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A study of religious drama as a resource of the church, illustrated by an original biblical drama

Marien E. Griffith
University of Nebraska at Omaha

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A THESIS

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A STUDY OF RELIGIOUS DRAMA
AS A RESOURCE OF THE CHURCH

Illustrated by
An Original Biblical Drama

Submitted by
Marian E. Griffith, A. B.

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
in the
Department of Sociology
of the
Municipal University of Omaha
1948
DEDICATED TO THE THREE MEN

IN MY LIFE

Wm. Owen Griffith, M. D.
William Laymon Griffith
and
Patrick Owen Griffith
P R E F A C E

The author wishes to express grateful appreciation for valuable assistance in preparing this study. She is indebted to Dr. L. O. Taylor and Dr. W. H. Thompson of the University of Omaha, to Allen E. Richardson and Allen G. Richardson of St. Louis, Missouri, to her friend, Wynnie Jones, and to many pastors and church members. She is particularly indebted to Dr. T. E. Sullenger, Director of Research in the Department of Sociology of the University of Omaha, for his constant guidance and generous help in the completion of this paper.
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INTRODUCTION

A STUDY OF RELIGIOUS DRAMA AS A RESOURCE OF THE CHURCH
ILLUSTRATED BY
AN ORIGINAL BIBLICAL DRAMA

The main purpose of this study is to determine the place of religious drama in the church. Data or information were secured from personal letters and interviews with pastors and lay-people in Omaha, Nebraska; Council Bluffs, Sioux City and Des Moines, Iowa; St. Louis, Missouri; Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota; Idaho Falls, Idaho; and Monrovia, California. A questionnaire was used as a guiding basis for the interviews. The case method and survey method were used. An original Biblical drama is presented to illustrate what the possibilities are in this field of activity.

The findings in this study reveal that there is a dearth of tangible means of expression of Biblical dramatic material, and also a need for trained leadership.

Drama is one of the most interesting of the present day leisure-time activities both from the standpoint of the spectator and the performer. It is conceded by all authorities that society in general loves the drama and has from the beginning of time preferred this form of entertainment, worship, or leisure-time activity, depending
upon the viewpoint.

The church has many valuable resources, but few which have the power of compelling society and the individual to view real life situations in the manner which the drama exacts of an audience.
Chapter 1

RELIGION - A BASIC DESIRE

There are many definitions of sociology, but they all have practically the same meaning, whether one quotes Kimball Young: "Sociology is the study of society and culture," or Lowell Carr: "Sociology is the study of group phenomena in the manner of an observational scientist."

Sociology is the study of the origin of human society and as far back as history goes religion was a part of human society. In any study of the origin of human society there enters also the study of primitive peoples and their searching and seeking to find an outlet for their emotions; a continuous exploration for someone or something to worship. Sociology may be thought of as the science or study of the origin, development, and constitution of human society; the science of the fundamental principles of social relations, institutions, etc. Sometimes sociology is used to express the whole group of social sciences.

The church is a well-known institution. The church as an institution of society means to one person something very holy, to another, perhaps, only a building of wood or stone. For one it may hold all of hope and aspiration or it may hold all one's friendships and love, one's very heart and soul, to weep over or to enjoy, while to another it may only be an inanimate thing even lacking in form, color, design and
beauty. However, it means something to everyone in a nation such as the United States of America, born through the travail of peoples seeking religious freedom and economic security.

This nation was founded by people interested primarily in religious freedom; freedom to build churches for worship of God in whatever manner desired and freedom to think and plan divine service in the manner preferred.

The first amendment to the Constitution of the United States provides, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," and the Constitution also declares, "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." Yet in the minds of the Pilgrims who left England to find a place where they might worship as they chose, in the thinking of the good men who constructed the Constitution of the United States, and who worded the first amendment to the Constitution, there was ever and always a true interpretation of religious freedom as "the freedom to choose form, place, and type of religion." Thus, as stated before, this country was established from its inception and for all time upon a religious foundation.

The philosophy of the country has developed as a religious philosophy. In the minds of Jew, Catholic and Protestant, there have been developed ideals based on love of
God and love of neighbor. Most of the institutions of this country have developed with this basic philosophy. The Constitution as well as the first amendment seems to presuppose a "religious" foundation for this nation. It is gratifying that it reads "religious freedom."

In Florence Fitch's book, *One God, The Ways We Worship Him*, the history of religion for three great religious sects is traced to the same source, namely, the Old Testament, which is the history of the Hebrew peoples. It was the basis for the earliest testaments in Greek and Latin. The whole Bible was translated into Latin later because Latin was used and still is used in the Catholic Church.

An English priest, John Wycliffe, began the translating into English. Johann Gutenberg discovered how to print. It is interesting to note that the first book printed was the Latin Bible. About one hundred years later the first English New Testament was printed and after another fifty years the Bible was printed in English.  

Today the Bible is the world's best seller for over thirty million copies are sold, and the Bible has been taken into every country by Christians. The Christians have developed the habit of regarding the Bible as entirely their own, and they are always surprised when they realize that the

---

1 Florence M. Fitch, *One God, The Ways We Worship Him*. 
Old Testament has always belonged to the Hebrews, and the belief in one God belongs to Catholic, Protestant and Jew and that the Christian Bible has its origin in Hebrew philosophy, Hebrew history and the early Hebrew religion.

Since religion is an institution and investigation in a scientific manner has been a continuous process for many years, there are interesting and absorbing historical writings on religion, theology and the church, which are reviewed and evaluated in a scientific manner by great scholars. The Higher Criticism is an objective study and comparison of old letters, traditions, writings, relics, inscriptions and tombs and an attempt at evaluation.

Society is dynamic and because there is constant change and movement it is most difficult to study its composition and development in a scientific and objective manner.

Science is defined by some as the technique of derived knowledge from any type of phenomena in the universe and the application of derived knowledge for purpose of prediction or control.

Quoting from Social Institutions¹-

Religion is a social process describing man's struggle to bring the universe within his comprehension. Religion gave him a set of working hypotheses, the basis for action when he lacked the necessary material for effective adjustment to his total environment.

Again quoting, "Religion is a process of adjustment

¹ L. V. Ballard, Social Institutions, p. 416.
to the intangible, unseen, unknown, and uncontrolled forces present in social situations.¹

By participating in religious ceremonies and symbols, religion has been lived rather than thought out. Patrick describes religion as the psychology of relaxation.² As the organized church was unknown before the Christian era, religion served the Greeks and other early groups by making them feel at home in the world.³

L. L. Bernard in *Fields and Methods of Sociology* describes religion as man's belief concerning beings and power, conceived of as superior to man upon which he is considered dependent, plus human activities growing out of his belief.⁴ One more definition of religion taken from the New Universal Dictionary describes it as system of faith or worship; "church" as a building for divine worship or a collective body of Christians.⁵

There are various definitions for religion varying from the worship of nature, and finding God in his surroundings, of the Greek, to various stages evolving into monotheism, the worship of one Supreme Being. In the *New Indexed Bible* we find the word defined as follows:

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¹ L. V. Ballard, *Social Institutions*, p. 193
² Ibid., pp. 85-86
³ Ibid., p. 444.
Religion consists in the revelation of the will of God and is a constant guide to follow as to whatever one is persuaded He would desire: to dispatch the work He has assigned us in life; and to promote His teachings for the happiness of man-kind.¹

This would seem to limit religion to Christian religion but in this treatise, there is no intent to limit religion in any way. However, as the theme develops, Christian religion will be the climax of the development inasmuch as the drama presented, His Masterpiece, is an expression not only of religion but of Christian religion explicitly.

The word religion is sometimes used as synonymous with sect, but in a practical sense it is generally considered as the same with Godliness or life dedicated to the worship and fear of God. Its foundation rests in the existence of God.

The World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 14,² brings out the hopelessness of defining religion because religion has been so universal - in all ages and in all lands literature on the subject of religion has been prolific. The marvel of religion is its universality and its multiple forms and details. Religion is therefore man's acceptance of the existence of Supreme and Supernatural Beings, usually Gods who are worshipped by the believer.

¹ John A. Dickson Publishing Co., New Indexed Bible - under word Religion.

Reviewing the vast number of definitions, the sum total of all seems to be contained in the following:

Religion is the expression of man's emotional response to his environment and his inner spiritual reaching or striving for expression of his spiritual search for God. Church is also expression of spiritual striving for God through forms, ceremonies, rituals, while indeed all are dramas.

Drama, on the other hand, is the vehicle of expression of man's response to his environment and expression of his inner spiritual seeking for God.

Thus religion and drama are closely allied, and who can say which has been more dominant in man's response to the basic urge of his emotions.
Chapter II

Drama - Man's Response to His Environment

Sociology is the Social Science which deals with society, its composition and development.¹

Institution, culturalized, more or less standard-ized, is a set of habits and associated attitudes and ideas centering around primary or derived wants or needs of individual such as survival, sustenance, sex, child bearing and child rearing, community protection, transmission of culture, etc.

As man has struggled to bring his universe within his comprehension, religion has given him a set of working hypotheses.²

Religion is the process of adjustment to the intangible, unseen, unknown and uncontrolled forces believed to be present in the social situation. Religion has made a principle of "the imitations of God" but there is also a process continually going on in human life, "the imitation of man."

The true extent of the imitation process was not appreciated until our own age because only now do we realize that it is not only a conscious but an unconscious process.³

¹ Kimball Young, Sociology, p. 442.
² L. V. Ballard, Social Institutions, p. 416.
³ Joshua Loth Lubman, Peace of Mind, p. 193.
"The object of all ceremonies is to bring down the spirits from above, to adjust relations. The whole may seem blessings from Heaven."¹

Religions were drama or ceremonies enacted out to bring down the blessings of God. The Greek drama originated in the worship of Bacchus (pagan God for productiveness of nature), "a mixture of sex and nature in production of new life following apparent death."

The Theory of the Drama² by Allardyce Nicoll states that the drama is at once the most peculiar and the most enthralling of all types of literature. He describes Aristotle's (384 BC) method of tragedy and epic as analytical; Horace's method (Roman 65 BC) as dogmatic, not facts. He quoted from Coleridge (early English), The True State - "illusion is the thing on which the stage depends and it consists not in minds judging trees to be a forest but in the remission of judgment that trees are not a forest."

Bernard Shaw, however, states, "I am not governed by principles - I am inspired, how or why I cannot explain, but inspiration it must be for it comes to me without any reference to my own ends or interest."³ Drama is the way of expressing ideas about life in such a manner as to render

¹ T. E. Carpenter, Comparative Religion, pp 150-151.
² Allardyce Nicoll, The Theory of Drama, pp.1-35
³ Ibid.
that expression capable of interpretation by actors. Drama is an art, and work of artists must have its conventions.

Action may be revealed through language or symbolism. Religious thought from Homer to the age of Alexander has been expressed as man's attitude toward the Divine, directly expressed in liturgy, in ritual observance, in prayers, hymns and temple services.

Drama was employed as an expression of religious fervor at the ancient festival of All Saints called the Anthesteria. During such services the Athenian household entertained the ghosts of their dead. To the Greek ear, theologian meant a poet who sang of the world's beginning and the birth of the Gods and laid claim to Divine inspiration of the Muses. The Greek mysteries beginning in 600 BC were dramatic expression of religious thought. Through Greek, Roman, early Christian, Medieval and early English up to our present civilization, drama has been employed for the expression of religion and religious ceremonies.

Quoting from religious drama by Alfred Bates, he declares that "between ancient and modern drama there is a great gulf, historical and moral."

We have several definitions for drama such as "The highest expression of art by the English material mind."

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Richard T. Moulton describes Religious Drama as **dramatic monologue**, and gives as examples — Proverbs 1:20-33, Wisdom's cry of warning, Solomon's Search for Wisdom, Dramatic Prophesy, dramatic scenes of panic, epic and lyric as Book of Ruth and Songs of Solomon.

The *New Century Dictionary* defines drama as a composition in prose or verse presenting in dialogue a story of life or character, especially one to be acted on the stage, also any series of events having dramatic interest and leading up to a crowning issue. It would appear from this definition of drama that its meaning has been changing with the passing of time, and is no longer restricted to religious service. Because of the degeneration of the drama during the Dark Ages, the religious flavor had been lost. Indeed, at the present time, "drama" does not signify religion unless so specified.

Drama is a story told in such a way that it must be acted out by living players to have its desired effect. Primitive drama is found in the dances of many savage tribes and in the play of little children who pretend to be somebody else; but drama as we know it today is an adult art which originated in religious ceremonies of ancient Greece, and was presented by priests and celebrants in order to make the service more vivid to spectators. Greek drama in the Fifth century B. C. had reached a high state of importance in Athens.

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1 Richard T. Moulton, *Literary Story of the Bible*, pp. 207-244.

2 *New Century Dictionary*

The Greek Drama originated in the worship of Bacchus. The Roman empire indulged in Pagan morality plays. Christian Dramas were preserved in monasteries and were sanctioned by the church. Later the clergy sought to control the mystery plays. In the Middle Ages pageants, miracle plays and legends of states were dramatized but at times had little to do with scriptural stories. Christmas plays in England were performed by pupils in the schools. Gradually allegorical drama grew up into real living drama which draws its material from active human life.¹

All history points to the fact that drama originated in religion and religion expressed itself in dramatic presentation. Throughout the history of primitive people and indeed up until the present day, religion and drama are so closely allied that it is often difficult to distinguish between them. Every church has its own form of dramatic religion expressed in its symbols, sacraments, ceremonies, music, hymns, rituals or formal dramatic presentations. No one can disallow the close association of the two as they have marched hand in hand down through the ages.

Religion seems to be born with man inasmuch as it is an expression of his emotions; while drama is one of the vehicles whereby man expresses his religion. Thus drama appears to be the response of man to his environment.

Chapter III

RELIGION AND DRAMA DEVELOPMENT
INTO CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Religion is virtually universal. Religions are historically connected and have influenced one another which is revealed through historical research. It would seem that the history of religions is truly a general history of society and is not a history of any particular religions. It is a process of development which has produced gradually and the development can be ascertained and traced by investigations.

John F. Hurst in a short history of the early church says "The visible church consists of the organized believers of Christ and the followers of His Life." General history reveals the recognition of the constant presence of a superintending Providence which is over all, in all, and everything in life is a symbol. The rise and fall of nations is not an idle play of human passions.

