FINDING GOD IN BIBLIODRAMA:
A CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF PERSONAL NARRATIVES
IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

In *Finding God in Bibliodrama: A Constructive Use of Personal Narratives in Christian Education*, I explored the question of why the youth feel alienated in our churches such that they often wander about in afternoon programs. The Johannine gospel talks about Christ as the incarnation of God, becoming flesh for our sake; and yet, majority of our worship practices with the youth disallows them in expressing their faiths fully. Bibliodrama, an interpretive drama curriculum uses all the senses of the body in interpreting scripture, imagining and looking at the realities of the Bible in the 21st century through theatrical arts.

This research revolves around an investigation of the Judeo-Christian problems with the body, as well as a resolution of how God communicates through the Bible and our response needs to be through our whole being.

The research suggests several teaching principles in preaching the word through drama, and the manifestation of God through the Word needs to begin with the sacred duty of teaching. Using the principles of Narrative Pedagogy, *Finding God in Bibliodrama* invites readers to consider establishing bibliodramatic troupes in churches as perfect curricular programs for young people ages 16 to 18.

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1 Interprets Christianity such as expounding the love of God.

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Special Thanks to Pastor David Scherer and Dr. Craig Koester for providing insights on the innerworkings of my paper. To Dr. Andrew Root, Pastor Nancy Lee, and Miss Madison Johnston at the Children, Youth and Family Ministry department, professors and cohort leaders, including various colleagues at Luther Seminary, as well as the many people I have encountered in my Christian walk over the years—people who helped shape me into maturity in the ministry, thank you. Of course, my Kenyan Community Seventh Day Adventist Church family, my focus throughout my study at Luther Seminary, thank you for inspiring me to be passionate in my role as one of your Christian public leaders. It was not easy to sit still for two years in one place, but I see the value of creating relationships in our church this way. It was the perfect first assignment for my family. My gratitude did not mean that it is the end, it’s quite the beginning of my journey in the ministry, actually. To my husband and best friend, Simeon, my daily source of joy, thank you for sharing with me your love for the ministry.

This piece is for all the young souls that I have taught and will teach in the future. I consider you all my sacred Christian duty and responsibility. You are God’s own, and so as ours as your leaders.
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INTRODUCTION

The first time I did anything theatrical was in high school. For a while, I had been secretly looking forward to the skits that Mr. Conopio did in my older siblings’ classes. The play, called *The World is an Apple* by Alberto Florentino, was a three-man cast about a husband and wife who struggled financially. The husband then stole a juicy red apple, which led to all sorts of complications in their lives.

While we only had to do it in the classroom, my team and I went all out and reinvented our roles where I interpreted the male antagonist as a female. My teammates did not take it seriously at first, but somehow, all three of us received a standing ovation. There was no leader assigned, but I remember psyching them up one by one to the day that led to the performance, telling them how much they are improving daily. After that play, my classmates would ask me to run lines with them, and the principal assigned me to direct a senior presentation that would commemorate the Death March that Filipino-American soldiers endured in World War II. I inserted romantic scenes in the script, and it was a hit. I directed another play after that, and the school sent me to writing conferences around the Philippines. I enjoyed reimagining a world that revolved around stories, drawing the stage in sketch, writing scripts, and inspiring actors to take narratives to heart.

I was involved in several plays in college, usually acting or directing, but I did not think that it had such an impact on me, until I discovered as a teacher that theater makes
an impression on a teenager’s brain development. Social emotion, in particular, is broadly associated with puberty. This type of emotion triggers teenage decision-making skills evident in teenage drama.

When I used a Shakespearean play to teach English to second-language speakers in Indonesia, I noticed not only my students’ engagement in the production itself, but in other subjects as well. The use of their whole minds and bodies in executing, planning, re-enacting, designing, and re-imagining *The Twelfth Night* magnified their learning experience. Most of the students that were in the play took college degrees that connects to their roles in that play: marketing, advertising, fine arts, film production, English education, and fashion design.

According to the American Alliance of Theatre and Education, “numerous studies have demonstrated a correlation between drama involvement and academic achievement...Schools with high arts-integrated programs, even low-income ones, report high academic achievement.” Although the benefits of theater is common knowledge in


3 Teenage drama can mean the complicacy of emotions, mood swings that teens undergo as they navigate their social worlds.

4 Another term for theater.

educational settings, traditional religious circles are often reluctant in striking a parallel on both worlds.⁶

Over the centuries of Christian existence, there has been a love-hate relationship between theater and the church. The projection of the flesh is associated with sinfulness.⁷ However, Biblical texts are for oral reading, heard by an audience, and each story is humanized with the articulation of each word and phrase. Given that the social world of the Bible “is inseparable from the people who speak them,”⁸ biblical stories come from the set of norms allowed in that culture. It is only right to understand fully the world that shaped the people who passed on God’s action to the world through these ancient realities, generation after another.

**Body, Theater and the Bible**

Each bodily movement that an actor makes, such as dialogue, gestures, sound effects and props, embody the reality of the story. Each movement projects not only the character portrayed, but also the interpretation of the actor, sometimes varying from the type of audience in the room. While actors portray scenes, the audience experience the sound of props, smell of the rim of the benches, lights, projection of the actor’s voice, and the whole reality of the story through the playwright’s reimagination of life on stage.

When Jean Racine interpreted *Athaliah*, the actor playing the evil grandmother of King

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Joash not only presented the characters with words. The actor consciously studies the character that the evil queen operated on in terrorizing the boy king. In a way, plays do not simply sympathize with antiheroes or heroes, but highlight humanity through the body’s portrayal of the written text. Each play is different from the other, and each scene depends on the time and emotions of the day. Experiencing the Bible with the use of the whole mind, body, and soul is the Christian experience.

The Bible and all its stories provide a rich representation of God’s action in the world. John 1:14 says, “So the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” In another version it reads, “…the Word became human.” God precisely needed to be human through Christ because this is how He could relate to us. His incarnation into the world was the only way to reconnect us to Him. God himself also becomes flesh through His revelation in the Bible, nature, and in various media, but our sin had already separated us from Him. God had allowed imperfect people like us to become part of His revelation in the written word, but the ultimate plan of redemption comes from Jesus Christ in the flesh, allowing us to behold the face of God. What Christ has gone

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10 Jn. 1:14, New King James.

