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BIOGRAPHY IN THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
OF ADOLESCENTS

By

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INTRODUCTION

BIOGRAPHY IN THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF ADOLESCENTS

INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem Stated and Delimited

One of the chief tools in the religious education of children is the story, which serves as a dynamic carrier of the concepts and modes of conduct which the teacher wishes the children to adopt. However, in teaching young people or adults the story cannot be used as much or in the same way as with children. An adolescent who has learned to think for himself in other things is not content to have a Sunday School teacher always devote the entire teaching period to the telling of a story, because he does not have the opportunity to probe for himself and give expression to his thinking. Moreover, the kind of story which intrigued him as a child no longer speaks to the adolescent, for he is concerned with a world of reality rather than story-book people. He is wise enough to see when a story has been invented for the sake of teaching a moral, and he strongly resents being preached at.

Can the youth leader retain the recognized values of the story in teaching and yet maintain the interest of the adolescent? What means can be employed to teach Christian truth and moral conduct in a way that will not only be acceptable to the adolescent but will actually call forth the desired response.

It is the purpose of this thesis to investigate the values of

biography as a teaching medium for the Christian education of adolescents and the various means of employing this form of instruction in all phases of the church's youth program.

The field of biography is indeed extensive, and it is not the writer's aim to make the whole of it the basis of this study. However, a quick glance over the general field of biography was thought advisable by way of introduction to the selected types of biography. In view of the problem, two major kinds of biography have been chosen, Biblical biographies and extra-Biblical biographies possessing religious and moral values. By "Biblical biography" is meant not only the "lives" contained in the Bible, although they will be of primary concern, but also those biographies of Biblical characters written by recent authors. Further selectivity of biographies within these classifications has been made on the basis of their suitability to the adolescent age as well as their adaptability to the purposes of Christian education. Both those biographies which are to be taken up individually and those which will merely be listed in the Appendix are only suggestive of the many good biographies available and are in no sense intended to be a complete compilation.

B. The Significance of the Problem

Quite apart from religious groups, the secular world is aware of the need of moral training for its young people. With the withdrawal of religious teaching in the public school and with a decreasing percentage of young people in contact with religious instruction in the church, educators have sought to include character building courses in the

public school curricula without any reference to religion. This is not a distinctly new development, although it is but recently becoming a subject of increasing interest, for as early as 1911 the Character Development League of New York prepared a course of study intended to give character training by means of examples from biography. This series of studies was entitled, "Character Lessons in American Biography for School Use and Home Instruction." It was adopted in over ten thousand public schools in different cities, including New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Newark, and many others. Reports coming from the children indicated that not only was there considerable interest on their part, but the lessons were directly influencing their lives. These results were confirmed by their parents who observed a change of behavior at home.¹

A similar tendency in education was observed in Japan. When it became evident that, if public education and moral education were completely divorced, the very life of the nation would be threatened, they introduced into the public schools in 1890 moral instruction through biographies. The primers and readers of Japan gave biographical sketches, with inspiring knowledge of the greatest personalities, not only of Japan, but of the world. It is said that the average Japanese boy knows more about George Washington than our own American youth.²

More and more the applicability of biography to the needs of

¹James Terry White, "Moral Instruction Through Biography," G. Stanley Hall, editor, The Moral Life. Vol. IX; New York: The Educational Society, 1911, p. 252.

²Ibid., p. 236.

young people is being recognized and secondary schools and colleges are introducing courses of biography. In an article entitled "Biography in Secondary Schools" William Holmes Davis states clearly the objectives which these courses are expected to achieve when he says, "No student of secondary education will deny that we have great need for anything that will take hold of the adolescent boy and inspire him with faith in himself and a determination to make the most of his life."¹

If secular educators are constantly alert to every possible means that will obtain their goals, how much more ought the Christian educator to be interested in discovering and using methods to achieve nobler objectives, namely, to inspire him with faith in God and a determination to make the most of his life through service to God. The youth leader in the church is acutely aware of the powerful and attractive appeals which the outside world makes to young people, and he cannot expect to attract youth to a spiritual cause unless he presents it in a challenging manner. The least he can do is to take advantage of the findings of the secular educators and adopt their best method for character development, which is one of the religious educator's most important duties. Many religious and moral biographies have been written, but they have not been put to adequate use. This study will be an attempt to contribute some helps in using biographies with adolescents to the end that the benefits of this literature may be made accessible to them.

¹William H. Davis, "Biography in Secondary Schools," The Outlook, v. 111, (December 22, pp. 1003-4.

C. The Method of Procedure

In beginning a study of this nature, one naturally asks himself, "Are there really sufficient values in biography to investigate the ways and means of using it as a definite educational tool?" The answer to this question will be the first consideration of this study. Chapter one will include a brief survey of the field of biography with special emphasis upon the values of biography, both for the general reader, and, in particular, for the Christian education of adolescents.

The second chapter will consist in illustrating the value of biography for the Christian education of adolescents through ten selected biographies, both Biblical and extra-Biblical. They will be discussed first as different types of biography and then in relation to their applicability to the needs of adolescents.

The final phase of this study will be an investigation of the means of using biography in the church's youth program. This will include a study of the possibilities of presenting biography as an aid both in worship and in teaching. The findings will then be summarized and conclusions drawn.

D. The Sources of Data

For general background information in the field of biography, books discussing the form, development, and purpose will be consulted. Similarly on the general subject of adolescents, there will be reference to the psychologies of youth as well as handbooks for the church youth director. In addition to these general sources, the Bible is the chief

primary source, and various other biographies are also used as primary sources. In the compilation of the annotated bibliography to be included in the Appendix, the Book Review Digest, book lists suggested by publishers, and personal recommendations will be used. Numerous educational journals, Biblical commentaries, sermons, and books on Bible study and Bible teaching will likewise be consulted.

CHAPTER I

THE VALUES OF BIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER I

THE VALUES OF BIOGRAPHY

A. Introduction

James Terry White, who, as editor of a biographical cyclopedia for many years, was called upon to write thousands of biographies, says how forcibly he was impressed with the unanimity with which men in various stations of life have referred to some particular biography as the turning-point in their lives. Some reported that they had learned determination and perseverance from Columbus; others found their greatest stimulus in Washington, as did Lincoln. But most often the influential life was not one of great fame, but some obscure person whose career was only within the personal knowledge of the individual inspired.¹

Numerous other testimonies of a similar nature could easily be provided to show that not only writers of biographies and educators but the ordinary reader also, who reads merely for personal enjoyment, has unconsciously discovered the unique values of biographical literature.

The value of biography is best understood when it is placed against the general background of the field of literature so that its distinctive features may be noted. The discussion of the values of biography in this chapter will, therefore, begin by observing the nature of biography in comparison to its closely related literary brothers, history and the novel, its development from the earliest

¹White, op. cit., pp. 243-4.

beginnings until the present, its special purpose, and its recent popularity.

Because biography is life, it has many values for the general reader without particular reference to Christian education. These are enumerated, not because they are the objectives of using biography in Christian education, but to show what additional benefits may accompany the specific values of biography for the Christian education of adolescents, which are also listed.

B. Biography in the Field of Literature

1. The Nature of Biography

a. Biography Defined

The word "biography" was first introduced into the English language in 1683 by Dryden. Before 1700 "life writing" was used, but it was not "vital enough to require a word to distinguish it from chronical and historical writing in general."¹ The term was aptly chosen, for it serves to define biography. In its very name biography is seen to be "life writing" or the literature of life. It is especially the literature of individual human life.² Some have referred to biographies as "life histories" and others as "personal histories."

¹George Carver, Alms For Oblivion (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1946), pp. 1-2.

²Phillips Brooks, "Biography," Essays and Addresses (New York: E. P. Dutton Company, 1894), p. 427.

b. The Essential Characteristics of Biography¹

1) Truth

To be worthy of the name of biography, the writing must be true to the character of the life it portrays. It will necessarily involve interpretation, but it must be an interpretation of actual fact.

2) Unity

Not only must biography be true, but it must be a story that has unity. The successive events must be more than a chaotic collection of incidents; they must have coherence and relevance.

3) Individualization

Every man is naturally unique, but it takes great care on the part of the biographer to preserve that uniqueness. The character must stand out from all other men as an individual having his own peculiar traits.

c. The Relationship Between Biography and History

It has been noted that before 1700 life writing was not distinguished from historical writing in general, and that even now biography is referred to as personal history. Because biography is a kind of history and the relationship between biographical writing and historical writing is so close, it is often difficult to distinguish between them. Thomas Carlyle would make history simply the collection of numerous life histories. In Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in

¹Edgar Johnson, *One Mighty Torrent* (New York: Stackpole Sons, 1937), p. 39.

History, he describes history as "the essence of innumerable biographies."¹

However, even if we take what appears to be primarily the record of one man's life, such as the narrative of David's life as recorded in the Bible, we find that not all would agree that this is a biography. William Thayer regards this particular narrative as history rather than biography, even though it is vivid and personal.² The difference between the two types of writing according to him would seem to lie in the purpose of the author. If the author uses the man primarily for the purpose of depicting the nature of the times, it may be classified as history. But, if the author is chiefly interested in the character for what he is in himself, and presents his environment and the contemporary events with the purpose of showing how they affected his subject, the writing takes on biographical qualities.

If a comparison were made of two life stories of the same individual written by two different authors, one an historian and the other a biographer, another distinction between the two types of literature might be discerned. The historian is mostly concerned with the public life of his subject, whereas the biographer probes into the private life to discover the real man.

In history you are conducted only into the rooms of state; in biography you are led into the private lodgings of the hero: you see him in undress and are made familiar with his private actions and conversation.... The pageantry of life is taken away; you see the poor reasonable animal, as naked as ever nature made him; are

¹Carver, op. cit., p. 11.

²William Roscoe Thayer, The Art of Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), pp. 13-14.

made acquainted with his passion and his folly, and find the demi-god a man.¹

In general, it may be said that biography differs from history in that it is concerned with the history of a single life instead of a group. The author's purpose is to focus attention on the development of his character rather than on the nature of the times. Biography seeks to discover the inner private life of the individual in addition to his public life.

These distinctions have been made, not in order that lines of demarkation should be drawn to separate the two types of literature, nor that the merits of one should discredit the other, but rather that it may be more clearly seen how vitally related they are to each other and how they may be used to complement each other.

To understand fully the life of Paul the Apostle, one must know the type of home from which he came, the nature of his education, the events that surrounded his conversion and call, the system of government, the conditions prevailing in the provinces to which he went as a missionary, and as much else as a history of Paul's time could provide, for to a great degree every man is a product of his times.

But on the other hand, "while each strong man has been the agent of destiny's evolution he has left his trademark on history's bill of goods,"² and the facts of history cannot be rightly interpreted without discovering its causes and effects in terms of human lives. "Without a living sense of personality suffusing its framework, the

¹Carver, op. cit., p. 7.

²Victor L. Albjerg, "History Through Biographical Lenses," The Social Studies, 38:245, October, 1947.

abstractions of history are only half truths."¹

Facts are of interest primarily because they have human significance. If they are divorced from the joys and sorrows, pains and pleasures, exaltation and agony of life they lose their appeal. Biography, therefore, makes its contribution to history by recalling the fact that history is the study of man, not merely an investigation of blind metaphysical forces disassociated from human feelings.²

d. The Relationship Between Biography and the Novel

The old style biography commonly called The Life and Times of ... or The Life and Letters of ..., which sought to give every fact available in a person's life from the time of his birth until the tombstone was placed on his grave, has now given way to a type of biography which does not feel obliged to begin at the beginning nor to end at the end, that selects carefully the incidents which are to be recorded, that seeks to discover motives and psychological bases for conduct, and that fills in imaginary conversation, until there is a close resemblance between it and a novel. However, the basic difference must always remain: in biography the people are necessarily those who have really lived, but in a novel, no matter how lifelike the characters appear, the reader must always be aware that they lived only in the imagination of the author.

Not only does biography deal with actual persons, but it must also deal with the truth. The biographer is not free, as is the novelist,

¹Johnson, op. cit., foreward.

²Albjerg, op. cit., pp. 245-6.

to alter personalities, reactions, or events to suit himself. In respect to this, André Maurois says, "To publish a biography, to announce it as a biography and not as a novel, is an announcement of authentic facts and the first thing that is due from a biographer to his reader is truth."¹

It is necessary to distinguish between the novel and biography, for many of the most recent and popular novels, such as David by Gladys Smith and The Big Fisherman by Lloyd Douglas have been read as though they were biographies, and false impressions have resulted from confusing fiction with fact. When the reader understands that the characters in such a novel are historical only in part and fictitious in part, he may derive real benefit from the novel through the descriptions and background materials as well as through the imaginative elements of entering into the feelings, thoughts, and conversations of the characters as they might have occurred in various situations.

However realistic a novel may be it cannot speak to its reader so powerfully as can a well written biography, for "the master creations of fiction spring from the human brain; the subjects of biography are the very creation of God himself; the realities of God must forever transcend the fictions of man."²

2. The Historic Development of Biography

Like all other literature, biography has taken various forms throughout the years. William Thayer, in his little book, The Art of Biography, gives a very clear portrayal of the historical development of

¹André Maurois, Aspects of Biography (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1929), p. 131.

²Thayer, op. cit., p. 147.

biography. He classifies the Biblical story of Joseph as one of the earliest biographies, although he thinks parts of it are legendary. The uniformity with which Joseph always acts in character is, to him, an indication that Joseph was a real person. He notes that the story contains an orderly, consecutive, individualized life and a natural flow of results from preceding causes. He says that it has typical qualities peculiar to primitive works, but on the other hand, it contains an unusual play of emotion, and a plot with several dramatic crises which a modern playwright might envy.

The next real landmark in biography was Plutarch who reached the point of defining each individual clearly. "Biography," says Thayer, "should reveal to us the individual, man or woman, that indivisible unit which has no exact counterpart in the world."¹ By using the comparative method of setting a Greek over against a Roman similar in some respect, Plutarch tried to show wherein one differed from the other.

The hagiographies or lives of the saints marked the next stage of life writing. They were characterized by much of the miraculous and the lives were always presented as flawless.

Toward the middle of the sixteenth century in England, the prevailing ideal was the meandering method. It was as if the biographer sat down with you and talked about his subject without reference to bounds of time or sequence.

¹Thayer, op. cit., p. 16.

Since 1870 the best biographies have been much closer to life than those of the middle and earlier part of the nineteenth century.

