if they were, to fill out the consent form and survey and return it to the researcher at the table. Because some of the individuals involved in the PERC program had been incarcerated in a federal or state prison and some had been incarcerated in the local Pinellas County jail, when the participants returned the survey after completing it, the researcher asked them if they had been incarcerated in a state or federal prison. If the individual had only been incarcerated in jail, the researcher noted this with a “J” on the outside of the envelope to indicate this distinction. Nothing was marked on the envelope if the participant had been incarcerated in prison.

Individuals who were in groups that also participated in the focus group interviews completed the survey when the interview had finished. The researchers asked the participants to remove the survey from the large envelope that was passed out at the beginning of the session, which included two consent forms and a pen for the participant to use. The participants were told to ask if they did not understand a particular question or if they needed help reading or completing the survey. They were also reminded that continued participation was appreciated but not required. The survey generally took about 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Instruments

Two separate instruments were used in this study to gain information on the importance of religion in the lives of ex-offenders. The first instrument used contained focus group interview questions that were developed with regard to previous literature to gain an understanding of what religion means to the subjects and to clarify their responses to later survey

questions based on the importance of religion in their lives. This information should be taken simply as descriptive to this sample and should not be generalized to all ex-offenders. The second instrument used was a survey questionnaire. Most of the survey questions for this study were based on a study by Clear and his associates (2000) who called attention to both intrinsic and extrinsic meanings of religion for inmates in prison.⁸ In the following section, the research questions addressed in each instrument will be discussed along with a more specific explanation of the questions asked in the focus group interviews and in the survey.

Focus Group Questions

In total, the participants were asked eight focus group questions related to religion⁹ (Appendix B). Although none of the questions specifically asked what reasons the ex-offenders turned to religion while they were incarcerated (in order to answer the first research question), multiple questions were asked to examine the role of religion in their lives. Examples of these questions include “Are you religious? If so, how has this impacted your attitude and experience since you have left prison?”, “If you are religious, what do you like most about your religion?”, and “What do you believe you must do to lead a religious life?”. These questions were asked in hopes of being able to add to the information gathered in the survey and to see what part religion played in their lives upon reentering society. One question asked during the focus group interviews, “Have you ever claimed to be religious to get benefits from the system?,” was asked based on literature that assumes there are inmates and ex-offenders who say they are religious to gain access to programming that would otherwise be unavailable to them. Some of the halfway

⁸ The survey questions that were not based on Clear et al.’s article were added based on the personal experience of the other researcher on the project who worked with inmates for 5 years. The survey questions were written by the other researcher, Saskia Santos.

⁹ The other researcher on the project asked questions for another study previous to these questions during the same interview period.

and transitional homes where the data were collected required that the participants of the program were religious or spiritual.

Additional questions were asked that were not intended to answer the research question. These questions included, “Have any of you re-offended since you have been out? If so, what have you done and why? If not, why not?,” as well as, “What do you think will keep you from re-offending in the future? What do you need help with?,” and also “Is there anything else you’d like to tell me about your experiences since you left prison?” These questions were asked to see if the ex-offenders thought religious services would help them stop committing crime and successfully reenter the community after their incarceration. Depending on the participants’ responses, several different follow-up questions were used to gain further information.

Survey Questions

The complete survey was a total of 13 pages and asked the participants 83 questions (Appendix A).¹⁰ The first four questions asked demographic questions including age, sex, race and or/ethnicity, and education. Other descriptive information asked included the amount of time since being released from prison, the amount of time incarcerated, the states where the individual’s incarceration took place, the level of security of those facilities, the amount of time since living in the halfway house or transitional program, and the offenses for which the individual had been convicted. The next few questions on the survey allow the researcher to examine the role of religion in the lives of ex-offenders. First, the participants were asked their religious preference/denomination (None, Catholic, Protestant, and Other). Then, targeting the second research question on the differences between intrinsically and extrinsically motivated religiosity during incarceration, the participants were asked each in a separate questions how

¹⁰ Questions 11-60 were asked as part of another study.

important religion was in his life before, during, and after incarceration on a 4-point Likert scale from not important to very important and also how often he attended religious services before, during, and after incarceration (never to daily on a 6-point Likert scale).

The final 16 questions of the survey addressed the first research question, ‘What are the reasons inmates turn to religion during incarceration?’. Each of these questions were asked on a 5 point Likert scale from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree. As stated previously, most of these questions were developed from the themes apparent in the Clear et al. study in 2000. In the Clear et al. study, the researchers separate the reasons inmates turn to religion into two categories, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic reasons of turning to religion during incarceration that are found in this survey are noted by asking the respondents to state their agreement with the following statements: I turned to religion to relieve guilt, to deal with the loss of my freedom, to learn a new way of living, to forget I am in prison, and to rebuild family relationships. Agreement with the following statements note extrinsic reasons for turning to religion during incarceration: I turned to religion for safety, to gain access to outsiders, to build relationships with other inmates, to receive privileges, because staff treated me better, because of a lack of anything else to do, as something to do, and my turning to religion was an act. Three statements asking the participant’s level of agreement did not come from the Clear et al. study, including: I turned to religion because it reminds me of home, I turned to religion to get out of work, and I turned to religion to get out of the hot/cold weather.¹¹

¹¹ Again, these questions were based on the fellow researcher’s work experience with inmates.