Christian religion was first marked by simplicity of forms and was practiced in the temple of Jerusalem until hostility of certain races drove the Christians into private homes. Christianity was a social revolution. As it triumphed the field was broadened, there was territorial expansion and the whole of social life changed. Happy households sprang up

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1. John F. Hurst, Short History of the Early Church, p. 128.
in the wake of Christianity's spread. At times there was much opposition. In 306 AD Constantine declared himself a Christian and thus hastened the progress of Christianity. There were disputes as to doctrines but the evolution of the Christian church was quite rapid. After the darkness of the Middle Ages came the reformation and the power of the church to purify itself is the greatest proof of Divine origin and the clearest prophesy of its certain conquest of the world.\(^1\) The philosophy of Christianity was revolutionary as it presented the transformation love makes in human life and in society.

In John 13:34 Jesus gives his disciples a new Commandment, "That ye love one another." He also explains that the first commandment is to love God and the second is like unto it, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Other commandments are "Pray without ceasing," "Quench not the Spirit," and "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

In James 1:27, there is a definition of religion which is expressive of modern Christian philosophy of the present, as "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." Thus the Christian religion appears not to be too easy of fulfillment.

In Matthew 11:29, Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon

\(^1\) John F. Hurst, Short History of the Early Church, p. 128.
you and learn of me." In Corinthians 14:12 there is the ad-
monition to be "zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may
excel to the edifying of the Church." There are also great
promises: John 14:14, "If ye shall ask anything in my name
I will give it thee." John 15: 7 to 9, "If ye abide in me and
my words abide in you ye shall ask what ye will and it shall
be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that you
bear much fruit. So shall you be my disciples. As the
Father loved me so have I loved you; continue ye in my love."

In all the Gospels many miracles are described,
such as the miraculous draught of fishes, the feeding of the
five thousand, the miracle of the water changed to wine and
many parables such as the Lost Sheep, The Prodigal Son and
the Barren Fig Tree. Someone has pointed out that we have
many miracles all about us. In a summer vineyard, with its
rich harvest, there is the yearly miracle of the water
changed to wine, and in the harvest of grain there is the
repetition of the feeding of the multitudes and always there
is the miracle of life and death. Only man-kind seems blind
and deaf to the great mysteries hinted by the Christ who
said, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth,
give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither
let it be afraid."

Nothing lends itself more to drama than the early
history of the Christian Church. The martyrdom of the early
Christians was the greatest expression of drama. Christ's miracles, parables, laws, pictures of social situations and personal contact with society were the greatest and most pronounced drama of all times.

There is much of Church history available but very little regarding contemporary "Religious Drama." In considering the church we are faced with the church as a social institution, the church as a group of people worshipping together and the Christian church as a development of religious thought, belief and experiences.

We are told by Henry S. Nash in *History of Higher Criticism* that it should be remembered that religion preceded the church. He states that the Christian Church developed in different sections of the world due to the preaching of the evangelists, the testimony to the world of the Apostles as to Christ's philosophy and religious teaching and the desire of human beings to worship together.

From Christian religion to the foundation of the church was but a normal step. The development of church government is an interesting study but is of no importance to this thesis on religious drama.

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Chapter IV
SURVEY

While pursuing the study of Sociology in its various institutions, one is impressed with the fact that the changes in the church have been more complete than in any other institution, probably, excepting the family and education, although not so apparent to the average member of society.

Although the "Faith and Tenets of the Church" have changed little due to the basic written historic plans of all creeds and denominations of religions, the Christian religion with its pattern derived from the "Book of Life" (Bible) is fundamentally unchanging, even though the methods of teaching and preaching vary with passing generations.

Francis E. Merrill in Social Problems on the Home Front points out that attitudes of society toward the church and some other institutions are so imbedded into social ideology that society is not aware of the changes that have taken place.

These reactions take the form of an emotional denial that any significant modification has taken place thus these institutions live in symbolic form in the minds of the average citizen, a form he finds satisfactory for his emotional needs and his adjustment to the world as it is.1

Thus we see that the basis of most religions remains the same

1 Francis E. Merrill, Social Problems on the Home Front, pp. 11-12.
but the manner of worship and the attitudes of society change; naturally it is necessary at times to check up on church and religion in its present progress.

Research is described by Bernard as orderly observation on the basis of which it is possible to do discriminating thinking with reference to specific problems.¹

We made a study of 152 churches to determine as far as possible the attitude of the various churches to the value of religious drama as a resource of the church, the extent of its use in the modern church, and if possible to obtain some information regarding the causes of its disuse as a part of religious services.

Two hundred questionnaires were distributed to the churches of Omaha, Nebraska, Council Bluffs, Iowa, Sioux City, Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa, St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota, Idaho Falls, Idaho, and Monrovia, California.

In Omaha, Nebraska, 125 questionnaires were sent to churches of every denomination without knowledge of creed or race or color in an attempt to get a picture of the attitude toward "Religious Drama" and its employment as a resource of the church, in as objective a manner as possible. Of the 125 distributed, 102 were answered and were useful in this study.

Council Bluffs, Iowa, was circularized in the same manner. Of the 30 churches contacted, 26 replied, one merely stating the leadership of the church was changing and the

present pastor did not wish to make any report upon any church situation at the time.

Of the 125 questionnaires sent to Omaha pastors, 19 were distinctly objective in that they were written responses with no personal contact; however, 93 churches were contacted by questionnaires and also by personal interviews.

Of the 102 Omaha churches responding only 10 had associate or assistant pastors and 12 had religious education directors. Only 19 churches reported that they have one play or more of one hour duration. The groups interested in actual play production numbered from three to two hundred people with an average of thirty-five in each group. The personnel of these groups consisted of children, youths and adults. The plays were drama, pageantry, music and various combinations of the three. The entire personnel consisted of 1369 actors distributed among forty interested churches.

Of this group of 102 churches there were only 10 who reported no active interest in religious drama. Forty reported that they had no leadership whatever to meet the need of education and dramatics. Of the other 82 who reported some leadership, 25 would like better training for leadership for this type of work. All but 10 of the entire group of 102 churches stated that they would be interested in a training course of religious drama, for play direction and for training in costuming, make-up and scenery designing. At least 35 of the leading churches would like a religious drama course in the University of Omaha, and 15 outstanding leaders
would like consideration of a request for a workshop for religious drama in the Omaha University and ask that such a request be entered with the Dean of the School of Adult Education.

The membership of these 102 churches was reported as 46,358, making an average per church of 464.5. The seating capacity of this group of churches was reported as 25,835 with an average of 260 per church. However, a number of churches are reported in progress of building to meet the need for comfortable seating for their growing membership. There is a wide variety in the number of members per church starting with a small membership of thirty-five in a Lutheran Chapel and ascending to a membership of five thousand. Eight churches reported a membership of over one thousand, one of which had a membership of five thousand, one with a membership over two thousand and another two thousand three hundred.

The interest in religious drama was almost universal and the ministers reported that not only was there spiritual value in such a program but also educational, social and physical value. There were only a few (fifteen churches) who did not feel this way and these by the way were among small churches of the less widely known denominations. It would, therefore, seem that the appreciation of religious drama as a resource of the church is almost unanimously acknowledged.

The survey was developed quite extensively in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Nine of the responses were most objective in the form of written replies. Seventeen of the
churches were contacted a second time with a request that they send in their questionnaires, but this second request brought but two additional responses; therefore, personal contact was made with seventeen churches. This third request led to quite a discussion of religious drama. It was surprising to note that only two were unable to see the spiritual value of a religious drama program. In Council Bluffs it was found that there were only two associate or assistant pastors and three directors of religious education employed in church work.

These twenty-six churches had presented fourteen plays during the year and but seven plays of this number were of a length to be called a drama such as one hour or more. There were two hundred eighty-five people who participated in these plays, making an average of 11.1 persons per play. Only nine had regular organized departments and sixteen reported that they had leadership. Of the sixteen all but two would like more extensive training courses for their dramatic leaders. Twenty-four of the twenty-six were definitely interested in religious drama; in fact, only one reported that they had no interest and only one reported they could see very little value in such a program. Nineteen desired further information regarding the results of the survey and the possibility of training in this field. There were six outstanding churches that suggested a "workshop" at the University or a request for a course in religious dramatic training, training for leadership, training
in costuming, stage, scenery, designing and make-up.

The membership of twenty-five churches in Council Bluffs (one did not report their membership or seating capacity) was 11,444, or an average of 278.6 members per church. The seating capacity for the twenty-five churches who reported was 8860 with an average of 221.5 persons.

There was much enthusiasm among the ministers of Council Bluffs regarding religious drama and the definite appreciation of the spiritual, mental and recreational value of a religious drama program. One church was particularly enthusiastic and has gone far in original dramatic presentation. Their minister has recently come to America from Liverpool, England, is well versed in Biblical history and has had extensive dramatic training and develops his own dramatic interpretations of the books of the Bible - such books as lend themselves to drama.

Questionnaires were sent to St. Louis, Missouri, St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota, Idaho Falls, Idaho, Monrovia, California, Sioux City and Des Moines, Iowa. Only a small number were distributed in these cities and the replies indicated somewhat the same results as the larger surveys of Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Omaha, Nebraska, indicating namely an unexpected and extensive interest in religious drama as a resource of the church. Also they were interested in further consultation regarding religious drama and in the results of the survey, and there was no dissenting voice regarding the spiritual value of such a program.
From St. Louis the replies were from about average churches regarding organizations and membership. Two of the churches have assistant pastors. Four of the seven reported they have educational directors and the seven churches have presented thirty dramatic offerings during the year, nineteen of which have been over one hour in length. Eight hundred forty people have participated making an average of one hundred twenty people per presentation. Only three of the seven noted that they have a regular organized dramatic department in their church, with trained dramatic leadership in five. The interest in this resource of the church was unanimous and all seven were enthusiastic regarding the spiritual value of such a program. There were 12,930 members in these seven churches, an average of 1,847, with a seating capacity of 6,800, an average of 971 persons.

The twin cities in Minnesota also indicated that the churches reporting were large. Four of the six reporting had assistant pastors, six had directors of religious education and five indicated that they had produced plays during the year. The dramatic presentation included seven plays of more than one hour in duration and in these dramatic presentations there were 825 participants. None of these reported they had a specially organized dramatic department but five indicated they had trained dramatic leadership. The interest in religious drama was universal in the six churches and combined membership was 8,100 which would be an average of 1,350 per church. The seating capacity of these six
large churches was 7,750 and average of 1,292. All of these churches reported they recognized spiritual, intellectual and physical value in religious drama. They also indicated their interest in further expansion along this line.

Two other Iowa towns were surveyed. In Sioux City four churches reported and the same number reported in Des Moines, Iowa. Their reports were similar in several ways. Both cities reported universal interest in religious drama and their appreciation of the spiritual value of religious drama and more extensive training and expansion in this line of work. In the Sioux City churches reporting there were no assistant pastors and two directors of religious education while in Des Moines there were three assistant pastors and two directors of religious drama. There were six religious dramas presented in these eight churches in Iowa. In Sioux City fifty-five people participated. In Des Moines twenty-five participated. In the Sioux City churches there were two well organized dramatic departments and in Des Moines one. In Sioux City four churches reported qualified leadership and in Des Moines two churches. The membership of the four Sioux City churches was 3,901 or an average of 975 members. In Des Moines the four churches reported a membership of 4,790 with an average of 1,198. The seating capacity of the four churches in Sioux City was reported as 1,850 or an average of 463 while Des Moines reported for the same number 3,166 or an average of 792.

Two far Western cities reported. The report from
one city was on four churches with a membership of 1,155, an average of 289, with seating capacity of 1,210, an average of 303. One church had given four dramatic productions during the past year, two of which were over one hour in length. At the time four churches had an organized dramatic department definitely and two of them had trained dramatic leadership. Only one was not interested in religious drama altho this one recognized and expressed the spiritual value of such a program, depending on the leadership.

In Monrovia, California, suburb of Los Angeles, two churches reported membership of 1,515 between them, one 415 members and the other 1100, with a seating capacity of 700 and 550 respectively. Both churches reported a definite interest in religious drama and a recognition of a spiritual value of such a program. One reported an assistant pastor.
### Chart 1

**NUMBER OF CHURCHES HAVING ORGANIZED DRAMA DEPARTMENT AND TRAINED LEADERSHIP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of City</th>
<th>No. of Churches</th>
<th>Organized Drama Dept.</th>
<th>Dept. %</th>
<th>Trained Dramatic Leadership %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omaha, Nebraska</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Bluffs, Ia.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines, Ia.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux City, Ia.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57 1/7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monrovia, Calif.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho Falls, Idaho</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16 2/3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>152</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>113</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart indicates that in Omaha of the churches surveyed only 14 or 14% have organized drama departments while 80 churches or 80% have trained leadership in education and drama. Ninety percent of these churches desire trained leadership and better training for leaders.

It also reveals that in Council Bluffs, Iowa, 9 or 36% have organized drama departments while 16 or 64% have trained leadership in education and drama. All desire better leadership and better training.
Chart II reveals interest of churches in better dramatic training and also shows the value of social, educational and physical benefits from religious drama, with special emphasis on the spiritual values.

Of the 152 churches, with total membership of 89,888, 137 or 92% are interested in religious drama as a resource of the church; 148 or 93% recognize the value of religious drama as a social, educational, physical and spiritual resource of the church; 140 or 95% of the number of churches desire further and better dramatic training.
**Chart II**

NUMBER OF CHURCHES INTERESTED IN RELIGIOUS DRAMA

See Value
Spiritual Value
Desire Better Dramatic Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of City</th>
<th>No. of Churches</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Interested in Religious Drama</th>
<th>Recognize Value</th>
<th>Recognize Spiritual Worth</th>
<th>Desire Further &amp; Better Dramatic Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omaha, Nebr.</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>46,358</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Bluffs, Iowa</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11,444</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines, Ia.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4,790</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux City, Ia.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,901</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12,930</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monrovia, Cal.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,515</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho Falls, Idaho</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul and Minneapolis,</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>152</strong></td>
<td><strong>89,288</strong></td>
<td><strong>137</strong></td>
<td><strong>148</strong></td>
<td><strong>148</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart III indicates that:

- 96½% of the churches were interested in religious drama.
- 70% were interested in better trained leadership.
- 80½% complained of lack of leadership.
- 82½% complained of weak, tawdry plays.\# 
- 96½% were interested in more effective religious drama.
- 41% were interested in original religious drama.
- 69½% were interested in training in techniques of dramatic production.
- 60½% were interested in techniques of make-up.
- 54½% were interested in costuming.
- 57½% were interested in scenery and stage settings.
- 17½% were interested in special course in religious drama.
- 9% were interested in special drama workshop at Omaha University.

The premises of this thesis which are:

1. Religious drama is a resource of the church, and
2. Lack of worthwhile dramatic material for church production,

seem to be borne out by the results of these recorded interviews.