The movement in the evolution of biography has been from the outward to the inward. The first biographers made an effort to describe the external man, his rank or position, and his visible acts. But recent biographers have come to see that the motive behind the deed was really the essential thing which ought to be studied, and, if possible, to be explained or interpreted. This brings us to the "new biography" of today which has probably made a greater contribution to the literary field than any other period in the history of biography. This movement which developed after World War I was led by Lytton Strachey, an Englishman. In the classic introduction to Eminent Victorians, Strachey scoffed at "those two fat volumes with which it was our custom to commemorate the dead--with their ill-digested masses of material, their slipshod style...their lamentable lack of selection, of detachment, of design" and set up what he felt to be the biographer's first duty, "to preserve...a brevity which excludes everything that is redundant and nothing that is significant."¹

Other important lessons which the new biography has taught are the need for artistic presentation of narrative and the value of psychological study of personality.²

The ideal biographer of today according to Thayer is one who keeps himself and his own opinions out of the story; who tells the story

¹Carver, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

²Dwight Leonard Durling, and Wm. Watt, Biography: Varieties and Parallels (New York: Dryden Press, 1946), p. 6.

as nearly as possible as the hero underwent it; who writes neither to fill out nor to curtail, but attempts to present his subject in just proportion; who is so sensitive to his subject's qualities that he perceives them better than anyone else.

3. The Purpose of Biography

As biography has developed historically there have been not only changing characteristics, but varying purposes which motivated the writing of the biographies. These purposes have varied not only with the periods of historical growth, but also with the individual writers in all periods.

Harold Nicolson in The Development of English Biography gives only two reasons for writing biography; the one is commemorative, and the other is didactic.¹ Thomas Fuller has added to these three other purposes which he had in writing Worthies of England. His reasons are:² (1) to gain some glory to God; (2) to preserve the memories of the dead; (3) to present examples to the living; (4) to entertain the reader; and (5) to procure some honest profit.

As one might naturally expect, the author's purpose in writing the biography largely determines the nature of the story. The "debunking" biographies of recent times reflect the aim of entertaining those who revel in finding fault with others, the authors not excluded. The multitudinous poorly written biographies which have flooded the market in response to the growing popularity of this form of literature

¹Johnson, op. cit., p. 35.

²Carver, op. cit., p. 7.

indicate the desire of ambitious writers to "cash in" while the public is still clamoring for biography. Perhaps the most significant purpose behind biography is the didactic. Until very recently most biographies have been chiefly concerned with how to live in order to merit the rewards of heaven. But lately, the emphasis has changed and the purpose is now to teach how best to live in order to merit the rewards of society. But regardless of what the author wishes to teach, the fact that he feels he has something worth communicating to his reader adds vitality to a book.¹

4. The Recent Popularity of Biography

As has already been indicated biography is now having its hey day in the literary world. The new biography movement led by Lytton Strachey in England was immediately popularized in France by Andre Maurois and in Germany by Emil Ludwig. With the replacing of the "lumbering chronicles of the Victorians" by the "stream-lined narratives geared to an evening's reading," with the substitution of "candid camera snaps" for the glorified, carefully posed portrait, and adoption of an artistic style which read like a novel, instead of a lifeless, prosaic style which demanded greater persistence than the average reader had, biography at length began to find a deserving favor with the general reading public.² The appeal of the new biography resulted in an unexpected popularity, and the widespread demand for it from readers brought an accompanying increase in the number of biographies being

¹Ibid., p. 3.

²Durling, op. cit., pp. 1-6.

written. By 1928 the total number of "lives" published exceeded that of novels.¹ In One Mighty Torrent written in 1937, Johnson states that biography is steadily expanding on publisher's lists, almost rivaling the novel, with a tremendous public responding to its lure.² Likewise indicative of the popular interest in biography are the special sections of magazines and newspapers devoted to biographical sketches. Typical illustrations of this are "Atlantic Portraits" in the Atlantic Monthly, "Profiles" in The New Yorker, sketches by Stephen Vincent and Rosemary Benet in the New York Herald-Tribune supplement, "Books," as well as isolated sketches in the Yale Review, Harpers', Scribners', Fortune, Forum, and Life.

Particularly interesting in view of the subject of this study is the fact that there has also been a great increase in biographies written for young people within the last few years. The Publisher's Weekly of April, 1941 comments on this fact and the trend was regarded of sufficient significance as to inquire the reason for this popularity of biography with young people. Seeking an explanation for it, fifteen key people in the juvenile literature market were interviewed. The general answer given by them was the nature of the world in which young people of today are living and their contacts through newspapers and magazines with heroes of the present as well as with those of the past.³

¹Carver, op. cit., p. 13.

²Johnson, op. cit., foreward.

³Helen Hoke and Les Lerman, "Biography for Young People," Publishers' Weekly, 1309:1633, April 19, 1941.

Mabel Williams, Superintendent of Work with Schools in the New York Public Library, says,

Young people want and love to read about heroic figures. Boys and girls are naturally curious, and this, coupled with modern magazine articles and stories, radio programs, films, and classroom discussion has certainly made for greater interest in biography.¹

C. Values of Biography for the General Reader

Indirectly some of the values of biography have already been indicated, but in order that they may be clearly seen and appreciated, they will be set forth individually here.

1. Biography Gives Pleasure

The average reader does not choose a book which he knows to be heavy reading, or one which calls for serious thinking, because his simple aim in settling down with a book is to relax and enjoy himself. To be sure, some of the old style biographies would be somewhat more tedious than enjoyable, but the ordinary reader is not likely to select one of them. A biography need not be written like a novel to give pleasure to the reader, for biography has other interests than a thickly woven plot. Maurois quotes Nicolson as saying,

The very real pleasure which the intelligent reader today derives from biography proceeds in general from no very active energy of thought; his responses are stirred by languid processes of identification and comparison. He identifies himself with certain characters in a biography, and he compares his own feelings and experiences with theirs. This process, as Lord Oxford has remarked, is very pleasurable.²

¹Hoke and Lerman, loc. cit.

²Maurois, op. cit., p. 134.

2. Biography Widens Friendship

Everyone likes to have many friends, but few, if any, have the opportunity to make all the contacts they would like. The things which hinder these friendships such as geographic separation, lack of social status, the death of those who have lived before, an undeveloped personality, and countless other obstructions are overcome when one is introduced, by means of biography, to the world's small and great of the past and of the present. With these friends one may linger as long or as short a time as he desires, and may maintain simply a cool nodding acquaintance or a warm, intimate companionship. In the biographical world one can be very choosy about the friends he keeps company with, and not infrequently he finds these friends less disappointing than those he meets in everyday life.

People are lonely souls. They herd and mingle and fraternize--desperately searching. They hurl themselves into the surging, gabbling mob of humanity, hoping to find their own counterparts, and failing, once again fall back into their familiar armchairs, giving up the search. Here at last, in the story-people they meet in the pages of their books and magazines, they find themselves as they were and are and hope to be. They never fail them--these story-people. They live, and we, the readers, live in completeness with them.¹

The story people just mentioned refer to the characters of fiction, but the response of the reader to the people of biography is much the same. In fact the reality of the biographical characters makes the associations more vivid.

3. Biography Gives Reality to Foreign Lands and Distant Times

There is no land so foreign and no time so distant that a familiar personality, set by imagination in the midst of it, will

¹Maren Elwood, Characters Make Your Story (Boston: The Writer, Incorporated, 1937), preface.

not make it familiar. Some friend of yours goes to live in Venice or Bombay, and how immediately your vision of that remote scene brightens into vividness. The place belongs to you....¹

Biography furnishes the reader with these familiar personalities.

As each new friend is made a new city or country or continent comes alive. As the common human traits in these friends are observed, the span of time shortens, for the reader sees himself closely related to them.

4. Biography Illuminates New Regions of Thought

In the same way that a friend in some foreign country makes the foreign seem familiar, so exploring a difficult and perhaps uninteresting area of thinking with a biography friend opens up new fields of interest, and the fact that others have mastered the profundities seem to remove some of the impossible difficulties. For instance,

I read the history of metaphysics. I open and study the great heavy tomes. If my tastes are in quite other directions I say, 'How dull this whole thing is ! How vague and dreary these abstractions are ! And then I turn and read the life of some great metaphysician, and how everything is changed ! I do not understand this great science any more than I did before, but I see him understand it. The enthusiasm trembles in his voice, the light kindles in his eye, as he talks and looks upon these abstract propositions which appeared to me so dreary.²

And so it is in the world of music, mathematics, politics, or religion. Each one becomes vivid and significant when the reader meets a real man in the midst of them.

5. Biography Imparts a Universal Outlook.

It is easy for anyone to become so wrapped up with his own

¹Brooks, op. cit., p. 449.

²Ibid., p. 450.

little orbit of life that he becomes dwarfed in his thinking. Habits and ways of doing things become fixed and rigid. The local standards, the fashion of the moment, and the power of routine control not only his dress, conversation, and conduct, but even his way of thinking. He needs to be freed from these limitations and to stretch out into the rich expanse of all of human life. One needs to recognize himself as a part of a great whole. This biography helps the reader do, by putting him in the midstream of humanity.¹

6. Biography Influences Character.

Every life, whether small or great, is both like and unlike every other. Therefore, every good life-story presents to the reader something which is imitable and something which is not. Consequently two different stimuli produce two different responses, inspiration and imitation. For example, one reading the life of Scott may say to himself, "This man is vastly greater than I can ever be, but, on the other hand, great as he is, he is of the same human stuff that I am and so I may attain to similar greatness." The inspiration of a great life is like the stars which guide a ship to its own port, but are themselves never reached. The second stimulus which calls forth imitation is like the fire which burns beneath the engines of the ship itself putting every lever and piston to work. Recognition of the greatness of another brings humility and the knowledge that he possesses the same human elements all men do brings encouragement, each by its presence saving the other from the vices to which it is most inclined. And these are the elements which make the noblest character and the happiest life.²

¹Ibid., p. 451.

²Ibid., p. 428 f.

D. Values of Biography for the Christian Education of Adolescents

All of the benefits which the general reader derives from reading biography come also to the adolescent when biography is used specifically for Christian education and these are to be kept in mind as the new topic is developed. However, there are some additional reasons why biography is particularly appealing and profitable to youth which make it a valuable aid in Christian education.

1. Biography Enlists Natural Interest

Reference has already been made to the recent increased interest of adolescents in biography which publishers and librarians have observed. It is quite evident that the nature of the new biographies has contributed largely to this trend. Recent writers have written with young people in mind. They have chosen subjects who have led active lives, faced danger, and fought battles. They have made their biographies read like a story by presenting their characters as real flesh and blood people.

But even more basic than the nature of the new biography is the nature of the adolescent himself which responds naturally with interest in biography. It is during adolescence that one becomes aware of himself as an individual with his own peculiar traits.¹ Biography follows this pattern of thought in that it endeavors to individualize its subject. The adolescent, in the process of maturity, is growing away from egocentricity to the we-experience.² Biography helps the adolescent to sympathize with and share the experience of others. The adolescent

¹Fritz Kunkel, My Dear Ego (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1947), p.98.

²Ibid., pp. 28-41.

stands at the threshold of an independent life and is interested in how others entered their vocations, how they found happiness, to what causes they dedicated their lives.

The natural interest which biography arouses has caused some teachers of subjects such as English and history, which are frequently considered dull, to organize their course around related biographies. In commenting upon the enjoyment which his sophomore English classes derived from reading biography, Herbert Muntz said,

In these classes the interest in biography developed naturally. Biography is especially well suited to the adolescent, who is in a critical period of character development. He has a keen interest in personality, in the 'secrets' of popularity, and in the problems of getting along with others and of adjusting to his environment.¹

Some young people feel that anything religious must be dull and uninteresting. If biography is a natural way to awaken interest, it has an important role in Christian education, for only when there is interest on the part of the young people is the way open for learning. The well known maxim in education is certainly applicable to Christian education also: "no learning without attention and no attention without interest."²

2. Biography Simplifies History

The chief task of Christian education is to supply its generation with a faith suited to meet the problems of a modern world, but it draws its primary inspiration from an old Book and from people of many centuries ago. To understand the Bible and the development of

¹Herbert E. Muntz, "If Pupils Are People," The English Journal, 35:138, March, 1946.

²Leon D. Palmer, Youth and the Church (Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing Company, 1933), p. 151.

the Christian faith, young people need to know something about Old Testament history and the history of the Christian Church. But if that history is going to be interesting and meaningful, it must be simple, with the major events seen in relationship to each other. Biography simplifies history by focusing an entire movement in the struggles of a single man.¹ Think how well the greatest event in Hebrew history, the Exodus, is simplified for the average young person in Sunday School if he thinks in terms of one outstanding life, that of Moses. The Bible narrative itself is so written that through the life of her leader, Israel's history is revealed more graphically than any chronicle would have been able to show it. Thomas Carlyle illustrates this point in regard to the historical contribution of Boswell's life of Johnson.

This book of Boswell's will give us more real insight into the history of England, during those days, than twenty other books falsely entitled 'Histories' which take to themselves that special aim. The thing I want to see is not Red-book Lists, and Court Calendars, and Parliamentary Registers, but the life of man in England;....²

3. Biography Bridges the Gap Between Books and Life

Even though a student may become sufficiently interested in history, or any other subject for that matter, to pursue it enthusiastically and be well informed, there is always the danger that what has been learned from books will remain isolated knowledge that never seriously affects his life. Dr. William Bower says that "The problem of religious education is to keep the educative process on the level

¹Albjerg, op. cit., p. 245.

²Edwin P. Hood, The Uses of Biography (London: Partridge and Oakey, 1852), pp. 85-6.

of experience...."¹ The youth leader has not finished his task when he has taught his young people the facts of the Bible or of the Christian Church. Unless the truths of the Bible are translated into actual living, there has been no real Christian education. Secular educators sensed the same problem of bringing together book learning and life, and interestingly enough biography is believed to be the best connecting link.

Dr. Vernon says,

This is the function of the department of biography in the academic discipline. It restores the balance between the outer world and the inner. It sends the student forth with convictions wrought out of hand-to-hand contact with the richest human material within our reach. It teaches him, in Lowell's phrase, 'to con-temporize himself with bygone time.' It obliterates for him the ditch men have dug between books and life.²

If biography can be effective in bridging the gap between books and life, between principle and practice, as the secular educators seem to believe, Christian educators should find it one of their most useful tools.

