

3. *Christ's presence with the apostles.* (a) He was present with them in bodily form after His resurrection, v. 3. Discuss some of the proofs that He had really risen (see Exposition on this verse). (b) They expected that He would remain with them on earth as a great earthly king, v. 6. Bring out the contrast between the true kingdom of Christ and that which the Jews looked for when the Messiah came. (c) He withdrew His physical Presence from them, v. 9. Refer to the promise of Matt. 28 : 20, and make it clear that the unseen Christ may be really present, in all His power and love, 1 Pet. 1 : 8. (d) He will appear to them again in visible form, the same Saviour whom they had known and loved and trusted, v. 11.

Follow the apostles back to the upper room in Jerusalem where they waited in prayer for the coming of the promised Spirit. Bring home our need of the same Spirit, before we can witness for Jesus. Urge each scholar to seek Him, now, at the beginning of a new year, that the year, and all after years, may be filled with useful service.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. E. Douglas Fraser, D.D.

The New Year ; a new Book ; a new enterprise. The scholars ought to be easily interested ; and will be, if the teacher has taken the pains to get the Lesson material in order in his own mind, and has grasped the uniqueness of the occasion which the Lesson describes, the ending of Christ's earthly ministry, the beginning of His ministry from heaven.

Begin with *THE BOOK AND ITS WRITER*. Dissect the title of the book. Have the scholars discover by comparison of the introduction with that of Luke's Gospel, who the author was. Col. 4 : 14 throws a sidelight. Luke was a man of education ; he was also a companion of Paul. His two books show how well fitted he was for the task of writing the story of Jesus and His disciples.

Then, *THE ENTERPRISE*. Luke 24 : 46-48 sets it forth, as do also the more familiar passages, Matt. 28 : 19, 20 ; Mark 16 : 15. It will be worth while to take a little time here to bring out by conversation : (a) *the character of the enterprise*—to win men for

Christ ; (b) *the vastness of the enterprise*—world-wide (compare it with the wars of the greatest conquerors, or the business plans of the largest commercial houses) ; (c) *the agents of the enterprise*—eleven plain, everyday men ; (d) *the backing of the enterprise*. This last point requires a place by itself. It is, indeed, the Lesson.

THE BACKING OF THE ENTERPRISE. First, freshen the sense of its vastness by a few review questions. Then bring out, successively, as back of the enterprise of winning the world : (1) Jesus the perfect Man (v. 1) ; (2) Jesus the Doer of acts of power and mercy (v. 1) ; have the scholars name some of these ; (3) Jesus the Teacher (v. 1) : again, have the scholars quote some of the wonderful teachings of Jesus ; (4) Jesus the Crucified (v. 3—"His passion") : 1 Cor. 15 : 3 and 1 Thess. 5 : 9, 10 are apt passages here ; (5) Jesus the Risen (v. 3) : if He really rose from the dead, He must be the Son of God, if the Son of God, He can give us new life, and we may trust His word ; (6) Jesus' promise (v. 5) : a promise of power to fit the messengers of the gospel for their task.

THE FIRST STEP IN THE ENTERPRISE. One of the scholars may tell the story of the happenings of that wonderful day (one always thinks of it as midday) on the Mount of Olives (vs. 6-11)—the risen Lord, the disciples with their feckless question, the answer and promise of the Holy Ghost, the commission of v. 8, the departure of the Lord, the two angels, their question and their promise.

The story told, bring out these *two strange things* : Jesus leaving earth just when, for the spreading abroad of His kingdom, He would seem to be most needed ; the Holy Spirit to come, to take His place. It will not be difficult to show that a Presence in men's hearts, and everywhere present, is more efficient as Leader in a world-wide and age-long enterprise than any one Leader in the flesh.

How did this wonderful day end ? Vs. 12-14 tell the tale. The apostles go to their fellow-disciples with the story, and together they all wait in prayer for the promised power. Truly, a New Year's Lesson : wait, in prayer, for the Holy Spirit, the spirit of power for the Lord's work during the year.