\# Check of various catalogues of plays and dramas reveals this lack of good dramatic material for church use, as attested to by various church groups.
Chart III

INTERVIEWS AND FURTHER CONTACTS
WITH 100 OMAHA, 25 COUNCIL BLUFFS, 4 SIOUX CITY AND 11 ST. LOUIS CHURCHES REGARDING SPECIAL INTERESTS OF CHURCH GROUPS IN RELIGIOUS DRAMA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Omaha, Nebr.</th>
<th>Council Bluffs, Iowa</th>
<th>Sioux City, Iowa</th>
<th>St. Louis, Missouri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100 churches</td>
<td>25 churches</td>
<td>4 churches</td>
<td>11 churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Religious Drama</td>
<td>100 100%</td>
<td>24 96%</td>
<td>4 100%</td>
<td>10 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Better Trained Leadership</td>
<td>76 76%</td>
<td>16 64%</td>
<td>2 50%</td>
<td>10 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complained of Lack of Leadership</td>
<td>86 86%</td>
<td>16 64%</td>
<td>4 100%</td>
<td>8 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complained of Weak, Tawdry Plays</td>
<td>65 65%</td>
<td>16 64%</td>
<td>4 100%</td>
<td>11 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in More Effective Religious Drama</td>
<td>91 91%</td>
<td>24 96%</td>
<td>4 100%</td>
<td>11 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Original Religious Drama</td>
<td>5 5%</td>
<td>3 12%</td>
<td>3 75%</td>
<td>8 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Training in Techniques of Dramatic Production</td>
<td>48 48%</td>
<td>14 56%</td>
<td>3 75%</td>
<td>11 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on next page)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest in Techniques of Make-up</th>
<th>Omaha, Nebr. 100 churches</th>
<th>Council Bluffs, Iowa 25 churches</th>
<th>Sioux City, Iowa 4 churches</th>
<th>St. Louis, Missouri 11 churches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Costuming</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Scenery and Stage Settings</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested in Special Course at Omaha University in Religious Drama</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested in Drama Special Workshop at Omaha University</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart IV

INDIVIDUAL AND CHURCH DEVELOPMENT REPORTED BY 100 OMAHA CHURCHES AS RESULT OF PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development in:</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as result of participating in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biblical drama</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biblical Literature</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Work</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1287</td>
<td>1287</td>
<td>1287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background and Stage Settings</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Growth</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costumes</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total to benefit</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>2429</td>
<td>2296</td>
<td>2935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were about 125 churches contacted 100 reporting.

# Physical development resulted from training in walking, bowing and other dramatic exercises, gesturing and talking.
Chart V

**INDIVIDUAL AND CHURCH DEVELOPMENT REPORTED BY 25 COUNCIL BLUFFS CHURCHES AS RESULT OF PERSONAL INTERVIEWS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development in:</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as result of participating in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biblical drama</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biblical Literature</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Work</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background and Stage Settings</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Growth</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costumes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total to benefit</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>1237</td>
<td>1049</td>
<td>1620</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Charts IV and V show that the social influence was most far reaching in terms of number benefitted.
ANALYSIS OF DATA OBTAINED FROM PERSONAL LETTERS CONCERNING RELIGIOUS DRAMA AS A RESOURCE OF THE CHURCH

14 or 80% reveal need for good plays.

14 or 80% need for original dramas.

19 or 95% spoke of church interest as important.

All but 2 or 90% spoke of Biblical and religious message.

All but 2 or 90% spoke of personal satisfaction.

12 or 60% spoke of necessity for technical skills.

16 or 90% spoke of Leadership

18 or 90% deemed "belief in truth necessary to good leadership."

19 or 95% believed in enthusiasm of leaders.

17 or 94% believed understanding as quality of good leadership.

14 or 80% believed leader should practice Christian living.

10 or 50% spoke of cooperation as benefit of Biblical drama, including church members, church officials and leaders.

15 or 75% noted spiritual growth as result of dramatics.

17 or 85% mentioned spiritual growth of leadership.

14 or 70% mentioned individual growth.

15 or 75% mentioned growth of church membership.

13 or 65% noted educational growth.

13 or 65% noted educational growth in leaders.

14 or 70% noted educational growth in individuals.

14 or 70% noted educational growth in church members.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Interest</th>
<th>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</th>
<th>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biblical truths</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual truths</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal satisfaction</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical skills</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe in truth</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live it (practice)</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cast</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church officials</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church leaders</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual growth</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational growth</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social growth</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church membership</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To sum up the results of the survey, the recognition of the spiritual value of religious drama is almost unanimous with only a small group of twelve churches, who were not interested in religious drama, nor recognized the value of such a program. The other one hundred forty-seven represented in the survey were definitely interested in religious drama, recognizing its mental, spiritual and physical value, and the vast majority of these churches indicated an eagerness for more training in such a program. At least thirty-five of the churches in Omaha and Council Bluffs desire a training program in the form of a workshop in the Omaha University or a training course for dramatic training and ask that the request be presented for a training program in the Adult Education Department for such training.

It is also a matter noted with interest, but probably without any definite significance, that the first churches to respond in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Omaha, Nebraska, to the questionnaire were of the Episcopal faith. The questionnaire was sent to Catholic, Protestant and Jewish Churches.

Many ministers related their experiences with religious drama, most of them being well-versed in the history of drama and in its uses. One newcomer to Omaha described a religious gathering in another larger city to which a crowd of 1,500 people came on a stormy day to witness a beautiful religious drama. He emphasized especially the
interest in the dramatic, and in the religious - when the combination is spiritual.

The ministers say they have had spiritual benefits in their various congregations through the presentation of the religious message in drama, pageantry and song, and the combination of these.

In summary we found the following:

The survey revealed the interest of the churches in religious drama:

1. 137 of 152 churches are interested in religious drama.
2. 148 of 152 churches recognize spiritual values in religious drama.
3. 140 of 152 churches wish more adequate training in religious drama.
4. Only 34 of 152 churches have organized dramatic departments.
5. 113 of 152 churches have trained leadership which includes assistant pastors and educational directors.

The interviews revealed:

1. 138 of 141 churches are interested in religious drama.
2. 96 of 141 churches complained of cheap, tawdry dramatic material.
3. 125 of 141 churches desire better dramatic material.
4. 19 of 141 churches are interested in original religious drama.
5. 35 of 141 churches are interested in training on university level.

These facts seem to bear out original premises that religious drama is resource of the church and that there is a dearth of tangible means of expression and need for trained leadership.
Chapter V

PLAY MAKING, DIRECTOR, SCENERY, LIGHTING,
MUSIC, MAKE-UP, COSTUMES AND CUSTOMS,
AND COOPERATION OF PASTOR AND CHURCH GOVERNING BOARDS

PLAY MAKING:

The first essential of drama as a resource of the modern church is a play which has worth, with religious or spiritual teachings; which is interesting and absorbing to the audience. Hennequin, in The Art of Play Writing, in Chapter 15, explains what constitutes a play:

A drama is a unified story of human life acted out on the stage in a series of motivated incidents, so arranged as to excite the greatest amount of interest and pleasure in the spectator, by means of novelty, variety, contrast, suspense, surprise, climax, humor and pathos.

In a religious drama all this is necessary but in addition there must be a strong religious or moral motivation which is unobtrusively projected throughout the story to the audience. This would indicate that the first essential of the drama, as a part of church worship, is a wise choice of a religious story, to be dramatized.

In William Archer's book, Play Making, is a statement that the art of theatrical story telling is necessarily interesting to the audience to whom the story is to be told.²

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¹ Alfred Hennequin, The Art of Play Writing, p. 23
² William Archer, Play Making, p. 13
The public constitutes the theatre and it is the work of the
dramatist to present the theme he wishes, but in a manner
comprehensible to the public.

Skelton says the subject of the play is important
but the actors must be real flesh and blood. It is there-
fore essential that the proper people be chosen to impersonate
the characters in the play. Some directors are adept in this
type of work. One who is accustomed to dealing with people
and has some understanding of human nature is able to cast a
play in a fairly creditable manner.

DIRECTOR:

In The Actor's Handbook by Carolyn Silverthorne she
quotes from Coquelin's What is Acting: "The two beings who
coeexist within the mind of the actor are inseparable, but
the master of the two, the Seer must be Number One. He is
the Soul, the other the body."  

Lord Byron: "Those who'd make others feel most,
must feel themselves." Actors must make a thorough study of
their part, study the soul of the character, for the soul
creates the body, not the body the soul. To create the spirit
of the play within the actors, the director has the important
role. The director must allow the actor to present his own
interpretation, yet he must also work for balance and unity
in his play, and must never permit one character to over-
weigh or underweigh his play.

1 William Archer, Play Making, p. 15
2 Carolyn Silverthorne, The Actor's Handbook XII
In religious drama much is required of the director; he must be a good dramatist, expressive in interpretation, have an understanding of people and a keen appreciation of color and line in scenery and costumes; above all he must be consecrated to the service of Christ, a person of vision, of faith and of love. In church service a person may be found with few of these requisites. In the service of Christ and the church, through consecration and divine guidance a spiritual growth is possible and partially trained persons oft-times develop into truly great leaders.

SCENERY:

In Crow's book, *Play Writing for Profit*, he explains craftsmanship. Further he says, "The wise, study conditions in which the works are to be performed." Consider the public and the system of distribution.

In *The World Book Encyclopedia* there is somewhat the same opinion expressed in "The form of the theatre has much to do in the form of the play written." The English theatre developed with little scenery, only bare platform. The Italian architect Pladdio built a semi-circular theatre in Vicenza in 1580 and set painted scenery at the three doors and back of the stage. From that developed the modern theatre. Indigo Jones of England went to Italy in the early 17th Century and brought scenery back to England. At about

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1 Edwin Crow, *Play Writing for Profit*, p. 20
the same time it reached France. The shape of the theatre
changed and the style of the play was changed. 1

In religious drama the scenery and lighting are
vitally important. However, it is not difficult scenery,
yet much depends on the ability of someone in the church
group who is able to paint and put the sets together.

The Philia players of Sioux City, Iowa, made forms
and blocked off scenery that could be used and set up quickly
on many church platforms. The scenery was in blocks in order
that it might be clamped together in sections. This also
made it adjustable to the size and shape of any of the
churches visited by this traveling company. 2

From Allen Gould Richardson, 2 Director of Dramatics,
St. Louis, Missouri, we have his description of scenery used
by them in a presentation last Christmas:

We have a very poor stage to work on as you can
probably tell from the pictures. It is really just
a platform in the dining room of the church, but we
are fortunate in having an excellent scene painter.
He is a member of the church and one of the best
commercial artists in St. Louis. Our setting for
the first act was quite beautiful. We have two doors
at the back of the stage, one leading into the
boiler room and the other a closet. These we con-
verted into windows, with railings and starlit sky
behind. Then with our four Ionic columns, curtains
and lighted seven-candle-candalabras, we had quite
an effective stage. The second act we did with a

1 W. F. Quarrie The World Book Encyclopedia p. 2024
2 C. Loyd Shubert, Drama Serves the Church, p. 58
3 Allen Gould Richardson - letter January 1948
on Scenery.
cheese cloth curtain upon which was painted the barn and the roofs of the city on either side, seen over a low wall to right and left of the barn. As the shepherds and wise men approached we brought up the lights behind the cheese cloth curtain revealing Mary and Joseph and the Angels. The third act was the mountain scene with a big tree on stage left. We hung painted leaves and moss on wires in front and behind the trunk to give a third dimension effect and had a pathway coming down between the rocks.

LIGHTING:

Lighting is also an important part of church dramatization. Someone should be chosen who is familiar with electricity and the mysterious possibilities of color and lighting effects. In most churches there is someone who is familiar with electricity and who has a little training on lighting effects. Foot lights, spot lights and overhead lighting will not only add beauty and fascination to the production but reality as well.

MUSIC:

Music is an essential part of the present day play. It not only adds beauty but it helps to create the proper setting for a play, effects the emotional response of the audience and often fills an awkward wait or pause in a production. In The World's Sweetest Love Story, a play often produced by the Philia Players of Sioux City, music covered the pause between scenes and acts. Because of the beauty of the music and a slight changing of the lights, scenes were set without the drawing of curtains.

A survey was made of the audience and with the
exception of one or two people who had been observing the
play for technical reasons no one had noticed the slight
shifting of scenery.

In Christmas and Easter plays, music is especially
effective. In the recent survey, regarding religious drama,
there were few religious dramas produced without the help of
music and oft-times the choir and the organist all shared
with the players in the productions.

MAKE-UP:

A good make-up committee is essential to religious
drama, inasmuch as the majority of Hebrew men were dark-
skinned and wore beards. The crepe hair for beards can be
bought at any costumer or drug store and cut into proper
lengths, fluffed out and applied with colodium solution for
attaching it to the face or can also be purchased easily at
any costumers and in many shades of grey, brown, red, blonde
and white.

The beards are of various types. Some are the close
Van Dyke type, many are the full face types, and others are the
side-burn type. These different types of beards should be
studied on the faces appearing in pictures of Biblical charac-
ters. Great care should be exercised in the color and the
placing of this hair, and in the trimming of the beards.
Alcohol or some solution with alcohol is used for the re-
moval of beards and it must be carefully handled with no
excessive use of either solution. Do not attempt to remove
colorings or beards with water.
Extra eyebrows and changed hair lines are sometimes effective and can be produced with this crepe hair. The faces of both men and women must be carefully protected with an under-coating of theatrical cream or some other base cream for protection and softening of the face. This cream under-coat also makes for ease in removing make-up.

Coloring, shadows and lines on the face can produce most any characterization desired. Training here is also required. All shades of flesh, reds, tans and blues and all other colors in stick paints can be purchased at any costumers or theatrical supply house. When there is an under-coating of cold cream applied it is not difficult to remove the coloring.

COSTUMING:

Equally as important as scenery is costuming. We know that Coquelin states in The Art of Acting, "That the actor can feel and yet control his feelings; that he must create life and express it in a beautiful artistic form." It seems that proper costuming assists the actor materially in feeling his part. In some magical way the costuming and the make-up help him transform his bodily appearance into a strange and new character. In some psychological manner this works upon his emotional nature, helping him conceive the feelings and actions of the character he emulates.

Many good directions are given for costuming. They can be made of cheap material such as cheese cloth, and developed as the Philia Players developed them from poor, flimsy cheese cloth to costumes of velvet, silk and cloth-of-gold.
With proper lighting and correct cutting, the garments in the cheaper goods often take on strange beauty to the audience.

The great masters in Art have portrayed characters in hundreds of masterpieces, copies of which are obtainable on religious calendars, illustrated Bibles or illustrations by Tissot, obtainable from the Tissot Picture Society, c/o The American Bible House, New York City.

Edward Robinson in His Bible Dictionary says,

The chief garments of the Hebrews were the tunic or inner garment, and the mantle or outer garment. The tunic was of cotton or linen and worn close to the body. It had wide and open sleeves and often when worn with a mantle had not sleeves at all. With a male it reached a little below the knees and with the female it was long and graceful. The upper garment or mantle was in contrasting colors, two or three yards in length or breadth which was wrapped around the body and tied over the shoulders. Between these two garments the Hebrews sometimes wore a third — a long and wide robe without sleeves.

Veils were articles of women's dress. Women wore a variety of plain and ornamental head dress. It will be found, however, that if the mantle is made of striped material or two types of material sewed together and made as a long flat garment with butterfly sleeves and an open front, bound around the waist with a girdle or cord, the actor will be much more at ease and the effect will be the same as a loosely tied garment.

Sandals are worn by both men and women and are easily made with flat bedroom slippers or ballet slippers, wrapped around and around with narrow banding of various colors. The Biblical costumes should be colorful and attractive.
The Greek costumes are often in white and light colors, consisting of loose flowing garments, full length for the women and short for the men, handed around the middle with wide girdles of gold or silver bands, narrow and high, a few inches above the waist.

The head dress consists usually of a simple band of silver or gold; the Greek costume must be soft and flowing with grace and beauty of line.

This study of clothing in early civilizations expands the educational as well as the social understanding of early peoples. The mores and habits of the people are often displayed in their dress and manners.

This would encourage educational and cultural enlightenment.

CUSTOMS:

It is necessary that the customs of the people be studied. There are several different bows and salutations used by the Greek and Hebrew people.

1. The most acceptable one and the one most universally used is the Salaam. This is a graceful bow. Most often both hands are raised above the head and the whole body, with extended hands, moves gracefully from the waist in a deep graceful bow before the person greeted. There are many ramifications of this. Sometimes just one arm is extended above the head, sometimes the person bows a short distance. Sometimes one kneels and Salaams to the floor (much depends on the agility of the actor).
2. Although the deep low Salaam from the waist is most often used, a close second is the salutation which is almost an embrace: The placing of hands on each other's shoulders and then the touching of cheeks follows, first one side and then the other (somewhat similar to the kissing of the Frenchmen). This embrace was used a great deal among Biblical people as a greeting.

3. A greeting which seems to have great significance is to place the hand on one's own head, one's own lips and one's own heart, in quick succession, then while the hand remains on the heart, one bows. The interpretation for this is "with my lips I greet you, with my mind I pay you respect and with my heart I pay you homage or tender affection, or love," as the case may be.

4. There is also the deep bow of the slave to his master.

5. There is the kneeling position extending one's self flat upon the ground in abject obeisance.

6. There is the dropping on one knee or the other and the bow.

   In the matter of eating, dried grapes and figs, raisins, fresh fruit, nuts and small cookies are served as refreshments somewhat as we serve hors d'oeuvres. These are served in brass, silver or glassware in bowls or flat dishes. They may be served to guests, standing, or if a table is provided, the guests may lounge on cushions on the floor. The meal is served on a flat low stool or on the floor.
In the study of customs, such as are revealed in entertainment, serving meals and refreshments, setting tables, chairs and rugs, there is again a revelation of the social life and its effect upon peoples.

The study of such peoples in their natural habitat is most revealing and one's education is furthered in a most pleasant and often unsuspected manner.

COOPERATION OF PASTOR AND CHURCH GOVERNING BOARDS:

There are few books presenting religious drama for enactment by groups and each one carries some direction for stage setting, costumes and customs. Another requisite to the success of religious drama in any church is the recognition by the pastor and the church of religious drama as a definite feature of Christian service and worship and the formation, if possible, of a dramatic committee who with the pastor will give full cooperation, financial help, religious guidance, instruction and interpretation of spiritual growth and development.

Quote from Mr. Richardson's letter:

One thing that your play did was to give us official approval of the Board of Religious Education. They asked us to form a committee and we are now authorized to make "drama" an actual part of church life. We had our first meeting Sunday night and met with quite a bit of enthusiasm. I am in hopes we can approach the popularity of the Philia group in Sioux City (when you were Director of Religious Drama) and maybe get a stage that is a stage.¹

¹ Allen Richardson - letter in re Religious Drama in Congregational Church of Webster Grove, Missouri.
This Chapter on Playmaking reveals the social extent of religious drama as a resource of the church.

There is vast and extensive social possibilities apparent in need for cooperation of pastor, governing boards and various agencies of the church.

A few of the group activities have been mentioned in this chapter such as director, committees on selecting type of drama or story, cast, committees on designing and care of costumes, make-up and dressing room committees, lighting experts, music departments of church, scenery and stage settings and management, and use of church property and church care.

In addition to all these there must always be the research committee on form, customs, diction and truth of material used.

Above all else, there must be the spiritual advisor and the prayer circles who aid in the spiritual preparation of casts before presentation of such a work of religious consecration. Thus we see that the social, educational and the spiritual developments are vital parts of the religious drama.

The pastors have complained that there is a dearth of good religious drama, stating that so much is "cheap, tawdry and without meaning or religious value."

For this reason the play centering around the life of St. Luke is presented, inasmuch as he was a great leader, a profound scholar, an educated and a talented man.
Although wealthy and learned, he consecrated his life to Christ's teaching and philosophy.

It is to be noted that the great leaders in Bible history lend themselves to dramatic presentation, all of which contributes to the educational, social and spiritual development of society.
Chapter VI

LEADERSHIP

In writing religious drama to be used as a part of church worship, it is essential to find a personality great enough to command the respect and esteem of religious groups. It is also advisable to seek a personality, who, through actual history, is embellished by traditional folk-lore and commands the highest esteem; a person who has traveled much and who has experienced much in the way of social contact; one whom glamour surrounds because of education and great achievement; one whom mystery and beauty enhance, and one whom his own contemporaries follow with absorbing interest, with which interest extends on beyond his own era of history into the vastness of time and future ages.

It would seem that such a leader as St. Luke, the evangelist, would be a good choice for dramatic presentation inasmuch as his writings are considered those of a pre-eminently intellectual and artistic gentleman with faith and vision. Quotations from various sources are presented to establish the fact that he was an evangelist, a widely educated leader, an intellectual scholar, a practicing physician as well as an artist who is credited with painting the "Madonna and Her Child." His writing of the Third Gospel of the Christian Bible reveals his love for Jesus and the
Christian philosophy, his human understanding of the
strength and frailties, his appreciation of the artistic
and dramatic and his awe and worship of the greatest Per-
sonality in the history of mankind: Jesus Christ.

The Illustrated Commentary On The Gospel of Luke
by the Rev. Lyman Abbott, published in 1878, states:

That he was a physician and therefore presum-
ably a person of education and culture and that he
was a friend and almost constant companion of St.
Paul in his missionary travels. An ecclesiastical
tradition represents Luke as a painter. Nothing
is known of his death.

Cambridge Bible For Scholars and Colleges pub-
lished in 1936 by H. K. Luce: "Luke shares Paul's interest
in Gentile Christians, in his religious teachings and his
emphasis on prayer, cheerfulness and on the Holy Spirit."2
"Joy" is one of his favorite words. He tells a story well
displaying dramatic contrast, vivid character, dramatic
value of suspense and interest. There is what is called a
domestic tone about his writings and he seems at home when
speaking of family life.3

Lonsdale Ragg has an interesting reference to Luke
in early Christian art.4 The International Critical Com-
mentary by Plummer:

1 Lyman Abbott, Illustrated Commentary On The
Gospel of Luke, p. 10
2 H. K. Luce, Cambridge Bible for Scholars and
Colleges, p. 7.
3 Ibid
4 Ibid
The legend which makes Luke a painter is much more ancient than is sometimes represented. Nicephorus Callistines (HEIL-43) in the 14th century is by no means the earliest authority for it. Omitting Simeon Metaphrates (AD 1100) as doubtful, the Menology of the Emperor Basil II drawn up AD 980 represents St. Luke as painting the portrait of the Virgin. The oldest witness is Theodorus Lector, reader in the Church of Constantinople in the 6th century who says that the Empress Eudoxia found at Jerusalem a picture of the Madonna painted by Luke the Apostle and sent it to Constantinople as a present for her daughter Pulcheria, wife of Theodosius II. In 1204 this picture was brought to Vienna.

At the Church of St. Maria Maggiera in Rome in the Capella Paolina is a very ancient picture of the Virgin ascribed to St. Luke. It can be traced back to AD 847 and may be much older. The legend has strong element of truth. It points to the great influence which Luke has had upon our Christian art, of which in a real sense he may be called the founder.

From a research standpoint the Gospel of Luke has value because his sources were (1) from eye-witnesses and ministers, (2) information, oral and documentary.

In Christ and His Companions by Wm. J. Bryan:

Demosthenes taught orators how to arrange arguments and build their climaxes. Plato has his admirers who discussed dialogue, and there were Greek masters in architecture, history and drama but the light of all these stars combined in a single ray is nothing compared to the light shed by Luke and his contemporaries.

The Story of Religions by Charles Potter, published in 1929: Luke enriches Christian religion with the childhood stories of Jesus. His colorful account includes

1 Plummer, international Critical Commentary p.31
2 Wm. J. Bryan, Christ and His Companions, p.14
3 Charles F. Potter, The Story of Religion, p.213
narratives of angelic Annunciation to Mary, her visit to Elizabeth, her Virgin motherhood, the beautiful stories of angels and shepherds, presentation of baby Jesus in the temple when Simeon prophesied the child's marvelous future.

St. Luke, His Life, Character and Teachings, published in 1917 by McVeigh Harrison:

Luke was very human, a Gentile, a Greek who possessed the soul of a painter. One of the pictures of the Blessed Virgin attributed to him is certainly very ancient. Apart from this the marvelous word pictures drawn in his gospel have been the inspiration for painters and they prove Luke's artistic genius.1

The New Indexed Bible, published in 1934, calls attention to Colossians 4:14: "Luke the beloved physician, and Demas greet you."

Luke the evangelist was not of Jewish but of Gentile descent. According to Eusebius he was born at Antioch in Syria. The date and place of his death are not known. He was the trusted companion of St. Paul, the author of the Gospel of Luke and of the Acts of the Apostles. As an educated physician he would have an intelligent appreciation of the miracles of Jesus as having to do with sickness and physical disabilities. His scholarship is also indicated by the classical style he employs especially at the beginning of his Gospel and in the closing section of the Acts. The learned manner in which he treats various subjects in Acts is also a testimony to his scholarship. From the prologue of his Gospel which reads (1) For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order, a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, (2) Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye witnesses and ministers of the word, (3) It seemed good to me also, having had perfect

1 McVeigh Harrison, St. Luke, His Life, Character and Teachings, pp. 1-10.
understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, (4) That thou mightiest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

In Luke's Gospel the Perfect Humanity appears in Jesus, universality of Christ and Universal nature of the Gospel to that characterization of Greek who was a man of ancient world, a man who could fraternize with all races.¹

Physician (to heal and repair) explained in the same text as follows: The Israelites brought some knowledge of medicine with them from Egypt whose physicians were celebrated in all antiquity.² Magi (in eastern empires, Media, Persia, Babylonia and Assyria) the priests were called Magi as were the wise men. They acted as king's advisors and thus occupied a position, high in the state. In Persia they performed sacred rites. Magi were the only ones who could interpret past or future events; well versed regarding Jesus and received intimations of coming Messiah as they are found in Ruth at the birth of Jesus coming from East to worship. (Daniel 1:20, 2:24, 5:11 and Chapter 9, Verses 24 through 26.³

Acts is a book of a strictly historical nature. There is no question about its authorship as the introductory statement establishes the fact that Luke was the

¹ The New Indexed Bible, pub. by John A. Dickson Co. p. 27.
² Ibid p. 27
³ Ibid l. 129
author. That Luke witnessed the majority of events recorded is strongly suggested by the subject matter.

Cambridge Bible for Scholars and Colleges by H. K. Luce:


He has a special tenderness for the religious outcast, the poor and the sinful. There is what is called a domestic tone about his writing. He seems at home when speaking of family life and has no hesitation in allowing women to play a full part in history.¹

Studies in Medieval Painting by B. Berenson

published in 1930:

The conclusion that the Kahn and Hamilton Madonnas are early Greek masterpieces dating probably just before Latin conquest of Constantinople. In Constantinople the art of painting must have flourished as nowhere else. Until great Venetian Betrayal of 1204 Constantinople was the Metropolis of European and Asiatic civilization. By 1200 painting all over Europe was Constantinopolitan. Color so gorgeous, so radiant is never seen in Western paintings of earlier middle ages. One can almost test wealth of medieval nations by quality of gold on their panel painting. Every detail of these paintings leads back to Constantinople.²

It is believed these may be early paintings of Madonnas which disappeared from Constantinople.

¹ H. K. Luce, Cambridge Bible for Scholars and Colleges, p. 7.

² B. Berenson, Studies in Medieval Painting
Artists who portrayed religious subjects were imbued with the Spirit and even the crudest of these early efforts are impressive in their evident sincerity. In "The Great Coronation" altar piece by Giovanni Alemayna and Antonio Vavarini in Venus Academy, the evangelists are seated at the foot of the Throne, St. John and St. Mark at left facing St. Matthew and St. Luke, are at right. Luke has a closed book surmounted by a Gothic picture frame upon his knee. The Gothic picture refers to an old legend or tradition that St. Luke was an artist and actually painted the Blessed Virgin and the gentle Apostle became Patron Saint of the "surgeons and painters" who both belonged to the same guild, the emblem of which is the Easel and Brush.

Arthur DeBles, How to Distinguish the Saints in Art, p. 58.
Chapter VII

SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF DRAMA
AND PARTIAL REVIEW OF CARR'S BOOK SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Situational Analysis\(^1\) by Lowell Juilliard Carr seems to be an entirely new and revolutionary method of sociological study. It is based upon the assumption that the primary task of the study of sociology is to develop scientific attitudes rather than simply to provide information.

The primary purpose of the text is to make sociological analysis functional to the study of sociology. The author first defines scientific method. Every science is at once an attitude, a body of knowledge and a way of finding out. No body of knowledge can be any more dependable than the method by which it has been obtained. Scientific method, then, is a set of scientific ideas and practices designed to reveal the ideas, forms, structure, functions, and changes of certain highly selected phenomena, and to determine relationships of problem-phenomena with conditioning variables.