4. Biography Presents Truth Concretely

Adolescents are only beginning to think in abstract terms, and yet much of the doctrinal content of Christianity which is included in the church school curriculum for young people is little else than abstract terminology. Even adults welcome concrete illustrations in understanding abstract ideas. An adolescent reading a book, such as the life of George Mueller, could not help but understand what it meant to live a life of faith, but a verbal explanation of the term might never come into the realm of actual comprehension.

¹William Bower, The Living Word (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1946), p. 152.

²Charles C. Mierow, "Biography--A Liberating Art," Christian Education, 29:204, March, 1946.

5. Biography Enlarges Understanding of Others

It is often difficult to understand why other people act the way they do. Unless a person is able to analyze somewhat the behavior of another to discover the reasons behind the conduct, he cannot be sympathetic towards him. The adolescent is naturally intolerant, especially toward those who are different or who do not conform to the expected behavior pattern. In a biography the author seeks to help his reader see the influences that molded the individual; he relates causes and effects; he attempts to get back of the action to the motives. This understanding of human nature is of inestimable value in learning to show Christian love toward others. "The study of biography serves most effectively in breaking down artificial barriers of race or color or creed or time."¹

6. Biography Wields Strong Moral Influence

a. It Speaks Indirectly

The law of indirection which underlies the story-telling method in teaching is at work through biography also. It frequently happens that the teacher who is most concerned that his young people develop Christ-like characters adopts the method of hammering away on the principles of conduct thinking to impress them deeply upon the minds of the pupils. But

the most effective lessons which enter the human heart are not those which take the form of lessons. It is when we are least conscious of the process by which we are impressed that we are impressed most deeply. And it is for this reason, if for no

¹Charles Mierow, "Biography: an Integrating Subject," Journal of Higher Education, 18:201, April, 1947.

other than the indirect teaching which is wrapped up in stories and metaphors often secures more attention than teaching of a more direct and didactic kind.¹

Character training is best carried on when the pupil is unaware of it, for if he thinks that he is being preached to he is indisposed to listen. David listened with interest to the story which Nathan told without suspecting that it had any relation to him. He arrived at the right conclusion with strong feelings because his judgment was unbiased in favor of himself. In the same way biography speaks indirectly with great effectiveness. The adolescent with a growing sense of independence rebels when a particular code of ethics is imposed upon him. But if, through biography, he can see in the life of someone else, for whom he has great admiration, a pattern of life with desirable consequences, he may conclude that this kind of life is really worth living.

b. It Carries the Force of Reality

The adolescent has passed out of the world of fairy stories, and although he may like to dwell in the land of day dreams by means of fiction, yet because he is becoming more and more realistic in his outlook, he finds a particular satisfaction in the stories of people who actually lived and did things. The element of realism is almost essential at this age if the story is to have any motivating effect in relation to Christian living.

Consequently, whether we like it or not, biography is a type of literature which, more than any other, touches close upon morality...because the credibility of the narrative and the

¹Joshua Fitch, The Art of Teaching (London: Sunday School Union, n.d.), p. 22.

reader's conviction of the real existence of the people in the narrative makes its influence immensely stronger. A child reading Oliver Twist says to himself, 'What a splendid little boy is Oliver Twist,' but does he really believe that a human being can maintain that perfection through a series of such adventures?¹

c. It Appeals to the Emotions

Biography has the advantage over precept in that it does not leave one cold and unmoved as is often true of the latter. Human experiences naturally call forth emotional responses which in turn energize the will to act.

Ethical teaching by precept is often far too verbal, and expands into monotony and reiterated preaching. It becomes something to be learned, rather than something to be done. The examples from biography, however, appeal to the heart and to the emotions; they inspire the will to do, and indicate the way....²

d. It Provides Patterns for Conduct

It has already been suggested that biography may help to build the pattern of life for the adolescent. This matter of setting a concrete example of Christian life before young people is so significant that this topic deserves special attention. In spite of their independent tendencies, adolescents naturally look to elders with prestige for example and guidance. They select as heroes people from real life, fiction, the movies, or biography. The hero may be a gangster like Al Capone or a president like Abraham Lincoln, depending upon who in the young person's social world seems to be most successful. Since it is a natural experience in early adolescence to resort to models, it is a unique opportunity for setting up the right kind of

¹Maurois, op. cit., pp. 136-7.

²White, op. cit., pp. 244-5.

heroes for imitation. In view of the fact that the motion picture today furnishes the model and pattern of living for many youth, Landis suggests that a knowledge of more substantial biography might be a more wholesome influence.¹ Where personal acquaintance with great lives is impossible, it is possible to supply noteworthy models for imitation through biography.

E. Summary

This chapter has been concerned with the values of biography, generally for the average reader, and particularly for the Christian education of adolescents.

By placing biography against the background of the literature field, the similarities and differences between biography and the related subjects of history and the novel were noted. In this connection two distinguishing characteristics of biography were emphasized: biography is the history of an individual life, and to be rightly called biography it must be true to the character it portrays. The chief trend discernable in the development of biography has been from describing the outward man to the understanding of the inner man including his weaknesses as well as his perfections. Two primary purposes have dominated the writing of biographies. They are: to commemorate the dead and to teach a lesson through example. With the development of the "new biography" which has made the characters more life-like and the books more readable, biography has become so popular

¹Paul Landis, Adolescence and Youth (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1947), p. 151.

that it can almost compete with fiction.

Biography has many values for the general reader which are worthwhile benefits, but which are not particularly the objectives of Christian education. By entering into the experiences of other people, the reader derives real enjoyment from biography. Through this literary medium he can span both time and space to make friends with the small and great figures of the world. The distant times and foreign lands which history presents in a remote way suddenly become alive through biography as the reader makes friends with those who have lived in other times and places. In much the same way, as these new friends are made, new areas of thought are opened and made interesting. The geographic, time, and personal limitations are removed as one moves out into a larger world and acquires a universal outlook. The influence of biography on character often has been such as to be the turning point in a life.

In addition to these benefits, biography is of such a nature that it is particularly valuable in accomplishing the goals of Christian education in the lives of adolescents. Interest in biography comes naturally to the adolescent, so it provides a good teaching medium. It is capable of condensing a whole period of history into the life of a prominent leader, thereby making historical material simple and vivid. When truth is embodied, as it is in biography, the gap between books and life is bridged, because the adolescent feels akin to the human personality who has come alive in his reading. Principles of life are presented in concrete examples in biography, so that there is no doubt in the mind of the youth as to what the abstract principle may mean

or how it applies to life. Tolerance and understanding of other people result from an increased knowledge of human nature and the factors that go into the making of a personality. The chief value of biography for Christian education is the strong moral influence it exerts by setting up models for imitation.

CHAPTER II

SELECTED BIOGRAPHIES AND THEIR VALUES FOR THE

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A. Introduction

Having surveyed the general field of biography, this chapter will be limited to the study of certain selected biographies in order that the values of various types of biography in the Christian education of adolescents may be illustrated more specifically. The division according to types will be based on Edwin Hood's classification which distinguishes historical, dramatic, pictorial, household, and didactic biography. Each type will be represented by one Biblical and one extra-Biblical biography. The content of each biography selected will be discussed, first in relation to literary type, and then in terms of its values for Christian education in meeting specific adolescent problems.

B. The Basis for the Selection of Biographies

The first consideration in selecting particular biographies was the suitability to the adolescent age. In each case the life was chosen because it was directly related to the needs of adolescents, and in the case of the extra-Biblical biographies attention was also given to the readability of the book and the probable appeal to adolescents.

The second consideration in the selection was variety. Some of the characters are men; some are women. Some are in the Old Testa-

ment; some are in the New Testament. Some are Biblical people; some are not. They come from different periods in history and from different walks of life. Some are more appropriate for the older adolescent; some fit the younger adolescent. As a convenient way of presenting these varied biographies, it was decided that the different forms which biography takes, according to the purpose of the author and the nature of the subject, could be best grouped under a general classification such as Hood provides. Within this broad classification of types the other factors of variety may be discerned. The types of biography distinguished by Hood are as follows:

1. Historical Biography

This type of biography merges into history and cannot be altogether separated from it. These lives serve to break up history as landmarks in terms of nations and ages. To remove these names would be to "interfere with the course of the historic river."¹

2. Dramatic Biography

Standing in opposition to the historical is dramatic biography in which the individual in the center of events is the significant thing, and the events are important only as they affect the individual. In historical biography the influence of the subject is continually expanding over the world, but in dramatic biography the subject, though seldom the originator of stupendous events is always in the midst of vivid and intense action of some kind. He is always the center of attraction wherever he is.

¹Hood, op. cit., p. 34.

3. Household Biography

In this case the biography may consist merely of an anecdote; however, that incident may throw a great deal of light upon the nature of the subject. The Bible very frequently makes use of this type of biography and shows great artistry in being able to say much about a person in a few words.

To dip into a person's life at some vital point gives the essential lines of that personality. One event alone will often tell the truth about that one individual. Sincerity, humility, great-heartedness quickly show. Hypocrisy, pride, and littleness stand out all too distinctly. Consequently, the Bible wisely gives us snapshots of hundreds of individuals.¹

4. Didactic Biography

Reading the didactic type of biography is like sitting before the professor's chair listening to a lecture, not that it is a formal type of instruction, but because the influence of the life as an example speaks so clearly.

5. Pictorial Biography

Some lives are pictorial. The story is so woven together that the individual is seen against the background of his times. The painting of a picture in the times in which the subject lived is one of the primary interests of the writer.

C. Biblical Biographies

As previously defined, Biblical biography in this study includes both the lives written by Bible writers and those written by recent writers of Bible characters. In regard to the latter a further

¹Maurice Fogle, "Your Life is Important," The Bethany Bible Student, 62:12-13, Oct.-Dec., 1948.

word of explanation is needed. They may be divided into two categories, the biographical novel which uses the Biblical material as a framework around which to build a fictitious plot and the actual biography re-told from the Bible story which fills in descriptive and analytical material without adding characters or events. Strictly speaking a biographical novel is not biography since much of it has been invented. However, if the basic facts of the life are true and the additional material is the result of careful study of the historical and psychological background, it may contribute much to an understanding of the Bible character. For this reason The Nazarene has been included in the selection, but it must be remembered that it is only biographical, not biography.

1. The Life of Moses

a. An Illustration of Historical Biography

Regardless of the angle from which Israel's history is viewed, the dominating figure is that of Moses. If one looks at the social conditions in Egypt, he discovers a large group of foreigners, Israelites, reduced to slavery, poverty, and affliction by a brutal Egyptian monarch who feared the loss of his power over them. Out of this hopeless situation steps a liberator who becomes the saviour of his people.

On the other side of the Red Sea this host of people find themselves free men, but having been slaves so long there is no one trained for leadership, that is, none except Moses. He, therefore, becomes their natural leader, initiating action and assuming responsibility for them all. Even after other leaders are appointed to share in the

government of the nation, the great law-giver remains central in Israel's political life.

The history of Israel would not have been possible apart from her religious faith. Israel's God was a personal God, and yet they came to know him fully only through a mediator, a prophet who spoke for God to them. This vital position through which the life blood of the Israelites flowed was held by Moses.

It is because the life of Moses could not be removed from a history of Israel without drastically interfering with the course of the historical river that it is classified as historical biography.

b. Its Value for the Christian Education of Adolescents

History is important only as it happens to persons and a knowledge of historical figures is important for the Christian education of adolescents only if this knowledge contributes something vital to present day life. The life of Moses, one of Israel's greatest historical personages, does have much significance for Christian youth today.

As the adolescent grows toward maturity, he acquires a greater social consciousness. His interests reach out beyond his own small circle of affairs to include world-wide problems. Generally the adolescent becomes concerned with the injustices and the sufferings of people close at hand or in far off lands, and with all the zeal of youth is eager to right the wrongs of the world. A realization of the enormity of the task may replace this ambition with an acceptance of things as they are, for what can one person do. On the other hand the zealot may suddenly turn reformer, guided more by impulse than by wisdom.

Moses too was sensitive to the evil about him, even though he

himself was not suffering from oppression. What could he, a single individual, do about it? The Egyptians could never be persuaded to relieve the burden and the Israelites were helpless to defend themselves. He could just forget that the Hebrews were his brothers and go on enjoying his own happy circumstances. But Moses was not this type; when he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, he had to intervene. Unfortunately, Moses acted rashly, and his chances of helping his people were gone.

Having fled to the land of Midian, Moses had many years to reflect upon the situation in Egypt and upon his own conduct. Here God entered into Moses' experience and Moses heard God calling him back to the task he had failed in before. Moses then reacted in the opposite way. The impossibility of the situation and his own personal inability caused him to turn away from assuming the responsibility and to adopt the attitude, "Get someone else to do it." The thing which finally induced Moses to go was the assurance that God would be with him, not only to supply the wisdom, but the power to do a job beyond his own strength.

This same feeling of inferiority often possesses an adolescent because he has not yet discovered or proved his own abilities. If the young person can be early encouraged to take God into each of his experiences, he will have found a resource that will enable him to do far more than natural idealism and enthusiasm can accomplish.

The remainder of Moses' life as a leader of his people likewise becomes fruitful ground for teaching adolescents. More and more emphasis is being placed upon educating young people for leadership.

As they begin to assume adult responsibilities, this matter becomes very practical. What are the qualities of a good leader? What is the price of being a leader? The experiences of Moses have much to offer as a textbook in leadership training.

2. The Life of Ruth (Women of the Bible by H. V. Morton)

a. An Illustration of Dramatic Biography

The chapter on Ruth in the book just mentioned begins with an apt statement concerning the kind of story one may expect to be unfolded in reading this biography.

Our experience of life tells us that recorded history is not always the whole story; while nations rise and fall, the little dramas of the human heart go on in secret all the time....

Just now and again, however, the beam of history falls, as if by accident, on a quiet little landscape where the sun is shining and the corn is growing, where men are courteous and noble, and where women are brave and kind of heart. One of these quiet corners of history is the short Book of Ruth.¹

Even in her own country of Moab Ruth was not a prominent person, nor did her life noticeably affect the affairs of her people. But in her own family circle, Ruth soon stood in contrast to her sister-in-law in her whole-hearted devotion to both Naomi and Naomi's God.