Variables

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables included in this study consist of two ordinal variables and two dichotomous variables. The first is an ordinal variable that is coded to represent four groups based on the frequency of attendance at religious services before, during, and after incarceration. These groups were assigned based on three survey questions that asked “how often did you (or do you) go to religious services” separately for before incarceration, during incarceration, and after incarceration. The responses for these questions included Never (1), Seldom (2), Monthly (3), Weekly (4), More than once a week (5), and Daily (6). The following codes comprising the first dependent variable were assigned by the researcher: (1) participants who did not attend religious services often (weekly, more than once a week, or daily) before, during, or after incarceration (N= 18), (2) participants who attended religious services often before incarceration but did not attend often during incarceration (N= 9)¹², (3) participants who did not attend services often before incarceration, but began attending often during incarceration and after incarceration (N=24), and (4) participants who attended services often before, during, and after incarceration (N=14). This dependent variable included only 55 participants (out of 106) due to missing responses in one or more questions used to derive the groups. The second dependent variable is similar to the first, but was assigned based on self-reported religious importance (i.e. “How important was/is religion in your life?” asked separately for before, during, and after incarceration). Response choices for these questions included Not at all important (1), A little important (2), Important (3), and Very important (4). The variable was coded as follows: (1)

¹² Out of the 9 participants in this group, 5 individuals attended religious services before and after incarceration and 4 individuals only attended religious services before incarceration. The groups are similar in that all of the individuals attended services before incarceration but did not attend during. These groups were combined to have a larger N.

participants who indicated that religion was not at all important or a little important before, during, and after incarceration (N= 9), (2) participants who said religion was important or very important before incarceration but not during incarceration (N=7)¹³, (3) participants who responded that religion was not important before incarceration, but was important or very important during incarceration and after incarceration (N=25), and (4) participants who said religion was important or very important before, during, and after incarceration (N=30). This variable also had many missing responses and included only 64 participants (out of 106) who responded to all the questions that were used to make the variable. The third and fourth dependent variables are based only on the time when the participants were incarcerated. The first dependent variable is based on attendance at religious services and distinguishes between individuals who attended services often during incarceration (coded as 1) and those who did not attend services often during incarceration (coded as 0). The second dependent variable (Model 2) is based on religious importance and was recoded so that 1 represented individuals who felt that religion was important or very important during incarceration and 0 represented individuals who felt that religion was not at all important or a little important during incarceration.

Independent Variables

There are 5 independent variables representing sample demographics included in this study. All of the respondents in the study are male, so the researcher did not need to include sex as an independent variable. The first question of the survey asked the participant's age by stating "How old are you?" and had a space available for the participant to write his age. Race or ethnicity was determined by asking "How would you describe your race and/or ethnicity?" and

¹³ Out of the 7 participants in this group, 3 individuals indicated that religion was important or very important before and after incarceration and 4 individuals said religion was only important before incarceration. The groups are similar in that all of the individuals said religion was important before incarceration and not during incarceration. These groups were combined to have a larger N.

the participant responded by circling 1 for White, 2 for Black/African American, 3 for Hispanic, and 4 for Other. Underneath the “Other” response, the survey indicated to specify the race or ethnicity if the participant circled 4 for Other. Because there were only 3 participants who answered Hispanic and 1 participant (Asian) who indicated Other, the researcher combined the Hispanic and Other categories and referred to the new category as Other. Each participant’s level of education was obtained by asking “What is the highest level of education you have obtained?” and were instructed to circle 1 for None, 2 for 1st grade, 3 for 2nd grade, and so on until 11th grade (indicated by circling 12). Above 11th grade, the choices were High School, GED, Some College, Associate’s degree, Bachelor’s degree, and Other, noted by circling 13 through 18 respectively. If the participant circled 18 (indicating Other), there was a line instructing him to specify his level of education. The researcher recoded this variable so that the responses indicated the years of education obtained by the participant. This means that None (previously coded 1) was coded 0, 1st grade was coded 1 (for 1 year of education), 2nd grade was coded 2, etc. These responses are continuous until a High School level is obtained where the researcher coded High School and GED both as 12 years of education, Some college as 13 years, an Associate’s degree as 14 years, and a Bachelor’s degree as 16 years of education. Next, to find out how long each inmate had been incarcerated, the survey asked “How long were you in prison?” and the participants were asked to specify the number of months or years. The researcher converted all of these responses to months. Finally, although it was not a question on the survey because the researcher had intended to sample only inmates who had been incarcerated in prison, a variable included in the study represents participants as having been incarcerated in prison or jail as a dummy variable with prison coded as 0 and jail coded as 1. As discussed in the section on sample demographics (Table 3-2), the sample is divided into prison

participants including focus group participants and non-focus group participants, and jail participants. In hopes of being able to report on all prison participants together, a fisher's exact test was run to test for any significant differences between the focus group (N=50) and non-focus group (N=20) prison participants in their responses to the 16 questions on turning to religion that make up the extrinsic and intrinsic scales (described below). The results indicate that the only question in which the two groups have significantly different responses at the .05 significance level (p-value= .027) is on turning to religion as something to do, where the focus group participants are more likely to disagree with this statement. Since the groups differ in only one question out of 16, the researcher will discuss them only as prison participants.

In order to examine Clear et al.'s study of reasons inmates turn to religion during incarceration, the researcher created two scales representing the findings in Clear et al. (2000) using the final 16 survey questions asking reasons of turning to religion during incarceration, all with responses on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree and choice (3) equaling Unsure. Both scales were created using Reliability Analysis, or more specifically Internal Consistency Reliability, which is a form of reliability used to judge the consistency of results across items on the same test that are related to each other (Agresti, 2007). First, the intrinsic scale was created using 5 variables designed to measure intrinsic reasons for turning to religion. These variables include turning to religion to relieve guilt, to deal with the loss of freedom, to learn a new way of living, as a reminder of home, and to forget about being in prison. For this scale, 95 participants (out of 106) had responses for all variables in the scale and the standardized item alpha was fairly high at .72, indicating a reliable scale. The extrinsic scale was comprised of 11 variables intended to measure extrinsic reasons for turning to religion during incarceration. These variables include turning to religion (or religious services) to gain

access to outsiders, for safety, to build relationships with other inmates, to rebuild relationships with family, because of a lack of anything else to do, for something to do, to get out of work, to receive privileges, because of better staff treatment, to get out of hot/cold weather, and turning to religion as an act. This scale includes 87 participants (out of 106) and has a very strong standardized item alpha of .87.

Analysis

The central issue for this study is to understand the reasons why inmates turn to religion during incarceration and if those reasons separate the groups based on attendance at religious services and feelings of religious importance during incarceration. Therefore, the time periods that are of interest in this study are before incarceration, during incarceration, and after incarceration, with the main focus on during incarceration. To accomplish these goals, both quantitative and qualitative analysis will be used. Since the survey was the primary data collection, the analysis of that data will be discussed first. The survey was used as the primary data collection method and the focus group interviews were conducted to provide more insight into the survey results and for comparison to the results found by Clear et al. (2000). Following the analysis of the survey data, the researcher will discuss the analysis of the focus group interviews.

In order to answer the first research question, asking for what reasons inmates turn to religion during incarceration, frequencies will be run on the 16 survey questions that make up the intrinsic and extrinsic scales discussed above. This will allow the researcher to report what percentage of participants said they turned to religion for each of the intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. Then, frequencies will be run on the questions that were used to code the dependent variables. This will allow the researcher to report the percentage of participants that responded that they attended services frequently or not and felt that religion was important or not important

before, during, and after incarceration. Each of the frequencies will be reported for three samples including total participants, prison participants, and jail participants.

Binary logistic regression will be used to answer the second research question, 'Do inmates who turn to religion for intrinsic versus extrinsic reasons differ in the frequency of attendance at religious services or religious importance during incarceration?'. The analysis will be used to determine if any predictors can distinguish group membership based on a dichotomous dependent variable. Most often, the coefficients reported in logistic regression analyses are the intercept (B), the Wald chi-square test statistic, and the Odds Ratio ($\text{Exp}(B)$), which shows the strength of association between a predictor and the response of interest (Press and Wilson, 1978). Logistic regression is favored when data are not normally distributed or group sizes are very unequal.

Finally, the focus group data will be examined for possible themes that support or contradict the findings of the survey data. Qualitative examples that supported or expanded the results that were found from the quantitative data will be noted. Also, examples will be shown that confirm or contrast findings from the Clear et al. (2000) study from which this research was based.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

Research Question 1: For What Reasons Do Inmates Turn to Religion during Incarceration?

In order to answer the first research question, frequencies were run across the total, prison and jail samples on the 16 reasons for why inmates turn to religion (Table 4-1). The response choices for the items on the survey were a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, with choice (3) equaling Unsure. In the frequency table seen below, the results are reported by the number and percentage of participants who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the reason for turning to religion. This is because for all of the statements except for two, the participants' mean response indicated disagreement (mean closest to 2) with the statement. The two variables that did not follow this pattern are turning to religion as a new way of living, an intrinsic variable, and turning to religion to rebuild family relationships, an extrinsic variable. For turning to religion as a new way of living, the total and prison samples had mean responses indicating that the participants agreed with this statement (means equal 3.60 and 3.69 respectively). The responses of the jail sample indicated that the average response to this statement was 3.40, or Unsure. For the variable measuring if participants turned to religion during incarceration to rebuild family relationships, all of the samples responded on average between Disagree (2) and Unsure (3). The means for all three groups ranged from 2.69 (jail sample) to 2.80 (prison sample). The next highest average response for any other variable among the total sample was 2.24 for turning to religion to deal with their loss of freedom and turning to religion as a reminder of home. Among the prison sample, the next highest means was 2.19 for the item indicating turning to religion to deal with the loss of freedom. Finally, among the jail sample, the next highest mean were 2.48 indicating

Table 4-1. Participant Responses to Reasons of Turning to Religion During Incarceration

	Total Sample (N=106)			Prison Sample* (N=70)			Jail Sample (N=36)		
	N	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Mean	N	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Mean	N	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Mean
Intrinsic Reasons									
To relieve guilt	68	70.1	2.10	51	75	2.06	17	58.6	2.21
To deal with loss of freedom	61	63.5	2.24	45	67.2	2.19	16	55.2	2.34
To find a new way of living	22	22.9	3.60	16	23.9	3.69	6	20.7	3.41
Reminder of home	62	65.3	2.24	46	69.7	2.15	16	55.2	2.45
To forget about being incarcerated	70	73.7	2.08	49	74.2	2.09	21	72.4	2.07
Extrinsic Reasons									
Access to outsiders	74	69.8	1.96	56	83.6	2.06	18	62.1	2.17
Safety	65	68.4	2.19	52	78.8	1.87	13	44.8	2.48
To build relationships with inmates	66	70.2	2.10	49	75.4	2.00	17	58.6	2.31
Lack of anything to do	77	81.1	1.91	57	86.4	1.83	20	69.0	2.07
To get out of work	84	88.4	1.68	63	95.5	1.59	21	72.4	1.90
For something to do	74	80.4	1.93	53	81.5	1.95	21	77.8	1.89
To receive privileges	76	83.5	1.84	58	89.2	1.75	18	69.2	2.04
For better staff treatment	78	84.8	1.84	58	89.2	1.75	20	74.1	2.04
To rebuild family relationships	48	52.7	2.77	36	55.4	2.80	12	46.2	2.69
To get out of hot/cold weather	74	80.4	1.95	55	84.6	1.83	19	70.4	2.22
My being religious was an act	76	71.7	1.82	56	87.5	1.69	20	74.1	2.15

*The prison sample includes focus group prison participants (N=50) and non-focus group prison participants (N=20). The columns in the table noting % Disagree are participants who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

disagreement with turning to religion for safety and 2.45 indicating turning to religion as a reminder of home.

Research Question 2: Differences in Inmates with Intrinsic and Extrinsic Values
Frequencies: Attendance at Religious Services and Religious Importance

The following analyses will be run to determine if having intrinsic versus extrinsic values is significantly related to the frequency of attendance at religious services and self-reported religious importance during incarceration. In order to gain a better understanding of how the participants responded to questions, frequencies were run for the total sample, the prison sample, and the jail sample on these questions (Table 4-2 and Table 4-3). The frequency of attendance at religious services during incarceration is similar. During incarceration, 51.1% of the total sample, 56.1% of the prison sample, and 55.6% of the jail sample attended religious services often. Missing responses were an issue especially for the jail sample where 27.7% of the participants did not respond to this survey question. The results of the frequencies run across the three sample for religious importance during incarceration showed that the total sample and prison sample were similar in their responses. During incarceration, 67.7% of the total sample and 72.7% of the prison sample reported that religion was important or very important. However, only 38.5% of the jail participants reported that religion was important. The amount of missing responses from the group ranged from 8.5% of respondents in the jail sample to 12.3% of respondents in the total sample.

Logistic Regression

Next, logistic regression was run to determine if any predictors can distinguish group membership based on dichotomous dependent variables instead of the ordinal dependent variables used in the previous analysis. The independent variables included in the following models included age, amount of time incarcerated (in months), years of education, whether the

Table 4-2. Participant Responses on Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services

	Attended Services		Did Not Attend		Missing Responses	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total Sample (N=106)						
Before Incarceration	27	30.3	62	69.7	17	1
During Incarceration	47	51.1	45	48.9	14	1
After Incarceration	58	63.0	34	37.0	14	1
Prison Sample (N=70)						
Before Incarceration	20	30.8	45	69.2	5	7
During Incarceration	37	56.1	29	43.9	4	5
After Incarceration	46	68.7	21	31.3	3	4
Jail Sample (N=36)						
Before Incarceration	7	51.9	17	48.1	12	3
During Incarceration	10	55.6	16	44.4	10	2
After Incarceration	12	59.1	13	40.9	11	3

Table 4-3. Participant Responses on Importance of Religion

	Religion Important		Religion Not		Missing Responses	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total Sample (N=106)						
Before Incarceration	40	44.0	51	56.0	15	14.2
During Incarceration	63	67.7	30	32.3	13	12.3
After Incarceration	71	75.5	23	24.5	12	11.3
Prison Sample (N=70)						
Before Incarceration	27	39.1	42	60.9	1	1.4
During Incarceration	48	72.7	18	27.3	4	5.7
After Incarceration	57	85.1	10	14.9	3	2.8
Jail Sample (N=36)						
Before Incarceration	13	48.0	9	52.0	14	38.9
During Incarceration	15	38.5	12	61.5	9	8.5
After Incarceration	14	29.2	13	70.8	9	8.5

participant was incarcerated in prison (coded 0) or jail (coded 1), race (coded 0 for nonwhite and 1 for white), and both the intrinsic and extrinsic scales. The first model based on attendance at religious services was based on only 60 responses (out of 106) due to the amount of missing responses in the scales and independent variables. This test had a chi-square statistic of 4.950 indicating a significance level of .666 (Table 4-4). None of the predictors in the model had a

Wald statistic that reached a level of significance (even at .10) and thus were not able to predict group membership. The second model run using logistic regression was to determine if any of the same independent variables used in the first model could predict the importance of religion. This model included 65 participant responses, more than Model 1 but still with many missing responses. Along with the first model, the second overall model does not reach a level of significance. The chi-square statistic is 14.424 and has a p-value of .087. Out of the 7 independent variables included in the model, only intrinsic scale is a significant predictor of the importance of religion during incarceration, with a p-value of .036 (Table 4-4). The findings show an intercept of 1.930 and an odds ratio (exp(b)) of 6.887 indicating that participants who find that religion is important are almost 6.9 times more likely to have intrinsic values. The extrinsic scale almost reached significance at the .10 level with a p-value of .122 and an intercept of -1.560. With a negative intercept, the relationship indicates that individuals with more extrinsic values are less likely to perceive religion as being important during incarceration.

Table 4-4. Logistic Regression Analysis: Frequency of Attendance and Religious Importance

Variables	Model 1: Attendance			Model 2: Importance		
	B	Wald	Odds Ratio	B	Wald	Odds Ratio
Age	.030	.739	1.030	.029	.449	1.029
Race	.015	.001	1.015	-.001	.000	.999
Education	-.094	.414	.910	-.123	.380	.884
Time Incarcerated	-.003	.322	.997	-.001	.071	.999
Prison or Jail Inmate	.455	.334	1.576	1.069	1.202	2.991
Extrinsic Scale	-.685	.828	.504	-1.560	2.387	.210
Intrinsic Scale	.874	1.940	2.397	1.930	4.393*	6.887

* p≤.05

Note: Model 1 (N=60) $\chi^2 = 4.950$, 7 df, p=.666; Model 2 (N=65) $\chi^2 = 12.424$, 7 df, p=.087

Focus Group Data

The standardized design of the focus group interviews allows the researcher to compare the responses of participants from group to group (Morgan, 1996:142-143). In order to analyze

the focus group interviews, the recording of each interview was transcribed verbatim.¹ Notes taken during the focus group interviews on the order of the participants who spoke and the atmosphere of the discussions facilitated this process. Each of the focus groups was conducted using the same questions as a guideline for the interviews. Though the questions may not have been asked exactly the same way, there were similar responses across groups. In order to extract common themes from the interviews, the researcher grouped the participants' responses for similar questions asked of each group. Reporting the results of the focus group interviews is important because the results of the logistic regressions did not shed very much light on the article of which this study was focused. However, some themes that emerged when the individuals in the study were prompted more generally about religion throughout their lives (especially during incarceration) help to highlight the inmate perspectives shown in Clear et al. (2000). This section is designed to provide a few individual perspectives from participants in the focus groups² that represent both the intrinsic and extrinsic values pointed out by Clear et al.

