

where does sin seem to show its cruelty and vileness more, than in moulding a little child of tender life into a rebellious and hardened image of iniquity.

2. As childhood glides into youth and early manhood still greater dangers beset its way. The world is still more engrossing, fresh avenues of pleasure open up, and there is still less room for thoughts of God. Strength and activity are seeking to embody themselves in achievement and enterprise. The dashing onset of youthful energy and ambition, are applauded by the world on every side. The sprightliness of ever quickening hope is encouraged. The undaunted daring that never learned defeat is emboldened. In all the urgency and onward movement that belong to this period of life, there is danger that only a residue, if even that, shall be left for the worship and service of God.

3. The sober and steady habits of middle age next mark the advance of years; and surely here, where the stern realities of life make themselves to be severely felt, and where the fascinating tastes and pleasures have lost their chiefest charm, there shall be not only a residue, but a large first-fruits for the altar of God. The *pros* and *cons* of life have been weighed and balanced against each other. But alas, how often do we find men enjoying the fattened roast, and warming themselves before the glowing fire which they themselves have kindled, satiated with the fatness of wealth and pleasure and giving no thought to the residue that remains. It seems almost a pity to disturb them in their self-satisfied composure. It matters less however, when we know that they will soon disturb themselves. For is not this pleasure already beginning to lose its sweetness, and is not this abundance losing its satisfaction? At this stage a man should be found stocktaking, his working days will soon be done. He should now be able to tell the world what true manhood is. He has been long enough in the struggle of life to show marks of the veteran. He should be telling raw recruits of the conflict and teaching them the art of war. He should by his successes, be inspiring those who are hastening on to fill up the decimating ranks. He should be pointing to the flag which he has borne aloft, nor allowed to be trampled in the dust. But men are not likely to be found in the front rank at this point, unless they have been engaged in the conflict from the first. If they have enjoyed the pleasures of the world all along they do not care to leave the cedar fire when its glow is brightest and warmest, unless indeed they