In the little city of Bethlehem to which she came with her mother-in-law, all who knew Naomi came also to know and speak well of the young widow who had left her father and mother and her native land for the sake of her mother-in-law. The first day that Ruth went out to glean in the fields of Boaz she became the center of interest, not only of the other servants, but of Boaz himself who inquired concerning

¹H. V. Morton, Women of the Bible (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1948), pp. 75-6.

her identity. Was it physical beauty, her heroic spirit which was made known to Boaz, or was it her own gentle and courteous manner which attracted the landowner to the gleaner? Whatever the cause, Ruth found herself enjoying the special favor of a "mighty man of wealth." When Ruth entered the home of Boaz as his wife and a little child was born to them, it was said to grandmother Naomi by the women of the city that Ruth was better to her than seven sons.

Ruth's life was not important in the time of the judges in the way that Deborah's was, but it was significant in itself quite apart from history. Ruth's influence probably never went much beyond the little city of Bethlehem, but in her own circles she shone like a bright star and all eyes were turned her way. In this respect Ruth's life may be considered dramatic biography.

b. Its Value for the Christian Education of Adolescents

The book selected for the study of the life of Ruth is one which contains a restatement of the Biblical story. It is not intended to replace the reading of the Bible, but is suggested because it tells the story in an interesting way that makes the character appear like a contemporary personality. By introducing young people to the Bible characters in this way, they may become more interested in reading the Biblical account.

Everybody enjoys a love-story and particularly young people who are themselves falling in love. The story of Ruth is an unusual romance in that it contains two love stories. The first is a love story between a daughter-in-law and a mother-in-law. "It is an axiom in modern life that a man's mother and his young wife do not

always agree."¹ And yet in that family relationship which is generally assumed to be discordant, Ruth demonstrates a selfless and sacrificial love which no other story has presented so beautifully.

Adolescents very often come into conflict with parents in their growing-up process, and family life instead of being a happy fellowship may become the source of considerable irritation. Ruth's fine sense of duty and her surrender of personal privilege is an example that may be translated into any family relationship where problems might exist.

The other love story is the romance of Boaz and Ruth. At first this might appear to be only a clever bit of strategy on the part of Naomi and Ruth, but when the customs of the Hebrews at this time are rightly understood it is seen in a different light. There is definite evidence of the hand of God in guiding Ruth to glean in the field of Boaz and also in the immediate favor which she found in the eyes of the wealthy landowner. The culmination of the romance was in accordance with the custom of the day.

Some of youth's most serious problems are in the area of boy-girl relationships. How few young people actually believe that God is concerned with this aspect of their life and will definitely guide them in their friendships if they seek His direction. Some young people, girls in particular, set their hearts on marriage as their only goal in life, and consequently they feel that they must contrive and scheme to get a mate. The courtship which is God-initiated is far

¹Ibid., p. 78.

more thrilling and far more satisfactory in the end. It is worth waiting for. The story of Ruth and Boaz is evidence of God's interest and guidance in social relationships.

3. The Rich Young Ruler

a. An Illustration of Household Biography

It often happens that one meets a person only once in life and from that single meeting feels that he has come to know that individual pretty well from the things he has said and the attitudes he has expressed. "An anecdote or two often are as lamps to the knowledge of a whole life-biography."¹ The gospel writers introduce the reader to a rich ruler who had a conversation with Jesus, and from this one incident the reader is given a window through which to view the entire life. From this one interview Jesus readily discerned his admirable qualities and discovered his weakest point. The young man came running, showing eagerness. He knelt, showing reverence for Jesus as a great teacher. He asked a question of vital significance, showing he was a serious thinker concerned about eternal things. His manner of life showed sincere devotion to God from his youth up. He was indeed a rare person and Jesus recognizing his fine qualities loved him. But the thing which revealed what the young ruler desired most was Jesus' command to sell what he had and give it to the poor. The sorrowful look on his face as he turned away spoke more loudly than any words could have said, "It is too much to give up."

In this little incident one is able to see into the very soul

¹Hood, op. cit., p. 94.

of the rich young ruler. He was an extremely religious person possessed with an earnest desire to obtain eternal life, and at the same time, perhaps unconscious of it until the test was applied, he counted his material possessions of greater worth. When it came to ultimate values, the young man's real religion was disclosed.

It is well said, in every sense, that a man's religion is the chief fact with regard to him.... By religion I do not mean the church creed which he professes, the article of faith which he will sign, and, in words or otherwise, assert; not this wholly, in many cases not this at all.... But the thing a man does practically lay to heart and know for certain, concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his religion....¹

b. Its Value for the Christian Education of Adolescents

This little incident gives one an insight into the personality of the young man in particular, but also into the experience of adolescents in general. It may not appear that many young people today are religiously asking, "What must I do to inherit eternal life," but nevertheless, the desire for it is still present. Youth leaders are discouraged because their young people are apparently only interested in having a good time, living from one day to the next. But in their serious moments, and all adolescents do have them, there is a longing for some certainty regarding the future, something which they know to be truth and by which they may regulate their lives, some friend who will never let them down. These desires may never be expressed, but one can be certain that they are there. Their presence, however, does not imply that the adolescent is governing his life by any such objectives.

¹Thomas Carlyle, Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History (New York: A. L. Burt Company, n.d.), p. 3.

He may have chosen altogether different values thinking that the greatest happiness is by living solely for the present, acquiring material possessions, and gaining popularity. It is for this very reason, because most adolescents have not formulated a proper sense of values, that the incident of the rich young ruler is so applicable. The things which young people most desire he already possessed; wealth, prestige, and honor were his, and yet these things left him unsatisfied. Although he is aware of this fact, he turns back to his riches counting them of greater value in the end than eternal life. The tragedy of the story is that the young man has deceived himself. He has chosen what he thought would make him happiest and yet he goes away sorrowful.

If young people in building up their life goals can come to a true appreciation of values through this concrete illustration of a young person who chose wrongly, they may escape this bitter experience themselves.

4. The Life of Daniel

a. An Illustration of Didactic Biography

What would be the reaction of a young person reading the story of Daniel for the first time? It is difficult when one is so familiar with this life story from childhood to judge rightly the influence it might have before the freshness of its appeal is lost. The fact is that, in spite of familiarity with Daniel's life, as one returns to the book, it repeatedly holds up before the reader a heroic model of devotion to God, and inevitably his heart is stirred as new aspirations arise. Whether a new story or an old story, the life of Daniel never

fails to convey its message to an open heart. It is the kind of story that speaks so well for itself that it scarcely needs anyone to teach it. Because this book is so full of the adventurous and heroic, it is fascinating reading and therefore becomes an excellent medium of indirect teaching. The high points of suspense are not invented merely for the sake of a good story, but arise out of actual experience. The names of kings, references to historical events, and local color are convincing evidences of the reality of the recorded incidents. This takes Daniel out of the category of superman and puts him on the same human level as the reader, within the range of imitation.

If it is true that one learns best when problem situations arise and solutions are demanded, then it is easy to see how Daniel's life becomes a didactic biography, for the pattern of his life seems to be a cycle of problems, temptations, and victories.

b. Its Values for the Christian Education of Adolescents

When a young person is about to enter college where he will be on his own to make independent decisions, where he will be confronted with numerous other religious beliefs or agnosticism, and where countless new temptations will be facing him, how can the youth leader best prepare him?

Daniel as a captive in a foreign land, away from parental control and enrolled in the highest institution of learning in Babylonia was in a situation comparable to that of the modern college student. The first temptation came in deciding whether to maintain distinctive Hebrew characteristics and be singled out as somewhat peculiar, or to lose their identity and simply become one of the Babylonian wise men.

On the modern campus this is likewise the first real decision. Daniel was prepared for it, having already purposed in his heart that he would not compromise his faith. This determination which called forth the utmost effort of his will power became a habit with him. Young people today need to acquire a similar determination to carry through what they believe.

The other great temptation which came to Daniel was in his later years. He had stood firm so long and then came the temptation to let up for a time in his devotional life. This is a weak point with almost every young person. Even though the habit of prayer and Bible reading has been a daily practice, under pressure of any sort, exam time in school, ridicule of a roommate, late social hours, the Christian is easily drawn away from his source of strength, thereby making him vulnerable for other attacks. But here again Daniel's purpose of heart kept him faithful. Moreover prayer had become such a vital part of his life that he simply could not cease from it without losing all that made life worthwhile. These two dynamic forces which motivated Daniel's life, purpose of heart and prayer, ought to be woven into every adolescent's life.

5. The Life of Jesus (The Nazarene by Sholem Asch)

a. An Illustration of Pictorial Biography

It is the chief contribution of most of the recent religious books which are based upon the Bible that they present a fuller picture of the times than the concise Biblical account was able to do. The characterizations in such books are not always true to the Biblical account, and the interpretations of certain teachings may vary consid-

erably, but the historical situations which surround these Bible people remain much the same provided reliable sources of information are used, and herein lies their primary value. One of the writers who has given a great deal of attention to the study of Hebrew life in the time of Jesus is Sholem Asch, himself a Jew educated in rabbinical schools. He has poured the wealth of his knowledge concerning Hebrew history and traditions into a book entitled The Nazarene. It is a presentation of the life of Christ through the eyes of three different individuals. This book is a biographical novel, but the account given of Jesus' life follows very closely the historical facts given in the Bible. Because of its intimate relation to biography and the vast amount of descriptive material it was selected to represent pictorial biography.

Through the person of Cornelius, one of Pilate's officers who tells the first part of the story of the Nazarene, the reader becomes acquainted with the peculiar governmental arrangement between the Romans and the Jews. As the ancient manuscript of Judas is read, many of the Hebrew sayings, laws, and customs come to light. One is made to feel the attitudes of the Jewish people toward their Roman over-lords and their own corrupt priesthood as they were probably expressed in actual situations. Especially vivid is the Messianic expectation which was commonly shared by all classes:

And what did they talk about? Why this: how much bread and oil, honey and wine, their fields and orchards and beehives would yield when the Messiah came! In what wealth and comfort he would steep them, what nations he would conquer--if they did not submit themselves--and what miracles he would perform on the day when the skies would open and the earth tremble!¹

¹Sholem Asch, The Nazarene (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1939), p. 118.

No one can read this life of Jesus without a greater understanding of the people to whom Jesus ministered and the obstacles against which he labored. The author has painted a remarkable picture of the life of the Hebrews in Jesus' time.

b. Its Values for the Christian Education of Adolescents

The Nazarene, as a biographical novel, is quite distinct from the other Biblical biographies, and therefore is distinct in the contribution which it makes.

Most young people won't read a history book unless they have to, but they will read an historical novel because a story is a painless and enjoyable way of gaining information. Similarly many young people cannot be persuaded to read the Bible. In the first place they are sure they can never understand it and in the second place they are sure it would be very uninteresting even if they could. There is something about the black covers, the small print, and the vertical columns of verses that gives them the impression that the Bible is a book to be revered but not to be read. Even though some young people will not read the Bible they will read a story based on the Bible, particularly if it is regarded as one of the outstanding books of the day. If they can become more familiar with the content of the Bible in a way that makes the Bible live, they might be a little more interested in giving it a chance to speak to them.

By rebuilding the historic situation, adding local color, and giving insight into the thinking of the people, a book such as The Nazarene helps adolescents exercise their imagination, so that when they come to the Bible they can try to feel, think, and see as the

Bible people did.

This use of the imagination is very significant in getting young people interested in the Bible. As Edgar Work suggests,

Interest is the child of imagination.... Interest the child in a subject and he will see double what he saw before. Or, state it the other way, help him to see, and his interest will grow.¹

Not only is this insight, which enables the mind to see more than is visible, essential for interest in the Bible, but for making the Bible truth applicable to personal living. Re-creation demands that one put himself into the situation. Imagination comes very close to the heart. Particularly is this true, says Work, of the stories of Jesus.

The Gospels furnish the greatest of all fields for the imagination, because one cannot take a single step in them without meeting the person whose story they unfold. As we read the four biographies, does Jesus emerge from history and stand out before the mind? Does he become to us sweetly companionable as the Friend of sinners? Do the scenes of his life seem actual and near, as if they were recounted of one whom we know? Do we seem to take our places among his disciples and follow the Master from Judea to Galilee, and into Samaria, by the lake, and to the mountaintop? These questions show us how necessary it is that one should read the story of Christ's life with such sympathy and insight as imagination can furnish.²

Unfortunately, the author of The Nazarene has not given a very heroic picture of Christ and the adolescent would not be likely to become a follower of one who is described as having "the body of a strengthless child," delicate skin, and a strange pallor on his face. On the other hand the author does give good insight into the thoughts and reactions of the people.

The attitude of understanding and acceptance, which an adolescent has toward those who do not belong to his own circle, varies

¹Edgar Whitaker Work, The Fascination of the Book (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1939), pp. 55-6.

²Ibid., p. 69.

greatly depending upon his training. However, generally speaking, the average young Protestant does not possess a feeling of brotherhood toward the Jewish people. Through the years the thing which has most separated Jews from Christians has been the fact that their rejection of Jesus as Messiah resulted in his crucifixion. The Nazarene is written in the hope that it may help to bring the two groups closer together. Through understanding what the prevailing conception of the Messiah was, one might not be so hasty in condemning the Jews for not acknowledging Jesus. Moreover, through reading this book, one comes to see more clearly that not all Jews opposed him and that rather than condemn an entire group, each individual ought to be judged for his own worth. This principle holds good in every social relationship.

D. Extra-Biblical Biographies

The use of extra-Biblical materials in the curriculum of the church school has been debated pro and con by various groups. It seems quite clear that the Bible should be the primary source, but there are some strong advantages in using extra-Biblical sources also. Betts says that religious educators should guard against giving the concept of God as being only the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God is not to be limited to time, place, or persons but is to be known as a contemporaneous God never more at work in the world than now. God's hand ought to be seen in all of man's history and development. In stressing the lives of the ancients the later builders of the church have been neglected. When one teaches of Abraham going out to seek a new land at God's call, one ought also to show Livingstone on a similar journey

in Africa.¹

1. The Life of Martin Luther (Martin Luther by Basil Miller)

a. An Illustration of Historical Biography

Of the significant events in the history of the Christian church, the reformation stands second only to the founding of the church. This critical movement not only revolutionized the church with the rise of a Protestant body, but became a powerful factor in the political affairs of the nations as well, even as it still is today.

The reformation was by no means the work of one man, and yet Martin Luther must be recognized as the man chosen by God to spearhead the movement. Others before him had resisted the power of Rome, but at the price of their lives so that the revolt never became widespread. But Luther seemed to appear in the fulness of time when multitudes of people were ready to join in with him. This coupled with his unique personal fitness for the task made him "God's man of destiny" as Basil Miller refers to him.

