

**YOUNG**

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method might mean, and he would say, Francis Bacon, in the 16th century. But Bacon was only 15 years old when the great idea took possession of him. Speaking of that day in life of that 15-year-old boy, one scholar says, "I believe it ought to be regarded as the most important event in his life; the event which had a greater influence than any other upon his character and future course." The more one studies life, the more one feels that the future of the world is always being determined by what happens in the young.

Indeed, remember that other 12-year-old boy, Jesus, who astounded his household by asking deep questions of the doctors of the law in the Temple, and who said to his amazed family, "Knew ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" What prophetic hours do come to the young! The turning points of history are there. I presume it is worthwhile preaching to the old; sometimes I wonder how much worthwhile it is. Think what might happen if some boy or girl should see a great vision, should be taken possession of by an important truth, should make an influential decision!

Let us, then, take up our text: "You are not yet 50 years old." So what! Well, so being young, you have zest and enthusiasm; you love a good game; you can tackle life as though it too were a game, to be played with sportsmanship, where you learn to be a good loser when you must and a fine winner when you can.

For while I am saying today that boyhood and girlhood are immensely important, I am not saying that they are easy stages to go through. They are not. Old people, if they are wise, expect trouble and get used to facing it, but when a young boy or girl for the first time runs into something mighty hard, some humiliating disappointment, some shattering insecurity in the home, some crippling handicap of the body, that is a tough experience for the young to face.

When I was a boy there was a bit of popular verse that had a good deal of influence in my young life. The books call it anonymous, although one friend tells me Jacob Riis wrote it, but here it is:

"One ship drives east, another drives west  
While the selfsame breezes blow;  
'Tis the set of the sail and not the gale  
That bids them where to go.  
Like the winds of the sea are the

ways of fate  
As we journey along through life;

'Tis the set of the soul that decides the goal  
And not the calm or the strife."

Well, what we are saying today comes down to this: It's when you're young that you decide what is going to be the set of your soul, and that is the most important thing in life.

Again look at our text: "You are not yet 50 years old." So what! Well, so being young, if you will you can start now a rich, deep, worthwhile inner life, and that is a great matter. I suppose you boys and girls do not read Louisa Alcott's stories any more as my generation did, but you are indebted to her all the same, for she was a pioneer in writing books for children. When she was 12 years old she wrote this one day in her diary: "I had a pleasant time with my mind, for it was nappy." That is one of the main secrets of life.

Well, why not have a pleasant time with our minds? What fascinating things there are to think about! There is the world that science, for example, opens up. Suppose that railroad tracks were laid from the earth to the sun. Suppose that an express train, running at full speed, should leave the earth today for the sun, with two babies on board named Jim and Mary. When the express train arrived at the sun, who do you think would be on board to get off? I've got it all figured out. It would be Jim's and Mary's great-great-great-great-great-grandson. Six generations born and growing up on that express train between earth and the sun. My word! What a universe in which to have a good time with one's mind! Don't start living in a mean and measly world of small concerns. Move out now in your mind into a world where there are great things to think about.

And here too is the world that Christ opens up. It is necessary for happiness that we live on good terms with other people, but it is first of all necessary for happiness that we live on good terms with ourselves. I and me—two of us—live inside of us, and if I and me are quarreling all the time, that is misery. After you are 50 years old, if you have not settled matters between I and me so that they get on well together, you're not likely to do it. But now, when you are young, you can start right, with a rich, rewarding, happy inner life of the kind that Christ has bestowed upon those who best have known Him.

When you have done wrong,

**Are You Enrolled With 'Teenicides?'**

Teenagers of every generation is the concern of the adults of the previous generation; and rightly so. When teenagers are seen in action the question comes: "What is this world coming to?" You need only read the papers and find some of the answers. This does not include all by any means but far too many.

Some are concerned about the news on, "Teen-age killers at

and inside yourself you are navigating a precarious time with your conscience, you do not need to stay that way. Repentance, confession, forgiveness — you can clean up your mind. When you are up against temptations too strong for you, or troubles too hard for you, you do not need to depend merely on yourself—you can learn now now quiet prayer opens up your spirit to strength greater than your own, so that you can do what you ought to do, and can stand what you must endure.

Look at that text again: "Not yet 50 years old." So what! Well, so you, being young, have still a life to give to those saving forces that in the end can make for all mankind a better world. When a man is 50 years old, he already has given himself to the aims that master his life. He has given himself to good or evil, to sobriety or alcoholism, to self-centeredness or public service. By 50, a man's life has been given away to some master or other, good or bad, almost beyond recall. Today the excitement one feels about you boys and girls is that you still have your lives to give.

I am not saying that there is no hope for people over 50. Haydn wrote his great oratorio, "The Creation," in his 60's, and Gladstone even said that had he died at 70, fully half of his life's work would have been left undone. There are lives that have a glorious late autumn, full of fruit, but when that happens, it always goes back to decisions made, habits formed, loyalties chosen, when such men were young.

Well, you are not yet 50 years old, but some day you will be. An older man cannot help thinking of that today. Sometime you will be 50 years old, and that can be a glorious period of life, full of rich friendships, happy memories, the consciousness of good causes served and work well done, and within oneself the resources of God's power and peace. But that depends on what—no, let us put it the Christian way, on whom you give yourself to now.

By Dr. Harry E. Fosdick

the wheel." Behind too many highway tragedies lies a new form of mass murder and self-destruction, it seems, known increasingly as "teenicide." Even with the electric speed device, "the Black Box," papers often carry a rather long list of traffic violators. Our state held special meetings to set up programs in each county. The records show that once every two minutes, day in, day out, some teenicide accident will kill or maim a victim somewhere in the United States.

Insurance companies generally believe the recklessness of the teens extend to the age of 25 years. Figures in a recent year spiraled to a shocking 7,500 dead and 275,000 injured for under 25 group. Even in terms of money drivers under 25 probably cost the nation almost as much as the 600-million-dollar yearly cost of all fires. About 1946 almost all the states raised the premiums insurance companies were allowed to charge if anyone under 25 drove the car. The Highway Safety Committee reports that the 16-20 age group is involved in five times as many accidents as the 45-50 group, though both groups hold the same number of driving licenses. They say driving is directly related to maturity and judgment.

These facts are both sickening and appalling because they are so needless, for maturity and judgment in driving can be taught. To prove this fact the American Auto Assn., in eleven high schools instituted a safety course, using a fleet of cars equipped with dual controls. Out of 1800 students taking the course, checked against about the same number who did not take it, the trained students had only half as many accidents.

Once a survey was made among high school students by Chevrolet Motor Co. that listed the causes for their accidents in this order; clowning—speeding — dreaming—disregard of traffic signs.

Another investigation showed that in our large cities such tricks as piling half a dozen boys in a car and driving for an hour at 60 miles an hour, then release the steering wheel. The first boy to touch the wheel or brake is labeled "chicken." In one year that game killed 30 boys. Other such lunatic games as "spider" and "dip-thrill" and "loopers," have been found among teen-age tribes.

It is said that nearly 25 per cent of the traffic deaths are a direct result of the frivolous or careless attitudes of juvenile

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