

4. *Jesus the light of human life* (vs. 9, 10), and hence the source of salvation, vs. 11-13. Call special attention to the two attitudes which men are said to have taken up towards Jesus,—that of unbelief and faith, and point out that one purpose of John's Gospel was to illustrate these two attitudes. Dwell on the result of faith,—becoming sons of God and sharers in His life.

5. *The incarnation*, v. 14. Bring out that Jesus, the Word, now enters into human life becoming identified with the experiences and conditions of humanity. In His nature Jesus is identical with God and in His life identified with man.

Now gather up these main conceptions of the life and mission of Jesus. Show that these are the things which gave the advent its meaning. People believe that Jesus was more than an ordinary human being, not merely because of the manner of His coming, but because His divinity is revealed in all He thought and did. The coming is glorious, because it is the coming of a glorious being. Emphasize the gladness of the gospel message, that Jesus brings life to all now as well as then.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

In a little booklet by Harriet King, *The Sermon in the Hospital*, the preacher is made to say, as he stands there where he can look down upon "five long chambers lined with suffering folk,"

"For God has other words for other worlds,
But for this world the Word of God is Christ."

Let the teacher quote these memorable words, and remind the class that Christ is the supreme revelation of God's life and love to man. The following treatment will bring out the leading features of this beautiful passage :

1. *The Pre-Incarnate Christ*, vs. 1-5. Question the scholars about what they know of the Christ before Bethlehem, and lead them to realize very fully that there never was a time when Christ was not,—that the evangelist in these words reveals the *eternity*, the *personality* and the *divinity* of Christ, that he reveals Him as the Creator, as the life and light of men, as the one who had come

into the darkness of human experience in Old Testament times (v. 5), in angelic forms and prophetic visions.

Lead the class to see that the revelation of the pre-incarnate Christ of to-day's Lesson is a wonderful advance upon anything contained in the other Gospels. They make Bethlehem the starting point in Christ's career : John goes back into eternity. Impress upon the class that the opening words of this Lesson can be applied to no other character in the world's history. Christ was divine in an altogether unique sense.

2. *The Christ of History*, vs. 6-15. Question out the particulars of this marvelously suggestive outline of Christ's earthly life,—*His birth* (v. 14), He was made flesh, He became human ; *His mission* (v. 9), to make the world a brighter, better place to live in, to enable humans to live in a divine way (v. 12); *His rejection* (vs. 10, 11); *His gracious reception* by a chosen few (vs. 14, 15); and impress upon the class that we have in these wonderful revelations the true source of all Christmas joy.

3. *The Christ of Religious Experience*, vs. 16-18. Make clear what is meant by receiving the fulness of Christ, by opening our minds and hearts to the incoming of the divine Spirit and love, of the divine thoughts and purposes ; and lead the scholars to pray :

"O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray ;
Cast out our sins, and enter in ;
Be born in us to-day."

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The minds of the scholars will be full of thoughts about Christmas. A good beginning, therefore, for the Lesson will be to recall the wonderful story of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Get the scholars to tell the story rather than tell the story to them. Then point out that the Lesson is about the One whose birth the Christmas season celebrates.

Call for the title here given to the world's Saviour,—The Word. Bring out the meaning of the title by a few questions about our words,—how their purpose is to reveal our thoughts and purposes. So the Word reveals the thoughts and purposes of God and so