Were the Lutheran Church the only outgrowth of Luther's work, he would be worthy of a prominent place in history, for this denomination alone is sizeable and influential enough to make an impact upon the world. But all Protestant groups, though they may not accept all of Luther's theology, recognize the debt they owe to the man who championed the doctrine of justification by faith. Luther has become a world figure and his life story therefore may be considered historical biography.

¹George H. Betts, Method in Teaching Religion (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1925), pp. 147-9.

b. Its Value for the Christian Education of Adolescents

As suggested earlier, both experience and content must be given due emphasis if young people are to come out with a vital Christian faith. The value of a biography of Martin Luther lies primarily in the realm of content, but this does not diminish its usefulness.

Because Protestant young people are growing up side by side with Catholic young people, the question is often in their minds, "Just what are the basic distinctions between these beliefs and do these differences really matter?" Particularly is this true when a Protestant and a Catholic contemplate marriage. A study of Luther's life comparing the first thirty-four years of his life, when he was still under the establish Roman Catholic Church, with his latter years as the reformer will help the young person to see the points of difference and how significant they are.

In most Protestant churches the adolescent is rarely given an historical presentation of his faith. He learns from the Book of Acts how the church began, but there is no sense of continuation after the first century. The years between the apostolic church and the church of today must be jumped without a knowledge of even the most significant milestones. It adds strength to a young person's faith to discover that what he believes is not an isolated faith which has only recently been revived, but that his faith has been shared by an innumerable company since the gospel was first preached. It is encouraging to know that in this stream of church history, not only were the apostles the heroic defenders of the faith, but other stalwart men like Luther have stood up bravely in the face of danger to maintain a true

gospel of salvation. Through the life of this great reformer young people are able to get an appreciation of the period of reformation and to see how the dominant emphases have been reflected in their own denomination.

The life of Luther has many qualities worthy of imitation, but primarily it reveals a man of conviction. He knew what he believed, and he would not be shaken from it. For the sake of compatibility and in the name of broad-mindedness, young people often tend to become spineless Christians who are not certain what they believe and would rather not find out lest they become dogmatic and intolerant. As one reads the life of Luther he is challenged to examine his own beliefs to discover what, if any, convictions he has.

2. The Life of William Borden (Borden of Yale by Mrs. Howard Taylor)

a. An Illustration of Dramatic Biography

The record of the influence of the life of William Borden is not to be found in the annals of history, but in the lives of all who were privileged to know him. Being born into a millionaire family might easily have caused him to become the center of attention in his social circles. However it was not his financial inheritance, but the heritage of a Christian home, which gave him his strong Christian personality that both won friends for him and caused him to seek out individuals needing help.

In his first year at college he and a friend began an early morning prayer meeting before breakfast which soon attracted others. It spread to the other three classes until it was campus-wide. He initiated a Bible study group among the students. He and the Y.M.C.A.

secretary began the Yale Hope Mission for down and outers. In addition to all his other responsibilities, he was a member of the Board of Directors of both the National Bible Institute and the Moody Bible Institute. What exploits he would have done had he reached China and engaged in missionary work as he planned can only be imagined in view of all that he accomplished before his life was suddenly cut off at the age of twenty-six. He had packed these years full of faithful service and though short, it was a dramatic life.

b. Its Values for the Christian Education of Adolescents

More and more young people are attending college and this book would be excellent to put into the hands of high school students who have their faces set in that direction or of those already in college. The life of William Borden is not the usual college story which glorifies sports and fraternities and social life, giving the impression that this is the essence of life at college. But rather it shows Christian young people what an important place Christ can have in the life of a college student and how much influence a consecrated Christian can have on campus. Such a book not only sets up an ideal standard for the young person's own life, but also very realistically presents some of the problems and obstacles which he must be prepared to meet.

There is a wonderful example of stewardship in this biography from which adolescents may profit. When one receives his first pay check, the inclination is to buy whatever he wants, for he is free to spend it as he chooses. But here is a young millionaire who, as much as he would have loved to own a car, never purchased one, because he felt that for him it would be an unjustifiable luxury. He believed that

his money was not his own but a stewardship which he must use wisely for God.

As one watches Borden's growth in the Christian life, he sees with what diligence and discipline he attended to it. It was not something that developed automatically with time, but needed careful cultivation. Whether a young person is interested in college or not this growth in the Christian life is pertinent to everyone. It was Borden's principle to set to work wherever he was, whether Yale, or Princeton, or Cairo. And whether it is a factory or a business office or a school room, young people need to adopt the same rule.

3. The Life of Hudson Taylor ("Set Your Sails"--Power)

a. An Illustration of Household Biography

This illustration was picked from a young people's paper, Power, as typical of how single incidents in a life may give the essence of that life in a nutshell. Because of its brevity this article will be duplicated just as it appeared in the paper.

When Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary, first went to China, his sailing vessel one calm day drifted shoreward toward a cannibal island.

The captain came to Mr. Taylor and besought him to pray for the help of God. "I will," said the missionary, "provided you set your sail to catch the breeze."

The captain declined to make himself a laughing stock by unfurling in a dead calm. Mr. Taylor said, "I will not undertake to pray for the vessel unless you will prepare the sails." And it was done.

While he was engaged in prayer there was a knock at the door of his room.

"Who is there?"

The captain's voice responded, "Are you still praying for wind?"

"Yes."

"Well," said the captain, "you'd better stop praying, for we have more wind than we can manage."

And sure enough, when the boat was a hundred yards from the shore, strong wind had struck the sails so that the cannibals were cheated out of their human prey.¹

The two outstanding characteristics of Taylor evidenced from this incident are that he was a man of prayer and that he was a man of faith. These two necessarily go hand in hand. When the whole life of Taylor is studied, it is apparent that these two principles governed all he did. It was upon prayer and faith that he founded the China Inland Mission.

b. Its Value for the Christian Education of Adolescents

This kind of biography is valuable in that it presents in a concise way the essence of a great life. One does not have to wade through a fat volume to get it. It serves as a reader's digest.

These two important exercises of the Christian life, faith and prayer, are hard to cultivate merely by teaching. The thing that made the disciples want to know how to pray was seeing Jesus in prayer. Similarly, young people may learn more about what prayer is, the place it should have in one's life, and how effective it is by becoming an observer of a great man of prayer. Basic to a life of prayer is faith in God and his ability to answer prayer. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6) In this little incident one sees faith anticipating the answer even before the request is made. This experience speaks deeply to the reader as he sees the teachings of Jesus concerning prayer actually carried out in a life, and as he realizes

¹ _____, "Set Your Sails," Power, 7:7, January 30, 1949.

that this may be his own experience also.

4. The Life of George Washington Carver (George Washington Carver by Rackham Holt)

a. An Illustration of Didactic Biography

A life so versatile as that of George Washington Carver has a message for every type of person. It speaks to the poor uneducated person, who, like Carver in his early years, in spite of great aspirations, must perform lowly tasks to make a living. It speaks to the privileged individual, for Carver too attained positions of great honor and could have made a fortune for himself had he chosen to do so.

It is the character of the man himself which makes the story of his life so didactic. Carver teaches us by his own teachableness. With a mind that was continually asking "Why?" and "How?" and with a confidence that caused him to say, "I can do that too," he pursued knowledge and experimented with everything. As one reads this biography the contagion of his inquisitive spirit fans a flame in the reader's own breast until he too is consumed with a thirst to discover. Carver was interested in ordinary things that everyone is familiar with and takes for granted. His equipment was often made from things he rescued from rubbish heaps. His teaching was always in simple terms and extremely practical. Because of this appeal to the common person, as one reads he is often tempted actually to carry out some of his experiments.

The character traits of the man apart from his scientific career touch the heart with great admiration and call forth imitation. The reality of his religious faith which permeated his

attitudes, and entered into daily work makes the reader long for such a genuine and intimate experience with God.

b. Its Value for the Christian Education of Adolescents

One of the basic problems of adolescents when they begin to explore the mysteries of science is the reconciliation of their Christian belief with the findings of science. They become so enamored by science and the scientific method that it becomes the ultimate proof of everything. They begin with science and try to find God through a telescope or test tube. But Carver, who probably probed into more areas of the natural world than any other single person, began with God and then sought to discover the universe and what it was created for. Carver himself describes his study of the peanut thus:

Then I told the Creator I wanted to know all about the peanut. He replied that my mind was too small to know all about the peanut, but said He would give me a handful of peanuts....

I carried the peanuts into my laboratory and the Creator told me to take them apart and resolve them into their elements....

I looked at Him and He looked at me. "Now you know what the peanut is."

"Why did you make the peanut?"

The Creator said, "I have given you three laws, namely, compatibility, temperature, and pressure. All you have to do is take these constituents and put them together, observing these laws, and I will show you why I made the peanut."¹

In Carver's life young people may see that not only are science and religion compatible with each other, but that a faith in God may even lead to a more fruitful scientific research.

In regard to race relations the life of Carver is an unexcelled example of a most satisfactory resolution of the problem. He did not have time to go about advocating the rights of Negroes, nor

¹Rackham Holt, George Washington Carver (Garden City: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1943), p. 227.

did he rebel against the injustices he so often received, but he bore them and rose above them by winning recognition for his attainments, which ultimately led to a wider acceptance of himself as a Negro and consequently of his race. His own impartial attitude of sharing his findings with Negroes and whites alike wherever he could be of assistance must have preached a most forceful sermon to the bigoted whites as it still does today.

Adolescents are in various stages in the pursuit of a career. Some are trying to decide in which direction to move; others are faced with the problem of financing vocational education; some are already in positions but are unhappy in them because of improper attitudes toward their work. In this problem area the life of George Washington Carver again speaks with concrete examples of how one man found answers to these difficulties.

Being a man of many gifts it was difficult for him to choose which course to follow. He was offered a scholarship to a music conservatory. His paintings won high acclaim and he would have loved very much to continue his study in art. But the thing which finally caused him to devote his time to agriculture was the passionate desire to help his people, and this was the occupation with which most of them were concerned. His education was hard won and was not limited to a classroom. He seized every opportunity both to work and to learn. He found delight in excelling in whatever job he performed. His basic working philosophy was not to labor for the sake of personal wealth or honor, but to value his work to the degree that it was beneficial to the lives of others. He took God into his laboratory.

I discover nothing in my laboratory. If I come here of myself I am lost. But I can do all things through Christ. I am God's servant, His agent, for here God and I are alone. I am just the instrument through which He speaks, and I would be able to do more if I were to stay in closer touch with Him. With my prayers I mix my labors, and sometimes God is pleased to bless the results.¹

What a beautiful attitude for young people to take into their life vocations.

5. The Life of Ida Scudder (Dr. Ida: India by Mary Pauline Jeffery)

a. An Illustration of Pictorial Biography

The opening and the close of this book are indicative of the kind of life that Dr. Ida lived. The book opens thus:

In the United States there was a woman who wished to send a letter. On the envelope she wrote three short words and that was all. The words were:

Dr. Ida
India

The letter, thus addressed, sped on its lonely way to the other side of the world....the letter reached its destination. An efficient post office knew already who was meant by "Dr. Ida, India" and where she lived.

A person whose first name without a surname--whose country of domicile, without a street or city, is sufficient for immediate identification, must mean something to the community.²

The author's last words concerning the subject of this biography characterize her own interpretation of that life. The phrase she uses is "Dr. Ida: India herself."

Dr. Ida's life pictures India very vividly, for she ministered to all classes, sometimes in their homes, sometimes along the streets or sometimes in the hospital. She witnessed all their superstitious and religious practices. She saw the tragic consequences of the caste

¹Ibid., P. 220

²Mary Jeffery, Dr. Ida: India (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1938), pp. 11-12.

system. She fought against the competition of the traditional system of medicine. She resisted opposition to the education of women. As one follows Dr. Ida about, through this biography, he sees in her varied experience the life of India herself.

b. Its Value for the Christian Education of Adolescents

An important emphasis in training young people in the Christian faith is the missionary work of the church. The adolescent age is a wonderful time to concentrate on missionary education, for the growing altruism of youth may be appealed to on behalf of others who have not shared the blessings of the gospel.

To stir the heart of a young person to action, he must first see the need for missions and then discover how he can participate in that program. Hearing an occasional missionary speaker cannot give one an adequate knowledge either of the condition of the people to whom he ministers or of the extent of the work which the missionary has been able to accomplish. This is the advantage of a missionary biography for the whole picture may be presented.

Because Dr. Ida is still living the challenge of her life comes very close to the reader. She was an ordinary fun-loving girl, a typical American girl set on living her life as she pleased. Even though her family for generations back had been missionaries, she did not intend to be one. But when she went to India to care for her sick mother, three Indian men in one night came asking her to act as midwife for their wives. She knew nothing about midwifery and they refused to let her father, who was a doctor, even look at their wives. The next day

Ida heard that all three wives had died in child-birth, because there was no one to attend them. This need so moved her that she returned to America to become a doctor.

A biography of this nature may easily persuade a young person who wants to devote his life to a worthy cause, in view of the needs presented, to consider prayerfully missionary service. Whether or not he chooses to be a missionary, the reading of a life of a great missionary must inevitably arouse a sympathetic feeling for the cause of missions and a missionary spirit ought always to characterize every Christian.

E. Summary

In this chapter ten selected biographies have been examined in terms of content. These biographies, five Biblical and five extra-Biblical, were selected on the basis of variety and suitability to the adolescent age. To secure variety Hood's classification of five types of biography was used as a guide. The biographies which were selected for study are given as they were classified according to types:

| | Biblical | Extra-Biblical |
|------------|---|--|
| Historical | Moses-- <u>Bible</u> | <u>Martin Luther</u> by Basil Miller |
| Dramatic | Ruth-- <u>Women of the Bible</u> by H. V. Morton | <u>Borden of Yale</u> by Mrs. Howard Taylor |
| Household | Rich Young Ruler-- <u>Bible</u> | Hudson Taylor, "Set Your Sails," <u>Power</u> |
| Didactic | Daniel-- <u>Bible</u> | <u>George Washington Carver</u> by Rackham Holt |
| Pictorial | <u>The Nazarene</u> by Sholem Asch | <u>Dr. Ida: India</u> by Mary Pauline Jeffery |

Each biography was discussed in relation to the type which it represented and in relation to its values for the Christian education of adolescents. The biographies were found to touch upon specific needs of adolescents such as: responsibility to society, sense of inferiority, leadership, family relations, boy-girl relationships, right sense of values, facing temptations, interest in the Bible, race relations, basic tenets of the Protestant faith, an historical view of the Christian church, personal convictions, college life, devotional life, stewardship, prayer, faith, vocations, science and religion, and missions.

