



LESSON IV.—Jan. 24.

The Lame Man Healed.

Acts iii., 1-16.

(Read the whole chapter. Commit vs. 13-16.)

GOLDEN TEXT.

His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong.—Acts iii., 16.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Luke 8 : 41-56.—The Sick Woman Healed.
- T. Mark 10 : 46-52.—Blind Bartimeus Healed.
- W. Acts 3 : 1-16.—The Lame Man Healed.
- Th. Acts 14 : 1-18.—The Impotent Man Healed.
- F. Isa. 35 : 1-10.—Then Shall the Lame Leap.
- S. Matt. 10 : 1-20.—The Apostles Commanded to Heal.
- S. John 14 : 1-14.—Jesus' All-prevailing Name.

LESSON STORY.

One day as Peter and John were going together to the temple to pray, they saw a poor lame man sitting at the gate called Beautiful. This man had been lame ever since he was born, and had to be carried every day to the temple gate, where he sat and begged from those who went up to the services. When this man saw Peter and John he asked them to give him something. Then Peter and John stood in front of him and said, 'Look on us.' And he looked up at them earnestly, expecting perhaps a few coppers, but Peter said to him, 'I have no money, no silver or gold, but I give you what I have; then seeing that the man believed him and had faith, he said, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.' And Peter took his hand and lifted him up, and Jesus gave strength to the poor, weak ankles and feet which had never walked, and for the first time, in all his forty years the man stood on his feet and walked and leaped, praising God for his wonderful healing. And all the people saw him walking and praising God, and they knew that he was the same man who had for so long sat at the temple gate unable to take a step. They were amazed at this sudden change, and were filled with wonder and excitement, and ran and crowded round Peter and John, clamoring for an explanation. They were in Solomon's porch, and when Peter saw how the people came crowding around, he spoke to them about Jesus and how it was faith in His name which made this man strong and well.

LESSON HYMN.

We may not climb the heavenly steeps
To bring the Lord Christ down;
In vain we search the lowest deeps
For Him no depths can drown.

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He;
And faith has yet its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain,
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

LESSON HINTS.

Peter and John went up together—Jesus had sent forth his disciples by twos (Mark vi., 7; Luke x., 1). It generally produces more than twice as much good for two to go together than one alone to carry the glad tidings of salvation, for one should always be praying while the other speaks.

'The hour of prayer'—the disciples still attended the daily services in the temple, though they doubtless had their own hours for Christian worship. The ninth hour was three o'clock in the afternoon.

A lame man is a common sight in the East. Travellers tell us that the streets are still filled with beggars of all descriptions, mostly maimed in some way. There were no hospitals or charitable institutions where these poor people could be looked after, so that they had to beg in the street.

He sat 'at the gate of the temple': here was a chance to do good by the way. 'Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple'—and

knowing that religious people are likely to be generous, 'asked an alms,' a small gift. 'Peter, fastening his eyes upon him,' compelling his interest and making him expectant, said, 'Silver and gold have I none—if he had had any money he had given it to the Church. 'Such as I have give I thee'; he was one of 'the poor of this world, rich in faith,' as poor, yet making many rich—he had true riches, the riches of the Holy Spirit. 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk' (R.V.). The man must have had faith in the name or he would not have attempted to rise. Peter 'took him by the right hand,' giving him practical help, 'and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength,' by the power of Jesus Christ. 'He, leaping up, stood' (Isa. xxxv., 6), 'praising God,' he knew that the apostles could not have done this in their own power.

'All the people'—it was the prayer hour, and the temple was full of those who had come to worship, 'and they knew it was he'—they could not help recognizing him. The man 'held Peter and John, and all the people ran unto them,' to find out how this wonderful thing had come to pass. The porch was called Solomon's, probably because it was built on an artificial hill made by King Solomon.

Peter said, 'Why marvel ye at this? He at once began to tell the people of the power of Jesus, and to direct their thoughts away from himself to the Saviour; the true follower of Jesus points ever to the 'Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.'

Peter goes on to show how, though they had done it ignorantly, still they had denied and crucified the Prince of Life, God's Son, Jesus, and that God had raised Jesus from the dead, to which fact the apostles were constantly witnessing, and that faith in the name of Jesus had made this man perfectly strong. He urges them to 'repent and be converted,' for the same power which had healed the lame man would heal and cleanse their hearts.

Suggested Hymns—'The Great Physician,' 'What means this eager? 'How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,' 'Wilt thou be made whole? 'I have a Saviour,' 'Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing,' 'Take the name of Jesus with you.'

Search Questions.

These questions will be given weekly, and answers should be sent in once a month. The answers for the preceding weeks to be mailed on or before the first Saturday of each month, that a monthly honor roll may be published. Those who answer these questions must have no help farther than a reference Bible and Concordance, and will kindly answer the questions as shortly as possible.

