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RELIGION AND THE
ADOLESCENT PERSONALITY

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Philosophy

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity

by
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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF ADOLESCENT PERSONALITY

In an attempt to gain a clearer picture of adolescent personality, psychologists and psychoanalysts, counselors and pastors have concerned themselves very much with this problem. Adolescence is a culmination of many things that have gone before, and its effects will continue in later life. Adolescence is not a life by itself, but a stage in a total life!¹ Therefore, the events and happenings of adolescence cannot be cut off from the total life. "There is no characteristic of adolescence whose germ may not be found in childhood, and whose consequences may not be traced in maturity and old age."² The adolescent needs sympathetic help and guidance. He is preparing for life, and what he experiences or becomes during these years of storm and stress will determine much of his future.

The adolescent belongs in a certain age group indeed, but this age will vary in individuals, as well as between girls and boys. One factor causing the variation is the variability of the pubertal period, as well as the critical nature of the period itself. "Puberty means the dawning of the sex life, and the beginning of the unfolding of the procreative capacities."³ Puberty covers the years eleven to thirteen. Girls usually begin to develop sooner than boys. Adolescence is that period of time which extends from puberty to full physical maturity.⁴ The age limits here will be fourteen to twenty-one years.

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1. Frederick Tracy, The Psychology of Adolescence, p. 5
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid., p. 16
 4. Ibid.

The girls usually reach physical maturity before the boys. Most states recognize eighteen years and twenty-one years as the time when physical maturity is attained. In the southern states of our country it seems that development is faster, and so this age limit is reduced by about two years.

As one begins to explore the mind and thoughts of the adolescent, one must go below the surface to see what the person is and what makes him that way. Here begins the study of personality. Some have thought that it would be better to study personality after maturity has been attained because so many changes occur during adolescence that it is hard to establish set standards of judgment for them. What is important is not how personality is studied, but the recognition that adolescence is the time at which definite qualities and characteristics of personality develop. It is also the time when aberrations and abnormalities that have been said to characterize adolescent development appear.⁵ At this time the personality pattern begins to become integrated.

Personality has been defined in many ways. One way is to define personality as the sum total of a person's habits. Another stresses the effect that one person has on another. One who has a pleasant disposition or certain winning ways is classified as having a fine personality. These definitions make personality a pattern of personal habits and qualities. If the good habits are dominant, it is said that this person has a good or a strong personality. The integrated pattern, formed by the combination of the many personal traits and habits, determines whether a personality is strong or weak, liked or disliked.⁶ By the same token a good personality is the individual who is well liked, well adjusted and influential.⁷ An individual cannot live by and

5. Ada Hart Arlitt, Adolescent Psychology, p. 172.

6. Earl G. Lockhart, Improving Your Personality, p. 26.

7. Ibid., p. 25.

to himself, for man is a social being. In view of this, personality has been defined as "the extent to which the individual has developed habits and skills which interest and serve others."⁸ This definition makes man too mechanical, and it allows a hypocrite to be classified as a good personality. That certainly is untenable.

The individual's capacities and experiences are a part of the person. "I am a part of all that I have met" is certainly true of the personality. But to say that the individual is the sum total of all that he has inherited and experienced⁹ is not adequate to cover the definition of personality. All these definitions are helpful, but they tell something about the personality instead of defining personality.

"Personality . . . is the individual self. It is the unique entity we call the person. A personality is the whole man, physical and mental, which of course includes all that heredity has furnished and all modifications which training and environment have brought about. It is better to think of developing personalities than of developing the personality of individuals, as though personality were a special character trait which might be attained. It is more scientific we believe to say that an individual is a fine personality than to say that he has a fine personality."¹⁰

This definition is the most tenable, for the term personality signifies the whole person, body, mind, character, voice, habits and attributes.¹¹ When one deals with personality, he is dealing with people.

The things that make me what I am are the determining factors that make and shape my personality or myself. In non-technical terms it has been said that a person is the books he has read, the church he attends, the effect that its teachings have on him, his method of greeting acquaintances and friends,

8. Henry C. Link, The Rediscovery of Man, pp. 60 - 61.
 9. Mc Elhinney - Smith, Personality and Character Building, p. 123
 10. Ibid., p. 95
 11. Earl G. Lockhart, Op. Cit., p. 25

the way in which he studies or reads, his hobbies, his behavior under emotional strain, the persistence with which he carries out his plans and holds to his original purpose, the presence or absence of escape and defense mechanisms, his purpose in life, and a long list of other such characteristics both mental and physical.¹² Heredity and environment play a great part in determining what kind of a personality one is. Through heredity a person acquires various characteristics, strong and weak. Notable among such characteristics are physical appearance, strength, and stamina. Some of the mental capacities are also passed on. Historians like to point to the Edwards family of colonial fame and stature. There is no doubt that heredity plays a great part in personality. The environment molds and shapes the individual. Many things come into the picture here. The family life is of the greatest importance in developing ideals, morals, habits, and attitudes. The economic status of the family means much. It may mean that an individual has all the physical comforts of life or that the individual has to work and scrape to get along. This may determine whether he lives in high society and associates with the elite or whether he lives on the other side of the tracks and pals around with the scum of the earth. One's social relationships, the people he associates with, will have an effect on him.

No one can look into the mind or soul of man to see exactly what he is; nevertheless personality can be evaluated and judged. "We judge a personality to be good, weak or bad according to: 1. The degree of control over others he exerts; 2. The degree of pleasantness or unpleasantness he arouses in others; 3. The character of his social adjustment."¹³ According to these standards of judgment, one may esteem a certain person very highly, because of

12. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 163
 13. Earl G. Lockhart, Op. Cit., p. 28

his pleasing manners and mannerisms, but in reality he may be playing the part of a hypocrite. Such a person could not be classified as being a good personality, but there is no other way of judging than those mentioned.

Every individual or personality displays various traits. The following is a partial list of such individual (personality) traits:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Courage | Unselfishness |
| Cheerfulness | Sympathy |
| Emotional control | Dependability |
| Conscientiousness | Willingness to take responsibility for our own acts |
| Accuracy | Ability to face facts |
| Initiative | Presence of defense mechanisms |
| Popularity | Presence of escape mechanisms |
| Speed of decision | Judgment |
| Persistence | Reasoning capacity |
| Modesty | Rote memory |
| Self-confidence | Memory for sense material |
| Industry | Speed of reaction |
| Attention | Pride. |
| Selfishness | 14 |

A well-balanced personality is usually regarded as one that can easily adjust itself to society and circumstances. Nobody is perfect, so many mal-adjustments appear. A number of such personality maladjustments should be noted:¹⁵

1. The frequent use of defence mechanisms: excuses, sarcasm, irritable, feeling of being 'picked on'. Such a person is constantly on the defensive and rarely accomplishes much. This maladjustment is frequently noted in the adolescent who is striving to free himself from authority and convention.

2. Over-timidity, sense of inferiority or inadequacy with little use of defense mechanisms. This kind of person tends to be a fatalist and a defeatist.

3. Day-dreaming. It is good to day-dream at times if the person can pull himself back into reality. It is only the substitution of the day dream

14. Ada Hart Arlitt, *Op. Cit.*,
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 179 - 183.

for actual accomplishment that is harmful. If a person spends too much time day-dreaming he may find it hard to face the harsh realities of life, and retire completely to his make-believe world.

4. Over-compensation. This is an escape and defense mechanism. It compensates for timidity, for a sense of inadequacy, by showing off, speaking more loudly than companions who are also in the show-off stage. The ordinary person will meet much of this type of maladjustment in the adolescent who is trying to make his presence felt in an adult world.

Thousands of books have been written on the subject of personality, some with much and others with little success. Personality is an intriguing subject, because it deals with individuals and their very nature. The greatest and most authentic textbook on personality is the Bible, and the discoveries which psychologists have made tend to confirm rather than to contradict the codification of personality found there.¹⁶

Religion affects man greatly. Most psychologists will admit this, but many are usually very vague in their description of religion, and do not ascribe much power to it besides admitting that it has a certain amount of moralizing influence. The religion spoken of here is the Christian religion. This religion is based on God's Word and revelation in the Bible. God is more than a mere idea, more than an influence. God is real. According to the Bible all men have sinned and incurred God's just wrath and punishment upon themselves. Because of His great love for mankind, He sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross and to rise again on the third day that all might be cleansed from their sins through faith in Jesus our Savior. This knowledge and acceptance of Jesus is the power that changes man. It turns him from sin and directs him to God and

16. Henry C. Link, The Rediscovery of Man, p. 235

holy living. All the conduct of a Christian must flow out of a proper relation to God. The redemption wrought by Jesus provides the power, and the life of Jesus provides the example for Christian ethics and behavior. The essence of Christianity which distinguishes it from pagan religions, natural religion, or a code of ethics is love; the love of God producing love in man. An outstanding contribution of Christianity is "its insistence on the supreme value of the individual in a scheme of things where love, faith, and moral law transcend all man's intellectual schemes and mechanical concepts".¹⁷

Important in the study of personality is the Biblical concept of the image of God. Gen. 1: 26, 27, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

God himself was the pattern after which man was made. This idea gives real value to the individual, and elevates him to a high level. No other religious system gives such worth to the individual.