These life stories are intended only to suggest that biographies are as varied as life itself, and because they deal with all phases of life are adaptable to the needs of adolescents.

CHAPTER III
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A. Introduction

In discussing the uses of biography in the Christian education of adolescents, it is to be understood from the beginning that the writer does not mean to imply that biography should be used to the exclusion of other types of lesson material. Any single approach may lose its value if used all the time, but if both content and method of presentation are varied the effectiveness of both is increased.

This chapter will be concerned with the various uses of biography in two phases of Christian education, worship and teaching. These cannot be rigidly divided for there is teaching in a worship service and elements of worship in a teaching procedure, but since a distinction is commonly made between these two parts of a service, the division will be used here.

The constituent parts of a worship service will be studied to see how biography may be employed either through them or in association with them. In respect to teaching, the use of biography will be discussed in terms of the various methods of lesson presentation. Biography is not in itself a method, but only content material, and must, therefore, be adapted to the different teaching procedures. In this chapter an attempt will be made to discover those methods of teaching which will retain the unique value of biography.

B. The Use of Biography in Worship

1. The Biographical Story

In looking through books of planned worship services for young people, one observes that a story is very often the central part of the worship service. The reason for this is that the story accomplishes so well the purposes of a worship service: to set pupils thinking by presenting truth in a gripping manner, to call forth certain feelings or attitudes, and to inspire pupils to accomplish worthy ends.¹ The variety of appeals which a story can present makes it a valuable worship medium. DeGarmo gives the following appreciation of story-telling:

A good story-teller claims instant and constant attention. He knocks at all doors, --humor, gladness, sadness, pity, exultation, fear; he rouses to action or subdues rebellious feelings; he softens to kindness where only callousness formerly existed; he can, in short, through proper selection of subject matter, and by sympathetic narration, produce, at least for the time being, any worthy effect upon his pupils that he may deem desirable.²

These values of the story in general, are particularly derived from true stories of individual lives, for the element of reality prevents the mind from dismissing the narrative as being merely a lovely story. A worship service is intended to bring the group into closer touch with God, and even as God is made real and near in Jesus Christ who became man, so He is revealed in the lives of other men through whom He worked. In this way biography brings God down to the believer

¹Alice Anderson Bays, Worship Programs and Stories (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1938), p. 20.

²Charles DeGarmo, Interest and Education (New York: Macmillan Company, 1904), p. 157.

and lifts the believer up to God.

A biography in itself has the power of moving an individual to certain attitudes and motivating one for commitment, but when placed in the midst of a worship service with the added influences of music, poetry, and prayer the effectiveness of the life story is heightened. Music speaks to the soul and if a hymn of commitment can be sung following a story which has touched the emotions, or if a prayer can serve to crystallize the feelings which the life story has created the benefit of the biography may be more permanent.

There is a place for both Biblical and extra-Biblical biographies in a worship service depending upon which serves the purpose better. The story of Jacob sleeping out in the open with a stone for a pillow and, after the dream, suddenly awakening with an unusual sense of the presence of God in that place can hardly be excelled in creating a sense of reverence and worship in the house of God. However, if one is desirous of arousing the group to an awareness of what needs to be done in the realm of social service, a brief summary of the life of Muriel Lester might present a more up-to-date picture of needs and opportunities than a Bible story.

In addition to the stories of other lives which the leader may use, he should not forget to make use of his own personal experience, for one speaking out of his own heart of that which is very real to him reaches the hearts of others. Concerning this Verkuyl says,

The best story for any leader's use is not offered him cut and dried. It comes from his general reading and personal experience. Each life experiences a story every day. And we who would lead others in worship must ever be ready to share with them the joys of discovery that come to us in daily contacts, conversations,

and reading.¹

The biographical story is not limited to use in a more formal church school worship service, but also fits in ideally in an informal type of devotional meeting such as a campfire circle.

2. Biography and Art

An effective worship service may be built around the interpretation of a religious masterpiece shown either as a picture or as a color slide. In some instances the picture may represent a life story or some dramatic moment in a life. For instance Hofmann's painting, "Christ and the Rich Young Man," tells the same story that the Bible tells. The combination of the Bible narrative and the interpretation of the picture would leave a vivid impression of the experience of that rich young ruler.²

The interpretation of some pictures may involve the life of the painter or perhaps the life of someone else who inspired the painting. "Praying Hands" by Dürer is of this type.³ The sacrificial spirit of the friend whose hands were painted and Dürer's own appreciation of what his artist friend had done for him are highlighted when the picture is before one's eyes.

If the life of some religious painter is to be studied, such as Michaelangelo, a series of his works might be presented as the story of his life is unfolded. Knowledge of such a life not only adds

¹Gerrit Verkuyl, Adolescent Worship (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1929), p. 185.

²Bays, op. cit., p. 118.

³Ibid., P. 123.

meaning to the masterpieces, but contributes much in the way of Christian character building.

3. Biography and Music

The suggestions given for the use of art and biography in the service of worship may be similarly used in relation to music and biography. A great hymn, such as "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," might be the unifying theme of the service. A brief sketch of the composer's life, or at least the events of his life surrounding the writing of the particular hymn, would be an essential part of its interpretation. If the life of one of the great masters was to be studied, such as Handel, the telling of his life story could be interspersed with the singing of some of his simpler pieces by the youth choir or by the playing of some of his works on record.

4. Biography Through Drama

The place of dramatization in the church, let alone in a worship service, is sometimes a matter of controversy, because dramatization is associated with the theater. However, the type of drama and the purpose of the presentation are the things which need to be considered. "It is obvious that the type of drama which alone can be considered in the church is the religious drama."¹ Concerning the purpose of religious drama Boyd says,

...it must always be kept in mind, both of participants and audience, that the purpose of this dramatic presentation is worship. And when this is kept in mind and emphasized with quiet effectiveness, there can be no question as to the appropriateness of the presentation of Bible dramas and missionary pageants in the church

¹Charles Boyd, Worship in Drama (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1924), p. 87.

in connection with a service of worship on the Lord's Day.¹

The most dramatic Biblical dramas are those of a biographical nature. Boyd, in suggesting dramatic material in the Old Testament, has given twelve stories which might be used and all of them are biographical: Joseph, Moses, Deborah the Prophetess, Ruth the Loving, Jonathan and His Armor-bearer, Elijah the Uncompromising, Micah the Truthful, Isaiah the Statesman, Nehemiah the Enthusiast, Esther the Daring, Judas Maccabeus, and Job the Sufferer.²

The value of dramatizing the life of one of the Bible characters is, for the actor, that he puts himself into the actual situation of the person whose role he is playing. For the spectator, the value is not so much in entering into the life of a single person as in seeing the whole situation come to life.

In view of the values which dramatization has in making the Bible real, Boyd concludes that it is not only worthwhile activity but obligatory:

...to many of our own young people these Bible heroes and heroines are unreal, vague, and somewhat mythical characters about whom you read in the Bible, but who have no special relation to the present and the practical problems of real life.

Hence, anything which will take these great characters out of that mythical, mystical past and make them really live again--make them actual and real--fighting real temptations and winning real victories--anything which will do that is not only worth doing, but there is a real obligation resting upon the church to do it."³

To be a religious drama, it does not necessarily need to be a

¹Ibid., p. 8.

²Ibid., pp. 27-31.

³Ibid., p. 27.

Biblical dramatization. The life of a missionary or other notable Christian might also be presented. This would be a good means of getting the youth of a church better acquainted with the missionaries of that particular church or denomination. It would certainly stimulate a more personal interest in the missionaries if young people could see their life stories enacted.

The worship service of the church school is usually too brief for a dramatization unless it is very simple or unless the class period is shortened. A dramatization involving considerable preparation and properties would be better left for a Sunday evening or week night, although play writing and planning may be carried on as an activity in the church school or in a youth fellowship meeting. Further discussion concerning play writing will be included later.

5. Biography Through Films

Another means of presenting biography in the worship service is through motion pictures. An excellent portrayal of the life of Ruth is given in a film produced by Arthur Rank. Some of the Cathedral films are also biographical in nature and are suitable for worship. Of course the thing which determines whether or not this, or any other means, of presenting a life story will lead to worship is the way it is used.

The hymns, Scripture reading, and prayer should all be preparatory to the main message in the film. Not only should the theme of the picture be carried out, but the spirit of it also as much as possible. The closing of the worship service should capitalize on the climax of the film. If it has led up to a dedication of life for service to God, a consecration hymn may help the group to make their

commitment more definite. A moment of silent prayer preceding a closing prayer may be more appropriate in some instances.

C. The Use of Biography in Teaching

1. The Story Method

In thinking how to use a biography in teaching, one almost immediately thinks of telling the account of someone's life as he would any story. The story method is usually thought of as preeminently the method of teaching little children, but its use is not limited to children. Truth may be graphically taught to any age through a story. However, in older classes the story is more frequently used as a part, not the entire teaching method.¹ Moore includes the story as a method in teaching seniors stating these reasons:

The story is an effective method of instruction because it is concrete and vivid, dramatic, dealing with imagery, action, and personalities, and the direct application of the lesson truth. It gives pleasure, quickens interest, stimulates attention, enlivens anticipation and thus provides a responsive setting for the lesson to be taught.²

As a guide to selecting appropriate stories for adolescents, Maus suggests some of the things which most interest them at various stages of development. Because early and middle adolescence is egoistic, "stories of egoism, triumph over difficulties, self-mastery, and loyalty to friends are keenly enjoyed."³ From history, adventure, modern biography and missionary annals, stories of self-sacrifice,

¹Maus, op. cit., p. 89.

²Mary Anne Moore, Senior Method in the Church School (New York: Abingdon Press, 1929), pp. 163-4.

³Maus, op. cit., p. 103.

heroic service, love for one's enemies and vocational choices may be selected for later youth, since this is the period of altruism, love and vocation.

The story has two primary uses in teaching. As the method of lesson presentation, it is not often that one would use the story method as the sole means with a group of young people. Nevertheless, there are occasional lessons which may be very effectively developed by the story method of teaching. The stories of Ruth and Esther are representative of the type of lesson which may be developed wholly by the use of the story method with young people.¹

The Bible effectively presents these and other lives in story form, and the full value of them is gained only when they are first read or heard as such. The elements of indirect application, the relationship of one act to another, the causes and effects, the emotion, suspense, and climax, which the story of a life is able to reveal when taken as a whole, are frequently lost sight of and the impact weakened when such a biographical lesson is dissected and its parts analyzed. Discussion and questions may have their rightful place after the story has had a chance to speak for itself.

Further, biography may be used as a point of contact, as illustration, and in application in connection with other methods. This use of the story is most frequent and most effective.² Household or anecdote biography finds its greatest use in this way.

¹Ibid., p. 105.

²Loc. cit.

A lesson for seniors entitled "In the Beginning God" selected from the Judson Keystone Series for seniors is introduced by an incident from the life of Rudyard Kipling:

Rudyard Kipling, the English poet, once toured America. While traveling in California, he became seriously ill and was taken to a hospital. One day his nurse heard him mumbling something she could not make out. So she leaned down to catch what he was saying. "What do you want, Mr. Kipling?" she asked. "I want," he said, "I want--God!"¹

This little experience from actual life is a point of contact which immediately arouses interest. It introduces the theme and indicates its importance and, above all, relates the subject to actual life from the very beginning.

The incident of Hudson Taylor's asking the captain to set the sails of the ship before he prayed for wind may be used as an illustration of an abstract idea. The principle of faith is here presented in concrete terms so that there is no mistaking its meaning.

In applying truth to the lives of young people, the teacher attempts to relate the lesson to specific problems of her pupils. In a lesson based on the life of Joseph in Egypt the primary truth emphasized was: "A man does not have to live down to the level of his environment; he may live above it."² One area of application was in the development of one's spiritual life even when the environment seemed adverse to it. The following summary of the life lived by Brother Lawrence clinched the lesson:

¹Lawrence Fitzgerald, "In the Beginning God," How It All Began, Judson (Keystone) Graded Course for High School Young People, Course X, Part 1, p. 11.

²Fitzgerald, "Shepherd Boy to Foreign Prince," How It All Began, Judson (Keystone) Graded Course for High School Young People, Course X, Part 1, p. 75.

The name "Brother Lawrence" has become almost synonymous with the phrase "practicing the presence of God." This man, an ordinary cook in the seventeenth century, lived a life of unusual devotion to God. A friend wrote of him:

"As Brother Lawrence had found such comfort and blessing in walking in the presence of God, it was natural for him to recommend it earnestly to others; but his example was a stronger inducement than any arguments he could propose. His very countenance was edifying; such a sweet and calm devotion appearing in it as could not but affect all beholders. And it was observed that in the greatest hurry of business in the kitchen, he still preserved his recollection and heavenly-mindedness. He was never hasty nor loitering, but did each thing in its season, with an even, uninterrupted composure and tranquility of spirit. 'The time of business,' said he, 'does not with me differ from the time of prayer, and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees.'"

As with any story, the manner in which a biography is told largely determines its effectiveness. To prepare a story successfully for telling these three processes should be followed:

(1) The story must be possessed by the intellect. The major facts of the life and the order in which they happened should be well known.

(2) The story must be possessed by the imagination. Each incident should be visualized with careful observation of details. The hearer will never see more than the story-teller first sees.

(3) The story must be possessed by the emotions. The passions, purposes, joys, sorrows, and motives that surge through the lives of the characters must be felt by the story-teller strongly enough that they will color the quality of voice, the facial expression, the pose of body, the light in one's eyes. "The strength of your emotional ideal is the dynamic that inspires others to sacrifice and service, to heroic

¹Ibid., p. 78.

giving and living."¹

2. The Presentation Method

This method differs from the story method in the same way that a talk differs from a story. The talk may concern the life of an individual even as the story, but it is treated differently. The story is an account of events so arranged and told that it speaks for itself, making its main appeal to the emotions. The story-teller is merely a conveyor of the narrative, as it stands, without inserting any of his own ideas. But in a talk or sermon interpretation and application accompany the facts of the story.

There are times when the story may not be perfectly clear without explanation and when specific applications are not evident unless pointed out. Moreover, young people will not always appreciate a story. If used too frequently they may resent it on the grounds that they are no longer children and are capable of something more intellectual.

This is the method most commonly used by the minister in preaching a biographical sermon. The value of biographical sermons is well stated by Clarence Macartney, who has become well known for this kind of preaching:

Early in my first pastorate...I made the important homiletic discovery that the people like to hear sermons on Bible characters, and that the preacher can preach on Bible characters more naturally, fluently, and practically than on any other subject.... It is not possible to preach on the great men of the Bible without speaking practical and timely truths to the people, and in a way that everyone will understand. The great advantage of such preaching is that you summon these men themselves into the pulpit and permit

¹Maus, op. cit., p. 97.

them to preach for you. Abraham preaches on Faith; Elijah on Righteousness; Samuel on Judgement to come; David on Temptation; and Peter on Repentance. Every chord in the great harp of the Gospel is struck by the preacher who preaches on the great men of the Bible.¹

It seems logical that, in view of the fact that biography has a special appeal to young people, if the minister of a church desires his young people to attend church services, he will frequently plan to use this type of sermon.

The plan used by Macartney with his congregation might well be used by a minister with the youth of his church. In the church bulletin space was left for the members of the congregation to vote for the ten greatest men in the Bible. Those receiving the highest number of votes became the subjects of a series of biographical sermons.² Young people would probably be eager to hear a sermon on the characters they had selected.

By the very nature of the Bible, so rich in biography, it would appear that much of the preaching from the Bible would be biographical. Perhaps God planned it so, as William Evans seems to think:

The Bible abounds in biography. Is it not possible that God knew that the best way to reach human lives was through the history of the rises and falls of other human lives?³

In a biographical sermon, the subject will probably be a Bible character, but a speaker at a youth fellowship may advantageously choose to speak about some other great Christian outside the Bible,

¹Clarence Macartney, The Greatest Men of the Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1941), p. 6.

²Ibid., p. 5.

³William Evans, The Book of Books (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1902), p. 192.

perhaps a contemporary.

At the conclusion of a young people's banquet, when a brief but pointed devotional message is desired, it may often be effectively conveyed through this medium, a talk centered about some person whose life speaks the message the speaker wishes to give.

3. The Research Method

This method of teaching, according to Dr. Tralle, "involves the cooperative working out of a class project in which each member assumes a proportionate share of the undertaking."¹ Through this method pupils learn to assemble facts and weigh them, arrange arguments, and form independent judgements.² The research method likewise pre-supposes careful assignments, outside work, and follow-up in the class period.

The use of biography in the research method does not mean that all of the assignments for a particular lesson should be a biographical investigation. It should be used only where it contributes to the purpose of the lesson.

A typical lesson assignment employing biography might be as follows:

Theme for the Unit: Our Church Around the World

Theme for the Lesson: Our Church in India

Teaching Aim: To acquaint the pupils with the work of their own church in India and to confront them with India's needs.

Assignments:

Group I is to study the religions of India. (Encyclopedia Britannica,

¹Maus, op. cit., p. 134.

²Frank McKibben, Intermediate Method in the Church School (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1926), p. 150.

"India—Religion," pp. 160-164)

One Individual is to study the caste system. (Things As They Are by Amy Carmichael, pp. 83-104. Church library)

Group II is to study the missionary work of our church in India. (Consult the denominational Annual and magazines in church library)

One Individual is to discover what motivated Dr. Ida Scudder to go to India as a missionary. (Dr. Ida: India by Mary Jeffrey. Church library)

4. The Project Method

The project method has been variously defined, but the definition given by Dr. Tralle seems to be quite inclusive: "A project is a cheerful group acceptance of a challenge, and the interested, purposive carrying out of a worthwhile undertaking."¹ The primary value of this method is that it offers a problem which cannot be solved without the pupil's discovering what the teacher wants them to know. This stimulates thinking and creativity.²

A project which has unusual appeal in the adolescent years is some form of drama. This has already been referred to in relation to the worship service. However, viewing it from the production angle one sees the educational value rather than the worship value. If a Sunday School class or youth group undertakes to write its own dramatization which it will later present, it will not only be more enjoyable but will necessarily "enter more deeply into their consciousness and become a richer part of their lives."³

¹Maus, op. cit., p. 170.

²Ibid., pp. 170-1.

³Boyd, op. cit., p. 16.

The study preparatory to the writing of a play would involve both a knowledge of historical background, and a careful analysis of characters, which comes close to making an application. The life of Ruth is an excellent story to dramatize because it is simple and yet dramatic. Maus presents the life of Ruth as a silent drama to illustrate the project method. The main steps in the procedure are given here as she develops it:

Group I--Study the story of Ruth to discover what scenes should be portrayed. Make an outline of the story into Acts and Scenes. Have it duplicated in the church office so each member of the class may have one.

Group II--Make a study of Oriental manners and customs, home life, ancient cities, peasant life, weddings, and business transactions with the story of Ruth in mind. Be prepared to prescribe costumes for characters and stage settings.

Group III--Study Ruth in order to write the script that is to accompany each scene. An introduction to the play is to be written also.

The results of a week's study is brought to class for discussion and evaluation. When the scenes have finally been planned and the script written, the actual dramatization begins. The culmination, if successful, is presenting it for the entire church school.¹

Writing need not be limited to plays, but may be employed in a number of different ways. A project in church history was carried on by college students in the Junior class. Instead of merely reading assigned pages from a textbook, it was planned that the class write a

¹Ibid., pp. 184-9.

book on the Protestant Reformation to be used as collateral reading in the young people's department of the Sunday School. The book was entitled "Some Aspects of the Protestant Reformation," and one of the chapters was devoted to Martin Luther.¹ The composition of this chapter involved an evaluation of the most significant events in Luther's life and an appreciation of Luther's great contribution to the Reformation movement.

Another project in writing might be a class "Who's Who." This was actually carried out in a high school English class and would have real value for a Sunday School class or youth group. Each student interviews another member of the group and writes a short sketch of his life. The group may decide what should be included in each biography. It would be of special value if an account of the person's growth in the Christian life were included. It would make the group better acquainted with each other and in many instances be a real inspiration and help. The completion of this project consisted in editing and duplication by the stenographic-minded, taking pictures of the members of the group and pasting them in the book by the photographers in the group, and the binding of the book and decoration of the cover by the artists.

One group began a study of the life of Christ with a project involving the construction of the pupil's own "Life of Christ" from the text of the four gospels. Instead of referring the student to a

¹Mason Crum, The Project Method (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1924), pp. 14-22.

²Maxine Alverson, "A Class 'Who's Who,'" English Journal, 30:591, September, 1941.

book on the life of Christ, this project was introduced in order to get the pupils to deal with the subject first hand. No incident in either of the four gospels was to be omitted or duplicated. Clippings from inexpensive editions of the gospels were pasted in chronological order on loose-leaf note paper. In the margin were written the topics and sources from which the clipping was lifted. An outline of the life of Christ was presented before the project was begun.¹

These are only samples of projects which may be used in biographical studies to vary the approach and at the same time to engage pupils in worthwhile activity.

5. The Dramatization Method

The writing and production of a play involving considerable time and work rightly comes under the project method where it has already been discussed, but there is another type of dramatization which requires no preparation but has value for a particular lesson because it arises spontaneously out of the class situation. Intermediate girls might enter whole-heartedly into a spontaneous dramatization of the critical moment in Esther's life. Older adolescents might prefer simply to read the parts with expression. This could be easily done with a lesson on Job.

6. The Visual Aid Method

Reference has already been made to the use of art masterpieces and moving pictures in the worship service, but these may also be used effectively in teaching. Surrounded by the other elements in a worship ser-

¹Crum, op. cit., pp. 65-9.

vice these mediums can be used to lead to worship, but when used in a different way in a class period they may contribute to a better understanding of the lesson.

The picture, "Christ and the Rich Young Man," by Hofmann might be used in a teaching situation by letting the pupils themselves analyze the painting and make the interpretation in connection with the Bible story. Maus suggests a comparison of the picture and the story in respect to: the setting of both, the relation of characters or objects in the picture and the succession of events in the story, the center of interest in the picture and the climax of the story, the appreciation response of the picture and the conclusion of the story.¹ By entering into the artist's interpretation of the story through this analysis, the pupils are enabled to re-create the story in a way that brings the application very close to their own lives.

A motion picture such as one of the series on the life of Paul could be shown to arouse interest in a new unit of study about Paul. A new booklet or a statement from the teacher announcing that the next lessons will be on the life of Paul does not usually produce a very enthusiastic response. But if Paul can be made to come alive and introduced to the group through a motion picture, there will naturally be greater interest in what he did and said. The film could also be the basis of discussion in succeeding lessons or be used to conclude a unit by way of review.

¹Maus, op. cit., p. 95-6.

7. Other Uses

A Sunday School class might enjoy reviewing a year's work by a quiz program. Each pupil is given the name of some person whose life they have studied in the past year, and they are to write six clues by which the others in the class are to identify the person.

If the church library does not seem to be getting the desired use, a youth group might decide to appoint one member each week to read one book and give a five minute report on it at the next meeting to encourage others to read it. Undoubtedly some of the more popular books would be biographies.

The young people's Sunday School papers afford an excellent opportunity for acquainting adolescents with people whose lives are inspiring.

The youth leader can find in biography a real source of help in personal counseling. A handicapped person who is discouraged and disappointed with life might be helped by the life of Helen Keller which the youth leader could put in his hands. A promising young Christian might accept the challenge to give his life for missionary service if the youth leader suggested that he read a missionary biography.

The possibilities of using biography are unlimited. By varying the way in which biography is presented, it may be used more often without losing its appeal.

D. Summary

In discovering the uses to which biography may be put in the Christian education of adolescents, two areas were explored, worship and teaching. It was found that biography might be used in connection with the various elements which constitute a worship service. It could be used alone as the main message of the worship service; it could be used in association with art and music; it could be portrayed through drama, movies, and records.

Some of these same means of presenting biography were found to be useful in a teaching situation also but with a different purpose and in a different way, such as the story, visual aids, and drama. But in addition to these, other teaching methods were found to offer opportunities for using biography, namely, the presentation method, the research and report method, and the project method.

This chapter has been written, not to give the impression that the use of biography will meet every problem or that it is the only approach to adolescents, but that, having recognized its value, the possibilities of using biography in various ways might be seen, and that it might be used more extensively and effectively than is customary.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. Problem Restated

This thesis has been an endeavor to discover what value biography in general has for the Christian education of adolescents, how particular biographies are related to the needs of adolescents, and how biography may be used most effectively in the church's youth program.

B. Summary

The investigation proved more timely than the writer realized at the beginning, for not only has biography recently become extremely popular with the general reading public, but more and more educators are discovering its value in vitalizing other subjects and in building character.

As a type of literature, biography was found to be related to history and the novel. But the characteristic of biography which distinguishes it from these other literary forms is the primary interest of biography in the individual life rather than in events and truth.

Numerous values of biography for the ordinary reader were discovered. In addition to the pleasure which biography gives is the broadening influence which it exerts by bringing the reader into contact with new friends, new places, and new areas of thought.

But biography was seen to have other values which made it particularly useful for the Christian education of adolescents. Because it naturally arouses the interest of young people, it is easily recog-

nized as a good medium for presenting Christian truth. Moreover, in biography truth is not stated in abstract principles, but in concrete examples from real life, so that an adolescent would have no difficulty in seeing how that principle might be applied to his own life. It was also noted that biography helps to bridge the gap between knowledge and actual experience, because it not only presents patterns of conduct worthy of imitation, but also makes a strong indirect appeal to the emotions and the will. And when Christian ideals are portrayed in biography, the young reader is invited to pursue the Christian way of life.

To illustrate more specifically the values of biography in the Christian education of adolescents, ten biographies were selected on the basis of variety and suitability to the adolescent age. Five of these were Biblical biographies and five were extra-Biblical. They were first classified according to types of biography and then analyzed in terms of their applicability to adolescent needs. It was found that these ten biographies touched on practically every area of life and had special pertinence to problems of adolescents. Some of these problem areas involved the relationship between the adolescent and society, his family, the opposite sex, God, and his own personal adjustment.

The uses of biography in the church's youth program were studied in relation to two aspects of Christian education, worship and teaching. In regard to the worship service it was shown how biography could be used as the main message, in relation to music and art, and through drama and films. In the teaching procedure it was found that biography

could be used effectively through the story, by the presentation method, in research, as a project, through dramatization, and by means of motion pictures.

C. Conclusions

This study has more than confirmed the writer's belief that biography may be very influential in molding the lives of young people. This conviction, which began from personal responses to the reading of biographies, has grown throughout this investigation because distinguished educators have likewise advocated the use of biography in arousing interest and developing character.

It was rewarding to discover how timely this subject is, for at present publishers, having recognized the recent demand for biographies by young people, have been printing more biographies written especially for them. Religious publishers too have been putting out an increasing number of Christian biographies written in a popular style to appeal to adolescents.

In turning to the Bible, the writer was again impressed with the extensive use of biography. Because the Bible is so filled with people, someone has said that if you put a knife into its pages it will bleed. It was thrilling to realize that God so guided the Bible writers that, unlike the sacred books of other religions such as the Koran or the Vedas of India, the Bible has preserved the teachings of the Christian faith, not by an accumulation of dry-as-dust treatises or teachings, but through living personalities.

Since so much of the Bible is biographical in nature, it would

seem logical to suppose that much of the preaching and teaching from it would also be biographical. However, from personal observation it seems to the writer that ministers do not frequently preach biographical sermons. When a Bible character is referred to, it is generally in connection with a single incident and only rarely does a minister attempt to present a total picture of the person's life.

In respect to teaching in the church school, the writer was surprised to discover that most curricula contained more biographical material than had been anticipated. However, the use of this material was not generally satisfactory. In some lesson materials life stories of Bible characters are merely re-written without any suggestions for using them. The untrained teacher would no doubt simply fall into the habit of re-telling the Bible story and perhaps asking a few questions. The same use of biography week after week, regardless of the value of the material, will become monotonous and have a deadening effect upon the class. The primary recommendation in teaching biography is that the method of presentation be varied. To make sufficient use of biography does not mean that an entire lesson must always be of a biographical nature; it may be employed more incidentally through illustrations or as a part of a special assignment. It is well to combine both Biblical and extra-Biblical biography in the same lesson, for this relates the message of the past to more recent days. If the story of Abraham is taught, the lesson of his obedience to God in going out in faith to a land which he did not know is brought closer to the class if compared to a similar response made by David Livingstone to God's call.