Intrinsic Perspectives

Many of the inmate perspectives indicating intrinsic reasons of turning to religion noted in the Clear et al. study were echoed by the former inmates that participated in the focus group interviews in this study. First, the Clear et al. study indicated that inmates turn to religion in order to deal with feelings of guilt (2000). One participant in the first focus group conducted in Gainesville, Florida indicated that “you realize how much you hurt your family...that was, ah, humbling experience to know that I really hurt my family.” Another intrinsic reason for turning to religion in the Clear et al. study was to find a new way of life. One former inmate in this

¹ Both researchers took part in transcribing the focus group interviews. When one researcher transcribed, the other researcher verified the transcription by listening to the tape and comparing it to the transcription.

² As discussed previously, all participants in the focus group interviews were previously incarcerated in prison (versus jail).

study stated that "...it's about changing your life. Changing what you do. You can't go to church and go around and buy some drug and do it right behind it." One ex-offender residing at the Center of Hope in Clearwater, Florida describes how he has faith that a full effort in the teachings of the Bible will pay off after his release from prison. He stated

I fully believe if someone attempts to live by the Bible to their best ability, um, that most likely they will not go back to prison. Of course, if it is not up to their best ability then they fail. And I'm not saying that is an easy task of anybody, but I'm saying if you put your whole heart into trying, or allowing the holy spirit to work through you to help you try then it is a lot easier I think.

This participant also stated that "there is certain times when you get blasted with the feelings of love, um, the holy spirit. Once you feel that love, God's love for the first time in your life, that strong, you realize that is better feeling than any drug or drink you have ever had or anything else." Clear and his associates pointed out that it was common to observe a mutual respect among inmates from different religions and that the religious bonded together because of their "mutual understanding of the needs that motivated them toward faith" (58). The same participant from this study that voiced the previous statement could not put words to the experience of praying with others by saying that "...when there is a bunch of people gathered together all in prayer and in spirit, it's, it's something indescribable unless you go and experience it yourself." For other inmates, religion is simply away to feel understood when society does not understand them. A participant from Clearwater, Florida voices that "...what it does for me is it gives me a chance to know a God of my understanding. It is a beautiful thing because I know what I've been through and I know where I'm at right now, and I would rather be where I'm at now cause I like the light, the don't like the dark."

Extrinsic Perspectives

The ex-offenders in this study did not shed light on many of the extrinsic reasons indicated in the Clear et al. study. One participant described inmates who turned to religion

during their incarceration for safety, similar to how it was described in the Clear et al. study (2000, 64-66). The participant from the Prisoners of Christ program in Jacksonville, Florida stated that “some of them (inmates) be penis dodging. Like a lot of white boys, they be scared, not being racist, they’d be scared so they go behind that to like, you know...for protection.”

Along the same lines, another former inmate from the Prisoners of Christ program in Jacksonville, Florida stated that “well, they around people, who kind of like watch over them more because they, for the presence of being a Christian and stuff. Because they got faith-based dorms and stuff...and some of the guys when the officer see you try, you know, like you’re trying to do right, they kind of like, I won’t say respect you more, but they kind of look out more for so-called Christians than they would a person who be getting in and out of trouble or you know.”

Not all inmates agreed that inmates received any benefits from participating in religious activities. This can be seen in the statement of an ex-offender from the Center of Hope in Clearwater, Florida. He stated, “I was not aware of any benefits that [the officers] give somebody at the prison I was in by going to church. I was involved for a while, active in the church. Off and on, and I didn’t see where it benefited me. So, other than for your own peace of mind I’m not sure.”

Most of the other statements from participants regarding turning to religion for extrinsic reasons indicated simply that many inmates are hypocrites and attend services but aren’t actually religious. For example, when the researcher asked the focus group if they had seen anybody in prison claiming to be religious, one participant responded “oh yes! Oh, there is so many of those hypocrites, it’s pathetic!...they in the stalls with freak books, and they cursing and they doin’ all these things that you know, un-Godly. So when you see someone trying, you know when they are different.”

A final participant response indicated that individuals simply turn to religion because of the stressful situation of being in prison. He said that “they’re not

acting, it's like a box full of prayers. You know, they're in a bad situation, they reach in...but as soon as the stress is off of them, they are right back to normal.”