"The divine image consisted not simply in man's original endowment with intelligence and will, so that he, in contradistinction to all animals, was a rational being, but above all in the right disposition of his intellect and will, so that by means of his undepraved intellect he knew God and divine things and by means of his uncorrupt will desired only what God wills." ¹⁸

In this state man was innocent and holy, free from sin and pollution. This original condition of man was one of supreme happiness; for his soul was wise and holy, his body free from suffering and death; his condition of life most blessed; and his condition of habitation was most pleasant.¹⁹

17. Henry C. Link, The Rediscovery of Man, p. 235
 18. John Theodore Mueller, Christian Dogmatics, p. 205
 19. Ibid., p. 228

Since the coming of sin into the world man is no longer in an uncorrupt state but in a state of corruption. Through the Fall man has entirely lost the image of God in its proper sense, that is, his concreate wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, so that his intellect now is veiled in spiritual darkness, 1 Cor. 2:14, and his will is opposed to God, Rom. 8, 7.²⁰ According to Gen. 1: 26, 27 the immediate results of the divine image in man were immortality and dominion. Because of sin man possesses only a faint semblance of this absolute dominion over the creatures. Now he must use force and cunning to control the creatures over which he tries to rule.

A distinction is usually made between the formal and material image. According to the formal image man is a person and endowed with intelligence, will, and other capacities. Man has this even after the fall. This formal image distinguishes him as a man and as a moral being. The material image is the righteousness and holiness that was lost in the fall of man into sin.

The idea of the image of God brings into focus the concept of sin. Man responds in many evil ways. There must be a cause for the great amount of trouble and unhappiness in the world. Man has many evil traits. Even many of his supposedly good traits are tainted. A trait is an internal disposition set up by training or experience and generalized sufficiently to appear in many situations. There must be some general trait that affects every other one. There must be a factor of saturation, and this is sin. Sin is an inner disposition of and inclination to evil. This trait of original sin must be inferred in order to be able to understand people and their actions. The essential element of sin is pride. Research workers are on the right trail when they recognize in individuals an inherent selfishness, but this does not go far enough to get at its roots. The Christian psychologist, pastor, or

20. Ibid., p. 207.

counselor is able to be of greatest service to the individual, because he can recommend a cure to man's greatest need. Through the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit enters into the heart of man and changes, "converts", him. The Bible and its message brings light to dark hearts, gives purpose to living, hope, patience, comfort, direction, and holiness of life, purpose, thought, and deed.

The study of adolescent personality has great value. Some may expect to find an accurate gauge of human behavior through such a study, but they will be disillusioned. No one shall be able to understand another person completely. No one is able to state definitely how a certain person will respond in every instance to a given circumstance or stimulus. If one were able to do this man would cease to be a free moral being, and would be reduced to a mechanical mechanism. Sin, freedom of choice, intelligence, heredity, environment, and religious convictions all affect a person's reactions, and these factors cannot be measured. On the other hand, a study of the adolescent with his unique influences, motives, drives, attitudes, and developments will help the observer to understand his behavior better, and to be sympathetic with his special problems. Such a study will prepare the adult to lend a guiding hand as parent, counselor, or pastor to those who are floundering through the uncertainties and changes of adolescence. The Christian counselor will not only be able to understand and sympathize with their problems, but will be able to offer help directly from the Word of God.

According to the set-up of this thesis, chapters two to five will discuss the problems, needs, and irregularities of the adolescent, and chapter six will attempt to provide the answer to the problem of adolescent living. Religion will be set up as the guiding and stabilizing influence.

Chapter II

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERSONALITY

One of the most interesting things about adolescents is the fact that they are growing, developing, and changing. They are developing in a more special way now that they are leaving childhood behind and preparing to enter the adult world with its purposes and difficulties. This process of development brings with it various problems, and that is why many adults dread the prospect of dealing with this age group. The person who stops growing altogether is of little use to society. Even if physical growth ceases, intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual growth continues.

Many teachers have the wrong idea about their pupils and their growth in personality. Maybe the fault does not lie wholly with the teachers, but with the training or normal school. Too many teachers are trained to teach their subjects, not to develop the personalities of their pupils. Link notes a study of personality traits of pupils in eighteen separate grade schools: The teachers rated fourth grade pupils higher in personality than fifth grade, and the higher the grade the lower the personality rating given by the teachers. In condemnation of this finding Link says, "Inevitably in the present scheme, the teachers' ideal of a good personality is a quietly absorbing sponge, not a positive, creative individual."¹

Development of the personality includes development of the body, intellect, emotional life, and will. If the personality is less developed in the eighth grade than in the seventh or sixth, something is wrong, either with

1. Henry C. Link, The Return to Religion, p. 158.

the child or with the teacher.

Few people realize how much the development of the body means to the individual. That is the only part of the personality that can be observed with the eye. The strong athletic type will usually have different interests and likes than the weak anemic type. Research indicates that the boys with superior or average physical development distinctly reveal more wholesome personal attitudes than the boys who are below the average in the physical measures.²

In general it may be said that physical growth is completed at about the twentieth year, although in some cases it goes on for several years yet. As a rule, very little is added to the height of the body, or to the size of the organs after this age, though the weight may increase or diminish by the addition or subtraction of fat, but the development of power, skill, and the capacity of endurance may continue until senescence, or the breakdown of the tissues due to old age, has set in.³ Moderation, even in sports and games, is extremely hard to observe, and so the physical strength is overtaxed, and this leads to periods of reaction with extreme bodily or mental weariness and inertia. Often the appetite, especially of the boys, is tremendous. Favorite foods are indulged in to excess, and if eaten too fast without proper chewing will be followed by indigestion, temporary loss of appetite, lassitude, and headache.⁴ To many young people, especially girls, fat meat is very distasteful, and the very sight of it is enough to cause a shudder. On the other hand, the appetite for pastries, sweets, and candy seems to be practically uncontrollable in many cases. "While this may very likely be a symptom of some

2. Hedley S. Dimock, Rediscovering the Adolescent, p. 84

3. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 33

4. Ibid., p. 34

real organic need, it is pretty certain that much of the instability of adolescent health is due to the unrestrained character of the adolescent appetite."⁵ Observations show that the period of most rapid growth, which is usually from twelve to fifteen years, while plagued by many ailments, has such great power of resistance that it is also the period of most marked vitality.⁶

The following chart shows the average height of boys and girls between the ages of twelve to sixteen years:

| <u>Age</u> | <u>Boys</u> | <u>Girls</u> |
|------------|------------------|--------------|
| 12 | 55 in. | 55 + in. |
| 13 | 57 | 58 |
| 14 | 60 - | 60 |
| 15 | 62 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 62 |
| 16 | 65 - | 63 |

In boys the most rapid growth in height takes place during the fourteenth and fifteenth years. After sixteen they grow more slowly until it stops somewhere between the twentieth and the twenty-third year. The girls reach their adult stature around the nineteenth year. For nearly three years girls are actually taller than boys of the same age. Adults should not make fun of a boy if his twin sister or even his younger sister is taller than he. This difference is natural. The same thing is true with regard to weight.

The heart itself grows more rapidly during the early years of the period and its actual size is nearly doubled during the adolescent years.⁷ The lungs and larynx increase in size, capacity, and power, especially in boys.

The development of muscular control takes place first in the larger and more fundamental muscles, and later in those of finer function. The effect of "a rapid increase in height taken together with the adolescent ration of increase in muscle tissue makes for muscular incoordination".⁸ This is very

5. Ibid., p. 35.

6. Ibid., p. 35.

7. Ibid., p. 29.

8. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 16.

noticeable in both boys and girls, but especially the poor sophomore boys in high school who try out for the basketball team. They always seem to be falling over their own feet. Many boys and girls are very self-conscious about this lack of coordination. This peculiar awkwardness is due to the slow development of neuromuscular patterns, and therefore temporary incoordination, and to the fact that disproportionate growth of muscles and bones frequently occurs.⁹

This incoordination results in certain "motor phenomena resembling habit ties";¹⁰ he moves about constantly while in a sitting position, develops such habits as twisting buttons, sliding ties, and so on. Some times these things appear to be the lack of consideration for adults, but they are merely the result of sudden or unequal growth without increase in coordinated neuromuscular patterns.

Throughout childhood the sexual system has lain dormant, but about the eleventh or twelfth year a rapid acceleration in the growth of the whole body begins, and this includes the development of the sex organs. Sex growth involves much more than can be expressed in terms of anatomy and physiology. The whole body, and especially the pelvic system, begins to round out towards its adult form. In the female a marked development takes place in the hips and in the mammae, while the entire body takes on a new fulness and grace of contour.¹¹ The timid or self-conscious girl may try to cover up this new development by walking and sitting in a stooped position or round shouldered. In both sexes a new growth of hair makes its appearance on the pubic and other regions of the body. One reaction among the boys is that they can't wait till they can

9. Ibid., p. 22.

10. Ibid., p. 3.

11. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 32.

take their first shave. To them this is a sign of approaching manhood. Happy are those boys and girls who can go through this period of growth in a natural and normal manner, not retarded by hardships, nor hastened by excessive excitements and premature acquaintance with emotions and ideas that belong by right only to adult and married life. This sexual growth is preparing them to assume a God-given purpose of life when they reach maturity, namely, that of procreation.

