

## LESSON VIII—February 19

## JESUS AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA

John 5. 1-15

GOLDEN TEXT: "And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles." John 6. 2.

## Primary Notes



**Approach.** Herbert was playing in the woods. By and by he heard sounds and followed them till he saw a strong man working. He was cutting down a tree, and it was wonderful to see how strong he was. Pretty

soon a frightened squirrel ran out, and the man, instead of killing it, or chasing it, stopped his work, picked up some nuts, and tried to coax the little animal to come and get them. Herbert thought to himself, "That man is kind as well as strong." When the little boy tried to find his way back he could not tell which way to go. He was lost. It was almost time to stop work. "I'll go back to that kind man and get him to show me the way out," he thought, and so he did. It was a narrow path which the man took, but he said kindly, "Follow me and I'll take you home." The boy followed closely, though the shadows were falling under the thick trees, and at last he saw his own home, where he was soon safe and happy. It was watching the man, seeing how strong and how kind he was in all that he did, which made Herbert willing to trust and follow him.

Our Lord Jesus did many things when on earth which made people trust and follow him. (Teach Golden Text.) To-day we learn of another of Jesus's miracles, or wonderful works, such as no man could ever do.

**At the Pool of Bethesda.** Draw a word-picture of this pool, and make a few marks upon the blackboard to stand for the place, the water, and the waiting company. It is a pathetic scene as we look at it in imagination. Bring young hearts into sympathy with that crowd of weak and suffering people. Then impress them with the great gladness following the fact that to this sad country Jesus came. The Lord was sure to come to people in trouble. He never passed by as if he did not see or care.

**Jesus's Question.** The Saviour noticed one man who had had a weakness for thirty-eight years. Think how long, how hard his trial had been. The Lord asked him a question: "Wilt thou be made whole?" Portray the man's condition, repeat his pitiful story of waiting in vain these many years, and imagine what his answer to Christ must have been. Did he not wish to be cured? But how strange it is that some who are sin-sick and unable to do right

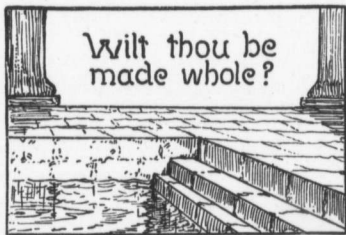
are not willing that Jesus should cure them! This man was not like these.

**Jesus's Command.** The Lord had a word for this poor man. He gave him a chance to do something to show his trust and obedience. "Rise," said the Saviour, "take up thy bed and walk." The bed was only a mattress, but weak as he was the man could not carry it till Jesus gave him strength. At the Lord's word he tried to rise and take up his bed. Jesus saw that he believed, and at once made him strong to rise, walk, and carry his bed. Everybody was astonished to see the man walking. Some found fault with him for carrying his bed upon the Sabbath. The man did not know who it was that told him to rise and take up his bed. Jesus wanted him to know. He found the man in the temple—a very good place for the healed man to go first of all, and told him to sin no more. Then the man knew who it was and went and told that it was Jesus who had made him well. He had a right to tell him to carry his bed away with him.

Many who knew of Jesus's wonderful works followed him because of his miracles, as our text tells us. Ought we not to do the same? We know from what he has done that he is Lord of all.

**Lesson Thought: Believe and Follow.** Who is willing to follow a guide who does not know the way? Unless we trust we will not follow. But if we have good reason to believe then it is easy to follow.

**Thought for Teachers.** Surely we have seen and heard of miracles of healing upon sin-sick souls, which show the power of Jesus. Have we not reason to believe that he will take the lambs in his arms and save them from the need of being brought back from wandering? It is far better to form than to reform, and to us is given the beautiful task of "working together with God" in forming fresh, plastic spirits in



the mold of right thinking and living. Let us magnify our office.

"In the young hearts soft and tender,  
Guide our hands good seed to sow,  
That its blossoming may praise Thee,  
Wheresoever they may go."