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Summary

This study was designed to quantitatively test themes that emerged in a study of inmate perspectives of the value of religion in prison conducted by Clear et al. (2000). The Clear et al. study indicated that inmates turn to religion for multiple reasons in order to handle deprivations they encounter in the prison environment. Two sets of values were described in the article as reasons why inmates turn to religion, intrinsic values and extrinsic values. The explanation of intrinsic values noted that inmates turn to religion to deal with the loss of their freedom, to deal with their guilt, and to find a new way of living. The reasons indicating that inmates turn to religion for extrinsic values included turning to religion for safety or protection, to rebuild family relationships, to gain access to outsiders, for material comforts, and to build relationships with other inmates. To determine why the participants in this sample were turning to religion during incarceration, the only variable that showed agreement (as shown by frequencies) was turning to religion for a new way of living. The participants in this study responded that they disagreed that they had turned to religion for any of the other intrinsic or extrinsic reasons. To test the findings of this study, the researcher performed two logistic regression models to see if 7 different predictors including, age, race, education, time spent incarcerated, having been incarcerated in prison or jail, and the intrinsic and extrinsic scales, could distinguish participants that attended religious services often during incarceration and those that did not as well as participants who felt that religion was important or very important versus those that did not feel that religion was important during incarceration. The first model testing the predictors on the frequency of church attendance during incarceration did not show significance in the overall model or for any of the individual predictors. The second model testing the importance of religion during incarceration

was did not show significance for the overall model, but the intrinsic scale was a significant predictor. The relationship indicated that the odds of feeling that religion was important or very important during incarceration were much higher for individuals with intrinsic values. The final part of the analysis included showing statements from participants in the study on why inmates turn to religion for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. Generally, there was more anecdotal support for the intrinsic values that were laid out in the Clear et al. article.

Relevance of Findings to the Literature

Most of the research on religion in prison involves determining if religious attendance and importance reduces prison infractions and recidivism rates upon being released. This study was unable to add to this literature because it did not include measures of recidivism. The few articles reporting inmate perspectives on reasons why they turn to religion are qualitative and simply relay general themes gathered from one-on-one or group interviews (Clear et al., 2000; Dammer, 2002). This study did not find that inmates turned to religion for any extrinsic reasons and the only variable that showed support as a reason that the participants turned to religion was to find a new way of living, an intrinsic reason discussed in Clear et al.. This finding did show support that reasons that was discussed in the Clear et al. study. This study took Clear et al.'s study one step further by attempting to distinguish participants who attended religious services often during incarceration and those that did not as well as those that felt that religion was important during incarceration against those that did not. This study was unable to distinguish inmates who attended services frequently from those that did not during incarceration with several predictors including scales representing intrinsic and extrinsic values. The results indicating that offenders who felt that religion was important during incarceration are logical due to the nature of intrinsic values. It makes sense that inmates turn to religion in order to learn a new way of living or to deal with the loss of their freedom because they are truly or inherently

religious and that inmates that turn to religion in order to build relationships with other inmates and receive privileges are not honestly religious.

Policy Implications

The finding in this study that is relevant to policy implications for institutional religious programming is that within this sample, there was no difference in the frequency of attendance at religious services among inmates who turned to religion more for intrinsic reasons (or had less disagreement that they turned to religion for intrinsic reasons) than for extrinsic reasons. As indicated in the beginning of the paper, a national survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice shows that about 32 percent of sampled inmates participate in religious activities such as Bible studies and church services (1993). With massive numbers of inmates housed in prisons across the United States, the number of inmates participating in religious services is very large. The Florida Department of Corrections indicates that 23,000 inmates per week (or 42% of the inmate population) participate in religious programming. Many inmates are likely to attend various religious services because of a lack of other programs available. If inmates who turn to religion for extrinsic reasons are attending religious services as frequently as inmates who turn to religious services for intrinsic reasons, as was found in this study, the inmates who turn for extrinsic reasons may be reducing the quality of service for inmates who are truly religious. It is possible that developing more programs that offer similar benefits as the non-religious benefits inmates receive from attending religious services, such as the ability to build relationships with other inmates and gain access to outsiders such as family and program volunteers, will increase the quality of religious programming for inmates that are truly religious. Not only that, it is likely that benefits provided by non-religious programs would better offer what non-religious inmates are looking for by attending religious services.

The improvement or implementation of several services or programs may help provide extrinsic benefits that an inmate may receive from attending religious services. Services that promote more contact between inmates and their families would provide another avenue to rebuild family relationships. National studies show that maintaining contact between inmates and their families can help reduce recidivism (OPPAGA Report, 2007). Many programs with this goal are offered, but the effectiveness may be reduced due to implementation problems. The OPPAGA Report notes that the Florida Department of Corrections is taking steps to strengthen inmate family contact by reducing its telephone commissions and inmate phone rates, in addition to correcting other problems with family visitation such as poorly defined dress codes and other rules, effectively managing the time of visiting children and youth, and insufficient statewide oversight (OPPAGA Report, 2007).

Many education services and programs have the ability to offer benefits such as building relationships with other inmates and/or gaining access to outsiders. For example, the Florida Department of Corrections offers volunteer literacy programs in which trained inmates volunteer to tutor inmates who want to improve their education, but who do not want to attend class, or who are unable to attend class due to job assignment, length of sentence, etc. (Florida Department of Corrections). Because the volunteer literacy program is run by inmates, other incarcerated individuals are able to foster relationships as well as increase their education. GED programs offered by community member volunteers would also provide access to outsiders in the community and help obtain higher educational achievements for inmates.

Study Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

There are several limitations of this study. The first limitation is that the study is unable to generalize the results to other prison samples. This is because the participants in the sample were comprised of inmates who had been incarcerated in both prison and jail facilities. This was

due to the fact that the sample was available and the researcher did not want to lose valuable participants. Other limitations that reduce the generalizability of the study revolve around the focus group interviews. Not every individual in the study participated in focus group interviews. None of the individuals from the jail sample participated due to the lack of an acceptable interview location and thus the researcher was not able to hear what jail inmates had to say about religion during incarceration. Another limitation related to the focus group interviews was that not all of the interview questions were asked the same way for each interview. This was due to the inexperience of the researcher in conducting focus group interviews. In most of the focus group interviews, only a few of the participants voiced responses. Therefore, the focus group interview responses are not generalizable even to the focus group participant sample. Also, more questions should have been asked that were directly related to reasons why inmates turned to religion during incarceration so that the results would have been directly correlated with the quantitative part of the study.

