

Then how glad the man was that he had gone and washed in the pool as Jesus told him to; for Jesus had to find out first if the man would mind, and so because he did mind and did what Jesus told him to do Jesus gave sight to his eyes.

### LESSON XII. (March 19.)

#### CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD. John 10. 1-16.

GOLDEN TEXT. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." John 10. 11.

#### Primary Notes.



What do we call a man who keeps sheep? What does he do for the sheep? He leads and feeds and keeps them safe. In far-away Eastern lands the shepherds almost live with their sheep. They know each one by name, and the

sheep know the shepherd's voice and come at his call. Well, what about the little lambs? Do you suppose the shepherd of a big flock would say, "O, these lambs are so small and weak it isn't worth while to look after them till they get stronger and larger?" Would any shepherd say that? O no. The weakest ones have the most care. The shepherd even carries the lambs in his arms when they cannot walk.

What about the lost ones? Sometimes sheep are very silly, and go astray, and get lost, and are in danger. Wolves and bears, in those far-away lands, long ago, and even lions, would be likely to find and eat them. Would a shepherd leave them to be eaten? No; he would go after the wandering ones, even over rough paths that hurt his own feet.

Most shepherds love their flocks and care for them; but there are bad shepherds sometimes, who cannot be trusted to look after the sheep and lambs. We are to hear to-day of the Good Shepherd, the best one of all. But it is not a man, and the flock is not made of woolly sheep and lambs, but of people. Ah, you know who is called the Good Shepherd, don't you? It is Jesus, our loving Lord. And this name is given to him because he cares for his children, little and big, as a tender shepherd cares for his sheep and lambs. We will put in our lesson link "shepherd and sheep." Let us learn to-day all we can about the gentle Shepherd, what he does for us, and what we should do.

Jesus, in the lesson, tells what he is like. He is not like a thief, who comes climbing into the

fold, but he is the one who owns the fold, or the safe place where the sheep are kept, and when they go out he goes before, as a good shepherd would, to lead and to clear the way. The sheep that belong to the shepherd will follow him, Jesus says, for they know his voice. Now, even little lambs can tell the shepherd's voice, and little children, who are the Saviour's lambs, know when he speaks to them in their hearts; they can tell what Jesus wants them to do, and they can follow, too, as well as the sheep, which means the grown-up people.

We will spell out what our Shepherd is like, using the letters in the word for the beginning of other words, so:

Our Shepherd

S eeks us out,  
H elps us,  
E ases us,  
P ities us,  
H olds us fast,  
E nfold us,  
R estores us,  
D ied for us.

We never would know the way to the heavenly fold if Jesus did not seek us out. We never could get there alone, but he helps us. He is so sorry for our weakness, and pities us so when we are sorry and sinful, or in any need at all, that surely we know he loves us dearly. He holds us fast. A little girl, walking with papa, took hold of his fingers with her hand till they came to a slippery place, where she was afraid of falling, and then she cried, "Papa, take hold of my hand, please!" She was safe then. So Jesus holds us fast. He enfolds us—that is, he clasps us in his arms and carries us to the heavenly fold. We are as safe as if we could see his arms about us. When we run away from him he restores us, which means, brings us back. The Shepherd Psalm, the twenty-third, says, "He restoreth my soul." Then our Shepherd died for us. "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

What kind of sheep and lambs does Jesus do all this for?

Timid,  
Forgetful,  
Weak,  
Wandering } Sheep.

O, how good our Shepherd is! We never can pay him, but we can please him. So let us

Love, }  
Trust, } The Good Shepherd.  
Follow }

A little lamb named Playful used often to run away from the shepherd, even from the pleasant pasture and from the safe fold. If some tempter