Because of all these changes going on, many teen-agers are a little bewildered. The uneven distribution of growth during this period, the jerky and unstable progression of growth, the appearance of conspicuous individual differences, the sudden development of sexual characteristics with their intimate connotations are among the physiological factors which make severe demands upon the adolescents' adaptive capacity.¹² For some this task is too great with the result that many become mentally and socially disorganized.

The general health of the body, especially during the earlier years of the period of adolescence, may be very well described by the phrase "unstable equilibrium". Growth is rapid, development is asymmetrical, appetite is capricious, and very imperfectly controlled.¹³ Likes and dislikes are very strong, and not always balanced by a strong will.

As one studies the development of the personality he is next led to consider the development of the intellect. There are many who never advance any further than the stage of a moran, and there are others who are child prodigies or "quiz kids", but the average adolescent and his development is here being considered. Even in the average adolescent group there is a marked difference in the ability to learn. The differences here are probably greater

12. Peter Blos, The Adolescent Personality, p. 234

13. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 34.

than the physical and emotional differences within the same group. The differences in ability to learn are easily discernable early in life already. The grade school teacher knows this very well. What one pupil will learn and remember in one day may take another one week to master. It seems that the more advanced the grade, the less the differences, because those at the bottom tend to drop out along the way. Thus the difference in high school is not as great as in grade school, and still less in college, university, and post-graduation classes.

The process of development from the infant to the discriminable personality of the adult is dependent on both maturation and learning, but the greater of these is learning.¹⁴ Man learns by experience and by study. Many adolescents are able to learn more by observation and experience than by study. In these cases the interests and fields of activity are probably very different. Even if these boys and girls make poor grades in school, they may still be very successful in life because they are very practical and know how to manage their affairs.

Much of a person's learning depends on his memory. "The most noticeable features in the growth of the memory power, as childhood passes into youth, are first, the rapid multiplication of memories, and second, the development of the power to unify memories into a system, and to hold in the mind, not only single memory images, but the connexions and relations of these images with one another."¹⁵ This latter point is very important, and the teacher must consciously endeavor to point out the relation and connection of ideas, places, events, names, and dates. Many times a young person will ask, "What does that have to do with what we are talking about?" He wants to establish a connection,

14. Ross Stagner, Psychology of Personality, p. 78.

15. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 89.

and this will also help in his ability to retain this thought in his memory. This is "a symptom of the growth of the mental powers and faculties toward their adult form".¹⁶ Memory combinations and associations are developed in great abundance and variety from the twelfth year. Observations and tests show that boys tend to have better memories than girls for relations and connections of impressions, while girls as a rule possess better memories for isolated impressions.¹⁷ According to this a boy and a girl may have the same I. Q., but if all the tests are factual, such as a history test may be, the girl probably will get the higher grades, while if the test deals with theory or if it is a discussion type, the boy will probably come out ahead.

The attitude and interest that a student has over against the teacher or the subject taught will often help determine the amount that a person learns. If they feel there is a need for them to study, they will apply themselves more diligently. In many cases the need will be to get a passing grade, so they will take notes without paying attention and cram without learning. Adequate learning, therefore, is partly in proportion to the need which is felt by the individual learner.¹⁸ Some adolescents are able to adapt themselves and modify their likes and dislikes. This ability will also affect their ability to learn.

In ability to learn, a curve on a chart would show an increase from age ten to somewhere between twenty and thirty and a gradual decrease from approximately thirty on.¹⁹ A number of more recent researches have indicated that distributed practice and study is better than to have it all concentrated.²⁰ Of course the best length of time of the practice or study period on one

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 90.

18. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., pp. 118 - 119.

19. Ibid., p. 119. Arlitt refers to the finding of E. L. Thorndike and associates in Adult Learning, p. 126.

20. Ibid., p. 121.

subject depends greatly on the subject matter that is to be mastered. At adolescence longer periods of time can be spent on one subject, because of the increase in the powers of concentration. The degree of concentration depends upon many factors both physical and psychological. The person who is nervous or fidgety will find it harder to concentrate for a long period of time than one who is calm and collected. Apparently the greater the extent to which attention can be increased, the more rapid the rate of learning.²¹ The manner of presentation by the teacher, and the specific interest on the part of the student come into consideration here. The one who is mechanically inclined will pay more attention and participate more in the physics class than in the Latin class. Some teachers are so gifted that they can gain the attention of practically all of the students in the class. The teacher cannot always be blamed for a student's poor showing. It may be due to some of the considerations that have been mentioned already, or it may be because of innate laziness and insubordination on the part of the learner.

As far as there is any research on the subject, the intention to remember has great effect in the length of time which the material is retained.²² If, for example, the student studies for an examination which is to occur on Tuesday with the intention of remembering just for that day, forgetting proceeds at a rapid rate.

Non-voluntary attention is attention given willingly, because the individual has an interest in the material presented. Voluntary attention is attention given with effort and often against distraction.²³ The ability to give voluntary attention increases slowly and only with training.

21. Ibid., p. 123.

22. Ibid., pp. 124 - 125.

23. Ibid., p. 131.

The medium intelligence for citizens of the United States is somewhere between the age of fourteen and sixteen years.²⁴ This does not mean that the individual can no longer go on learning, nor does it mean that the individual will always be restricted in his behavior to the limit set by adolescent experience. Roughly what it means is that the individual has the capacity to learn characteristic of the fifteen-year-old.

The mind in adolescence begins to go further below the surface of things. It looks for a reason. It will not accept convention at face value. "The child's mind is mostly limited to what is presented; the mind of the adolescent reaches out to that which is implicated or involved in the presentation."²⁵ In the later period of the teens the development of the powers of the mind and body begins to settle into more regular lines and to take on a somewhat more sober character.²⁶ These powers begin to come under more effective control.

It is difficult to measure growth in intelligence or mental capacities. It can be said that mental growth may be measured by the breadth of view, the depth of insight, the steadiness of the aims, the loftiness of purposes that are formed, the way in which these purposes are followed up, and the way in which all distracting inclinations are subdued and brought into harmony with the aims and purposes.²⁷ As the adolescent approaches more and more to the adult stage there seems to be a desire to discover truth and acquire knowledge. Arguments that appeal to reason and logic will find an eager audience among the late teen-agers.

It is interesting to listen to the rationalizing of the adolescent.

24. Ibid., p. 150.

25. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 18.

26. Ibid., p. 45.

27. Ibid.

Sometimes they will develop a habit of rationalization that is difficult to break,²⁸ and which may not be good. Many times their rationalizations will be only attempts to excuse themselves. Such arguments might run like this, "I won't open a book, because I'm too tired to study anyway," or "the teacher is no good, so I won't pay attention".

Because of the many problems of adolescent education the need for more Christian secondary schools and teachers cannot be overstressed.

The third development to be considered is that of the emotional life. An emotion has been described in a simple but sufficiently accurate manner as a 'stirred-up state of the entire organism'.²⁹ One does not experience an emotion in any single part of the body but throughout one's entire being. The physical changes that take place during an emotional experience are produced through the action of the autonomic system.³⁰ During the earlier years of the period of adolescence the development of feeling is relatively very pronounced; while in the later years the rational powers gradually overtake the emotional, and establish that balance and control which is the mark of maturity.³¹

The three simple emotions are fear, anger, and love. Anger may be represented by irritation through prodding, fury, anger, rage. Fear would include insecurity, worry, nervousness, embarrassment, anxiety, dread, regret, grief, jealousy, fear, and terror. Love embraces affection, fondness, reverence, respect, and sex.

In early childhood fear and anger can be seen in their clearest manifestations. This is modified that by adolescence there is more often a

28. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 77.

29. Luella Cole, Psychology of Adolescence, p. 81.

30. Ibid.

31. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 19.

general sense of insecurity. It may appear in all of its phases: mild insecurity, grief, depression, and worry.³²

At adolescence emotional tension appears to be high. They always seem to be on edge, expecting something new, looking for something exciting.

"Probably this is due in part to the function of the endocrine glands which has changed markedly with the introduction of the hormones from the gonads. It is highly probable that changes in the hormones from the gonads have produced a difference in adrenal gland function, and that since the adrenal gland seems to have so great a relation to the emotions, an unusual tension is the result. This is all the more probable since there appears to be a fundamental relation between adrenal gland secretion and the development of the secondary sex characters."³³

At adolescence, the sex instinct and the emotion love become associated, and the individual 'falls in love', a new experience. This is the period of infatuation and 'puppy-love'. Puppy love is hardly more than a rush of affection and often involves very little of the sex element.

This emotion, love, passes through a number of phases:³⁴ from birth to the sixth month the love object for the child is himself. Then it is gradually transferred to the child's mother or nurse. This continues till about the eighth year. About the fifth year boys begin to show a special interest in the father which grows. At about ten years of age, the boy's interest shifts to individuals his own age and sex. From twelve to about fifteen years, the gang spirit dominates. Then comes a gradual shift toward members of the opposite sex. He pushes, pulls, knocks against the girls who are the center of his affection, hangs on to their arms, holds hands with them. To older folks this seems silly and crude, but a new life is

32. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 53.

33. Ibid., p. 56.

34. Ibid., pp. 84 - 87.

opening up for him, and he handles himself accordingly. About this same time the boys and girls may find as their love object some older person at a distance from him or her. This may be movie actors and actresses, singers, or even teachers. Girls and boys alike appear to pass through a period in which they are more interested in falling in love than in the love object itself.³⁵

Their curiosity about sex is aroused, and they will want to find out as much information as possible. The mere giving of biological information about the other sex and reproduction is not enough to insure youth a happy adjustment toward the other sex. "They need to be taught a thoughtful control of impulses, to be enlightened about possible satisfactory sublimation of them through creative channels, and encouraged to a full and varied life which prevents morbid concentration upon that one aspect of development."³⁶

The older a person gets the greater are his number of experiences. These experiences have an effect upon him. Many changes are going on within the adolescent. New emotions are being aroused, and there are many new experiences. Thus experience becomes a developer and a part of personality.³⁷

Emotional maturity in the anger-rage series shows itself in the absence of defense mechanisms and in the absence of displays of temper or irritability in the presence of resistance. These may be considered as tests of emotional maturity in regard to the emotion fear:³⁸ (1) that

35. Ibid., p. 101.

36. "The Adolescent in the Family" in The White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, p. 58. This quotation is significant, because it comes from a group that studied the situation and made their report to Pres. Hoover. They were not clergymen.. This is in contradistinction to the idea that education will solve all sex problems of the adolescent.

37. Ira S. Wile, The Challenge of Adolescence, p. 151.

38. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., pp. 104 - 105.

the individual faces the facts of the case, and that he does not try to relegate these to the subconscious or to escape from them by any of the escape mechanisms; (2) that he examines the situation to determine the factors which may have affected the result; (3) that he tries to adjust himself to the situation and to develop adequate techniques so that these will tend to produce success, or if this is impossible, he turns to other interests and develops adequate techniques for success in them.

Emotional maturing in the fear-worry series presupposes a definite increase in the sense of security felt by the individual. The Christian Religion can provide the answer to a great degree. Security in the adolescent also depends upon the acceptance by his family, and by the social group in which he functions.³⁹

In general it can be said that the control of the emotions is the sign of approaching maturity. It is now known that emotional development is necessary for intellectual growth and maturity. Conversely, intellectual development should contribute to emotional stability.⁴⁰ "The ways in which he meets the new sensations and social problems, the kinds of attitudes he forms toward growing up are fundamental indicators of his emotional development."⁴¹

All of the factors mentioned in this chapter contribute to the development of the will. The will is the expression of the whole personality. Therefore, as the whole personality, or its various phases develop, so also proportionately the will develops. Especially important in the development of the will is the part that the home, church, and school play. These

39. Ibid., p. 105.

40. The White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, Op. Cit.,

41. Peter Blos, Op. Cit., p. 267

p. 10.

agencies help to form ideals and attitudes which directly influence the direction of the will. Here again the idea of original sin must be considered. Sin has filled the whole being, and by nature the will is turned away from God. The will must be turned back to God, and this is accomplished only by faith in the redemption of Jesus Christ.

Sometimes there is a conflict between desire and capacity, or between capacity and will, and this may produce definite reactions that are distressing to the adolescent.⁴² The adolescent who is continually thwarted in his efforts or babied and not allowed to make any decisions for himself will gradually hesitate to express himself in any way.

A person usually wills according to the standards that he has set up and accepts as true and binding. Will power is the extent to which the person adheres to the decision he has come to or to the ideal which he has set up. The part that regeneration plays is unquestionable, and the contribution of the church, home, and school immeasurable.

⁴². Ira S. Wile, Op. Cit., p. 161.

Chapter III

OUTSTANDING TRAITS OF ADOLESCENTS

Many of the traits which adolescents show mark them as problems by those who are unable to understand or interpret their actions. To many the adolescent is a loud mouthed, rowdy, impolite, and doubting individual. To be sure the average adolescent may appear to possess these undesirable characteristics. Their actions often seem incoherent and unpredictable. The adult should not forget that ^{at} one time in his life he went through and did the very same things that the average adolescent is doing today. The times have changed, and the conditions are different, but the drives and responses are essentially the same.

Closely connected with the emotional tension of the adolescent is the fact that everything must thrill. The appetite seeks what is stimulating to the palate, the muscles cry out for strenuous exertion, and the mind for a story with an exciting plot. Hence intemperance, in all forms, is apt to show itself, and unless checked, to fix itself as a life habit.¹ When it comes to foods, the extremes are the order of the day. They want the thickest milkshake, the sweetest candy, the dillest pickle, and the most tender roast. Checkers are generally too tame. Give them a fast game of basketball, or a bone-bruising football or hockey game. If the book does not have an exciting or thrilling plot, it is no good. The movie must be thrilling in adventure, emotion, or passion.

A constant source of amazement is their tremendous store of energy. It seems that they are always on the go. If they have to sit down for an

1. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 35.

evening at home and do little, this is rare. Some will find it hard to sit still in classes. Energy can be expended in two general ways: physically and mentally. The modern day teen ager goes to high school, belongs to several clubs or societies, probably an athletic team, a choir group, attends meetings, social events, and may even work after school hours or on week-ends. An emotion or emotional experience may buoy them up to such an extent that they perform over and above their natural capacity and skill. Often this is followed by periods of extreme fatigue or, if the opposition was too great, with frustration.

The energy is there and bubbling over. Adequate outlets for the energy which would ordinarily have gone into sex expression must be provided in the form of athletics, hobbies of some sort or another, and the like.² This idea is very important in dealing with teen-agers. Instead of suppressing their energy, instead of condemning their actions, they must be given something good to do. Their potential is very great, and it should not go to waste. The church and the nation must develop a plan or program to utilize this energy. If the energy of the adolescent is guided and directed into the proper channels, the church and the nation possesses a great source of strength in its youth.

Another trait is ambition, the desire to get ahead. This is probably part of the general drive for power. In an attempt to assert themselves, they want to plan and do big things. They often aim at things over their head and are disappointed when everything does not come their way. In their desire to get ahead they often rebel against the conventional way of doing things. The accepted way may seem to be too

2. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 12.

slow and inefficient. This often will explain their action. Anything that appears to them to thwart their drives will be resisted. This may bring them into conflict with authority. Discipline at adolescence must be largely in the nature of self-government if it is to be successful - at least let them think they are governing themselves -, for against an authority which is too compelling, the adolescent reacts with resistances so violent that he may transfer these resistances entirely from the individual who stirred them up to all authority.³

There is throughout life a desire on the part of individuals to conquer. At no time is this desire more powerful than during the adolescent period, when the individual becomes a member of a social group in which he feels he must excel if possible. In order so to excel, he must demonstrate his ability to measure up to the standards set by the group and to control the situations in which the group finds itself.⁴ This brings up the idea of competition. In competition there is a desire for power over both persons and things. At adolescence this desire to compete is probably stronger than at any preceding period. The desire for power over objects and situations finds its normal outlet through adolescent activities such as group games, dramatics, and the like. Young people like to play, and this should be encouraged as much as possible. Sacrifice of self to the team's needs is an excellent check on the desire for power which would lead the individual to use his skill for his own ends rather than for those of the group.⁵

Next the adolescent is noted for being a sceptic. This is largely

3. Ibid., p. 29.
4. Ibid., p. 35.
5. Ibid., p. 45.

due to his expanding intellect, and helps to give weight to the statement that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing". Many of the fundamental truths of life are doubted, and about the only way of dealing with them is to guide their thinking, so that they themselves arrive at the correct conclusion. In this present period of the world reason is glorified. When the youth enters high school, an appeal is made to reason, especially in the sciences. In life there are many things that are not "reasonable", and these will probably be doubted for a while. The individual will not take a person's word just because he happens to be a teacher or an authority on the subject, unless the adolescent has supreme confidence in him through previous experience. Many of the doctrines of the Bible will be questioned. This is due partly to sin, but also to an expanding intellect and a general quest for truth on the basis of reason. Religious doubts are frequent, and they should not be overlooked or just downright condemned. Take these problems and discuss them on the basis of God's Word. Logic will appeal to them, and pastors and counselors should use it as much as possible when dealing with their doubts.

The adolescent will pass from periods of hilarity to moodiness. A period of moodiness may come as a result of having met opposition in one way or another. The individual may feel that his freedom of expression has been infringed upon, or that he has been singled out for special punishment. He feels hemmed in on all sides. On the other hand, it may be caused by a sense of guilt or shame which in turn may have been caused by a mistake or a wrong deed or attitude. They are growing up, and some of the problems of life and living loom up large for the time being, so their moodiness may be a result of a general feeling of inability to cope with these problems.

Some parents are very concerned about their sons and daughters who show signs of moodiness. Ordinarily there is no cause for alarm, just for understanding, but if this moodiness becomes habitual and regular, then the cause should be determined and a cure effected. This should be done before the individual becomes a case for a mental institution.

One can hardly imagine a teen ager who does not want a lot of social life. This desire for social life is one of the most obvious developments in his behavior. That means that he will want to belong to a team, club, fraternity, sorority, or society, and if he is rejected will feel very uncomfortable and hurt. He wears his school colors, cheers with his class, and might feel cheated if he were not allowed to go to dances, games, and the like in large groups.⁶ The kind of group that the son or daughter belongs to should be of great concern to every parent. In early adolescence the groups are generally restricted to the same sex, but within three or four years the groups tend to be mixed.

If the adolescent wishes to be alone and not to associate with groups, something is wrong, and his adjustment is not adequate. This individual may have certain inhibitions that will not permit him to be a member of certain groups, or the group may not accept a person because he lacks certain qualities which the group considers essential.

There is a tendency to do as others do. It is this tendency which makes the child fit into the group as a member who does what the group does, thinks what the group thinks, wears what the group wears.⁷ The boys and girls are acutely aware of social pressures and relationships. It is this sensitivity that leads the adolescent into the conformity characteristic of

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., p. 47.

the period.⁸ Deviations in dress and manners from the mode of the group are painful.

The last outstanding trait of adolescents to be considered is self-consciousness. This is the feeling that everybody is or should be looking at me, that a new rule is directed against me, that I am being picked on, that I am indispensable. They are self-conscious about their physical appearance, and their achievements. Closely connected with this is the desire for recognition. In order to cover up a weakness or lack of certain aptitudes, they will try to assert themselves in various ways that seem strange to adults, and even contradictory to the nature of the adolescent. The loud voices and "monkeyshines" which one sees in adolescent groups on street cars, the extraordinarily loud ties and socks, the slavish following of style to its extreme are all evidence of this trend to gain recognition and attention. Thus the most timid person may try to cover up his inadequacy by being the loudest person or by adopting some defense mechanism.

These traits make this special age group an interesting one to work with. Every parent and counselor should be acquainted with their special problems, and be ready to help in a friendly manner. "The adolescent needs a sense of independence while at the same time he should be able to go to an adult for consultation and to share his confidences. A combination of independence and the dependence which comes from a knowledge that adults have a wider experience and can give adequate counsel are both necessary."⁹

8. Luella Cole, Op. Cit., p. 217.
9. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., P. 59.

Chapter IV

EMOTIONAL LIFE DURING ADOLESCENCE

In Chapter II under the development of the personality it was pointed out that there is a development of the emotional life. The emotional life of the adolescent increases to such an extent that he is guided and ruled more by his emotions than by any other single factor. Often more is accomplished by appealing to their emotions than to their intellect. Instead of calm deliberations, there are snap judgments; instead of deliberate planning and working, things are done on the spur of the moment and upon impulse.

The complexities of life during adolescence naturally give rise to many unsatisfactory if not adverse conditions. These promote emotional strain and increase personal dissatisfaction; they heighten internal tension and lessen external peace.¹ The well known moodiness of young men and women, which makes them pass from extreme depression and melancholy to extreme hilariousness, and back again, has its roots in the emotional unsteadiness of the period.²

The emotional life at adolescence is very unstable. This instability is due to several factors. In the first place, there is a sense of insecurity due to the transition from the child's to the adult's world. No longer do they want to be classified as children, for they feel new powers and sensations at work within themselves; still they also realize that they are not physically mature, and thus cannot be classified as adults. This may lead them to feel that they are leading a special life that is

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1. Ira S. Wile, Op. Cit., p. 152.
 2. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 100.

disconnected in any way with the future adult life.

"Up to adolescence the child expands in a protective and encouraging environment. During adolescence he is confronted with the necessity of re-orientating himself completely to life."³ As a child he could depend on getting practically everything at home, but now he has to help himself more. This may include doing odd jobs in the neighborhood, or straightening out his own difficulties in school. Connected with all the physical and mental changes that are going on, the adolescent will have to adopt a whole new outlook on life, or else expand the original outlook very much. He is confronted by apparently inexplicable changes within himself and is at a loss as to how to adjust himself to the world around him.⁴ The way in which he is able to adjust himself is a test of his personality.

An idea which many young people constantly have in mind is their independence of their parents and adults in general. Age and maturity spell this freedom, while any symbol which connotes youth or childhood is a reminder of what they might consider serfdom, out of which they have been working, and against which they have been striving.⁵ Often they feel that their rights of freedom and judgment are infringed upon, and as a result will rebel. This often causes friction in the home, and also at school.

"A young person is very sure that he has outgrown and rejected his childish past, while at the same time he secretly suspects that he has not come into his future estate of manhood or womanhood."⁶ This is a cause for the insecurity and instability of this particular age, and the individual will often make use of any number of defense mechanisms or escapes from reality.

3. Whitehouse Conference, Op. Cit., p. 12.

4. Ibid., p. 58.

5. George W. Crane, Psychology Applied, p. 225.

6. Paul E. Johnson, Psychology of Religion, p. 73.

Respect for the home and obedience to parents does not cease with the advent of adolescence; nevertheless, it is true that a certain amount of emancipation from home ties is necessary because the adolescent will never be a real adult as long as his parents make his decisions for him, protect him from unpleasantness, and plan his daily life.⁷ All of this produces a feeling of insecurity which affects the emotional life of the adolescent.

Adding to the instability of the emotional life is the general trait of scepticism. The intellect is expanding, and new ideas and impressions are being formed. The old outlook on the world which consisted mainly of the city or county in which the individual lived has broadened tremendously. "New" facts seem to be discovered through the study of the sciences. The whole world order is a new and challenging field. When this differs radically from former notions, the individual will be unbalanced until he can succeed in making the proper mental adjustment.

Scepticism often brings with it a critical attitude and judgment upon the existing order or teaching. "If, in this process (of critical judgment and reflections), he encounters problems and difficulties that stagger and unsettle him for the time being, this is simply a part of the price which he has to pay for the privilege of growing up. The only other alternative is to remain a child forever."⁸

Because of their nature, religious doctrines and principles are objects of scepticism. Many adolescents find it hard to subject their new found reasoning powers to the idea of faith. This means that there will be many cases of religious doubt. This is usually not due to a malicious

7. Luella Cole, Op. Cit., p. 9.

8. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 98.

attempt to throw aside their Christian religion, but to "the expansion of the mind, the enlargement of the mental outlook, and the augmentation of the emotional currents, that take place at the time of puberty. These changes are almost certain to bring with them a new impulse to scrutinize those things that have heretofore been taken for granted."⁹ Doctrines touching the origin of things, the authority of the Bible, the person of Christ, certain of the divine attributes, certain of the attributes of the human soul and its destiny, stand first among the things that come to be doubted in these years. The Christian religion teaches that Satan, the enemy of God, makes use of scepticism as a tool to confuse and lead away from God His prize creation. No matter in what field scepticism occurs, it will contribute to the emotional instability of this age.

Much of the instability is due to varying interests. Interest will vary in intensity and the objects of interest will change. For a time music may be the main object of interest. Then, for apparently no reason at all, the center of interest may shift to photography, and for the moment all else is practically forgotten. The boy will insist that a new camera means all the world to him, and the basement is converted into a darkroom for developing pictures. For some this interest will become fixed and develop into a life's work or at least a worth while hobby. Some will find a certain phase of church work that becomes all absorbing for a while, only to wane after a while to the alarm of parents and pastors.

Interests will vary from time to time as the adolescent begins to contemplate and ask himself, "What about the future?" He may think that he has found the answer as to how to prepare for the future in a certain

9. Ibid., p. 194.

vocation or occupation. Anything that pertains to that line of work will be eagerly sought. If difficulties are met or if the novelty wears off, interest may be diverted into another direction.

Emotions are easily aroused and difficult to predict. New forces appear on all sides, and often an emotional conflict will result. In the face of difficulty or opposition, the adolescent may try to escape from reality. In his book Psychology Applied, George W. Crane lists ten normal ways out of emotional conflicts:¹⁰ (1) Nostalgia - thinking of the "good old days" when everything was quiet and serene. In reality "the good old days" may not have been a bit better than the present. (2) Inactivity - the individual can't decide what to do, so he just waits until something happens, and in this way he does not have to exert himself. (3) Flight - the desire to get away from the unpleasant situation or place. (4) Sour-grapes attitude - the disposition becomes unpleasant. (5) Dissociation - moods and ideals will vary greatly within a short period of time. One day the person will be a perfect saint, and the next day the worst sinner. (6) Compensation - the physical weakling will try to compensate for his lack of strength by becoming overly intellectual. The one who lacks skill will become reckless. (7) Projection - the individual will place the blame for an undesirable situation or act on someone else or on the environment, and in this way try to excuse himself. (8) Identification - the individual identifies himself with another person who is an outstanding person or a hero. This is often done by the avid movie fan who identifies himself with the hero of the story. (9) Rationalization - reason will be employed to explain away responsibility. (10) Any number of substitute responses.

10. pp. 523 ff.

Emotions are the spur to action. It takes feeling to get action. All sense impressions pass through the intellect and on to the emotions. If there is a response, it will be passed on to the will and action of some kind will result. This action may be an actual deed, or the formation of an attitude. If the emotions can be controlled or directed, the behavior can usually be controlled or directed into the proper expression. Especially in adolescents are feelings the spur to action; their degree is a measure of potential energy.¹¹ When well controlled, feelings are a social asset. It is true that feeling is apt to be more permanent if it rests upon reason.¹²

Emotions seek expression. A contribution of the school and of the church to emotional stability is "the provision of adequate outlets for such emotional crises as are inevitable during the adolescent period".¹³ A strong emotion will find some outlet, desirable or otherwise. If one avenue of expression is forbidden, another will be found. "Simple suppression is not a permanent solution to any emotional problem; it may work for a while, but the final release of tension is likely to be more violent because of the inhibition".¹⁴ Since emotions can cause nervous and muscular tension, anything that requires exertion acts as a relief.

Feelings constitute the innate responses out of which the complex structure of personality is erected. "Feelings are the basic responses of personality."¹⁵

"Our emotions carry us to the hilltop of hope and courage and they sink us in the slough of despondency. They may increase our physical strength and improve our personal charm, or they may deplete us to the level of invalidism.

11. Earl G. Lockhardt, Op. Cit., p. 38.

12. Ibid., p. 61.

13. Luella Cole, Op. Cit., p. 150.

14. Ibid.

15. Ross Stagner, Psychology of Personality, p. 70.

"They may make us attractive or repulsive, reasonable or irrational and insane. They may rob us of our friends, jobs and peace of mind. Our emotional habits largely determine our social adjustments, but intelligence is or may become master of the emotions." 16

For the adolescent there is the need of belonging to a group. More and more the individual becomes aware of the fact that he is a social being and as such must seek and take a place in society. Clubs and societies are plentiful, and membership is usually sought, especially if the activities and accomplishments of these societies are held up as interesting and good before the person reaches the age when he can join. Belonging to a group enhances individual importance and lends to the individual's social prestige. Because there is a sense of insecurity that arises in the transition from the child's to the adult's world, the need of belonging to a group is greater, for membership in a group brings with it a feeling of security.

The emotional life of adolescents demands group contact, and acceptance or rejection by the group will determine very much whether or not the adolescent is able to adjust himself to life.

Since it is true that adolescents live in the realm of emotion much more fully than they do in the realm of reason, it is important that youth leaders take account of every influence which will affect the emotional life.¹⁷ In this connection the need for religious experience must be noted. Religion and faith are important and strong factors in the life of every Christian. Christian doctrine is living and dynamic, and it must touch more than the intellect. It must necessarily touch the emotions if it is to have any effect on life and behavior. In this respect there are two extremes. One extreme would make feeling the determining factor of religion and faith.

16. Earl G. Lockhardt, Op. Cit., p. 47.

17. McElhinney - Smith, Op. Cit., p. 198.

The other extreme would leave out all feeling and reduce religion to an intellectual formula. Faith indeed must be based on knowledge, but it must also affect the emotions.

The "Youth For Christ" movement in our country is gaining much popularity, because it appeals to the emotions. It cannot be denied that religious leaders must take into account the emotions. "In its effort to win youth the church ought to concentrate upon the weaving of emotional ties which will bind youth to itself so tightly that nothing which life can bring will break those ties." 18

18. Novin C. Harner, Youth Work In The Church, p. 26.

Chapter V

STANDARDS AND MORALS

As the adolescent grows mentally and spiritually, he will realize through his association with people and life in general that he must adopt a standard of behavior and a moral code that are in keeping with the demands of society and of his religious belief. The mind itself has developed to such an extent that it can comprehend the idea of moral right and wrong. "The mind is beginning to comprehend the meaning of moral principles as distinguished from relative values. It takes in the momentous idea that there is such a thing as a right that does not depend on external conditions, such as laws or consequences, but is in itself right, and that there is such a thing as a duty which is not made such by any external command, but would be one's duty even though it were not commanded at all".¹ A discussion of this thought would lead into the field of ethics.

" . . . the essence of morality is the capacity of apprehending a good which is good in itself, and not for any merely extraneous reason, and of deliberately seeking that good, not through compulsion, training or habit merely, but on its own account. A moral nature involves the power to conceive ideals and to strive for their realization, which means the power to think of personality and life as possessing a meaning and value apart from the satisfaction of any immediate need of the organism or the gratification of any particular or transient desire."²

As there is a physical, intellectual, and emotional development, it might be expected that there is a corresponding development in moral judgment and knowledge. Growth toward physical maturity has no parallel in growth toward maturity in religious and moral thinking.³ There is a definite lag

1. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 163.
2. Ibid., p. 161.
3. Hedley S. Dimock, Op. Cit., p. 258.

in the development of moral knowledge after puberty is attained.⁴ This is due to many circumstances. The system of religious instruction in many churches accounts for some of this lag. Often this instruction ceases about puberty after the rite of confirmation which many denominations observe.

There is a definite connection between biblical knowledge and moral judgment. The Bible contains the most perfect code of ethics. The Christian is duty bound to submit to and carry out its demands, and receives the power to do so through the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ.

This ideal is not perfected in man. Especially in the adolescent there are many inconsistencies that have to be reckoned with. Many extremes in the moral life of the adolescent will be found. His conscience which may be sane and reasonably sensitive for the most part may at times appear callous and depraved on the one hand, or morbidly scrupulous and exacting on the other.⁵ Such an inconsistency is often due to the emotional instability of the age. Frequently when asked for a reason a certain act was committed, the adolescent may reply, "I don't know". Since the adolescent often acts on impulse, judgment must frequently be withheld as to punishment for a misdeed until it can be established that the act was malicious and deliberate. In early adolescence, the application of a principle fails in many instances, because the individual is unable to generalize and carry over the application to similar situations. Thus while he may be very scrupulous with regard to the sexual stimulation of the modern dance, he may be very callous with regard to indecent exposure or passionate movies.

"To many adolescents truth is one thing as it applies to situations in which it concerns his family and his friends, and quite another as it

4. Ibid., pp. 157 - 158.

5. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 164.

applies to strangers or to individuals whom he considers as prying."⁶

As a group many feel that it is actually virtuous to tell a story to protect a member of their gang or group, and they do not hesitate to do so.⁷ For the moment they have forgotten about the virtue truth, and have replaced it with an idea of group loyalty. The telling of "white lies" in these cases will be looked upon as a virtue.

The average adolescent may never think of stealing even the smallest object, yet he will cheat in the classroom, or join the gang on Hallowe'en and destroy or mar any amount of property. "At the beginning of the adolescent period, unless long training has made the child certain of the fact that his property is his own and that of other people is their own, to be shared only with their permission, a certain lack of regard for property rights persists."⁸

Many tests have been given on the subject of moral judgment, and the results have proved very interesting. "Being good" was defined by a five year old as "eating my dinner, doing what mother and daddy say, and being quiet when there is company". Goodness defined by an adolescent was "helping the poor, playing fair, giving a hand where it is needed, telling the truth, and living up to one's ideals". The difference between the types of behavior described in these definitions is obvious, but the later type has developed from the earlier.⁹ Specific instruction determines to a great degree how a person will react in a given situation, but the carry over into similar circumstances is not always great.

6. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 206.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., pp. 208 - 209.

9. Ibid., p. 201. These definitions are a combination of the answers received on a questionnaire that included the question concerning goodness.

There is little doubt that the method of teaching has great effect on the correlation between biblical knowledge and moral judgment. To the dismay and consternation of many pastors an increase in the storehouse of biblical knowledge does not always mean an increase in moral judgment and behavior.¹⁰

"The mere study of facts, unrelated to religion, will not produce the desired results. There must be a very definite relating of the facts studied to the total experience to be of religious value. This demands a profoundly religious outlook on the part of the teacher, an outlook which students will recognize and appreciate".¹¹ The principles studied must be applied to the individual's needs and problems.

The method of religious teaching least painful to the adolescent and yet extremely effective is the "problem-solution" method. Instead of starting with a principle and then making the application, the process is almost reversed so that a specific problem, or even a problem of a more general nature, is studied, and, guided by the instructor, a solution is sought on the basis of the principles set down by God in the Bible. Often adolescents rebel at the thought of having to listen to a lecture which in their minds must necessarily be boring, but they will eagerly take part in and derive much benefit from the discussion of a problem which they feel concerns them.

Among the factors that may have a bearing on biblical knowledge and moral judgment, Kraeft lists the following: intelligence, socio-economic status, church affiliation of parents, religious influence of home

10. Walter O. Kraeft, Biblical Information, Moral Judgment, and Doctrinal Comprehension In Lutheran Schools (Missouri Synod), p. 4.

11. Laird T. Hites, The Effective Christian College, p. 203.

as expressed by the practice of saying grace at meals and conducting family worship, the regularity with which pupils pray, the attitude of pupils toward the study of religion, church attendance, and chronological age.¹² Of these factors the most outstanding is intelligence. According to tests made in Lutheran grade schools by Kraeft, "the higher the intelligence of a group, the better the score that was made on the test in moral judgment. School grades consistently differentiate the groups on moral judgment, each successive grade bringing a distinct advance in the average score."¹³ An explanation of the difference between scores on biblical information and moral judgment must be sought in the schools themselves, in the curriculum content, the method, or the objectives underlying instruction in relation to the outcome observed.¹⁴ Many reform schools for boys and girls will testify to the fact that intelligence plays a great part in the moral judgment of an individual. Intelligence includes the ability to learn a principle and to apply it in general and specific instances.

One of the typical features of adolescence is the development of and interest in ideals. These generalized attitudes are of immense importance to the adolescent. "Adolescent idealism is distinctly moral. It offers direction and goal to life."¹⁵ Because they have ideals, high school students are more capable of making their own decisions than are children.¹⁶ Every normal adolescent has ideals, and he judges his own conduct in terms of them.¹⁷ However, it should not be supposed that all ideals which the adolescent has set up within his own mind are socially acceptable.

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12. Walter O. Kraeft, Op. Cit., p. 30.
 13. Ibid., p. 76.
 14. Ibid.
 15. Ira S. Wile, Op. Cit., p. 326.
 16. Luella Cole, Op. Cit., p. 388.
 17. Ibid.

Adolescents desire that their adults exemplify their moral ideals, and are often disillusioned when they discover that such is not the case. Often they may use the bad example of an adult as a license for their own inclination to do wrong. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that youth leaders and counselors be of the highest moral integrity.

"Some years ago Sanford Bell made a study of characteristics which adolescents most disliked. The qualities that most inspired dislike were as follows: absence of laughing and smiling, excessive scolding and "roasting", fondness for inflicting blows, indifference, malevolence, sarcasm, severity, sternness, suspicion, threats, broken vows, and unjust punishment. On the contrary, those that inspired trust and confidence and were the most appreciated were absence of hypocrisy, arousing of ideals, athleticism and vigor, understanding, confidence, encouragement to overcome circumstances, giving of purpose, independence, inspiring self-confidence and giving direction, kindling of ambition to be something or to do something and so giving an object in life, kindness, a little praise, personal beauty, personal sympathy and interest, purity, special help in lessons, stability and poise of character, and timely and kindly advice." 18

The standards and morals of adolescents are greatly affected by heredity and environment. "Morality is not an instinct", and, therefore, it depends for its development upon the parent, the educator, and those forces in the home, school, and community which play upon the individual, checking his activity on the one hand and facilitating it on the other.¹⁹ An environment that is conducive to crime and filth will most generally lower the standards of the individuals who live there. On the other hand, the person whose environment lends to love, culture, and beauty should be expected to have higher standards of education and morals.

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18. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 64. In this quotation Arlitt refers to Sanford Bell, A Study of the Teacher's Influence, Pedagogical Seminary, December 1900, Vol. 7, pp. 492 - 525.
19. Ibid., p. 206.

In building unselfish standards there is a need for group recreation. Group games can serve as a factor in developing moral behavior in several ways: (1) sacrifice self for the good of the team; (2) resistance to authority checked by obedience to rules; (3) good sportsmanship, which includes playing absolutely fair and losing gracefully; (4) emotional control in games should be developed so that the individual does not show outbursts of temper; (5) loyalty - to team mates, school, city, state, and nation.²⁰ Many schools have lost sight of these goals in their sports program, especially where other schools are involved and there is a standing rivalry.

There are many adolescents who may never receive any punishment for infringements of the moral code, but because they do not measure up to the standard of the group are regarded by their fellows as "lacking in good sportsmanship", "sneaky", "double-faced", or as otherwise not conforming completely with ideal behavior. These factors are often brought to light in group games and recreation.

In group recreation the individual has an opportunity to add to the enjoyment and happiness of his friends. The development and improvement of the personality does not consist only in the development of virtues, but also in the ability to use these gifts and talents in such a manner that they will add to the happiness of others.²¹

During the period of adolescence the capacity to appreciate beauty in all its forms makes the most marked advance. "The disposition to respond to the charm of the beautiful is greatly quickened, and the inability to give fitting expression to the feeling for the beautiful is most painfully

20. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 210.

21. George W. Crane, Op. Cit., p. 199.

realized. External nature awakens an interest not previously felt."²² The adolescent will be thrilled at the sight of a beautiful sunset, he will thrill at the sound of beautiful music as never before. Many chorus conductors would rather have younger men and women in their choirs and choruses, because they feel the music more deeply and accordingly have more depth of expression.

Nature seems more beautiful than before, and the adolescent often has a strong feeling of fellowship with the things of external nature; a feeling which seems closely related to the religious sentiment.²³ Therefore after a week at an outdoor camp the adolescent will tell about the closeness to God that he experienced in nature.

This new enthusiasm for the beautiful and the artistic thrills the soul and gives new interest to life even though many of these newly awakened artistic enthusiasms are short lived and endure for only a time. Nevertheless, more sober after-images persist throughout life.²⁴

Whenever art is taught in school it should be taught with the idea of increasing love for the beautiful, and this will create a desire to express oneself in beautiful creations, and the individual will find pleasure in this. This creative self-expression tends to heighten the moral tone and bring satisfaction for an accomplishment.

The appreciation of beauty is able to elevate a person's whole being. "Those who really enjoy expressing themselves through painting or music speak of the peace of mind and heart which comes to them as they become absorbed in the practice of their art. . . . They lose themselves in a world of beauty and are able to forget the sorrows and distress of the day."²⁵

22. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 150.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p. 151.

25. McElhinney-Smith, Op. Cit., p. 243.

Chapter VI

RELIGION AS ORIENTATION AND DYNAMIC IN LIVING

Life is complex and changing. The forces that affect the personality are strong, and sometimes they become so overbearing for the individual that he feels lost, insecure and helpless. Religion offers support, for religion remains the abiding truth in a world and life of changes.

The adolescent with his many insecurities needs the support of religion more than ever before.¹ In the chapter on the emotional life of adolescents it was pointed out that there is great instability which is accounted for by a sense of insecurity which is due to the transition from the child's to the adult's world, scepticism and the expanding intellect, and varying interests. This presents a great need, and religion provides the answer. The youthful minds and hearts can be directed to the eternal verity of God. Though the adolescent is experiencing changes within himself and all about him, God remains the same. Ps. 102: 26, 27 "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Of the second person of the Trinity Hebrews 13: 8 says, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

"Religion is the only unifying and ever-present force which can help solve the inevitable moral and intellectual conflicts of parents, children and society at large. In a world of change and rebellion to authority, God is the only fixed point."² America is called a Christian country, and

1. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 212.

2. Henry C. Link, The Return to Religion, pp. 104 - 105.

as such accepts the authority of a divine being. This makes it possible for a moral code to be established. In this country the basic moral code consists of the Ten Commandments. God is a fixed point outside of man on which he can draw for strength and security. In order that this idea of God be of any use to man, he must accept God in faith and in faith draw upon Him for help.

Religion and religious thought appear to be a necessary accompaniment of the life of social groups, and to be present particularly where conditions of life are difficult. In fact, in times of stress and strain, mankind turns to religion as the power which enables him to conquer otherwise unconquerable obstacles or enables him to stand otherwise unbearable strain. Adolescence is a period of strain. Where there is no stability in religious belief the strain is increased many times.³

Scientific theories have changed, ideas of medicine have been proved to be fallacious, but the truth of religion, though challenged, remains unchanged, and it can therefore serve as a bulwark for man, especially the adolescent.

Religion is not separate from life, nor is it a set of ideals that is impractical. If that is all that religion amounts to for the individual, something is wrong, for there is and must be an integration of dogmatic principles with life and its problems. That religion has a desirable effect on people can not easily be denied. In a test given to some two thousand children, Henry Link found that "the very fact of parents attending church was a factor in the development of desirable personality traits on the part of their children, and the attendance of Sunday School by the children was an

3. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 61.

even more important factor."⁴

The church has a duty to perform over against its youth. It must present the living and vital teachings of Christianity in such a way that the youth are made to feel that religion answers their needs for this world and for the world to come which the Bible speaks about. "The church ought to concentrate in its efforts to win youth upon satisfying the life-needs of youth so completely as to become indispensable to youth."⁵

The Bible has established a definite moral code in the Ten Commandments, and Jesus has provided an example for living by His perfect life. With Jesus providing the power and the example, religion becomes a guiding influence in the formation of desirable habits and in orderly conduct.

". . . religion is that quality of life which lies behind habit, which causes one to want to do right and to form the habits necessary to do so. It is the conduct control which operates in those crises of temptation that break through the wall of habit and threaten to engulf the moral values. Religion becomes a powerful influence in life as one abandons himself to the leadership of the divine. One may be truly free only in terms of the bonds which hold him close to God. The truly moral may not be separated from the religious in vital living in the Christian school. Religion, therefore, becomes the supreme conduct control. Our problem is to discover the nature of religion, and to find how it may be brought to function more effectively in student life, in conduct as well as in thought."⁶

The church and its teachings have affected the course of history. This is often forgotten with the result that church history and secular history are taught as two distinct subjects. The crusades, the papacy, and the Reformation were religious in character, and they helped to shape the world and events for many years. The teaching content of the curriculum should include an emphasis on the church as a motivating agency in the life

5. Nevin C. Harner, Op. Cit., p. 27.

6. Laird T. Hites, Op. Cit., p. 235.

of people, and show how in religion a large part of the cultural life of the nations has been centered. Such an emphasis is perfectly true to the facts of history.⁷

Unfortunately, there have been types of Sunday School morality which believed in the use of copy book maxims as pure verbalizations instead of guides to action. Much religion is taught in this way, and as a result much of the usefulness of the instruction and the power of religion is wasted. These are examples of ideals which do not go over into overt action in terms of expression or in terms of the inhibition of acts not for the social good.⁸ It cannot be assumed that a given measure of biblical information or moral judgment means a similar degree of excellence in moral behavior. Biblical information has been found to be superior without a corresponding superiority in moral behavior by a number of investigators.⁹ This may be due to faults in the presentation or the evil trait of sin, or probably a combination of both.

Often courses of instruction would isolate moral behavior from life rather than integrate the two. "A feasible and valuable plan is that of securing a thorough correlation of character training with every other subject of the curriculum, every extra-curricular activity, and in fact every school experience."¹⁰ Furthermore, it should extend into the home and other community agencies which may be influential in the life of the adolescent.

"The attainment of moral character is not so much the habituation of a set of behavior patterns, but rather the reformation of the total mental and moral attitude of an individual, so motivated as to produce desirable and social outcomes.

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7. Ibid., p. 197.
 8. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 205.
 9. Walter O. Kraeft, Op. Cit., p. 4. Kraeft cites the findings of Hartshorne and May, Bartlett, and Hightower.
 10. Ibid., p. 10. Kraeft quotes Charles E. Benson, Psychology For Teachers, p. 389.

"According to the Lutheran point of view all attempts at character education require an impelling motive or drive which will build desirable attitudes while it is improving conduct. . . . This motivation should not be extraneous, but inherent in the religious interpretation of conduct reactions."¹¹

The acceptance of Christian doctrines and principles will mold and shape the whole personality with its mental and moral attitudes and form basic individual and social responses and behavior patterns that will elevate the individual and also raise the standard of the group. Religion and life are closely bound, for religion prepares for life and answers the problems of life. The teaching of religion will bring to youth the knowledge of a source of power outside themselves upon which they may call. In their more serious moments youths feel the need of a higher and divine being to whom they can look for assistance and guidance.¹²

Man has been created a moral being and must view all that he does in a moral sense. Every child is endowed with a moral sense called conscience. Romans 2: 14, 15 "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Conscience is not the standard or law, but presupposes a law. Conscience is the judge and passes judgment on the individual's acts on the basis of the law within himself which he recognizes as binding, and therefore a man can follow only his own conscience.

The function of conscience is threefold: (1) Obligatory - it does

11. Ibid., p. 11.

12. McElhinney-Smith, Op. Cit., p. 198.

not function with the same intensity, accuracy or responsiveness in every individual because of differences in heredity and temperament, environment and education, and the way in which the person has respected his conscience. The Christian accepts the Ten Commandments and the whole will of God. This function of conscience appeals to the will, prompting him to do the right and restrain from wrong. By the intellect man accepts the standard and knows what is right. (2) Judicious - conscience passes judgment on the contemplated or completed action. It commends man for doing right, and condemns him for doing wrong. Rationalizing often attempts to bribe the conscience, but it can never do so completely. (3) Executive - conscience executes the judgment it passes. It gives a feeling of shame, remorse, and pangs of conscience for violating the conscience and the standards which the individual has accepted.

If the adolescent has accepted the standards of Christianity as binding, then his conscience will be a power that will lead him to choose the right and will act as a restraint when tempted to do wrong. "Personality is affected by conscience and conscience, tested by experience, develops character."¹³

For the adolescent there is great value in religious experience. Religion in youth is more subjectively personal than in childhood, for the mind of youth is strongly disposed to find spiritual meaning in, rather than apart from, the objects of nature, and the events and relationships of human life.¹⁴ Experiences help to develop the person, therefore the essential worth of an emotional experience lies in its contribution to the development and molding of the emergent self.¹⁵ Religious experience can

13. Ira S. Wile, Op. Cit., p. 326.

14. Frederick Tracy, Op. Cit., p. 188.

15. Ira S. Wile, Op. Cit., p. 326.

certainly do no less than help in the development of the self, and the adolescent who has no religious experience must find other means to make up for this deficiency. Religious experience is enriched by deeper reverence and satisfaction in communion with God.¹⁶

No experience is vital or dynamic without emotional support, and since religion is concerned with the deepest needs and highest worths of life, it will naturally be charged with emotional urgency.¹⁷ The church that fails to realize this will have difficulty in keeping alive a good youth program that will benefit the youth and the church.

Such religious experiences can be achieved in Christian fellowship and in moments of quiet meditation in candlelight services or outdoor vespers. One hour of contemplation can furnish thoughts which weeks and months of action can scarcely achieve.¹⁸ "As to services out of doors in a beautiful natural setting, they afford youth a chance to approach the Creator through his handiwork, and they enable God to speak His own word to the souls of youth. Rural youth groups are particularly fortunate in this respect, and should make full use of their good fortune. Even city groups can have an Easter dawn service, and a summer vesper or so."¹⁹

The Walther League of the Lutheran Church recognizes the need for religious experience. The program of the Walther League gives the individual an opportunity to test and try the principles and values which the Lutheran Church presents in its formal religious education. Instead of just talking about the joys of Christian fellowship, the leaders of the Walther League believe it to be a sound educational procedure to make it possible for the

16. Paul E. Johnson, Op. Cit., p. 74.

17. Ibid., p. 52.

18. Henry C. Link, The Return To Religion, p. 22.

19. Nevin C. Harner, Op. Cit., p. 141.

individual to experience them (to taste their goodness). The same is true of the values of worship and of any of the other truths which the Lutheran Church is endeavoring to teach. The Walther League program provides for sunrise services, vespers, other outdoor services, fellowship within the local congregation and at conventions and camps. An extremely effective means of developing the feeling and bond of fellowship is the traditional "Friendship Circle" of Walther League camps and conventions. Other useful means that promote religious feelings are camp fires and sacred songs.

Adolescents desire that their counselors and pastors exhibit certain qualities. The most important is that the counselor or pastor exhibit a genuine interest in them and their problems. To the adult these problems may seem very insignificant or even silly, but to the adolescent it is a real and a great problem. Furthermore, the youth like to have their pastor take an active part in their activities if at all possible. This also proves to them that he is interested in them. Instead of lectures give them discussion and guidance; instead of denunciation give them help; instead of ignoring their best efforts give them a little praise.

There is much value in Christian company and fellowship. Christian fellowship has as its bond a common faith and a common goal. This gives to the adolescent a feeling of security in his life which is full of insecurity. Christian friendship can never be selfish, but in accordance with the principles of Christianity seeks the good of the other person. This idea is important in the development of the personality.

Closely connected is the value of Christian group pressure. The adolescent desires to conform to the standards of the group in which he finds himself. In a Christian group where the standards are high, the individual will find that he also must conform to the high standards of the

group. Christian group pressure, where developed, can be very helpful to the church, school, home, and community.

Association with fellow Christians is always beneficial, but this is especially true in group games with Christians. "Play behavior is of particular consequence for the development of the personality. Its major values are two-fold. Play possesses remarkable powers in the re-creation of persons. It also is a major means of achieving effective personality and social adjustment through providing wholesome avenues for the expressing of basic urges that cannot be denied without disastrous results."²⁰

In group games the participants have an opportunity to practice many of the principles which they have learned through religious instruction: sacrifice of the self, obedience to rules and authority, good sportsmanship, self control, and helping to make the lives of others more happy and enjoyable. Physical games and competitive sports have been found to contribute much toward personality.²¹ These principles must be brought to the attention of the participants, lest the games get out of hand and negative instead of positive qualities are developed.

The awakening of the religious sense is commonly associated with adolescent development, and forms one of the most significant drives to conduct from the onset of puberty throughout the adult life.²² Religion does not act to suppress action but rather is a guide to action. The Christian religion is not a set of dead principles but a dynamic way of life. Christianity is not the refuge of the weak but the weapon of those who would be strong; it is an aggressive mode of life, by which the

20. Hedley S. Dimock, Op. Cit., p. 35.

21. Henry C. Link, The Rediscovery of Man, p. 76.

22. Ada Hart Arlitt, Op. Cit., p. 212.

individual becomes the master of his environment, not its complacent victim.²³
As its contribution to the adolescent and to the nation the church becomes
duty bound by the command of God to direct its youth to go forward with
Christ.

23. Henry C. Link, The Return To Religion, pp. 15, 16.

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