11 New Living Translation.

12 Rom. 3:23, New Living Translation.


through with us are good enough reasons for us to explore ways on experiencing Christ with all of our senses, our very flesh, in the manner given in the Bible. The tangibility of the Word of God becomes real when we enact biblical storylines in His word.15

In my experience working with youths, I noticed that something happens in the moment that a young person becomes part of a play. The truths of the story transform them. They become a part of the reality on stage. The gestures, facial expressions and vocal projections immersed into the character. They are no longer their own persona; they become embodied in that narrative, even for a moment.

**Bibliodrama and the Plan of Salvation**

Bibliodrama, a theatrical concept developed by Peter Pitzele uses role-playing to investigate the Bible in a holistic way. I found this concept as I was exploring the use of theater in my congregation, considering various perceptions that I have encountered in using and having theater especially when working with teens.

Bibliodrama as a concept is from the Jewish tradition of *Midrash*, where it explores the untold lives of characters, showing back-stories and subtexts from the written narrative and gives a commentary in the scriptures.16 It also looks into the spaces between words, bringing the Bible alive. While it reinterprets scriptures and challenges popular notions of each biblical account, Bibliodrama honors the written text and never contradicts the biblical account.17 In his book *Scripture Windows*, Pitzele explains how

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15 The Word of God is Jesus Christ, while the word of God refers to the Holy Scriptures, the Bible.


Bibliodrama becomes the window into the Bible and a mirror in which participants can recognize parts of themselves. The written word has been doing that for centuries in the Jewish oral tradition, and in that context I thought that there must be a better way of embodying church, especially with teenagers.

This year, I am planning to develop a theatrical group with the teenagers ages 16-18 at the Kenyan Community SDA Church using some elements of Bibliodrama, to develop Jean Racine’s *Athaliah*, in an effort to spike interest in fundraising for the new church building. Stage plays can be the kind of community collaboration that would involve everyone, especially the youth. The aim is not only to provide a sustainable program for them, but to empower each teen involved, including the audience and the community in constructing a personal narrative of faith formation.

For this study, I would like to explore my initial research question: Why does the youth feel alienated in our church such that they wander in Sabbath afternoon programs? This came as a question because as I notice the lack of consistent programs in the afternoon for teens ages 16-18. Many of them would stop coming to church after they get some independence from their parents and I am curious to know the factors that disinterests them at church, as well as the constructive curricular plans in which to have them keep coming and involved in church community life.

In that, I would like to explore the use of Bibliodrama in constructing narratives in Christian Education. The title, *Finding God in Bibliodrama: A Constructive Use of*


Personal Narratives in Christian Education, based on several concepts presented by Peter Pitzele, Frank Rogers, Bjorn Krondorfer, E. Stanley Jones, among others. I am also incorporating several years of my experience as a Christian educator where I have established theatrical groups for similar aged teens.

Limitations and Delimitations

For the purpose of this study, I will limit my exploration of Bibliodrama in the interpretation of scriptures using scripted drama. While many smaller congregations in Europe and Asia use Bibliodrama as an improvisational activity after the reading of a biblical text, which I will also use to invoke interest in doing plays, I wanted to explore Bibliodrama as an overall rich interpretation of biblical stories using ancient and modern biblical plays. In establishing long-term productions such as a full-blown play, I will establish a better foothold and longer commitment for the teens and mentors involved. While the basic principles of bibliodrama design fit smaller groups, most congregations I work with are big enough to have an entire cast. I also wanted to consider the audience as an essential part of the Narrative Pedagogy, a common nursing education approach to thinking about teaching and learning that evolves from lived experiences of teachers and students. Christian education can adopt this concept as the whole experience of bibliodrama that rests upon the incorporation of experiences of the actors and audience.

21“Narrative Pedagogy in Nursing Ed Used to Teach Tough Topics,” n.d..
My interest lies in the use of one source, *Athaliah* by Jean Racine. I would also mention several encounters with my youth group and recall other meetings I have had over the years of working with them, to give a better glimpse of the type of mindsets that could help in creating a bibliodrama troupe in such a church. For the purpose of this study, I will limit the age group to teens ages 16-18 at a Kenyan American Church in Minnesota, although the principles are flexible enough for use of various ages, and in different congregations.

In assessing the research question of why the youth in churches feel alienated in the church programs, I will be using the four-part reflection process that Richard Osmer used in engaging a challenging ministerial situation from his book *Practical Theology*. These theological tasks are descriptive-empirical which asks ‘What is Going On?’ Interpretive asks ‘Why is this Going On?’ Normative asks “What Ought to be Going on?” in that situation. The last, looking at servant leadership as the point of emulation, is the Pragmatic approach, looking at a more practical step forward, answering the question “How Might We Best Respond?” In all the four parts of the reflection, I will be looking at various resources that tackle the Theoretical, Theological, Practical and areas where my specialization in Youth Ministry lies while assessing the various ways of approaching bibliodrama as a tool for faith formation.

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23 Refers to a group of theatrical performers.

I do not want to limit this paper to anyone who would like to use unscripted/improvised Bibliodrama in other congregations. Improvised exercises work best in bibliodrama troupe activities in preparation for plays. The point of this paper is to explore the importance of a fully involved participant in the interpretation of scripture. While there are elements in the reflection that mentions several leadership issues within the context, that is not the focus of the study. As a Christian public leader, one can make use of whatever fits his and her congregation. It also relies on bibliodrama as an artistic form of biblical interpretation and supposes that bibliodramatic church ministries can contribute to the faith formation and Christian education of teenagers ages 16-18.
CHAPTER 1

DESCRIPTIVE-EMPIRICAL TASK: WHAT IS GOING ON?

The One Where They Wander

My context, Kenyan Community Church, has roughly 20 young adults ages 15-21. There should be more, but they come and go. Part of my duties as the leader of the Ambassadors’ club¹ was to listen to some of the youth’s frustrations about their lack of belongingness in the church. At first, I was not certain if there was a culture of criticism that bred in that church, but I soon realized that these frustrations were valid. To the youth, it was only the choir or the children’s department prioritized in funding and in the church activities. For some reason, as soon as the children are done with Pathfinders² Ambassador teens do not have an avenue of expression at church. They were too young to be considered adults, and too old to be considered children. It is mostly their parents handling the church board; their views are often invalid until they are married. This type of patriarchal hierarchy is strong in Kenyan and other East African communities.