There are difficulties such as (1) one's self and (2) confusing hurly-burly of problem phenomena. Problem Phenomena consists of some abstracted aspect of human behavior. For scientific purpose situational analysis has three objectives: 1. - to break down any situation into its

\(^1\) Lowell Juilliard Carr, Situational Analysis
component elements and processes. 2. - to determine and measure the relationship among problem phenomena, the situation, and its conditioning variables. 3. - to discover laws, i.e. (a) invariant uniformities of co-existing relations (b) invariant uniformities of successions or phases and trends. There is great difficulty in studying growth patterns, focalized patterns of groups of people due to the fact that society is dynamic and time changes so quickly and materially these patterns.

The first task is to break down a fictitious situation into its component structures or into its focalized pattern and relations. The author states that there are three advantages in studying situations that are purely fictitious and she finds great advantage in the study of drama for the following reasons: (1) being fictitious the situation has already been isolated, simplified, organized and defined by the author; (2) such a situation occurs in a "closed universe", a system of cause and effect as has been isolated by conventions of the story of stage from the ongoing processes of actual society; (3) (and perhaps the most important) a fictitious situation can be examined and re-examined at leisure. In real life "time marches on" and one situation follows another with confusing rapidity.

A novel or a play presents us with a kind of glass enclosed model of social process. The author presents a behavior cycle which is a tool of analysis which is used over and over again. In the application of the behavior cycle to
a play or drama, there is a revelation of "three kinds of factors which condition the situation:" (1) people in patterns of relationships, (2) culture, (3) forces and objects of the physical world."

The drama herewith presented as an illustration lends itself to situational analysis because the given situation is a complex of human relations providing a problem situation with the life and teachings of Christ as the dominant focus of interest and the challenge of the Pharisees to the authenticity of His teachings. Another great problem is the acceptance of His "Divine Origin" and third is his presentation of a new pattern of brotherly love in the place of the old law, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

The life situation in the drama "His Masterpiece" of the focal character St. Luke, who allied himself with Christ and His philosophy, is one of tragedy which is understood by the audience. His relationship to the immediate situation is one entirely out of line with his life situation inasmuch as his master is at the very pinnacle of success and acclamation as a King yet he already understands that tragedy is developing. The focal character in his behavior cycle faces an unusually difficult adjustment, accepting Christ's philosophy. He realized the problems and antagonism involved in attempting to change the philosophy of those about him to conform to the new and startling philosophy of his master.

The people are as the people of the world today,
of various races, cultures and nationalities. They differ in physical appearance and in their attitudes toward education, religions, social and physical situations. The very proof that the focal character in the drama "His Masterpiece" faced the situation and overcame the situation is evident in the spread of Christ's philosophy throughout the then known world, and the continuation of it in the present day world; also the acceptance of Christ's statement that He was of Divine origin.

This new presentation of situational analysis conducted in the drama "His Masterpiece" is presented as an additional basis for the inclusion of religious drama in the field of Sociology. The first basis for including religious drama in the field of Sociology is its relationship to the church, as a recognized resource of the church.

Scientific analysis of religious drama from an analytical basis may be used to teach Christian principles, character studies, leadership, social graces as well as ethics and law. Thus a Biblical drama may be studied in a scientific manner to broaden the understanding of the individual or group. Such a study would improve the knowledge of religious principles, of Christian leadership, of Christian philosophy, and would no doubt encourage application of such knowledge to daily living.

This development of thought would lead to knowledge of spiritual truths. It would not be too much to expect that such understanding would lead to better social, educational and religious development and relationships.
Chapter VIII
Drama as a Means of Expression
Of Art, Music and Leisure-Time Activities

There seems to be a relationship between "recreation expressed in drama" and "religion as expressed in drama." Both are described as intangible attitudes. In George D. Butler's book, Introduction to Community Recreation, he describes recreation as an attitude or spirit which finds expression in various forms of activity bringing richness and beauty in living to children, youths and adults.¹ He states further that

the love of beauty like craving for emotional experience underlies many forms of recreation such as beauty of landscapes, gardens, works of art, poetry, stage designs, grace and rhythm of dance, beauty of pageantry and expression of religious aspirations in pageantry story and pantomime.²

It would seem that the more one delves into ancient history (in other words the more thorough the research process) the more one is convinced that religion and drama, from the beginning of time, have been the expression of man's emotions and have thus been intimately associated.

Recreation includes all the beautiful skills, crafts, and hobbies that human beings can practice. It is stated that there is no country today where so many people are listening to music, practicing the arts and engaging in musical composition.

² Ibid. p. 201
It is apparent to all that drama like music and dancing, is a part of people's lives, and belongs to them to the extent they employ it in their leisure hours. "In reviewing history it is apparent that drama is closely associated with man and his emotions and is a deep-rooted instinct and it is gratifying to note there is renewed interest in amateur drama throughout the country." It is suggested that an outdoor theatre be constructed which would be simple in construction, with only a fence of hedge to enclose it and turf for a stage where it is necessary.1

Many have seen the open air theatre in Griffith Park in Los Angeles, the bandshell in Zoological Park in Toledo, Ohio. Another open air theatre equally attractive in this part of the country is the outdoor theatre at Yankton College, Yankton, South Dakota. Beautiful effects are produced where there are wooded backgrounds, paths with small trees for wings, shrubs, etc.

The most famous presentation of drama in outdoor setting is the Passion Play presented every ten years in the little Bavarian village of Oberammergau. Since 1633 in gratefulness to God for deliverance from a plague, the inhabitants vowed to present the passion play of Christ's crucifixion on an outdoor stage with nature for background and sky as a canopy. This is regarded primarily as a religious exercise, lasts eight hours, presented every Sunday in summer, and has

become a mystery play of great beauty. The Freiburg players of Switzerland have imitated the Oberammergau performance. Both have sent traveling companies to the United States in later years.

Mr. Butler speaks of the importance of leadership. This emphasis on leadership was a point made by all the churches contacted in the recent survey of religious drama explained in a previous chapter.

As for art, the development of color, form and beauty are a necessary part of religious drama. Much depends on the picture which is produced, by the cooperation of the stage manager, lighting experts, costumers, make-up people and general stage settings. If these reach a high degree of artistic beauty, the success of the play is usually foreordained. It is said that the great paintings of the world have often been of religious subjects. There are numerous paintings of the Madonna, famous among which are the Kahn and Hamilton Madonnas reported to be Greek masterpieces, dating just before the Latin conquest of Constantinople.

Mr. B. Barenson describes the Kahn Panel "Our lady sits somewhat sideways, child rests on her left arm."

In the Hamilton collection the Virgin faces right exactly as in the Kahn but sits to the left instead of the right. Every detail of these paintings leads back to Constantine and resembles the Mosaics of Palerma, Delphi and Kiew. There are a few copies of these beautiful paintings displayed in this article. It is suggested that they be used

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1 George D. Butler, *Introduction to Community Recreation*
as subjects for costuming and for Biblical drama.

As for music, it has proven to be a most important adjunct of religious drama in that it provides a setting of musical background and often acts as a cloak for disquieting or disturbing elements of intermission or stage rearrangement.

Music is also vitally important to the emotional response of any audience. By the use of a good drama, artistic settings and costuming, beautiful music is of the utmost importance and encourages expression of emotion in the actor and an outlet for emotions in the audience.

It would seem from this description that the church would have every reason to make use of religious drama as a fit vehicle of expression of society's emotions in leisure-time activities with music and art contributing their share of beauty to the finished production. The church should not overlook drama as a resource.
Chapter IX

SUMMARY

This is an attempt to summarize the data contained in this thesis. The question may well be posed, "which came first, religion or drama?" but it would seem religion was born with mankind, and in learning to express his emotions (his seeking after God) drama was developed as a means of such expression (response to environment). In this study, man's complexity of heredity and environment was accentuated inasmuch as religion and drama appear as intricately inter-mingled as does the very nature of man and his response to his environment. As in all studies of mankind, there is always and ever a reappearance of these basic psychological and sociological elements in structure of society.

History of drama and history of religion have been so closely allied, each having contributed greatly to the other, and for this reason it is hard to know where one begins or the other leaves off. It is interesting and surprising to note that the Christian religion comprises only 28% of world's population and yet the command was "to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded." With almost 72% of the world's population untouched by the Christian religion, the church might well take stock of
itself. Especially is this true, when it is revealed so clearly how the first "church" organized originally by Christians, worked day and night, facing dreadful hardships and death to evangelize the then known world; "passed on to Briton, eastward to Antioch, west to China, India, Africa, Rome and Germany."

There was an attempt to show in this treatise how religion and drama progressed into the early Christian church and that drama is an essential part and basis of the church, worship and religion.

In Chapter Four the survey of churches was reported and it is evident from this scientific approach to the problem that religious drama is regarded as a resource of the church. As some ministers reported in a truly literal sense, the drama has a place in every ritual, liturgy, sacrament and service of the church.

Also the drama, as a set form of entertainment and religious teaching is considered a resource of the church by practically every church, in every community contacted, in the small church and the large church, the wealthy and the poor church, in the well-organized and departmentalized church of the large city as well as the semi-rural church. All leaders recognize the formal drama as an asset of the church, but the majority contacted, even though they have an organized department for dramatic presentation, feel need for better trained leadership in this field.

There is a need expressed for more and better
religious drama. Too often the church play is short, ineffective, inartistic and merely presented because, as some ministers said, "It is Christmas and the Sunday School expects to be in a play." Much more serious thought should be given to the "type of drama" selected.

This brings up the question how and where can such drama be secured. One way is to write them. The Bible stories are "drama" in themselves, with little necessary but "costumes" and "consecrated study" and, of course, combined with serious leadership.

The great amount of work involved in a good production is endless. The "techniques" in Chapter Five of this thesis were presented mainly as assistance and encouragement to any wishing help in this line of work. But also they were presented to reveal the great scope of the drama, the extensive planning, training and work involved in religious drama.

Does this not merely point the way to further resources in the Church? The educational and social values of religious drama appear to be myriad. To begin it is well to consider the committees of real live people necessary to choose, direct, costume and stage a play, and the close communion of such groups. Sioux City pastors were strongly influenced in their dramatic efforts because of this element of association of various groups of all ages and talents. Even the seemingly untalented love the drama and find satisfaction in working in make-up, lighting, costuming, etc.

Religious drama opens vast vistas of service and
association, according to all results which in turn bring rich rewards of spiritual and social life back into the parent church.

"Leadership" or Christian leadership, presented in Chapter Six, reveals one of the greatest writers and leaders of his day - a Greek, rich and influential, with not one talent but many - the gift of word painting, art as we know it today, and the healing of the sick. What better training for young people than to study such leadership and to delve into history and learn all the unrevealed truths about the life and professions of the early Christian leaders. How often has society been led to believe that only the poor and ignorant followed Christ; that "men in high places" also were ardent in worship and tribute is indicated in this research on life of Luke.

The drama, "His Masterpiece" is prayerfully and humbly submitted as an illustration of what can be done. This drama is but a simple attempt of an ordinary mind seeking religious expression. But it is well known fact that there is much real talent which would find satisfaction in achievement in this field so little known or so little explored by the literary. If this thesis encourages one or two of talent to devote time and energy to this blessed service of the Master and His church, it will not have been written in vain. The real mission of the thesis will be accomplished in encouraging others to write in this field.¹ The consensus among

¹ C. Loyd Shubert, Drama Serves the Church, p.23
church leaders indicates not only is there need for drama in the religious field, but there is room for vast improvement in the quality of drama and also in the extension of its use in leisure-time activities. The children's field alone, offers great incentive to more prolific writing. Even in the field of radio and screen entertainment there is a dearth of material for children's use and entertainment.

One of the surprising books on Sociology is Mr. Carr's *Situational Analysis*, referred to in Chapter Seven of this thesis. If there were no other reason for writing this manuscript, it would be reason enough to measure scientifically the background, the problems and the response of society to its problems; as outlined in Mr. Carr's book. The medium for this study is the drama which presents the closed episode which portrays life and which can be viewed objectively and at leisure. Not one quick look which life really allows the sociological scientist, but the opportunity to study over and over again the pattern of behavior made possible because the situation is adaptable to analysis. Because it is a kind of glass-encased model of social process that can be run over and over again in slow motion. A very amateurish attempt has been made to analyze "His Masterpiece" by application of Mr. Carr's measuring stick for "fictitious situations" but there is much room for the reader or the really trained sociological scientist to further analyze and estimate social behavior of

1 C. Loyd Shubert, *Drama Serves the Church*, p. 36
various groups of society as portrayed in various roles and relationships in this play.

The sum of the whole matter seems to be an acknowledgment of drama as a resource of the church, and an almost unanimous agreement among the people contacted, on its usefulness. There is expressed the great need for leadership in the church; and trained leadership in religious drama. Like all social and scientific groups, any leaders of church as well as other social institutions are looking to the universities for training of such leaders.

In closing this thesis, there seems but one appropriate finis: Christ's own words, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."
- HIS -

- MASTERPIECE -

A BIBLICAL DRAMA
A story of Luke, following the gospel story and tradition. Tradition has it that Luke was a great physician, a learned scholar, and a great painter. To his credit is placed the first picture of the Madonna. As we gaze upon Luke's Masterpiece, let us see it prayerfully, but through the eyes of the Twentieth Century, remembering that although his Masterpiece was of the First century, and not comparable to the Twentieth century conception of art, it was VIEWED THROUGH THE EYES OF THE FIRST CENTURY, and was THE MASTERPIECE of his day.
HIS MASTERPIECE -- Synopsis of Play by Acts.

Act I
In the Courtyard or Garden of the rich Greek Cleopas, the Magi from the Orient are received as guests. Lucanus, the son of Cleopas, studying to be a physician but by nature an artist, is permitted to accompany the Magi as they go on to Jerusalem. Daphne, a little crippled sister, urges Luke to make a picture of the King for her.

Act II
The Roman soldiers discuss the taxation and the crowds in the village. The Angels visit the shepherds and they go to the village to seek the new born King. The Wise Men come and bring their gifts, and all wonder at the bright guiding star. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, sings the "Virgin's Lullaby." Luke consecrates his life to the Christ.

Act III
About thirty years later. A company of Greeks seek Jesus. Daphne, the crippled sister of Luke, is healed by the Master. The Greeks listen to the voice of Jesus and all are convinced that He is the son of God. Luke consecrates his life to the service of Jesus, and to the task of completing his picture.

Act IV
Home of Cleopas in Bethany. Jesus has made his triumphal entry. The Greeks are rejoicing in his triumph. The Wise Men and the shepherds have gathered in the home of Cleopas for a reunion and to celebrate the "Crowning of Jesus as King." Luke presents his great masterpiece, the picture of the nativity, and thinks his life work is done, but is reminded by Gasper that his work is just begun. Luke resolves to go on and follow the Master forever.

Solo: "The Birthday of the King."

Cast of Characters:

Lucanus or Luke
Cleopas (father of Luke)
Ophelia (mother of Luke)
Daphne (sister of Luke)
Hermas (brother of Luke)
Shepherds: 6 or more
Titus (a Roman soldier)
Julius (a Roman soldier)
Joseph (Mary's husband)
Mary (Mary's husband)
Baby
Angels: 10 or 12 girls and boys

Philip
Apolo
Greeks: 4 or 6 men or women
THE VOICE "Voice of Jesus"
Director
Wise Men from the East
Belthaser, Gasper
Musicians
Costumers
Stage Director
Wardrobe mistress
Make-up staff
Costumes

Greeks
Romans
Israelites
Standard Reference
Pictures of Artists
Pictures in Bibles and
Bible book

Customs

Research in Greek, Hebrew,
Persian, Egyptian,
Indian history and
traditional writing.

Stage Settings

Research in fields of
stage settings, scenery
and furniture.

Bible History and history of early Christian times gives

Tradition gives Luke credit for creating the first painting
of the Madonna and Child.
ACT 1

HIS MASTERPIECE:

This should be a Greek setting. Room or courtyard of home with Ionic column and as elaborate as can be contrived. It is a home of wealth and culture. It is the home of Luke (Lucanus) in Antioch of Syria. Lucanus was Greek student of great learning, and his father was well versed in language and knowledge of his times. When play opens, Lucanus is a boy about 15 or 16 years old. His father and his crippled sister, Daphne, are all in the room, variously occupied. The father and son are interested in stars. Have some kind of telescope or star gazing machine visible. They are studying the stars as the play opens.

LUCANUS: See, Father, that one bright star! A star of a brightness and size that we have never beheld before. Have you ever in your life seen a star of such brilliance?

CLEOPAS: Nay, my son, but let us look into the books and see if we can discern its meaning or origin. Let us look at the record made by the first Magi, long years before our fathers settled in Syria, or the Chaldeans had such wisdom. (Looks in book or scroll and reads:) "One of the greatest of these star-gazers, these wise men, was called Boer and his father was Balaam, and such an one makes prophesy thus: 'There shall a star come out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel.'"

LUCANUS: (doubtfully and somewhat amused) But Father, the Hebrews are in bondage, the House of Jacob and their descendants are under Roman rule, and if we know King Herod, there shall no star ever shine among that captive people.

CLEOPAS: My son, there is but one thing to do. Let us
compose ourselves until my friend Gaspar of Greece arrives here. He is coming with some friends to visit and rest. Gaspar has studied the stars from his youth up, and he will be able to answer all your questions. The time for his arrival is at hand, and if I mistake not, your mother is greeting them now. (Enter three wise men, and Ophelia.) (Gaspar of Greece greets Cleopas as an old friend).

CLEOPAS: Greetings, friend Gaspar.

GASPAR: My friends, Cleopas, Melchoir from India and Belthasar from Egypt.

CLEOPAS: Peace be with thee and welcome (salutations) Ophelia. You see that our guests are served, if it pleases thee! My son, Gaspar, see my son Lucanus and my little girl. She is the light of our home.

(Ophelia, accompanied by servant, serves dry grapes, raisins or nuts, or small crackers or cookies. Conversation continues.)

GASPAR: We have come a long way and it is good to be with friends. Friend Ophelia, you are true to Greek tradition; as time increases so doth thy charm. The little one is she no better?

OPHELIA: Thanks, my friend. It is indeed good to welcome our countryman back again. It has been long since we have seen thee. Our little one is happy, but yet she cannot ever walk.

CLEOPAS: Now tell us, good Gaspar, of your journey here and how you should choose Antioch for a stopping place. My son Lucanus is overcome with curiosity and I myself have a burning desire to hear all that you three have encountered.
GASPAR: I shall tell some of the tale but my friends will help me with the narrative, as it is a long one. To go back to the beginning of our journey. We started out because of the stars. The stars are the thoughts of the Eternal One, as we will agree. (Men nod) and MELCHIOR continues: We have all seen that bright star, and our tale would never have been but for it. The unrest at the present time portends something of great moment. The Greeks, Gaspar has just been telling us, have new teachers who say that Truth is not, and that the wise men of our day are those who spend much time discovering and exposing lies that have been believed by the peoples of the past. But the Stars, as revealed by our ancient Magi, tell us that the time will come when we shall see the brightness of a light, a light more brilliant than the sun, a light that has never been seen on land or sea.

BELTHASAR: Indeed that it true. Look in our own records of the past and read the prophecy of the Avesta, my son.

LUCANUS: (reads as directed) "In that day Sosiosh, the Victorious, shall arise out of the number of the prophets in the east country. Around him shall shine a mighty brightness, and he shall make life everlasting, incorruptible and immortal, and the dead shall rise again." Think you that could be true?

CLEOPAS: Yea, my son. More than five centuries ago, Daniel, the mighty searcher of dreams, the counsellor of Kings, brought a vision to Belshasser. And Daniel revealed to the king his vision: "Behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought
him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and
 glory, and a kingdom, and all people, nations and languages
 should serve him." CLEOPAS continued: "His dominion is ever-
 lasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom
 that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 1:13-14).

BELTHASAR: Thus was it foretold long ago.

GASPAR: The books of prophecy we have just re-read, but the
words are dim and hard to understand. But the stars, the stars
reveal the mystery of life from the beginning to the end. If
we could follow them perfectly nothing would be hidden from us.

LUCANUS: But how can we discern the meaning OF THE STAR, that
bright star?

MELCHOIR: The stars are the thoughts of the Eternal One. We
have all been studying the stars, and waiting for a sign.

BELTHASAR: The Star, my son, is the sign we have been watching
for.

MELCHOIR: In the early Spring of this year, we saw two great
Planets draw together in the sign of the Fish. The Fish is the
sign of the House of the Hebrews. We also saw a new star which
shown for one night and then disappeared. Did we not, my
brothers?

GASPAR & BELTHASAR: Yes, we did (nodding).

BELTHASAR: Again we saw two great planets meet and we immediate-
ly started our journey. Strange as it may seem, we all were
watching for the same sign, and we had planned to meet at Antioch.
Gaspar had notified you of our coming. If you look you will see
again the bright star we are following.
HIS MASTERPIECE:

LUCANUS: Yes, father, and I had been watching that star, wonder-dering at it, when you arrived. How far do you intend to follow it?

MELCHIOR: As far as it leads us, on ever on, until we find the King.

GASPAR: The promised One.

BELTHASAR: The Eternal One.

LUCANUS: Would you allow me to accompany you and see the rest of the journey? It would be a rare advantage to a young man. To be with such learned men, and on such a quest. May I not go with them, my father?

GASPAR: Allow him to go with us my dear Cleopas. It is a rare opportunity for education, as well as adventure. He will see a prophesy fulfilled. For we shall seek Him, who is born King of the Jews.

LUCANUS: But how will you find Him?

GASPAR: We shall go straight to King Herod in Jerusalem, and ask him about this new King of the Jews. He will surely know. And Jerusalem is certainly the place of his birth.

CLEOPAS: What manner of person shall you seek? How do you think this new King will look?

MELCHIOR: We shall expect him to look like a King.

BELTHASAR: I think he will be very young, possibly a baby, and that he will look like other babies only (far off dreamy look) his cradle shall be of finest gold, and his coverlet of softest down or ermine. His mother shall be a vision of radiance, as all new mothers are!
DAPHNE: A BABY KING! A BABY KING! I should so much like to see a baby King. But I can't imagine a king like that, soft and tiny like a baby. My brother, I do hope you can go! Remember I shall expect you to make a little picture of the Baby King, and bring it home to me, so we all can see him too, through your eyes. I should love a picture of a baby King.

MELCHIOR: I am sure the king will be an infant. Let us look farther back even than Daniel's prophesy. Let us search the records again. I myself looked up that prophesy of the Hebrew prophet, Isaiah. It reads: "Behold a son shall be born to a Virgin, and they shall call his name Immanuel: and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. He shall sit upon the throne of David and his kingdom shall last forever."

CLEOPAS: Everything points that way. It would seem to me that this is the time foretold and that the STAR is the key to the whole mystery. I would that I were younger that I might travel with you. But it is a long journey yet and I am a busy man. My son has always been a student, searching out the records of the past, and although we are training him for a Physician, his heart is in art, and drawing and colors. He is too idealistic, I fear. Mother, do you not think such a journey as this might benefit our son, our first-born, who is a dreamer of dreams?

OPHELIA: Yea, my Lord: yet I cannot look upon his dreams of
HIS MASTERPIECE:

art with aught but delight. Already his drawings are a delight and a marvel to me. If he goes, it will benefit him I am sure.

MELCHIOR: Allow him to go, friends. We shall promise him a safe return home as we must pass through Antioch to reach our own countries.

BELTHASAR: It will do him good; But think not, my lad, that the journey is an easy one. It will be hard and long, I have no doubt. Already I fear some have been discouraged and turned back. It is disheartening traveling alone, through long miles of barrenness and silence.

MELCHIOR: But there is a company of us now, and we must go on. We cannot tarry longer. On to Jerusalem is our motto now.

GASPAR: Yea, my brothers. "On to Jerusalem" without delay.

DAPHNE: I have always wanted to see Jerusalem. I suppose that is out of the question. I wonder if you will not draw pictures of its beautiful temple for me, Lucanus. I can never hope to go that far, but I do want to see their temple. My father says it is the most beautiful building he has ever seen since he left Greece. Wouldn't you like to see the inside of it? But Father says none but Jews can ever enter the temple.

LUCANUS: (Putting down vase and going to her and tenderly caressing her) Yes, little sister, I shall make you a picture of the temple, if I ever see it myself.

OPHELIA: I am so thankful for thy special gift, my son. Remember to make pictures of all the beauties of your journey
His Masterpiece:

For the eyes of thy sister and thy mother.

Lucanus: Father, if you let me go on this long journey, I promise thee I shall work diligently at my lessons. I shall do my best to honor thee in my profession. Although the painting and modeling interest me much more I shall do my best to be a learned physician if you will only allow this journey. Perhaps the stars will reveal some of the wonders of the future to me, but tell us, Gaspar, of your long journey from Greece. It is such a wonderful country, yet it is a very far country, is it not?

Gaspar: It is, indeed, a long way from here, lad. We have traveled fast and hard to keep up with the star, but ever it is before us. We still have much farther to go. Over the mountains and through beautiful valleys and in cities and among strange peoples, that has been our lot. But ever, I knew we should meet here in this wonderful city of Antioch. I knew we would see your father and his family and renew our valued friendship. You already know much about Greece for your father loves Greece and has told you much about it.

Lucanus: Yes, we have heard much about Greece, but there is so much one would know. But what of India, did you travel far, friend Melchoir?

Melchoir: Yea, Yea, a long way have I come. My journey has not been all through cities and pleasant places. Some of the way is desert and unmarked but the STAR was ever leading onward.
HIS MASTERPIECE:

DAPHNE: And you, Belthasar, did you travel much to reach here on time? It seems to me Egypt is a long way to come just to follow a STAR. Have you great doctors and men of medicine in Egypt?

BELTHASAR: Yea, little one, we have learned doctors, but I fear we have none that could heal your trouble. But you are so happy like a little bird, what more do you desire? If you had feet they might lead you into paths of wickedness. Now you are safe, in these bitter and troublous times, when it is hard for the young to make a straight path. I have come a long way and seen strange sights. Part of the way I came on a big boat. But it is a very different boat from those that come from Greece and Cyprus to Antioch. Some day you will know and see all these things. Until then you are so happy surrounded by love. I shall open my chest; before I depart, and mayhap I shall leave you a little gift from the land of the Nile. We shall be up and away in the morning before your eyes shall see light or your ears hear the first call of the birds.

GASPAR: Now we must all sleep, for we have a long journey before us and we know not what dangers await us on the road. We cannot delay longer, although we would enjoy staying in such pleasant company and further discussing our beloved country, Greece.

CLEOPAS: It is a pleasure to talk to such dear friends, but it is indeed true that you all need rest. The boy must be prepared for travel. But must you not await your other friends
MELCHIOR: What do you think has happened to the others?

GASPAR: I think discouragement has overtaken them (thoughtfully). All but Artaban of Echatana; I fear something has happened to him. He is a Persian and a very valiant man. He has also studied much and waited patiently for this sign of the King's coming. I cannot imagine what has delayed him. But we can wait no longer than the dawn for him. As Belthasar has said we must be up and away before the dawn of the new day. We shall take our leave now, so as not to disturb the household.

OPHELIA: Dost think we could let you, our guest, depart without our blessing, and our son, we must be up to wish him God-speed on this, his first adventure. Now we shall say "good-night" and wish you pleasant rest.

DAPHNE: Pleasant dreams. I know mine shall be about a baby King. But you will not fail to visit here on your return journey. And make your stay longer than this has been.

CLEOPAS: Insatiable youth! She can never hear enough of Greece from her mother or me. If you can tell her of the whole world she will certainly welcome your return, as we all will. Now adieu until dawn.

OPHELIA: One word more! Take care of our son. Remember he is but a youth in spite of his man's stature.

CLEOPAS: Yes, regard him as your own, for he is our treasure.
HIS MASTERPIECE:

DAPHNE: Some day brother Lucanus may discover that which will heal all diseases and shall raise me to health and strength. Farewell and peace be with you. (Greetings. Men go first, family kiss and salute each other as curtain falls).
HIS MASTERPIECE

ACT II

BETHLEHEM, the end of the journey. Street or courtyard with front of stable visible. Perhaps barn could show with a large front that would push back or removable curtain. Must be so manger and baby and mother will be visible with little effort.

JULIUS: (Roman Guard) How goes the enrollment, Titus?

TITUS: It is indeed tiresome and uninteresting here in Bethlehem. These poor Jews, how they hate us. We cannot help it that Herod reigns over them, and that he has seen fit to levy a new tax. Yet I wonder sometimes at their submissiveness.

JULIUS: I also; but from their conversation, it would seem that they are looking forth to the coming of a Deliverer, some Messiah, whom their prophets have foretold.

TITUS: Ah me! that reminds me of what we have been hearing in Rome. You have heard much of the philosopher, Plato. Well, he has written that Socrates said "We will wait for one, either God or God inspired to take away the darkness from our eyes and show us our religious duties." There is talk also that this "Promised One" shall come from these poor, miserable Jews.

