

The Junior Epworth Era

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Fifty Years On

"When you have turned a hundred and I am fifty-five"—
So spoke without a warning the plumpest girl alive—
"I wonder, oh, I wonder how both of us will be,
With Helen fifty-seven and baby fifty-three."

The sum was done precisely; each item was correct;
The grisly shade of Cocker had nothing to object;
And yet I could not praise her, or sanction a display
Which tossed about the fifties in this collected way.

But still the maiden pressed me, and so I made reply,
"I'll tell you what I think, dear, about your by-and-by;
Your figure will be ampler, and, like a buzzing hive,
Your boys and girls will tease you when you are fifty-five."

"Your hair will not be brown, dear; you'll wear a decent cap;
Maybe you'll have a grandchild a-crowling on your lap;
And through the winter evenings the easiest of chairs
Will give you greater comfort than romping on the stairs."

"And sometimes, too, I fancy, when all the world is snow,
You'll smile as you remember the days of long ago;
And every now and then, dear, you'll spare a thought for me,
When Helen's fifty-seven and baby's fifty-three."

—R. C. Lehmann, in *Punch*.

Weekly Topics

NOV. 15.—THE LORD'S SUPPER AND WHAT IT MEANS. Luke 22: 14-20.

We have not forgotten what the Passover meant, have we? For if we have, we must study the meaning of that feast before we can understand what our Lord's words and actions meant, as they are told to us in our lesson to-day. Christ was celebrating the great Passover Feast with His disciples. Their minds were thus turned back to the history of the past, and they recalled the old story of Egypt with its dreadful bondage. But it was the mercy of God shown unto the Hebrews on that awful night of death, when all the first-born of Egypt were slain, that they were able to remember most of all how "the destroying angel" passed over every Hebrew house that had the blood-marks upon it. The Passover celebration was meant to remind the Israelites forever of the wonderful and merciful deliverance God granted to their ancestors in this way. Now, as our Lord kept this feast with His disciples, He told them of another sacrifice—that which He was making for all the world. And the early church kept the new Passover Feast—what we call "the Lord's Supper," to bring to mind the death of Christ for our sins. Paul says, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast. . . ." (1 Corinthians 5: 7-8). We must always bear in

mind that the one great first purpose of the Lord's Supper is to "show the Lord's death" as a sufficient sacrifice for our sins. It reminds us always that our Lord Jesus Christ is the one and only Saviour for all. He said, "This do in remembrance of Me," and told His disciples the greatest of all truths in saying, "I will give you the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." It must then be with faith in Christ as our personal Saviour that we come to the "Supper." And as many come together it shows our common and united faith in Him, all must meet as forgiven sinners if they would celebrate aright this great salvation wrought by Jesus Christ. The Lord's Supper is thus the most glorious memorial service we can ever join in. It speaks to us of pardon of sins, peace with God, a pure heart, a holy life, a loving fellowship with all Christians and calls us to go forth to loyal service in His name. Who should attend this feast? Everybody who accepts Christ as Saviour certainly should be there, and by them confessing Him together, as our Saviour and Lord, we not only receive strength and blessing ourselves, but remind even those who may not be there, of the universal need of His salvation and of the power of the saving grace and mercy of God.

NOV. 22.—JUDAS AND PETER — A CONTRAST. Lev. 22: 47, 48, 54-62.

Note the word applied to Judas by Jesus in verse 49—"betrayed." Then notice what is said of Peter in verse 57, "he denied." The comparison of the words will show how much worse was Judas' act than Peter's. The very idea of betraying implies an evil intent upon the part of the betrayer. He went into the garden for the express purpose of delivering Jesus up to His enemies. He had hired himself to Christ's foes, to be their guide to take Jesus. He had a bad heart. But it was different with Peter. It was not hate, but love, that brought him where he was. Matthew tells us that his desire was "to see the end." But his heart failed him. He was not as strong as he thought he was, and when the test came he failed. But it was only for a while. He felt sorrow and shame for his weakness and "wept bitterly" because of his failure to stand true to Jesus all through. Judas finally felt the awful pangs of remorse and "hanged himself." Peter lived to work for Christ many years and then to die for His Master's cause. The study of these two men show us that only a pure and right heart can keep us true. Even the best of men may yield under trial; but they never intend to be disloyal. But an evil heart seeks wrong and will barter truth for gain, as Judas did, only to lose all in the end. Our only safeguard is to keep our hearts full of love to our Lord. Boys and girls may be tempted to turn their backs upon Christ, may even do so, and still by repentance and confession be forgiven and restored. But few Judases exist; but we fear there are many Peters. Let us watch, pray, and continue faithful in word and act.

NOV. 29.—DEPUTATION TO OUR MISSIONS IN WEST CHINA. (See page 345.)

DEC. 6.—CHRIST ON THE CROSS. Matt. 27: 33-38.

Christ's death was not like that of any other man that ever died. He was not simply a martyr for the sake of truth. A martyr is helpless in the hands of his enemies. Christ was really and truly King and had all things at His command. But He chose to die that the world might see and know what an awful thing sin is, and turn from it through Him. Make it plain that our Saviour died for our sins, not merely that it was sinful men condemned Him to die and who put Him to death, but that through Him as our atoning sacrifice, we might come to God and be forgiven and delivered from our sins. Only by His death is the way to God made clear and plain to us. He came into this world to die. All through His earthly ministry He knew that the cross was before Him. He gave Himself for our sins, that we might be brought to God. There is no other Saviour. The apostles so preached Him. Unless we accept the price with which He has purchased our redemption, there is no other salvation for us. His very name is Jesus because "He shall save His people from their sins," and this saving from sin is surely greater when we trust Him not only to forgive our past sins but to prevent future sins. He died that we may live,—not only in the heavenly world, but in this, for holiness is life indeed, and as He saves us from sin are we kept pure and clean. To save a boy is a greater work than to pardon a man. The death of Christ must mean our death also, or it will not mean much to us. We must die to sin and wrongdoing, and live in Him unto righteousness and purity of heart, not only to believe the fact that Christ died, but to die with Him unto sin, and to live with Him unto righteousness, brings us life now and forever more.

DEC. 13.—THE RESURRECTION STORY. Matt. 28: 1-10.

As with last week's topic, so with this. The bare historical facts are easily stated, and will be unquestioned by all your Juniors; but we must make it plain to them that as the death of our Lord means our death to sin if we would know what His atonement means, His resurrection means that we are raised to a conscious life of inward purity and truth. The head may be easily bothered over the mysteries of both His death and resurrection; but the heart rejoices in the truth, and it is this inward experience by spirituous union with Him that is above everything else of supreme value. It is well to acquaint the young with the story of the cross and the tomb, but if we stop there, we fall indeed. The centre of all that we wish as aid with Paul in Galatians 2: 20, and other similar passages. It is well to train our children and youth to clear thinking in the great foundation doctrines of our religion; but it is better to fortify their lives against sin by bringing them into affectionate and vital union with the Lord. To believe in His death and resurrection is more than to accept as true the records about Him. It must make Him a real, living, all-powerful Saviour from daily sin, or profit us little. To count ourselves dead unto sin, and alive unto righteousness, to be risen with