Normally, raising children is a communal duty; this responsibility shared among adult

¹ A Seventh day Adventist group for teens ages 15-21. Also referred to as Junior or younger youths in this context, there is an older youth group in the church, mostly composed of young professionals ages 21-35.

² Pathfinder refers to the Seventh-day Adventist cultural, social and religious education of children and teens ages 10-15.
members of the community.\textsuperscript{3} The pastoral team incorporated several young people to do the scripture readings every week, but it is not for everyone.

On the Saturday afternoons, while Bible studies go on, younger kids linger around the classrooms, sometimes breaking property while older teens loaf around the other building. Elders blame parents for not restraining them, but nobody had a concrete plan in engaging them. At times, church officers would institute a plan, but many of them are not consistent as well.

When I came with my husband in 2016 to this church, I joined different ministries and observed the subculture of the congregation. It felt like mini churches in the Women’s department, the choir, children’s and youth ministry. Each department has its own project and agenda. Although some of the toxic elements of gossiping and complaining exists, I relied on observable genuine desires of the members to be a part of the community. Because I could not understand all the things that people were talking about,\textsuperscript{4} it gave me an opportunity to dwell on the positive attitude towards their projects. I have noticed that it was almost a form of escape for them to be in church from their daily lives. This is evident even in Filipino churches I worked with abroad. Despite some irreverence towards some church social etiquette, families and the young people continue to come to church every weekend, albeit complaints on how things ought to be run.


\footnote{\textsuperscript{4}Most adult members of Kenyan Community SDA church use Kiswahili or Ekegusii languages in informal conversations.}
The One with the Drama Queens

The church plans for annual youthrevivals, but the Ambassadors’ Club was new, and the team given for me to lead began in January 2018. On December 2018, we drove three vans for 23 hours with 42 young people to attend the Generation of Youth for Christ conference in Houston, Texas. It took the pastors several attempts at bringing in parents to come with us to the trip. Not many of them did. At the trip, all adult mentors struggled to resolvepent up issues with some girls. Their frustrations with their parents’ separations, hidden vices, as well as other behavioral issues all came out during the trip. We had sleepless nights struggling with mood swings, angst, logistics, and discipline among a handful of very rebellious girls. By the end of the conference, we have exhausted and struggled and fought to reason and straighten up the troublesome clique, walking with them, debating, while the rest of the younger teens wait idly by as we resolve their issues. Weeks after, one of the four troubled girls came up to the pulpit to share a testimony of her struggles. She said she did some thinking, and confessed that she was struggling with so many changes. She is now part of the leadership, and we allowed her to take charge of some responsibilities in the Ambassadors’ Club.

The One with the American Bantu

Bantu relates to a subgroup of people speaking a variety of 500 languages along the Niger-Congo region. Majority of the church members at Kenyan Community SDA church belongs to the speakers of this language group. Like all other ethnic congregations, people attending this church are passionate about their Kenyan identities.

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Their children on the other hand, wanted to display their eclectic culture. Many of these children were born in the U.S., and have little association with the real Kenyan life apart from the weekly exposure to the culture at church. While the choir still sings most of its original compositions in Kiswahili and other local East African languages, the teenagers of the church are more in touch with Westernized Christian music, and have few avenues to develop it since the church choir have very strong hold of the audience. The idea of even putting together Kenyan youths who had just moved to America versus second generation Kenyan Americans is also a challenge. When we came in to the congregation in 2016, these groups are segregated.

It was a challenge to convince many of them to agree to a stage play, and even a challenge to make the Kenyan Americans to get involved with the Kenyan migrant youths. But when I tried transforming my favorite Christian novel Project Sunlight by June Strong into a stage play, I was amazed to see the youths come together to recreate the scenes, as if it was their own story. Although one older youth refused to be a part of it, most of them were excited about having something to do. It did not matter that it was a grueling task to make them act. The day came; they practiced, and owned their roles. Each one genuinely loved being a part of the presentation, and I enjoyed watching the story unfold through the elements of the scenes. The next day, the church elders gave my husband and myself a pat on the back, saying, they have never seen the youth come together for a program like that in the past. I wondered if it could be replicated using a

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6 KCC church was established in 1998 by a handful of new Kenyan Americans migrants in order to retain their identities, and teach their children to do the same.

7 Refers to American, Caucasian, or Pop Music.
more structured curriculum. Community projects like this could work in such a tight knit church.

Using that experience as the benchmark in approaching Spiritual Education through theater for younger youths might help in forming Christian beliefs to mid-teens. An ancient adage says, “Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember. Involve me, and I will learn.” When kids say that they feel left out in the church, having no way of expressing their faiths, maybe what they meant was that they only need to be in that space, contributing to the worship experience instead of being asked to sit down and listen.

**Spiritual but Not Religious**

Young adulthood is when religious conversion likely takes place. This was the rationale for creating a nationwide survey of mid-teens in the US, published in the groundbreaking book called *Soul Searching*. In the study, Smith and Lundquist explored the many facets of religious beliefs in America. They said, “Among the more religious American teenagers, religious practices appear to play an important role in their faith lives.” The formation of an active faith comes through specific practices. Although it is a common notion that the youth have the shallowest roots in the substance of their own beliefs.

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religious traditions, with an assumption that comes from the lack of youth involvement in the church, studies found mid-teens have quite an open viewpoint to religion.¹⁰

I always hear the notion that teens or even millennials¹¹ in general are *spiritual, but not religious*. Yet, a very small number of the teens caught up in spiritual seeking look for higher meaning. A majority of American adolescents are not spiritual seekers as described in the media. Instead, most teens are engaged in conventional religious traditions and communities.¹² This means that US teens are as much dependent on adults, especially their parents,¹³ to lead them religiously. The fact that only a handful of youths are spiritual seekers by nature, Smith and Denton suggest in the result of their research in *Soul Searching* that although “majority of teenagers say that religion is a good thing, they had difficulty explaining how faith is particularly consequential or influential in their own lives.”¹⁴ Most of their faith experiences are in the background, where their non-religious peers can be just as good and happy as believers.

Conventional religious teens also have difficulties imagining their lives differently if they are not religious, did not attend church, or are not in a youth group.¹⁵

There is little difference between less religious and non-religious teens, especially in

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¹³ Smith & Denton, 261.

¹⁴ Smith & Denton, 218.

¹⁵ Smith & Denton, 218.
measured outcomes such as risk behaviors, quality of family and adult relationships, moral reasoning and behavior, community participation, media consumption, sexual activity, and emotional well-being. However, “religiously active teens are quite different by contrast.”\textsuperscript{16}

The intensity of religious life and practice shapes the adolescent lives in positive directions. “US teens as a whole are anything but areligious or irreligious... teenage religiosity in the US is extraordinarily conventional.”\textsuperscript{17} While many remain regular participants of their families’ communities of faiths, church involvement alone may not have allowed these beliefs articulated well. Instead, “the kind of religiosity among these teens are not particularly active personal quests of eclectic spiritual seeking about which we heard so much lately.”\textsuperscript{18} Teens do not seem to be very reflective of their religious practices, although, this does not change the best social predictor of their religious and spiritual lives comes from the religious and spiritual lives of their parents.

As I read the results of Smith and Danton’s study, I recalled the analogy of lukewarm Christians stated in Revelation 3:15-16 that says, “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot, I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are Lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”\textsuperscript{19} The articulation of one’s faith, whether young or old, can be evident in total involvement and active participation of the Christian. Evidently, the more parents and adults in church

\textsuperscript{16} Smith & Denton, 219.
\textsuperscript{17} Smith & Denton, 260.
\textsuperscript{18} Smith & Denton, 261.
\textsuperscript{19} Rev. 3: 15-16, NIV.
invest in their children, the more involved and intentional teenagers are in seeking the meanings of their faiths, deepening their spiritual meanings more.
CHAPTER 2

INTERPRETIVE TASK: WHY IS THIS GOING ON?

Baby Got “Too Much” Back

Howard Schwartz suggested in an article that there is a problem with the body for the people of the book. While other cultures and religions are preoccupied with the symbolisms of the body and its functions, it is the source of conflicting cultural representations, especially in ancient Judaism. While “humans are created in the image of God, He has ‘no body’.1 God mandated procreation, and yet bodily emissions such as semen or menstruation are pollutants and imply impurity. The contrasts of a God who has no gender to a sexual human makes it difficult to reconcile the embodiment of God in humanity, made in the divine image.2 Judaism follow laws that regulated the body3 to show how Israel values God as holy and the body, treated the same way.4 Any impurity or uncleanliness signify alienation from God, and are offenses against Him.

I remember as a child, adults say that it is good to behave well, to sit still inside the church. Any noise or extra fidgeting children make at church is a nuisance. The same thing is true with the youth. If they are not inside the sanctuary listening, they are not

1 Exo. 24:9; 33:23.
2 Timothy Beal and David Gunn, Reading Bibles, Writing Bodies, (London, UK: Routledge, 1997), 42.
4 Lev. 11:42-44.
well mannered. “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these,” says Jesus.5 Young people are still discovering the definitions of their faiths. But they cannot do so without the involvement of their body, mind and soul. Bjorn Krondorfer introduced the concept of using the experience of biblical narratives in the Bible in his book *Body and Bible*. He said, “The human form mirrors the divine appearance, having a body is part of what it means for humans to be made in the image of God.”6 After all, God made us in His image.7

**The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly Drama**

Augustine and Aquinas described play as a necessary form of culture among Christians “as long as humans did not become protagonists in a universe confined to transcendental reality or authority.”9 Using both Platonic and Christian theology anchored on the idea that we are merely “play things of the gods,” theatrical plays have the ability of strengthening morality through *eutrapelia*.10 Early Christians sometimes mix the concept of *eutrapelia* as obscenity,11 confusing the concept in Christianity.

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5 Mt. 19:14 NIV.


7 Gen. 1:27.

8 As in theater.


10 *Eutrapelia* is a Greek term which means “ready wit.”

11 Eph. 5:4 NRSV: “Entirely out of place is obscene, silly, and vulgar talk; but instead, let there be thanksgiving.”
because here is an art that is “so closely tied to the human body.”12 In the positive sense of the word that Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas intended, *eutrapelia* is the virtue of pleasantness or playfulness.13

It was not until the 16th century, too, that the concept of the child or someone in need of special attention emerges. The concept of adulthood also varies between cultures. An American church in 1792 even prohibits theater, calling students not to indulge in worldly plays.14 Theater’s significant function lies in the psychological phenomenon that confines a pure physical activity into a nonmaterialistic quality in the nature of the thing itself.

As children, we listen to Bible stories read orally, such as Adam and Eve. We imagine a physical garden with all the animals and think of what they do daily in that garden. Adults take a lot more to incite imagination on the tangibility of these stories. Samuel Laeuchli coined the term *field of symbolism* when examining idioms, symbols and validity of texts. Different religions and sciences contradict the historicity of literatures. Stories are explained using a diachronic, seemingly rational transmittance of the word, “a crucial step in the human development of our faculty to think and disbelieve and to weigh and make judgments.”15 These come as an extremely important way of

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studying the Bible. Linguistic and historical analyses also shed light in the mimetic ways that open the religious, historical, and academic schemes that these texts operate on. When we read and listen, our mind imagines, when we play in theater, we become the narrative.

Theatre is a place where an actor recites a written text, illustrating it with a series of movements in order to make it more easily understood. Theater to an actor can mean a mere self-satisfaction to the player. A biblical interpretation of the text, however, exists not merely for the actor’s relatability to the text. The audience can also make demands in systematically educating the actor himself by allowing his own vulnerabilities be seen publicly, something that a person can perform as part of a spiritual act. This vulnerability to expose one’s innermost self could be a painful experience and not intended for the eyes of the world, but this process of a particular mental discipline and physical exercise happens by allowing self to be a part of the meaning of the text.16

All the World’s a Stage17

Tim Schramm stressed the closeness of the text and the reader in his work, *Bibliodrama in Action: Reenacting a New Testament*. He argued that theology, pedagogy, Gestalt psychology18 and play therapy contribute to a Theme Centered Interaction (TCI). As a concept and a method for group work, Ruth Cohn and others developed this social

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16 Samuel Laeuchli, 16.

17 Is a famous line from William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene VII.

18 Or Geltaltism, which refers to the philosophy of the mind that attempts to understand the laws behind the ability to acquire and maintain meaningful perceptions in an apparently chaotic world.
learning skill as part of their study in humanistic psychology. Biblical theatre, Biblical Role Play, and psychodrama which contributes to bibliodrama, provides an “opportunity to test, probe, and experience the possible meaning of what the Bible says regarding our personal and professional existence.” Understanding it with the body and the soul, the heart and the mind comes when in theater, we are no longer mere audiences or players acting and experiencing story but become the story; our mind watches it together, ultimately transforming someone’s narrative as our own. Martin Luther once said, *die bibel in das leben siehen*, which means ‘to bring the Bible into our lives,’ and transform written words into ‘living words’ or *lesenworten machen*. TCI achieves this through openness intended to create a balance between the theme of biblical text, and the interaction that comes from the people that interprets it.

It is important to recognize that Jesus himself is a dynamic storyteller, often using materials that the audience could see, feel, and touch in the moment told. Hence, when we read a particular parable of Jesus, we need to place the text in the socio-linguistic and historical setting it was in to understand the context, then amplify the story into our own experiences. We can meditate memories about trees, for example, in the story of the Syrophoenician woman who talked to Jesus, allowing the bibliodrama participant to empathize with significant elements of the story. While it is useful to know the facts, knowing is only the beginning of learning. Krondorfer emphasizes the imageries of the

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20 Krondorfer, *Body and Bible*, 56.

21 Krondorfer, 50.

22 Mk. 7:24-30; Mt. 15:21-28.
Bible regarding the body, he writes, “the body is the most original, primary, and continuous source of awareness and learning, it should be no surprise that understanding the connection of knowing which is identified as making love comes as the understanding of this bodily process.” While the ear is a comprehensive organ that absorbs and receives as we listen to text, perception is magnified when things are vividly described using all our senses.

Bibliodrama relies on the various techniques alongside verbal forms of communication. When our bodily postures, facial expressions, and all other signals of our muscles signal each movement we impose, we connect to the text, becoming an important part of the understanding of non-verbal definitions of these texts.

Rehearsing Faith

Divine act in drama is represented through the personal expression of faith. Theology has to do with God in self-communicative action and scripture is God’s self-communicative act. Scripture mirrors drama and can only be understood when referenced to it. Like our role in Christ, apprenticeship for learning is a lifetime rehearsal that will determine the quality of our end performance. When we teach children “Jesus loves Me,” they sing it not just as confirmation of what they already know, but as a way for them to know it. When lines are dropped and actors fail to stay in character in a scene just as teens and adults find themselves making a mistake every so often, the director-directress points us to the correct line. Ivan Patricio Khovacs describes this situation in his article of

23 Krondorfer, 64.

the book *Faithful Performances*. He says, “Our Christian situation is an ongoing rehearsal that anticipates a performance as a way of rendering embodiment of the text.” Our performance in the flesh is what is called for, when we act on a biblical play. Bibliodrama can be the linguistic epistemology that speaks to the use of scripture that comes to life in performance. Theater communicates through image, but it is not the end in itself.

For Joshua Edelman, theatre is not merely a psychological exercise, “the goal is always honesty in emotion, but in order to achieve this, and particularly to replicate it performance after performance, the actor must hold of something substantial, or he will fall into the temptation of mechanical acting.” While a director-directress is the most important element in the Stanislavskian system, which refers to the method of acting set by actors to portray emotions by putting themselves in the place of the character, the Christian life is led by the guidance of God and is performed to the glory of God. Hence, the objective is to make each performance the most beautiful in the eyes of the Divine Director. The Bible is not a theological dictionary, but a theological drama, where the model of scripture is dramatic text.

As non-Christians observe the way Christians live, passing judgments on Christianity as a system based on those actions, personal performances become a way for Christians to preach, unconsciously, using their very senses. In the same manner, the

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25 Khovacs, 47.

26 Lingual investigation of what distinguishes justified belief from opinion.

27 Joshua Edelman, 55.

character building proposed in biblical interpretations through bibliodrama creates an accurate and logical theology on using theater, which is supposedly an incarnational one. Edelman added that the Christian life both led by the guidance of God should be performed to His glory. He states, “it needs to rest on those gritty earthy things that make a script into a play and the word into flesh”\textsuperscript{29} The meanings behind our physical performance in this world affect the time, space, and audience that lives amongst us.

**Too Cool for School**

Ephesians 4:12-13 says that our bodies in Christ should be “built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fulness of Christ.”\textsuperscript{30} Most migrant churches are tight knit communities. My congregation for one is very involved with each other’s lives. Yet, despite its African village culture, the relationship between elders, parents, and leaders to young people are disconnected because the cultures involved in both generations are patterned with the way each both group worships.

Our duties as a Christian go with the way the disciples went, baptized and teach. The teaching ministry of the church seeks to promote genuine faith in Christ alone, through the proclamation of the gospel. While our salvation is already justified through our faith, we ultimately exist for the glory of God. Teaching exists for the sake of worship—to glorify God through our actions. Parrett and King spoke about the essence of reconciliation in worship, they said,

\textsuperscript{29} Joshua Edelman, 71.

\textsuperscript{30} Eph 4: 12-13, NIV.
To walk that walk, the body must be built up; in pursuit of these aims, we engage in a variety of ministries of teaching and formation. These ministries are sometimes formal, sometimes not; sometimes pre-emptive, sometimes responsive; sometimes engaging large groups, other times engaging small groups; always attentive to the needs of individuals but never losing sight of the church as a whole.31 Yet, we may lose our sight of the importance of devoted preaching to the children.32 Many churches struggle to recruit teachers for youth and children ministry because of this notion. While young people are still forming their faiths, they need a constant, grounded mentor to lead them. Teaching young people requires obedience not just for the students but the mentor as well. When Jesus taught, “he was concerned with the obedience to the truth, not merely with the affirmation of it,”33 he meant that our duties as leaders to young people is as the Greek term parakletos, to be alongside another, to help find the truth of God’s love together.

The Bible is not to be as a form of propaganda for religious education, but as a way to enrich people’s lives with. As the mentor sees in the learner and the learner sees himself in the mentor, both of them gradually outgrow one’s need for mentoring, and a relationship of learning becomes a gift for both.34 In any given situation, stories are wonderful tools for teaching. Learners carry each of truth as a vehicle for them, even far after the sessions, lessons, and the stage plays are over. While some young people may have a hard time articulating their beliefs, our constant actions and ongoing dedication in creating a relationship with them and leading them makes a very big difference.


32 Mt. 23:13.

33 Gary Parrett and Steve King, 271.

CHAPTER III

NORMATIVE TASK: WHAT OUGHT TO BE GOING ON?

Can You Feel the Love Tonight?

When I was in high school, I remember having feelings that were so intense, the world would have eroded if these emotions were not resolved. But all of these gush-worthy feelings are mere imaginations from movies or stories. When I fell in love for real, it was quite different from merely having facts about what love is. When I talk to my students, their favorite themes always include very strong feelings of joy, fear, doubt or happiness amongst their peers and family. When Dr. David Phelps wrote the hymn “O Love of God,” he vividly described how every blade of grass, every man becomes a scribe by that writes into the parchment in the sky God’s love, and yet, the ocean that serves as man’s ink would drain it, losing all the words in the world to describe it.1 Sometimes you cannot describe love. You have to experience it in action.

Like love, faith works in the same manner. Passionate faith formation among teens develop through the experience of stories. This sets the pattern for preaching; witnessing out of experience, because “all great literature is autobiography, so all great preaching is testimony.”2 Testimonies are manifested in the written word of God. When the Word became flesh, his testimony is enfleshed into human stories, creating beautiful

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2 Jones, 148.
narration of God’s love. Preaching then is no longer necessarily primarily testimony but the Word becomes word, or the Word becomes our theology. Bibliodrama becomes the medium in manifesting the Word as incarnate.

Max Harris, who wrote *Theater and Incarnation*, the theatrical nature of the Bible, believes that all of the dimensions of space and time grant themselves to the theatrical possibility that is unavailable to other narrative arts. He says, “both theater and incarnation are inherently sensual,” which means that both of these concepts apply five of our senses, seeing, tasting the infinite divinity, embracing, kissing, and drawing a response to revelation. Play is not merely about the particular facts, but the universal truths that are drama’s ultimate concern.

While some theologians like Jacques Derrida argues that all forms of theatrical performance are literature where gestures accompany text, Karl Barth is one of the theologians that Max Harris mentions who believes that revelation engenders the scripture that attests it. Harris states, “His word became flesh of our flesh, blood of our blood. His glory was seen in the depths of our situation, and the full depth of our situation were disclosed when he illumined them then and there by the Lord’s glory.” Theater is no longer based on dialogue, but created on stage, culminating into what is written down.


5 Max Harris, *Theater and Incarnation*, 61.

In *Taking Theology to Youth Ministry*, Dr. Andrew Root dissect the motivation of developing passion among youth, saying it has a lot to do with the formation of relationships with people involved in the church especially with youth workers and peers within that sphere rather than the programs youth ministers set up. Although all youth workers want kids to own their faith, our motivations in doing ministry should not only be about having good kids, involving them in service, passing on traditions to them, or even entertaining them. It is easy to have good, moral kids who are not Christians. But while practicing faith requires participation to it, Root warns that church leaders might “think that the goal of youth ministry is to make kids into servants,” making leaders feel that the program in their ministry creates an impact to the teens involved.

I paused for a moment as I read this passage and thought to myself, what ought to be going on in my intention to put up a Bibliodramatic troupe? Does my intent coincide with the very needs of the ages I am handling, or is it a form of accomplishment in my career as a practical theologian? There are thousands of reasons why theater is good for teens, but at the end of each day, does that make an impact on the youth I am working with? The woman anointing Jesus’ feet with perfume did not just do the action for performance’s sake, but she sincerely wanted to be a part of God’s activity in the world.

Youth Ministry is not to be treated as any other form of ministry, except that it is at the center of God’s own act, and the church should seek to participate in God’s action with adolescents. Youth Ministry should be as theological as every other form of ministry. It is at the very core of the action of God. It is distinct from other ministries,

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because of its particular interest in God’s actions among young people. I have been pondering upon the type of mentorship that I have received as a young person, and the type of support that I provide to my teens. While a majority of my religious upbringing relies on parental influences, there is no doubt that the church shaped much of my identity. As far as the materials I present and the forms of impression that I have given when serving others is concerned, this matters to the youth that I serve. Do I give the young people the right avenue for which to fulfill their duties? Is Youth Ministry and fashioning a bibliodramatic troupe only a form of elation to the leader, or of Christ?

You Are Standing on Holy Ground

Teaching the youth is a sacred duty. God’s image, imbued into humanity and the youth, given for us to lead. Even as we use theater in reflecting with God’s people through Bibliodrama, we deal with issues of faith, exploring the meanings of biblical truths through the humanity in us, and our children. When I was wrestling with some of the issues that one of my students at church faced, I knew that it was a delicate situation. My presence amidst her struggle and my relationship with her as her mentor is ultimately what every youth in my context needs, and programs secondary. I cannot solve everything for everyone, after all, I am not their parent; but ultimately, that God builds a relationship with us the same way through the scripture. If we do not allow ourselves to be just as vulnerable in embodying the truths of the word into action, as a leader/director-directress, as an actor/student, and as an audience/parent, none of these bibliodramatic ideals could be possible. It needs to be an intentional effort.

9 Root, 39.
Theater is an art form, and there is much room for reflection and contemplation of the script, where “the experience of theatre, like the experience of God, invites stillness and quietness.” The essence of the theater is that someone experiences the performance. Although Judaism has a strict law against the use of images or any likeness as figures of worship, Oppenheim suggests that a tradition of theatricality and performance to only be complimentary but not necessary for a performance to happen. The player, who is the essence of the performance, creates a unique religious experience. It is not the approach to theater as religion that values the artists or the audience; it is God’s very image in the world that allows us to embody the word creatively. While Tertullian fumes against actors altering their bodies using cothurni, or the thick-soled laced boots worn during the Greek and Roman dramas, calling masks and jewelry a form of hypocrisy, we understand that our Christian faith using theatre does not rely on props alone—it comes after the fact that our whole being becomes a part of the story. Johnson and Savidge reiterated that God is an incarnate God and dwells within His creation. They wrote, “The theological category of incarnation is one of the most central concepts in the

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11 Exo. 20:4


history of the church.” Dramatic structures is found in so many spaces and places, and in fact, the books of Job and the Song of Solomon, for example, are good examples of theatrical texts.

Let’s Keep It Real

‘Let’s keep it real’ is a phrase I often hear from youths every time they would share something important to people they trust in the church. Their sociological, psychological, and theological formations within the church depends upon the type of experience they go through. Unlike psychodrama, where the participant’s biography is magnified; bibliodrama always begins and ends with the text. The focus is not on the actor, but the act of God in that scenario. While the Bible is not only a historical document, bibliodrama intends a richer interpretation of faith, especially in areas of moral action and emotional experience. “The linguistic structural and materialistic reading of the Bible is especially suited for Bibliodrama [because its exegesis] concerns itself with the deconstruction of the text from a synchronic perspective.” While Bibliodramatic faith experiences are held, spiritual experiences are magnified, and the possibility of the quality of religious experience in the Bibliodramatic interpretation can be allowed, these experiences of faith are not exactly the explicit goals of bibliodrama. It is the process of understanding the text or its application, rather than the stressing of relationship between faith experiences. While participants maintain convictions of differing experiences one

16 Todd E. Johnson & Dale Savidge, 56.
18 Claudia Mannen, 4.
from another, the danger of the Christian message has a tendency to be abused, especially in its presentation.

However, bibliodrama can be a place for new forms of experiences that are not necessarily connected to the negative connotations of abuse of power that has been an oppressive propaganda in the past. God’s drama, Bibliodrama, is the process of God’s incarnation of the Word, *logos*, becoming flesh. When young people enable themselves to reverse roles with biblical characters, they learn to understand the other, empathize with them. This role reversal is also true with God and us. Humans like us understand God’s message through the portrayal of His actions in the scripture, while every Christian finds the immediacy of God’s experience as the goal of bibliodrama. As scripture is the truth that is from the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures can remind us of “God’s salvific plans testify and proclaim them, reveal them. They remind us that the scripture is not the Word of God in the sense that it was revelation itself but rather only in as far as it allows God to these people.”

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19 Claudia Mannen, 24.
CHAPTER IV
PRAGMATIC TASK: HOW MIGHT WE BEST RESPOND?

In answering the question of how the leader could shape the context to better embody Christian life through a Bibliodrama curriculum among teens, this section will try to rationalize the thesis statement that Bibliodrama as a Narrative Pedagogy is an effective form of church curriculum for Kenyan American Teenagers ages 16-18 in developing spiritual identities.

A Whole New “World”

Of the many things that are important to young people, it is the acquisition of new experiences. Elizabeth Thiel Engfer spoke about how teenagers ages 16-18 have some form of independence to explore on their own. While they still rely on their parents and adults for advice, their newfound freedom brings even people of authority, like God, to be their friend and advisor. “On a spiritual level, high school youth examine their faith in light of their life experiences and need a deeper and more meaningful connection with their Creator.”¹ While their self-identities are also highly important among this group, working together with caring adult learners and other age mates can provide for them greater confidence in their shared faith journeys. It is important that mentors teach with relevance, using grounded biblical truths, coupled with an honest prayer and devotional

¹ Elizabeth Thiel Engler, et. al., Nurturing Faith through the Stages of Life (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1998), 20-22.
program as a group and an encouragement to do it in partnership with others, and in private, as well as in worship.2

In Scripture Windows, Bibliodrama explores the possibility of looking to a world beyond the youth’s reality through the mirror of the self and a frame that is called upon biblical interpretation. This age group is old enough to understand abstract ideas, but still young enough that they would highly benefit from concrete physical involvement in order to learn. Pitzele reminded that to be a student of Bibliodrama, one should be a student of the biblical commentary.3 Reading creative interpretations allows the participant to create unique responses to the same material.

Bibliodrama begins with the mind of the reader, discovering what biblical stories left out, and imagines ways in which they might be filled. “The Bible can retain its power as a sacred book not because its authority is never questioned, but because the questions it raises have the authority to lead us to some of the most important issues of our lives.”4

Bibliodrama imagines a first-person narrative, assuming roles and unfolding the story as if it was in the present. Facilitators or directors-directresses can lead the actors using a simple formula, which is to choose a text, read, and interpret a text from the commentary, role playing, and closing. The bibliodramatic stage can also be anywhere, and while initial exercises of reading a text such as reading King Joash in 2 Kings 11, Bibliodrama dissolves boundaries between the past occurrence and the present in

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2 Thiel Engler, et. al., Nurturing Faith, 21.
3 Pitzele, 24.
4 Pitzele, 27.
understanding the context of the story. (See Appendix for a sample of a bibliodramatic exercise.)

**Finding God in Your Life Story**

The loss of a theological language among young people triggered a loss of Passion among the youth. In the book *Finding God in the Graffiti*, Frank Rogers focused on the use of drama among teens in exploring the biblical truths through an association of their narratives to the narratives of the Bible. He argues that many young people have lost their sense of purpose in their culture because of the sea of burgeoning options and expansion of the world of information, leaving them paralyzed and without a sense of what to choose.\(^5\) One thing that was evident is the teenager’s ability to tell stories. Stories in itself is not only transformative in educational ministries with young people, but it helps teens maneuver their ways to the world using these narratives. Through the model of teen acting troupes, Rogers investigated some of the ways that story can be transformative in ways that young people could find God. Student actors, for example, can choose an object from a pile of props; write a monologue of teen suffering or joy. In this practice, their very own feelings are enveloped with God’s narrative in the scriptures, and their deepest fears, greatest wishes, are emboldened to become agents of change and promote their liberation.\(^6\) The teenagers’ raw experiences within their homes and communities contribute to the way they narrate their stories. As they dwell with these

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\(^6\) Rogers, 3.
various realities, they look for the presence of God in the midst of a wounded mess of the world. In their narration through drama, they reframe their own stories.

While religious educators, spiritual guides, and schoolteachers are by default keepers of cultural heritages and are known to have the power of communicating these lessons through stories, the reception of the youth is just as vital. Our ancestors have passed down values and described and explained through narrating the origins of many things in myths, legends, and folktales. In order for that to happen, the youth over ages had retained these stories to memory, passing them also to their children. Jesus, for one, is a central figure in the Christian context and taught parables from everyday life. To tell one’s life story strengthens personal power, and interpreting it compels teachers within a multitude of contexts to have created a drama-based curriculum.

When I think about my students at church, I wonder about each of the experiences that they willingly share within the context of our weekly lessons and think that each of these experiences are sacred, such that they are engaging in the shaping of their faith. Frank Rogers enlisted the ways in which a religious tradition’s wisdom is passed on through narrative pedagogies, using an individual’s personal story, which is the locus of a theater’s transforming power. The first, Narrative Pedagogies, can teach religious literacy, is the basic familiarity of the community to the religious beliefs of the system. Second, Narrative Pedagogies can teach personal identity. In a world of so many people with unique personalities, influencers, content creators, etc., the normal teenager needs to picture himself or herself uniquely through the characters that he is acting on or studying. It helps teens reimagine their personal stories through the lenses of the cultural and religious narratives that would provide for them freedom and liberation from their
personal shells. Third, it can also teach them contemplative encounter. The indwelling of their stories of hope creates an experience of sacred reality that is to be embedded into their lives. Fourth, Narrative Pedagogies teach critical reflection. Critical reflection is nurtured when dealing with the plot that infiltrate one’s culture, and pedagogies like that of bibliodramatic sense can awaken a critical consciousness toward stories that oppresses human dignity. Fifth, Narrative Pedagogies can teach creative vitality. When dramatic storylines are internalized well, it causes healing for some and spiritual journey for others; it can also mysteriously revitalize the process of creativity in the work that is given. Lastly, Narrative pedagogies can teach social empowerment. Narrative pedagogies can mobilize social changes, and contrary to the belief that most dramatic productions are sources of propaganda and agents of oppression, personalized narratives can be a liberating agent of understanding the depth of the cultures that the teens are undergoing in their communities. Bibliodrama cannot be more useful in facilitating NP because it allows the teen to encounter spirituality existentially.

While our youth live in a world that has so many distractions and conflicting plotlines of destruction and creation and recreation, family estrangement and tragic loss and all that, there is hope in having a world, seen in the larger scheme of things.

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7 Rogers, 16-19.
CONCLUSION

Throughout my life on stage as a youth and then eventually as a language teacher and youth mentor in church, I have learned that while theater and drama contribute highly to the overall brain development of young people ages 16-18, their experiences in these programs and the narratives that they bring alongside is what matters most. King Solomon says, “Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds.”\(^1\)

When John presented Christ’s incarnation through the Word becoming flesh,\(^2\) it provided the perfect manifestation of Christ’s embodiment into the world by becoming one of us. Had he not done so, our salvation would be at risk. The same embodiment that was described in the word of God can become intangible, unrelatable, and immaterial if these texts are merely read or seen in the background, but not lived.

When I asked the question, Why does our youth felt like they are not heard, or that they don’t belong in church, such that they felt alienated in the church, leaving them to wander on sabbath afternoons, the question was not merely a form of criticism to the parents and church leaders in the way they have handled their children, but an overall intent to reason with the congregation how the disconnect between the body and the spirit of young people are part of a bigger problem, that of a universal disconnection to the Word of God and His word.

Bibliodrama came as a part of this ongoing search, in the hopes of facilitating a constructive narrative pedagogy that would engage young people ages 16 to 18 in

\(^1\) Prov. 27:23, NIV.

\(^2\) John 1:14.
Finding God in their lives. In answering this dilemma, I used Osmer’s four step critical reflection. I resolved that while methods such as bibliodrama, theater, and other intentional programs are really beneficial in engaging a group of young people who are battling everyday with identity issues and maneuvering developing independence as pre-adults, the commitment of their parents and the intentional and constant investment of all adult leaders within a church community matters to the way these programs are to be received. This communal effort is not only evident in more traditional settings like the Kenyan Community Church or other culturally ethnic churches around the US, but every single church community must and always engage fully, in body, mind and spirit. This study is also an intent in my role as a church leader to look into the good of one’s congregation, to look at the positive aspects of it, and fashion programs that would embody the body, mind and spirit, for “by the mercies of God, [we ought to] present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is [our] spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing, [we] may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Christianity need not decline if all of us live fully in His words.

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APPENDIX

KCC Bibliodrama Troupe

Introduction to a bibliodramatic method;
In preparation for the Play, *Athaliah*, by Jean Racine

NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR: This activity is meant to demonstrate the type of activities that could be done when interpreting Biblical text. Maximum size of each group should be 6-8, and the material is fit for 16-18 year olds.

KEY TEXT: 2 Kings 11. The students are expected to have read 2 Kings on their own, prior to the bibliodramatic activity.

WARM UP:
Divide the students into pairs. Instruct them that one partner should be blindfolded; while another one is to guide them. Set up a pre-determined path, with few obstacles that must be maneuvered around. Set them on this course using empty chairs.

Debrief:

How did it feel to not be able to find your own way?
What was the best thing about having someone else help you?
How did it feel to help the other person?

Everyone to sit in a wide circle. Allow the interpretation to flow based on this question. Although the importance of this activity is on family loyalty, as a facilitator, do not suggest that, but simply allow them to imply it.

THE ACTION: Read 2 Kings 11 dramatically. You can switch from one speaker to the next, use-voicing technique. Note that they do not need to stand up in the theatrical sense, but could use voice projections, gestures while seated, and facial expression as they read through. The Facilitator needs to help the troupe to be convinced that even their gestures and voices give meaning to the story. Encourage them, even while seated to use

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3 As in the manipulation of voice projection to convey dramatization of character.
tapping of feet and other sounds such as alliterations and onomatopoea to recreate the scenes. Allow them to have a part to play each time.

REVIEWING: Using the principle found in *Finding God in the Grafitti*, allow the teens to get an item from a pile of props laying on the floor. It could be a shawl, a crown, a toy, or any random material that the facilitator chose and sometimes randomly selected because of availability, but these are various materials that could represent the story. Bibliodramatic exercise would not need props, but because this is the first session, allow bibliodrama using objects and scenarios as sources of contemplation among this group.

DE-ROLLING:
Allow the students to go back to their non-bibliodramatic roles and identify each of the items they picked out, and allow them to narrate why they think it relates to them and their roles in the first place. The point of the exercise is not to identify items that matches the character, but the person embodying it.

SHARING:
Allow the participants to share and talk about what it was like for them to play certain parts, and what they felt while doing it, and what might have they seen in that activity about themselves.

EXEGESIS:
Using a Bible commentary, connect the bibliodramatic work in pairs, find a comfortable seat and table where pairs resume their roles from actors to students, while the facilitators becomes the teacher again rather than the director-directress.

This process requires at least an hour and a half, preferably uninterrupted by other programs while ongoing.

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4 Frank Rogers, Ibid, 36-38.


*Athaliah, a Monologue from the play by Jean Racine.* Performed by Sonia Bourdages, posted June 28, 2017 on YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWqCwnfCyls.
Beal, Timothy & Gunn David. Reading Bibles, Writing Bodies. Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge, 1996.