A large limitation of the study involved the wording of the survey questions. Since the researcher did not intend to involve jail participants in the study, some of the survey questions ask specifically about experiences while incarcerated in prison. These questions include “How long since you have been out of prison?” and “How long were you in prison?”. When the jail participants were completing the survey, many of them were confused about the wording of these questions and many did not respond, most likely due to this confusion. Another limitation with the survey measure was the lack of survey questions measuring the reasons why inmates turn to religion since their release from incarceration. These questions would have allowed the researcher to determine if the ex-offenders were turning to religion for different reasons since

being released from incarceration and since regaining some of the deprivations that they had experienced while incarcerated.

An additional limitation of this study is the amount of missing responses to survey questions. There were numerous participants who did not answer one or more of the survey questions regarding religious attendance, religious importance, and reasons of turning to religion during incarceration. Not only that, there were 15 participants who either stopped answering questions upon reaching the reasons of turning to religion during incarceration, or skipped a whole page (containing up to 10 questions) in this section. The amount of missing responses severely reduced the amount of participant responses included in the logistic regression analyses.

The final limitation is the selection bias deals with the halfway and transitional programs where the samples were gathered for this study. To enter the programs, in most cases individuals must declare themselves religious, and sometimes specifically Christian. Also, in most of the programs, the Chaplain from the institution is the person who must refer the individual to the program. It is hard to say if the participants knew that most of the reentry programs such as the ones used in this study, accept only religious individuals and require (or highly recommend) participation in religious services and activities upon acceptance. Upon starting this study, the goal was to find a sample of ex-offenders from halfway houses with both religious and non-religious orientations. This was not possible due to the fact that there were no such programs that the researchers could find within 2 hours driving distance from Gainesville, Florida. Due to this selection bias, it is hard to determine the validity of the results since many of the individuals in the study continued to attend religious services and report that religion was important after incarceration when they did so during incarceration (Table 4-2 and Table 4-3). The participants may have responded in this way due to forced participation in religious components of the

programs that are required or because the individuals feared getting kicked out of the program if they reported that religion was unimportant. Although the researchers clearly indicated to the participants that their responses would be kept anonymous, some of the individuals may have felt insecure in reporting their true feelings.

The most obvious direction for future research to measure other possible reasons for inmates turning to religion during incarceration. Then, if other reasons are indicated, the research should measure differences recidivism between inmates who turned to religion for intrinsic reasons and those that turned to religion for extrinsic reasons. Future research should take into consideration the limitations encountered in this study. The research would be better if the sample included only individuals who had been incarcerated in prison or only individuals who had been incarcerated in jail. If the research were to measure both, larger samples would be necessary. An ideal study would use a longitudinal to measure currently incarcerated inmates on their religious perspectives and participation in religious services as well as other programs and then measure recidivism at multiple intervals upon their release. Other possible future research could determine if introducing more programs (such as the ones discussed above) that provide benefits such as those that a non-religious inmate would receive by attending religious services would improve recidivism rates further than current studies on religious attendance and importance.

APPENDIX A
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Perceptions of Prison Life

Code Number

Circle or fill in the response that best fits your answer.

1. How old are you? (*indicate age*) _____

2. What is your sex? (*circle one*)

Male
1

Female
0

3. How would you describe your race and/or ethnicity? (*circle one*)

White	1	Hispanic	3
Black/African American	2	Other	4

Specify

4. What is the highest level of education you have obtained? (*circle one*)

None	1	10 th grade	11
1 st grade	2	11 th grade	12
2 nd grade	3	High school	13
3 rd grade	4	GED	14
4 th grade	5	Some college	15
5 th grade	6	Associate's degree	16
6 th grade	7	Bachelor's degree	17
7 th grade	8	Other	18
8 th grade	9	(Specify) _____	
9 th grade	10		

5. How long since you have been out of prison?

_____ months

_____ years

6. How long were you in prison? (*specify number of months or years*)

_____ months

_____ years

7. What state(s) were you incarcerated in?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

8. What level of security were the facility (facilities) you were housed in? (*minimum, medium, close, etc.*)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

9. How long have you resided/did you reside in the half-way house where you live (or lived)?

_____ months

_____ years

10. For your last incarceration, what offense(s) were you convicted of? *(Please list the offense carrying the longest sentence first)*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Circle the response that best fits your answer. Please remember to answer these questions based on your last incarceration experience.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
11. Officers were more likely to formally punish inmates through corrective consultation (CCs). <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
12. Officers were more likely to formally punish inmates through disciplinary reports (DRs). <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
13. Officers were more likely to informally punish inmates through taking away privileges. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
14. I would have rather received informal sanctions than formal sanctions. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5

Now I would like to know about your experiences during your last incarceration. Which informal sanctions did YOU receive by officers? (Circle the response that best fits your answer.)

	Never	Sometimes	Half the Time	Usually	Always
15. Not told when it was relax count. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
16. Being forced to remain sitting up during relax count. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
17. Not having the phone be turned on. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
18. Not allowed the full minutes of phone usage. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
19. Being forced to rush during eating. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
20. Shortened access to the yard. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
21. Reduced access to smoking, and rec time through not opening the yard. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
22. Reduced access to the canteen. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
23. Being yelled at. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5

Now I would like to ask you about how other inmates were treated. How often were the following informal sanctions utilized by officers towards OTHER inmates? (Circle the response that best fit your answer.)

	Never	Sometimes	Half the Time	Usually	Always
24. Not being told when it was relax count. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
25. Being forced to remain sitting up during relax count. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
26. Not having the phone be turned on. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
27. Not allowed the full minutes of phone usage. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
28. Being forced to rush during eating. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
29. Shortened access to the yard. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
30. Reduced access to smoking, and rec time through not opening the yard. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
31. Reduced access to the canteen. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
32. Being yelled at. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5

How effective do you believe the following sanctions were at informally CONTROLLING THE INMATES during your last incarceration experience? (Circle the response that best fits your answer.)

	Not at all Effective	A Little Effective	Effective	Very Effective
33. Not being told when it was relax count. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4
34. Being forced to remain sitting up during relax count. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4
35. Not having the phone be turned on. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4
36. Not allowing the full minutes of phone usage. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4
37. Being forced to rush during eating. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4
38. Shortening access to the yard. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4
39. Reducing access to smoking, and rec time through not opening the yard. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4
40. Reducing access to the canteen. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4
41. Being yelled at. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4

Correctional officers often interact with inmates for a variety of reasons. I am interested in knowing why correctional officers interacted with YOU on an informal level. (Circle the response that best fits your answer.)

When an officer interacted with me I thought:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
42. He/she wanted something. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
43. He/she was trying to get out of work. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
44. He/she was trying to hit on me. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
45. He/she was trying to get information <u>from</u> me. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
46. He/she was trying to get information <u>about</u> me. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
47. He/she was concerned about my problems. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
48. He/she was sincere in his/her interaction. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
49. He/she was no different than anyone else. (circle one)	1	2	3	4	5

I felt most officers were: (Circle the response that best fits your answer. For each question, circle one answer.)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
50. Educated	1	2	3	4	5
51. Criminal	1	2	3	4	5
52. Fair	1	2	3	4	5
53. Patient	1	2	3	4	5
54. Polite	1	2	3	4	5
55. Wise	1	2	3	4	5
56. Violent	1	2	3	4	5
57. Religious	1	2	3	4	5
58. Cruel	1	2	3	4	5
59. Rude	1	2	3	4	5
60. Drug abusers	1	2	3	4	5

Finally, we would like to ask you questions about religion. We are hoping to learn more about the role of religion in prison.

Circle or fill in the response that best fit your answer.

61. How would you describe your religious preference/denomination now? (*circle one*)

None 1 Protestant 3

Catholic 2 Other 4

(Specify) _____

62. Before you went to prison, how important was religion in your life? (*circle one*)

Not at all important A little important Important Very important

1 2 3 4

63. In the year before you were incarcerated, how often did you go to religious services? (*circle one*)

Never	Weekly
1	4
Seldom	More than once a week
2	5
Monthly	Daily
3	6

64. While you were in prison, how important was religion in your life? (*circle one*)

Not at all important	A little important	Important	Very important
1	2	3	4

65. How often did you go to religious services while in prison? (*circle one*)

Never	Weekly
1	4
Seldom	More than once a week
2	5
Monthly	Daily
3	6

66. Since you left prison, how important is religion in your life? (*circle one*)

Not at all important	A little important	Important	Very important
1	2	3	4

67. Since you left prison, how often do you go to religious services? (*circle one*)

Never	Weekly
1	4
Seldom	More than once a week
2	5
Monthly	Daily
3	6

Please tell me how much religion affected your life while you were incarcerated. Circle the response that best fits your answer.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
68. I turned to religion to relieve guilt. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
69. I attended religious services to gain access to outsiders. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
70. I turned to religion to deal with the loss of my freedom. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
71. I turned to religion for safety. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
72. I turned to religion to build relationships with other inmates. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
73. I turned to religion to learn a new way of living. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
74. I turned to religion because of a lack of anything else to do. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
75. I turned to religion because it reminds me of home. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
76. I turned to religion to forget I am in prison. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
77. I turned to religion to get out of work. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
78. I turned to religion as something to do. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
79. I turned to religion to receive privileges. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
80. I turned to religion because staff treated me better. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
81. I turned to religion to rebuild family relationships. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
82. I turned to religion to get out of the hot/cold weather. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5
83. My turning to religion was an act. <i>(circle one)</i>	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B
FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe your prison experience? (Explain)
2. In your experience, what type of things did staff do to control inmates? (Please explain. Can you give us some examples?)
3. What were your interactions with staff like? (Examples)
4. What were the interactions between staff and other inmates like?
5. Did officers mess with you? With other inmates? How? Please give us some examples of how this happened.
6. Did some officers treat you differently than others? How so? Why do you think this happened? (Explain)
7. When you did something wrong, would you be punished the same way each time? How were you generally punished? The same as other inmates? Why or why not? (Explain)
8. If you were talking to your friends, how would you describe the staff in the prison where you were? What about the interactions you had with them?
9. What would you like people who do research on inmate-staff interactions to know that we have not discussed already?
10. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences since you have been out of prison. First, have any of you re-offended since you have been out? If so, what have you done and why? If not, why not?
11. What do you think will keep you from re-offending in the future? What do you need help with? (Family, friends, church?)
12. Are you religious? If so, how has this impacted your attitude and experience since you have left prison?
13. If you are religious, what do you like most about your religion?
14. What do you believe you must do to lead a religious life?
15. Do you feel you have been forgiven? Why do you feel this way?
16. Have you ever claimed to be religious to get benefits from the system (e.g., in prison, to gain entry to a halfway house, etc.?)
17. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about your experiences since you left prison?

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jessica began her college career at the University of Florida in 2002 after graduating from Oviedo High School, near Orlando, Florida. Jessica started out as a music performance major playing the clarinet and eventually found her niche in the criminology department. She decided to continue her education as a gator and entered the Criminology, Law and Society graduate program in Fall 2006. Jessica's research has focused on incarcerated populations and prisoner reentry. Upon graduating in August 2008, she hopes to put her knowledge to practice working for the criminal justice system in Dallas, Texas, near family.