All answers to be addressed: 'Search Questions,' Editor 'Northern Messenger,' 'Witness' Office, Montreal. These questions begin in this number, and will be continued through the year in connection with the Sunday-school lessons in the Book of Acts. At the end of the year prizes will be given to the two competitors who have sent in the best answers to the Search Questions during the year.

These prizes will consist of handsome Bibles, with maps, references, notes, etc. The count for the prize will begin from the first lesson in February, the answers to be mailed the first Saturday of March.

We hope that a great number of our readers will take pleasure in finding out and sending in the answers to these questions.

1. At what hours did the Jews go up to the temple to pray?
2. Tell how another lame man was healed.
3. Where are silver and gold first mentioned in the Bible?
4. What does the Psalmist say is more precious than gold?

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPIC.

Jan. 24—Our failures and successes.—Luke v., 1-11. (A question-box meeting suggested.)

Hints to Teachers.

(Evangelical Sunday-School Teacher.)

Keep within the vocabulary of your pupils. There can be no teaching without a medium of communication between teacher and pupil. This medium must be common to both. Never use words the pupil does not understand. Remember that the pupil's vocabulary, especially in the lower grade, is very limited. There will, of course, be times when words will be used that the pupil does not understand. They must always be explained. You accomplish a double purpose in this—namely, you enlarge the pupil's

vocabulary and teach, at the same time, a new truth. See that the pupil knows the meaning of every word in the text of the lesson; then that he knows the meaning of all the words you use in asking questions. A teacher once (who was also a preacher) was teaching (?) the parable of the Prodigal Son to a class of boys, and when he came to the 'husks that the swine did eat,' he asked this question, 'Boys, are you of opinion that the customary aliments of swine are congenial to the digestive apparatus of the genus homo?' A grunt with a rising inflection was the only response he got from the class.

Primary Teaching.

(By Harriet L. Shoemaker.)

There is no denying that the primary teacher without a room to herself is most seriously handicapped. Her first effort, then, should be to find out the resources of her environment, to see if something cannot be made out of nothing, and a room improvised.

I know a girl whose situation was as unpromising as it could well be. But there was an abandoned choir-loft at the back of the country church where she taught—a place full of cast-off seats and remnants of past usefulness. When she proposed holding her class there, the superintendent scorned such a notion; but her perseverance finally succeeded in getting a space cleared large enough for her little folks. That, with all its inconveniences, was infinitely more satisfactory than teaching downstairs in a crowded room. I may add, in passing, that, by the gift of a summer visitor, that teacher has now a beautifully equipped class-room. It did not come, however, till long after she had battled with adverse fortune in the old gallery.

But all schoolrooms will not yield treasure on demand, as in her case. Sometimes an accommodating neighbor will give the use of a room near enough to the church for the primary class to retire to it after assembling with the adults. If this plan is impracticable, there is generally one remaining device for securing privacy—to gather the class behind all others in a corner, and to enclose that corner with screens.

The enclosing screens may be very plain. Two ordinary large clothes-horses, covered with dark calico, will answer every purpose. A row of nails along the top will hang the picture-roll, etc. A piece of flexible blackboard cloth, hemmed at bottom and top, and stiffened by two sticks, may be attached to the screen by rings or cords at both top and bottom. It will not be perfectly steady, but it is a great deal better than no board, and has the advantage of being easily removed after the lesson.

Behind the screen the problem of teaching in the main room is almost solved. Of course, there can be no singing, but a great many of the simpler motion exercises can be quietly carried on. For instance, they can repeat Miss Haver-gal's 'Consecration Hymn' without disturbing the other classes. In fact, motion exercises can be used without the screen, if the class is in its proper place—behind all the others. Each child can be taught to speak gently, while every voice contributes to the whole volume of sound, just as the skilful leader of a chorus can command a pianissimo passage—a mere breath of music—from five hundred singers, each adding his whisper.

When the screen is an impossibility, and therefore no single blackboard can be used, each child may be given a slate for himself. This plan involves extra work on the teacher's part, but it attracts each one of the class, and fixes the lesson when he helps teach himself by means of a slate.

In learning a new text, it sometimes helps to give each child a different word of it, and then to call for the words in order. This and the repetition of verses in concert by at least three or four children can be done in the quietest of adult rooms.

But, after all is said, we come back to the truth with which we began, that teaching in a common class-room is most difficult. After you have carefully utilized the resources of your particular work-place, if there is no next-door house to borrow, and if screens and blackboards are a vain fancy, then use slates and such motion exercises and concert recitations as you can. Make a sand map on the ground outside the church some pleasant day. Work on with a good courage, remembering what stupendous results have been achieved by our forefathers in the faith, who taught the word of God with far less of material equipment than belongs to the poorest modern Sunday-schools. — 'Sunday-School Times.'