

the unloved, to note. They are not left out of the notice and the mercy of Jesus. To them he says, "Wilt thou be made whole?"

(2.) *What the question involved.* The sick man did not discern this. He had his answer ready to show why he lay there, so near the healing water, yet unhealed. Just so are many among ourselves, quite ready to show why they cannot be any better; they have tried, but circumstances are always against them, etc., etc. But the Lord does not want such an answer. His question relates to one thing only. It is not, "Why art thou not?" but "Wilt thou?" We all understand what such a question involves in ordinary life. "Will you dine with me?" means "I am able and willing to receive you." "Will you come with me?" means "I am able and willing to take you," etc. So, "Wilt thou be made whole?" carries with it this assurance: "I am able and willing to make you whole." The question is really an offer full of promise. Accepted, the promise becomes fact. And even to this man, so slow to take in the offer made to him, the Lord Jesus presently fulfilled it: "The man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked."

It is a sad feature in this story that the man thus healed appears to have shown no gratitude, and gained no spiritual benefit, as we judge from ver. 14, 15. The Lord Jesus had indeed manifested the tenderness and depth of his mercy, but there had been no response in the man's heart, no looking up in faith to the Deliverer, and so the blessing stopped with the mere physical cure. Christ demands just this one thing of sinners: that they should answer his "Wilt thou be made whole?" with "Lord, I will."

2. The hostility of man.

It seems strange that, instead of receiving the congratulations of those who met him, the restored cripple should have been greeted by a rebuke for carrying his bed on the Sabbath. Stranger still, that when the wonderful cure was related it aroused only feelings of anger in the rulers, and that when the name of the Healer was brought to them the result was that they "sought to slay him." Upon this subject the class will probably be of one mind with the teacher. Surely if such a miracle were worked now among ourselves it would be differently received. Would it? How is it, when the Lord Jesus has come to some young man and healed his soul, so that he is a "new creature?" Is such a cure welcomed? Why are the newly converted so often teased, laughed at, persecuted? Because the world—because the natural heart of man, is full of hostility to the Lord Jesus. The Healer is the Son of God, he comes in his father's name; he comes as the divine King. And the world will not acknowledge his claims, and hates to see them acknowledged.

And why is this? The great reason is that the world obeys another, the "god of this world," the enemy, Satan. This is why the mercy of God is met by the hostility of man. And whoever mocks, or hinders, or tries to mar the work of Christ, is doing service to Satan, whose desire is that sin-sick

souls should not be made whole. But mark what the hostility of the Jews came to. Their desire, their purpose, to slay Jesus, was in time fulfilled; and thus the design of God for the redemption of mankind and the making "whole" of sinners was carried out! And all the hostility of the great enemy shall, in the end, but accomplish the purposes of God for the glory of Christ and the good of those who trust in him. Only, let the teacher ask of his class, On which side are you?

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Give the outline of events intervening between the last lesson and this one, but do not spend much time upon them. For the outline, see General Statement.... Show or draw a map of Jerusalem, and upon it the two places supposed by different writers to represent the Pool of Bethesda. (See note on verse 5).... If the teacher can show to the class a picture of the pool, according to either identification, it will add to the interest.... Show in the teaching the process of salvation, as presented in the Thoughts for Young People.... With the Analytical and Biblical Outline are given Scripture texts illustrative of the spiritual teachings of the lesson. Let some of these be read by scholars, and the application made by the teacher.... Do not fail to give the caution of Christ to the healed man—"Sin no more." The young convert needs especially to be on his guard against temptation.

References. FREEMAN. VERSES 8, 9, 11, 12: The bed, 649.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

24. How must we then esteem the Scriptures?

As the true word of God, the sure and sufficient rule of faith and practice.

25. If after prayerful and patient study and inquiry we still find difficulties in the Bible, how must we deal with them?

We cannot expect to know all things while we live in this world, nor fully to understand all that has been made known. [1 Cor. xiii. 10.]

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Jesus Makes Whole.* To be taught: 1.) That our souls and bodies are broken by sin; 2.) That Jesus can make them whole again; 3.) That our part in the work is just believing Jesus.

1. Tell first part of the story. Get a clear idea of the ancient pools and porches, or you cannot give it to the children. A few simple marks on the board will help the children to imagine the sick people, the blind, the lame, all lying, waiting to be cured when the waters should be troubled. Teach that these poor sick bodies were all broken by disease. Perhaps they had tried to get doctors to mend them, but they were not helped. Then they had heard about the wonderful waters which could mend broken bodies, and they came here. Tell that not only bodies, but souls, are broken by sin. We do not know how it is, but we know that God made us to walk straight [make a straight line on the board] and something turns us aside so that we walk like this, [making a crooked line]. That something is SIN, a will which chooses evil, and not God.

2. Show a broken branch or flower-stalk. Can any one mend this? Teach that what God has made, God only can mend. Ask to whom I must take my watch to