JULIUS: It certainly would surprise Rome if anything like that should come to pass. Yet it does seem strange that Jews and Greeks and Romans are thinking about this prophet that is to come. It seems like the Greeks and the Jews are expecting the same Deliverer.

TITUS: It would be a shock to our King Herod if a Jew should supplant him. Well, it is not for us to have any
thoughts concerning the government. I shall be happy when this task is completed and we can return to Rome. I certainly hope no more people arrive here in Bethlehem for there is no more room here. Only tonight a poor Jew and his young wife came in and they could get no lodgings. They tried everywhere. I really felt some pity for them, they seemed so tired.

JULIUS: Pity, pity! Do you know what pity is? A Roman has no place in his life for such weak things. Well, pitying one, could you direct them to a place of rest?

TITUS: Nay, I could not, but I believe I would have done even that if I could. The woman's face haunts me. It was so beautiful, so weary and so sick looking. They finally went into the stable over back of the inn. As they came out not again, I fear they must have had to take up their abode in that old barn.

JULIUS: Well, waste no thought upon the misfortune of others. The night is young, hurry now, we shall be on our way soon. But Titus, hast thou noticed that star of unusual brilliance? It must be a sign, Titus.

TITUS: Yea, it is a strange star, and hath a meaning no doubt. Let us go and see if we can ascertain what it means. My task is finished for this day, praise be to the Gods.

JULIUS: (going out) (calling as he goes) - Hurry Titus, time is flying. I too am curious about that star. Come, come, man, I'm impatient to be off.

Group of shepherds enter from opposite side as Romans depart. As they come on they sing the following
to tune "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear", Angels also enter unobtrusively up in front and higher, if possible.

**SHEPHERDS:** (as many as possible – should be six) singing as they come:

Hark, on the midnight stillness comes
The voices of the blest
From angels by the throne of God
To guide us on our quest.

**ANGELS:**
Peace on the earth, Good will to men,
From Heaven's all gracious King,
You'll find him in a stable warm
By Bethlehem's old Inn.

**LEVI:** (first shepherd) Ah! The star has stopped above that old stable yonder. The angels have answered our questions.

"How shall we know the place?" "Where shall we find the King?"

**UCAL:** You are right about the star; it has stopped above that old barn. It has led us all the way from the fields.

**AGUR:** And have we not just listened to the angels' voices again?

**ISAAC:** Look again, I think I see their white wings shining. Hark:

**SHEPHERDS:** (after listening a moment sing)

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled.
And still their heavenly music floats
To all the listening world.
HIS MASTERPIECE:

ANGELS: Peace on the earth, good will to men
From Heaven's all gracious King
Immanuel come to earth tonight
To save the world from sin.

JOSEPH: (appears at door, and lights brighten within) Peace be with thee.

JONAH: Peace be unto thee. We seek Jesus who is born King of the Jews.

MARY: (within, leans over manger or babe and sings lullaby; someone else can sing if desired "Virgin's Lullaby" - Dudley Buck, or "Sleep Baby Mine" or "Gesu Bambino" by Yon) - then Mary recites:

My soul doth magnify the Lord
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour,
For he hath regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden, For behold, behold, from hence forth all nations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. Luke 1:46-50.

SHEPHERDS: (bow in adoration) step back to one side as wise men appear.

WISEMEN: (come down aisle singing first verse "We Three Kings of Orient Are.") When they arrive they bow and -

GASPAR: I have come from distant Greece, where we have
HIS MASTERPIECE:
been making special study of the conditions of the times. We have hoped for the advent of someone that could quiet the unrest of our people. With Gold (offers gift) I honor thee, and with joy I welcome thee, PRINCE OF PEACE.

MELCHIOR: I bring homage and present my gift from distant India. Frankincense, always the essence of worship, as sweet smelling offering that shall rise upon the wings of the night to the very throne of God, the Father, and bring joy to the new-born King.

BELTHASAR: I bring my gift from Egypt, the land of mystery. That mystic country of wealth and beauty. I present a strange but wonderful gift. My gift is myrrh. Although myrrh is the symbol of death yet I present it to the KING ETERNAL.

LUCANUS: (almost forgotten by the men) I bring my gift. It is not costly frankincense, myrrh nor gold, but it is a "life of service" to the King. I am young, but already Jehovah has blessed me with an especial gift. I shall not rest in this life until I have made "a true picture" of this blessed scene. I shall be a physician, as my father desires, but my true life work will be to hand down to the world a picture of this very scene "The Birthday of the King." I consecrate myself to thy service and to this great and holy task, thou NEW BORN KING. (if possible let light illumine him).

JOSEPH: (to wise men) And how didst thou find thy way here to this little town of Bethlehem, and to this stable?

GASPAR: We have been waiting and watching the stars for years for this very sign. The STAR led the way.
HIS MASTERPIECE:

MELCHIOR: We followed the STAR, and it led us to this village. Although we went first to Jerusalem to interview Herod, we expected to find the King of the Jews at Jerusalem.

BELTHASAR: The stars are the thoughts of the Eternal One, and it was a Star we followed. At Jerusalem we lost it for a time, but when we found it again it led us to this very door.

JOSEPH: (to Shepherds) And now let us hear somewhat of your adventure.

LEVI: We were abiding in the field, keeping watch over our flocks.

AGUR: It was night, and very dark and cold.

ISAAC: We were chilly and some of us were huddled around the fire.

UCAL: Some drowsed, but the watch was wide-awake. Jonas and Ezra were on watch and they can tell the first of the startling tale.

EZRA: Suddenly, startlingly there was a great light, which almost blinded us. I clutched Jonas in fear, and he me.

JONAS: By that time the light was so bright it dazzled the eyes of the others and startled them into wakefulness. But we all clung to one another in great fear. There was no sound, not even the barking of the dogs.

EZRA: The sheep huddled together as did the men. Then an angel of the Lord appeared and said: "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."
HIS MASTERPIECE:

JONAS: And the glory of the Lord shone all about us.

EZRA: And the angel said: "And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

LEVI: And behold, we hastened to the City of David, which is Bethlehem, and lo! The STAR led the way. The heavenly hosts sang as we came along the way "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men."

JOSEPH: Blessed be the Lord who hath visited the humble as well as the wise with glad tidings.

ISAAC: Blessed be God who hath given to the poor also and the humble to hear the song of the angels.

GASPAR: Blessed be God who hath guided our steps from far and distant lands to the birthplace of the King.

BELTHASAR: Blessed be thou, Bethlehem, for it shall be told of thee forever that out of thee came the CHRIST, THE PRINCE OF PEACE, THE MIGHTY COUNSELLOR, THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

(Shepherds kneel, one shepherd says "Hark").

SHEPHERDS: "Hark, on the morning stillness comes
The voices of the blest
From angels by the throne of God
Who led us on our quest."

ANGELS: "Peace on the earth, good will to men
From Heaven's all gracious King.
Immanuel came to earth tonight
To save the world from sin."
HIS MASTERPIECE:

MARY: (With the voice of prophesy) "From Midian and Ephah, all they from Sheba shall come; They shall bring gold and incense. Sing oh ye heavens; shout O earth, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel."
ACT III

Act III is in the little town of Bethany near mountainside. Indicate the mountains in some manner if possible, or try in some manner to have unusual setting. This act is thirty years after preceding. Everyone some older, but not too much change as that means confusion for the audience.

Mother Ophelia, Father Cleopas, young Hermas, Gaspar of Greece, little Daphne, Lucanus and two or three other Greeks. It would be well to use a few women.

CLEOPAS: My son, you have led us a long ways from our old home, yet this change was not so hard for Mother and me. When one leaves his native birthplace the break is more keen, is it not, my dear Gaspar? You have been away from Greece for some time now. How does this new place suit your fancy? Is Bethany as satisfying as Corinth?

GASPAR: I love Greece above all the earth, as you well know, my dear Cleopas, and yet here I am, far, far from home, seeking, seeking, ever seeking!

LUCANUS: Seeking, Seeking for what? You have richness, knowledge, learning, everything. For what should you seek? As for myself, I too have a longing for something, I know not what.

GASPAR: Since I came to Jerusalem years ago, to seek Him who was born King of the Jews, I have never rested night nor day. I have sought to hear everything and to know everything about Him that I could. You, my dear Lucanus, have been quite as diligent as I. You have helped me much with your information, although your knowledge of Him has always come through others.

LUCANUS: That is my one great regret. Although I have made
many trips to Bethsaida and Jerusalem, I have never met Jesus, since that night long ago, when we brought our gifts. He has always just departed, or is yet to come and I could never wait for Him. I have sought to see Him too, but never has that been my good fortune. I am indeed grateful that we now are in Bethany, near this mountain. I have heard that often He teaches the people from that mountain side close at hand. I should give much for a sight of Him. He is always in my thoughts as I work on my picture of that Holy Night but it always seems to me that I could do the work much better if I could look upon His face now.

CLEOPAS: Patience, my son. I think the time will soon come when you shall have your heart's desire. Already our youngest son, the child that came to gladden our old age, has seen him and tells a strange tale.

DAPHNE: Oh Father, I can hardly wait. Will it not be wonderful to see Him and know Him. I have always kept the first little sketch Lucanus made of Him on His birthday. I have pondered much. I should love to see Him again.

OPHELIA: See Him again? Why what do you mean? Have you ever seen Him?

DAPHNE: Yes, Mother. Not long after we came here Hermas and I saw Him from afar. We were on the shore of the Lake near Bethsaida where we lived before we took up our abode in Bethany. Hermas could have run to Him quickly if I had not been such a burden. We heard the people shouting and singing. He had
HIS MASTERPIECE:
raised many to health and strength. As we watched from afar, we saw some who were as lame as I, rise up and walk and we could almost hear His voice as He spake to them. Then we saw a young man speak to Him and motion to send the crowd away. There was such confusion for a little time and I begged Hermas to leave me and go nearer and see what was going on. Finally I persuaded him to go. We did not tell you, Lucanus, as you have always been so afraid to have me alone. But I persuaded him to go nearer so he could hear what was said. He left me in a very pleasant, cool spot, away from the crowd, but where I could see him. The disciples all came crowding about Him asking about food and pointing to the vast crowd as if to send them away. Hermas edged into the crowd and I could see him getting closer and closer. He had our lunch with him, but it was only a little lunch, five loaves and two small fishes. Tell them, Hermas, what happened then.

HERMAS: I was close to Him then and one of His disciples asked me for the little lunch. Just think, I was allowed to do this small favor for the Master. He then had the disciples seat all those people in companies of fifty and I am sure there were five thousand men alone and lots of women and children. He took my poor little loaves and fishes and blessed them and His disciples fed that vast multitude. They all had as much as they could eat. We know for we also were filled, were we not, Daphne?

DAPHNE: Yea, we also were satisfied, whereas if we had eaten our own lunch it would scarcely have been enough and we would
I have been hungry. Then we saw the most amazing thing of all; the disciples gathered up twelve baskets of the fragments that were left.

HERMAS: The He spoke to me again and blessed me. If I could only tell you how He looked. I was so astonished at the light of His countenance and the glory that shone round about Him that I could only gasp. I think I must have gasped out Daphne's name for He asked me "Who is Daphne?" One of His disciples said to me that Jesus was very tired and that I must not bother Him with such things.

DAPHNE: But He smiled upon you. I could see that smile myself from where I sat. It was like sunlight on the Lake. And Hermas, did He not tell thee to ask what ye would of Him? Hermas told Him how we had watched Him heal others. Hermas said He listened to all He had to say. Then Hermas told Him about Lucanus, our brother, who was such a learned physician, but that he could not heal me.

HERMAS: Then He started with me. We were going to the place where I had left Daphne but the crowd surged in around Him and I was lost from Him. When I finally came to Daphne the crowd had carried Him far down the fields away from us.

DAPHNE: Hermas is not sure He could have healed me but I KNOW if I could but be near enough to ask HIM He would heal me. My chance will come some day - perhaps today. Who knows? A Greek, named APPULUS comes down mountain and calls: He is just beyond the mountain. As usual the multitudes crowd about Him. I fear greatly that we shall not reach His side even
today. But come on, let us try. The women had best rest there and pray. The crowd is so great there would be little chance for them to reach Him and they can hear His voice from where they are.

OPHELIA: But of course the crowd is following. They are always following. I wanted to speak to Him alone. I thought He might recognize Hermas and oh! I do want Daphne to have her chance (opportunity).

LUCANUS: Mother, do you too believe that He can cure Daphne? Why I have tried everything known to science. If he cures her it would be a miracle. Nothing short of a miracle would make those shriveled limbs straight and strong.

OPHELIA: I know, my son, yet I feel sure. He has cured others that I have known and I am sure Daphne will be healed if we can but reach Him.

LUCANUS: Father, Hermas, Gaspar and myself shall all seek to get to Him. Father and Gaspar you go ahead, follow Apollos; Hermas and I shall follow with Daphne. If anyone of us gets near Him we shall tell Him of her and signal the rest. If he cures our Daphne, I shall follow Him all the rest of my life. I consecrated my boy's life to Him. As a man I shall serve Him and follow Him anywhere He may lead.

OPHELIA: even unto death, my son?

LUCANUS: Yea, my Mother, even unto death. Now pray Mother, to the God of the Hebrews, whom we have learned to worship. Hurry men. (Men go out, Father and Gaspar first, Hermas and
Lucanus take Daphne on out. Either Lucanus carries her, or
two brothers carry her on a litter made with two side poles
and blanket of dark material forming seat).

JOHN 12: 21-46 (Mother and men pray, then watch)

GASPAR: (off stage on loud voice) Sir, we would see Jesus.

PHILIP: (off stage) Andrew, Andrew, a company of Greeks would
see the Master.

CLEOPHUS: Yea, we would see Jesus.

VOICE OF JESUS: (women quiet and watchful) He that believeth
on Me, believeth not on Me but on Him that sent Me. He that
seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me. I am come a light into the
world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in
darkness.

LUCANUS: My sister is lame, lame from birth. Thou Son of God
have mercy upon us and save us. We want to walk in the Light.

DAPHNE: Thou Son of God, I know thee and am persuaded that if
Thou wilt just speak the word, thy daughter shall rise up and
sing praises unto God the Father and His Son, Jesus.

VOICE OF JESUS: Thy faith hath made thee whole. Arise and
walk.

DAPHNE: All praises and honor and glory to Thee. I have noth-
ing to give in return but my life. Canst Thou use that in Thy
service, Lord?

VOICE OF JESUS: Yea, my daughter. Suffer the little ones to
come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom
of Heaven.

DAPHNE: (running back on stage to Mother and other women)
Ah, Mother, now am I well and I shall serve Him forever and ever.

**MOTHER:** Yea, my daughter, we shall follow Him always. This is indeed a great day of rejoicing for us. My daughter can walk again. All praises to Jehovah. But hearken my daughter —

**LUCANUS:** (still off stage) If you have need of me, I shall serve Thee diligently, Lord. In fact, sire, since Thy birth Gaspar and I have followed Thee, as well as we know how. We would know more of Thee. We would walk in the Light.

**OPHELIA:** Ah, that is Lucanus speaking. (Mother nods assent through this and women continue to watch).

**VOICE OF JESUS:** There is room for all. Any who come unto me I shall in no wise cast out. Ah, and here is the lad who came to me and helped me feed the hungry multitude.

**HERMAS:** Yea, my Lord. My father and my mother, my sister and my brother have I brought unto Thee.

**VOICE OF JESUS:** Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

**CLEOPAS:** We would hear further of thy wondrous doctrine Thou wert about to teach. We shall listen and perchance when Thou art through Thou wilt come and abide with us, for we now live very near here. We will follow Thee, I and my entire household. I shall wait yonder with my wife and we shall learn of Thee. My wife also is most desirous of knowing Thee.

**GASPAR:** And I, too, shall serve Thee, following wheresoever Thou shalt lead.

**VOICE OF JESUS:** Whosoever will serve me, let him take up his cross and follow me.
HIS MASTERPIECE:

GREEKS (men and women on and off stage) Lead on, Lord Jesus.

DAPHNE: (bowing) Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.

CLEOPAS: Where is Lucanus?

OPHELIA: He is probably close to the disciples. He will never let the Master far out of his sight again. Now are his eyes opened. He has seen the great Light. I believe that now he will finish his picture and give it to the world. His life work will be accomplished.

DAPHNE: Harken, my mother and my father, to the voice of the Teacher.

VOICE OF JESUS: The hour is come when the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, Verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me and where I am there shall my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

CLEOPAS: He is telling us plainly, "Those who believeth in Him shall forsake old ways and follow his example."

OPHELIA: Hearken, he continues.

VOICE OF JESUS: "Now is my soul troubled, and shall I say - Father, save me from this hour. Yea Father, I know that Thou hast glorified Thy name and shalt continue to forever glorify it. I spake not for myself but that these gathered here unto me might know and believe that I am in Thee and Thou in me."
Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, SHALL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME. While ye have light, walk in the light that ye may be the children of light. Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me. Because I live, thou shalt live also. Abide in me and my words abide in you and ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you. Peace I leave with you and my peace I give unto you."
HIS MASTERPIECE:  

ACT IV

Home of Lucanus, who is now known as Luke, his father Cleopas, his mother Ophelia, his brother Hermas, and his sister Daphne, also their friend the Greek philosopher Gaspar. Make setting somewhat simple as in Act II. Picture large enough to hold life size figures (show frame if desired), curtain before it, picture in centre of stage and occupying much stage and prominence. Mother sitting with some kind of work. Daphne enters a little ahead of Lucanus.

DAPHNE: Ah, Mother! Jesus has gone from Bethany to Jerusalem amid the waving of branches, the singing of multitudes. He rode upon a colt and the whole world turned out to hail him King. I wish I had been there. Lucanus has just returned. I can scarcely wait to hear more about it. Isn't it wonderful, Mother?

LUCANUS: (entering and greeting Mother). It was indeed a marvelous sight.

OPHELIA: Tell us of the wonderful coronation of the King.

LUCANUS: It was the most beautiful sight I have ever witnessed. I have stolen a few moments at home for you must hear about it, and I had a task yet to complete. But you should have seen that sight to have appreciated it. The whole multitude of people going before Him and singing "Hosanna, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Ah! It was an inspiring sight. Little children singing and waving branches of trees and strewing flowers and choice ferns before Him. Women crying and laughing, and singing for joy. Everyone shouting His praise. It was a feast of Love and Joy. I hurried home to tell you of His triumph. They must be nearing Jerusalem before this. Do you wish to return with me?

OPHELIA: Nay, my son, we shall abide here. Our guests will
HIS MASTERPIECE:

soon be arriving. We must be here to greet them. You have a
task to finish ere they arrive, have you not?

LUCANDUS: Yea, my mother, my life work. The task I dedicated
myself to when I first saw the King. It is finished and yet
I caught a new look in His face, a new glow in His countenance
that gave me inspiration. It was the most glorious sight I
have ever witnessed. Triumph complete.

OPHELIA: But do you not fear the Scribes and Pharisees, my
son? They will never allow Jesus to be crowned King.

LUCANDUS: But they will be compelled to Mother; He has already
been declared King. I have always believed that He is the King.
Of a truth, I now know that HE IS KING. While this mood of ex-
altation is upon me I shall finish my picture. (He retires
behind the curtain before the Picture).

OPHELIA: Hasten, my son, for some are arriving now. (Turns
to greet Cleopas; Cleopas greets two women).

CLEOPAS: Mother Ophelia and daughter Daphne, it was indeed
the triumph of the age. I do hope Gaspar's friends arrive in
time for their reunion. They were to have been here at dawn.
I hope they were not late. It would indeed gratify them to
see the fulfillment of their life dreams: The baby Jesus
of thirty years ago, now crowned King of Israel.

ENTER HERMAS: (greets them) Peace with thee, Mother and
Father.

CLEOPAS: Peace be with thee, my son. Have you too been to
see the wondrous triumph of the King of the Jews? Have you
seen Gaspar and his friends from the East? Do you know
HIS MASTERPIECE:

whether they witnessed the triumph of the King?

HERMAS: My father, I have never witnessed such triumph, absolute and complete. Gaspar, Melchoir and Balthasar have witnessed it also. They are overcome with joy. They are now in the outer court greeting the Judean Shepherds who have come to their reunion. All are most impatient to see Lucanus' masterpiece, his life work: "The Birth of the King," the King who is the Wonderful, the Prince of Peace, the King Everlasting.

OPHELIA: (going to curtain) Is it almost finished, my son?

LUCANUS: Yea, Mother.

(Enter men, Shepherds and three wisemen, and unobserved, the angels of Act II).

CLEOPAS: You are indeed welcome, friends. Peace be with you.

(Visitors bow and Gaspar speaks) -

GASPAR: Peace be to thee and to this house.

MELCHOIR: Again friend Cleopas we meet in thy house. And as in the years past we are still studying the stars. We have seen strange things, very strange. The two planets in the shape of the Fish have come together again, but with such force that they seemed to break. Since we are here the break has been most apparent and tonight they all seem to be changing entirely. All we can see now is the star, the STAR that led us to Bethlehem of Judea on that night long ago, yea thirty years ago.

BELTHASAR: But for the break in the planets we would be sure that the new King that arose out of Judea would reign over all the earth. And yet their coming together again in the
His Masterpiece:

STAR would indicate just that, perhaps. But the break - I do not understand that.

GASPAR: Head again the prophesy of Isaiah, my son.

HERMAS: (takes up scroll and reads) "They shall call His name Immanuel and the government shall be upon His shoulders and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. He shall sit upon the throne of David and His Kingdom shall last forever." This was revealed by the Hebrew Prophet seven centuries before the Birth of Jesus.

GASPAR: Now is the prophesy fulfilled. My soul doth rejoice. Haven't we just seen Him proclaimed King of the Jews? Haven't we seen all nations bow before Him and call Him blessed?

MELCHOIR: Yea, verily all but the Scribes and Pharisees.

BELTHASAR: Yea, it is strange. Remember how we said on that long ago journey, "The stars reveal the mystery of life from the beginning to the end." If we could follow them perfectly nothing would be hidden from us.

MELCHOIR: I still believe that. Didn't the stars lead us into truth?

GASPAR: Yea, but we cannot follow them perfectly - "PERFECTLY" it is. We can look back over the way and see how we have been led into the truth. This triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is the very climax. Yet we do not read perfectly, for did you not say friend Melchoir that the planets rushed together and were broken? What of the break? If it weren't
his masterpiece:
for that it would look like a complete triumph for Jesus and
the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Ophelia: But he has spoken much of going away. But I never
understand Him when He speaks like that. He always says He will
come again. At least, I understand that and there is comfort
in it.

Cleopas: Come now friends, let us enjoy his triumph tonight
and honor Him as you did on that birthday long ago.

Daphne: I have often stolen glances at Lucanus' picture and I
shall tell you a secret. The people look alive and just as if
they could talk. Lucanus says he wants you all to forget that
it is a picture and present your gifts, as you did in times
gone by. If you forget that it is not real He will be sure
that it is a Masterpiece inspired by God. He has been with
Jesus continually of late and I think he has caught His spirit
in the picture. Mother and I have been praying that it will
be so real, so life-like that you all will be taken out of
yourselves and enact the whole beautiful scene before our eyes.
We have always envied you that sight. Lucanus whose name was
changed to Luke by Jesus as he followed Him and His disciples
says that if he can just make us see the Birthday of the King,
he will forever be happy. He shall go on following Jesus,
wherever He may lead.

Cleopas: Come Lucanus, Luke my boy, are you ready?

Luke: It is finished but I have been praying that the Lord
would reveal it as it truly was. Look upon it with prayer in
your hearts. Pray and the vision will come and I believe you
HIS MASTERPIECE:
shall see it as it appeared that night. (Draws curtain aside and shows picture) — (Shepherds and family draw up close to view picture — show awe and joy then kneel in adoration.) (Show picture in bright light, living figures as in Act II, then let light dim, while Shepherds sing):

Hark on the midnight stillness comes
The voices of the blest
From angels by the throne of God
To guide us on our quest.

ANGELS VISIBLE: Peace on the earth, Goodwill to men
From Heaven's all gracious King
You'll find Him in a stable warm
By Bethlehem's old inn.

SHEPHERDS NOW AND SAY (two at a time)

O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ the King.

LUKE: And Mary said "My soul doth magnify the Lord
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour
For He that is mighty hath done to me great things
And holy is His name.
And His Mercy is upon them that fear Him from
generation to generation."

(During Shepherd's adoration wise men rise to feet and come close to get a better view of the picture. Wisemen sing first verse together "We three Kings of Orient are." Casparr sings second verse and presents gold, Melchoir the third and presents frankincense and Belthasar fourth and presents myrrh.)
HIS MASTERPIECE:

SHEPHERDS: Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace, goodwill to men.

OPHELIA: Sing unto the Lord for He hath done excellent things. He is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout ye inhabitants of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. (Isa. 12: 3-6)

CLEOPAS: Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors and the King of Glory shall come in.

DAPHNE: Who is the King of Glory?

CLEOPAS: The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory (Psalm 24).

HERMAS: Yea, at this very moment He is King of the whole world. But what of the rest of the prophesy and what does the break in the planets imply?

CLEOPAS: We know not, O questioner, but listen to Isaiah: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined; for unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given and the government shall be upon His shoulders." Rejoice that we have lived to see the light.

LUKE: Yea, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. I know that Jesus is the Son of God and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against all time and eternity.

SHEPHERDS SING: Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled.

And still their heavenly music floats O'er all the listening world.

ANGELS SING: Peace on the earth, good will to men From heaven's all gracious King
Immanuel come to earth tonight
To save the world from sin.

LUKE: "And I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto me." Jesus said that, and also that He is the Light of the World. We cannot understand all His sayings. We shall ask Him further about these things. In the meantime let us seek Him. Would that He might soon arrive. I should like Him to look upon my Masterpiece.

CLEOPAS: Let us all rejoice for this is indeed the Birthday of the King.

LUKE: Praise be to God who sent His Son to live among us. May our Life-Work be worthy of the Great Master whose name shall be called WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE. My work is finished (pointing to the picture) then looking off into the future.)

GASPAR: Nay my son but just begun. The Master has told thee: "Behold the fields are ripe unto the harvest. Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

LUKE: (triumphant) I have put my hand to the plow; there is no "looking back." Thy kingdom come, O Lord, thy will be done. (Arms raised high above head). Lead On: thou King Eternal.
CONCLUSIONS

1. Religious drama is a resource of the church and may be used to further social, educational, physical and spiritual improvement in the individual, the group and society.

2. It lends itself to children's activities as well as adult activities.

3. It would be possible to employ it much more extensively if the church had better equipment, improved facilities, better trained leadership and more tangible expression of religious truths.

4. There is a need for trained leadership.

5. There is a dearth of dramatic material expressing religious truths.
RECOMMENDATIONS

l. Because of the expressed need of the churches contacted, it is recommended that the University of Omaha consider religious drama:

(a) Perhaps a course of training for leadership.
(b) Or a course of training in production of Biblical drama.
(c) Or a "workshop" for various dramatic problems.
(d) Or a course for interpretation and evaluation of present materials of expression in Biblical drama.
(e) Or a course in writing Biblical drama.
QUESTIONNAIRE

CHURCH DRAMA SURVEY

Under the direction of the Sociology Department of The University of Omaha we are conducting research in the field of Religious Drama, and are asking your cooperation.

Will you kindly answer the following questions and also make suggestions regarding this activity?

1. Do you have assistant or associate pastor?
2. Do you have Educational Director?
3. What dramatic presentations have you given (list them)?
4. How many plays of 1 hour or more?
5. How many people interested?
6. Do you have drama department?
7. Do you have qualified dramatic leadership?
8. Are you interested in religious drama?
9. What is your church membership?
10. What is your church seating capacity?
11. Do you see any value in such a program?
12. If active or interested, when could you arrange for a conference?

Name ___________________________ Address ___________________________
Telephone ___________________________

We are grateful for your cooperation in this matter and your prompt reply. Return envelope enclosed.
**LIST OF PLAYS**

**STAR IN THE EAST**
Anna Jane Hardnwell

**WHY THE CHIMES RANG**
Elizabeth McFadden

**THE GIFT**
Marie A. Floey

**THE ROCK**
Mary P. Hamlin

**THE LIFE OF DAVID**
Marian E. Griffith

**THE WORLD'S GREATEST LOVE STORY**
Marian E. Griffith

**THE QUESTIONER**
Lyman R. Bayard

**LYDIA, SELLER OF PURPLE**
Helen L. Wilcox

**DRAMATIZED SERMON OF THE LIFE OF DAVID**
Marian E. Griffith

**RABBONI**
Marian E. Griffith

**REBEKAH**
Marian E. Griffith

**THE SALE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN**
Marie E. J. Hobart

**BEHIND THE VEIL**
Annie Hobbs Woodcock

**SPIRIT OF MOTHERHOOD**
Marian E. Griffith

**HE IS RISEN**
Marian E. Griffith

**THE CHALLENGE OF THE CROSS**
Marian E. Griffith

**THE RICH YOUNG MAN**
Marian E. Griffith
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