Many churches have libraries which are rarely used, and although

a number of good biographies may be collecting dust on the shelves, they do not get into the hands of young people where they may do their work. It would seem, therefore, that where this is the situation youth leaders should do all they can to promote a reading program. Much may be done in this respect through a youth fellowship, advertising on bulletin boards, and by personal recommendation. Smaller churches frequently do not have libraries. And if young people must search for Christian biographies in a public library, it is not likely that many of them will be read. For this reason some step should be taken to begin a church library, perhaps by each member purchasing one book.

In view of this study it appears that Christian education leaders have not yet become fully aware of the valuable tool which they have in biography. Although lessons are planned about the lives of Bible characters, the methods of using the material are not usually the most effective. Extra-Biblical biographies have been inadequately used. Not only in the church school but in youth fellowships also young people need to be encouraged to read more of the lives of those men and women who can lead the way to a more abundant Christian life.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

A. Books of Individual Biographies

1. Biographies of Missionaries

Ann of Ava - Ethel Daniels Hubbard. Westminster Press.

This is the story of Ann Hasseltine, whose life as Mrs. Adoniram Judson, from its beginning in a New England village to its close in a jungle village of Burma, was filled with unbelievable adventures, great courage, and a transforming love. For teenagers and young people.

Mary Slessor - Basil Miller. Augustana Book Concern.

The touching story of the Scottish lassie who went as a missionary to Africa.

David Livingstone - Basil Miller. Augustana Book Concern.

A fine biography of the frail Scot who did so much for the salvation of his beloved Africa.

Wilfred Grenfell - Basil Miller. Augustana Book Concern.

The inspiring story of a Labrador missionary.

C. T. Studd, Athlete and Pioneer - Norman P. Grub. The Gospel Light Press.

Gentleman, scholar, famous athlete, but best of all a good soldier of Jesus Christ. A man who gave up his entire fortune and life to serve as a missionary to three continents.

Charles E. Cowman, Missionary Warrior - by his wife. Mennonite Publishing House.

A stirring biography of a great missionary to the Orient, told by his companion in his labors.

Pioneering for Christ in Xingu Jungles - Martha Moenich. Mennonite Publishing House.

The true story of missionary pioneering in Brazil.

A Life For the Congo - Julia Lake Kellersberger. Mennonite Publishing House.

The life story of Althea Brown Edmiston, a Negress who carried the gospel to Africa.

Behind the Ranges - Mrs. Howard Taylor. Mennonite Publishing House.

A missionary biography exalting Christ and showing the spiritual battles and victories in Christian work. Also tells the story of Fraser and his work among the Lisu in China.

Borden of Yale - Mrs. Howard Taylor. Mennonite Publishing House.

The biography of an American student who dedicated himself and his wealth to God for work among the Moslems in China.

An Hour With David Brainerd. Mennonite Publishing House.

An Hour With Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth.

An Hour With Ann and Adoniram Judson.

An Hour With David Livingstone.

An Hour With Hudson Taylor.

An Hour With John and Betty Stam.

Pocket size biographies of great missionaries.

Goforth of China - Rosalind Goforth. Mennonite Publishing House.

A real missionary tonic.

The Triumph of John and Betty Stam - Mrs. Howard Taylor. Mennonite Publishing House.

A soul stirring account of the brief lives and tragic death

of two young missionaries, the news of whose martyrdom moved the world in December, 1934.

John G. Paton - Dr. J. T. Mueller. Concordia Publishing House.

A man whose life was wholly yielded to the cause of winning lost men to Christ in the New Hebrides.

Prophet in the Wilderness - Hermann Hogedorn. Brethren Publishing House.

A popular biography of Albert Schweitzer, the man who was recently described as the greatest man in the world.

2. Biographies of Bible Characters

Paul, A Biography - Edgar J. Goodspeed. Presbyterian Book Stores.

Dr. Goodspeed pieces together the scattered data of Paul's life so that the personality of the man emerges and he becomes a figure that every reader can understand.

John: Disciple, Evangelist, Apostle - William Dallmann. Concordia Publishing House.

It offers the Bible student a veritable mine of pertinent data on the early life of St. John, the disciple "whom Jesus loved," his early contacts with Jesus, his apostleship, exile, and death. The author comments on John's invaluable legacy to the world in his writings.

Paul: Life and Letters - William Dallmann.

Peter: Life and Letters - William Dallmann.

3. Miscellaneous Selection

William Tyndale - William Dallmann. Concordia Publishing House.

Every Christian, young and old, should read the story of this

valiant translator and martyr.

Breakfast Table Autocrat - Richard Day. Concordia Publishing House

Mr. Crowell was a great industrialist and a great Christian. He began with tithing and ended with giving more than sixty percent of his possessions to churches and missions.

Martin Luther - Basil Miller. Augustana Book Concern.

A popularly written biography of the great reformer.

Luther's Life - Ingeborg Stolee. Augustana Book Concern.

A new biography of Martin Luther written especially for young people to help the young Lutheran understand the background of the Reformation.

George Washington Carver - Rackham Holt. Augustana Book Concern.

The fascinating life story of a great American by an author who knew the grand old man intimately.

Johann Sebastian Bach - L. N. Field. Augustana Book Concern.

A human, appealing story, this biography of Bach presents the great musician as a lovable and living character, a Christian, and a church worker.

Florence Nightingale - Basil Miller. Augustana Book Concern.

The stirring tale of a famous nurse.

Sankey Still Sings - Charles Ludwig. The Warner Press.

An Hour With Charles G. Finney - Mennonite Publishing House.

An Hour With Dwight L. Moody.

An Hour With Samuel Morris.

An Hour With Andrew Murray.

An Hour With George Müller.

The Monk Who Lived Again - B. H. Pearson. Menmonite Publishing House.

The story of a Catholic monk in South America who, in God's answers to the prayers of an American mother, found Christ and preached his gospel.

Bush Aglow - Richard Ellsworth Day. The Gospel Light Press.

The life story of Dwight L. Moody.

The Shadow of the Broad Brim. - Richard E. Day. The Gospel Light Press.

A popular and intensely interesting biography of the great Charles H. Spurgeon.

A Man of Like Passions - Richard E. Day. The Gospel Light Press.

The life story of Charles G. Finney.

The Life of John Calvin. - Albert Hyma. The Gospel Light Press.

The distinguished historian gives us the only popularized life of the great reformer, with special attention to the less widely known factors of his life, and his lasting contribution to the Christian cause.

God Runs My Business - Albert W. Lorimer. The Gospel Light Press.

The amazing story of R. G. Le Tourneau, founder and head of one of America's mammoth enterprises, and a Christian layman who is devoting time, talents, and money to the spreading of the gospel.

Abraham Lincoln - Edward Wagennecht. Brethren Publishing House.

A rich selection of fact and fiction, prose and poetry about the life and work of Abraham Lincoln.

Anna and the King of Siam - Margaret Landon. Brethren Publishing House.

The story of a young teacher who was engaged by the king of Siam in 1862 to teach his favorite wives and children. She did much to

instil progressive democratic and Christian ideals into Siam.

Lone Journey - Jeanette Eaton. Brethren Publishing House.

The book contains interesting material on Roger Williams' peace-making venture among the Indians.

Fanny Crosby's Story of 94 Years - Mennonite Publishing House.

An Irish Saint - Mennonite Publishing House.

The simple story of an ignorant Irish girl who settled in Canada and learned to read only one Book, the Bible, and believing its promises, wrought miracles through prayer.

Paula, The Waldensian - Eva Lecomte. Mennonite Publishing House.

Here is a literary jewel translated from the Spanish. A simple country girl, forgetful of self, finds the love of God that found her. It tells of her struggles of heart under the stern hand of one who forbade her to worship and confiscated her Bible.

Mahatma Gandhi--An Interpretation - E. Stanley Jones. Brethren Publishing House.

Out of many years of association with Gandhi, Dr. Jones writes of what he actually knows about India's great leader. Interpreting Gandhi, the author states clearly the case for peace and world understanding.

Margie - Kenneth Brown. Brethren Publishing House.

The story of two Christian university students, Dick and Margie as revealed in their letters. Will have a special appeal to college students.

Dobbie--Defender of Malta - S. Maxwell Coder. The Moody Press.

This is the record of what God has wrought in the 20th century

through the apostolic faith of a British general.

The Making of the Beautiful - Helen E. Bingham. Zondervan Publishing House.

A popular biography of Annie Johnson Flint, the great Christian poetess.

4. Biographical Novels of Bible Characters

The Herdsman - Dorothy Clarke Wilson. Christian Board of Publication.

Barrabas - Emery Bekeasy. Christian Board of Publication.

Gripping contrasts between the popularly considered Messianic movement of desert outlaws against the Roman legions and the doctrines of Christ based on love and peace.

Table in the Wilderness - Norton S. Parker. Christian Board of Publication.

A long and colorful story of Joseph, the son of Jacob. The author follows the true biblical outline closely in this new and arresting novel.

The Apostle - Sholem Asch. Christian Board of Publication.

A book based on authentic research which makes Paul's life very vivid; in imagination the reader lives the life he lived; at the same time it is an excellent account of the spread of Christianity.

Mary - Sholem Asch.

The Nazarene - Sholem Asch.

The Brother - Dorothy Clarke Wilson. Brethren Publishing House

The story of Jesus is here told through the eyes of his brother James, the proud, law-abiding Pharisee. It is a story revealing deep understanding and tenderness.

The Big Fisherman - Lloyd Douglas. Brethren Publishing House.

A novel of the times of Jesus, in which Simon Peter, the Big Fisherman, plays a leading part. Romance, intrigue, adventure, good character portrayal are blended with a reverent treatment of Jesus as another prominent figure in the story.

B. Books of Collected Biographies

1. Biographies of Bible Characters

Women of the Bible - H. V. Morton. The Methodist Publishing House.

The author writes about famous women of the Bible as if he were writing about living women. He has breathed new life into the old stories.

Women of the Bible - Algot Theodor Lundholm. Augustana Book Concern.

A favorite for over twenty-five years, originally published in two volumes. Now available in one volume. Outstanding pen pictures of thirty-one women of the Bible.

Lives That Oft Remind Us - Mennonite Publishing House.

In very interesting style, with lessons to be learned these Bible characters are presented. Fine for devotional reading.

Personalities of the Old Testament - Fleming James. Westminster Press.

Vigorous biographies of the leaders of Israel, the result of many years of careful and intense research, and the subject of the Hale lectures.

Personalities of the Passion - Leslie D. Weatherhead. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.

The passion story movingly re-told through intimate sketches of twelve persons close to Jesus during his last earthly days.

Feminine Faces - Clovis G. Chappell. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.

Sermons on sixteen unforgettable biblical women.

Faces About the Cross - Clovis G. Chappell. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.

Sixteen biographical sermons--plain straightforward preaching that illuminates the Crucifixion drama.

The Greatest Men of the Bible - Clarence Macartney. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.

Great Women of the Bible - Clarence Macartney.

Sermons on Old Testament Heroes - Clarence Macartney.

The Wisest Fool and Other Men of the Bible - Clarence Macartney.

2. Miscellaneous Selections

One Hundred Stories for Boys - Archer Wallace. Brethren Publishing House.

Brief stories of incidents concerning famous personalities, easy to read and easy to use in working with boys.

Dauntless Women - Winifred Matthews. Westminster Press.

The picture of women's vital contribution to missions. The subjects are Ann Judson, Mary Moffat, Mary Livingstone, and others. Creative Personalities Series: Philip Lotz, editor. Westminster Press.

Vocations and Professions.

Women Leaders.

Founders of Christian Movements.

Answering Distant Calls.

Rising Above Color.

Distinguished American Jews.

Fox's Book of Martyrs - Mennonite Publishing House.

The great English classic of early Christian martyrs.

Deeper Experiences of Famous Christians - Gilchrist Lawson. The Gospel Light Press.

A book vividly portraying the power, influence, and workings of God in such persons as Savonarola, Madam Guyon, Fenelon, Fox, and Bunyan.

In Spite of All - Archer Wallace. Brethren Publishing House.

Ten short biographies of men and women who succeeded in spite of handicaps.

He Took It Upon Himself - Margaret Slattery.

Dramatic sketches of men and women who have devoted their lives to working for the Kingdom, such as Schweitzer, Curie, Kagawa, Studdert-Kennedy.

They Did Something About It - Robert M. Bartlett. The Pilgrim Press.

Short biographical sketches of 35 women and men of all nationalities, representing many religious beliefs, coming from all walks of life, who have helped to make the lives of others worth living.

They Work for Tomorrow - Robert M. Bartlett. The Pilgrim Press.

Biographical portraits of 15 outstanding men and women of today who are doing something specific and constructive for humanity and the future. Includes Wilkie, Sorokin, Murray, Hull, and Lehman.

A Book of Protestant Saints - Ernest Gordon. Scripture Press.

Vivid pen portraits of evangelical saints of the 18th and 19th centuries, drawn largely from untranslated French, German, and Scandinavian sources. One of the main themes is the remarkable revival in

dead European churches brought about by the lives of these saints of God.

Girls' Stories of Great Women - Elsie Egermier. Augustana Book Concern.

Stories about Mary Slessor, Helen Keller, Rosa Bonheur, Fanny Crosby, Jenny Lind, Elizabeth Browning, Clara Barton, Madame Curie, Louisa Alcott and others.

Boys' Stories of Great Men - Elsie Egermier. The Warner Press.

Such men as Lincoln, Washington, Longfellow, Edison, Burbank, Bell, Ford, Wright, and Rockefeller.

Living Biography Series - Henry and Dana Lee Thomas. Presbyterian Book Stores.

Living Biographies of Great Composers

Living Biographies of Great Philosophers

Living Biographies of Great Religious Leaders

Addresses of the Book Stores Mentioned:

Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 150 5th Avenue, New York, New York.

Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Illinois.

Brethren Publishing House, 22 South State Street, Elgin, Illinois.

Christian Board of Publication, 2700 Pine Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri.

Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson, St. Louis, Missouri.

Gospel Light Press, 1443 North Vine Street, Hollywood 28, California.

Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

Methodist Publishing House, 150 5th Avenue, New York, New York.

Moody Press, 153 Institute Place, Chicago, Illinois.

Pilgrim Press, 14 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts.

Presbyterian Book Stores, 8 North 6th Street, Richmond 9, Virginia.

Scripture Press, 434 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 5, Illinois.

Warner Press, Anderson, Indiana.

Zondervan Publishing House, 847 Ottawa Avenue, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan.