

Dare to live NOW!  
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

*"You cannot kill time without injuring eternity."* Henry Thoreau

Remember, when we were children time seem to drag. We were always wishing away the days to a birthday, Christmas or summer holidays. When we were young we wanted to be older and now that some of us are older, we want to be younger. I believe this is a common human weakness. Instead of enjoying what we have now, we tend to either look backward with vain regrets, or forward with unrealistic expectations and fears.

As young men and women we could hardly wait to grow up. We wanted to finish school, find a job, get married, establish a home, have children, watch the children grow up, become grandparents, retire. Then one day we wake up to realize that life is almost over, and we have spent much of our time wishing our lives away. Oh, how foolish! Expecting tomorrow to bring us happiness instead of living in the present moment. Many times, we are old before we understand that great and precious truth; that the happiest moment is NOW because it is the only moment we truly have.

We often say to the young, "The future belongs to you." But how can anyone be sure? British statesman, Cecil Rhodes, planned great things for himself and Africa, but he died at age 49. His last words, "So much to do, so little time." The English poet Keats died at age 25; Shelley at 30; Byron at 36. Friends prophesied a brilliant future for each one of these men, but the future was not theirs. No one can plan tomorrow with absolute confidence.

I strongly believe that God has given a glory or special value to every stage of life. Youth has its problems but also its joys and compensations. The same thing is true of middle or old age. The people who are wise, the people who walk with God, are those who have learned to take the value from each period of life as it comes. And if you were to ask these people, what is the best and most fulfilling time of life, they would probably answer – right now, today.

Every day, each one of us receives a gift of 24 hours or 1440 moments of time. Success or failure in life has a lot to do with the way we manage that process gift. The trouble is, when God says today, we often say tomorrow or next month or next year. Perhaps you find yourself saying – someday I will follow a diet or an exercise program. Someday I will pray and attend church again. Someday I will spend more time with my children.

So, I leave my readers with a choice. You can let the years pass by saying, "I'll do it tomorrow; someday I will begin a new life." Or, beginning NOW, you can DARE TO LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST!