

SN 9/26
SN 1/12

testimony is to set to our seal that God is true (John 3. 33 . To disbelieve this record is to make God a liar (1 John 5. 10)

V. A Confirming Evidence. "As he was going down, his servants met him, saying, Thy son liveth... when?...yesterday at the seventh hour. So the father knew that it was at the self same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth" (vv. 51-53). Is such faith not always confirmed by the providence of God? Had Joshua not to confess, at the end of his eventful life, that "not one thing had failed of all that the Lord had promised?" (Josh. 23. 14). Believe and thou shalt see, for in the "self same hour" in which the almighty Redeemer says that expected thing shall be done, it will be done. Those who go in faith, and at His bidding, as this nobleman did, will surely find that He is faithful who hath promised. The assurance of salvation must as certainly follow the act of faith.

THE IMPOTENT MAN.

JOHN 5. 1-15.

"The Blessed One—
He read the tear-stained book of poor men's souls."

—Kingsley.

THIS pool called Bethesda, "House of Mercy," seems to have been the Jerusalem hospital. The fourth verse is left out of the text in the Revised Version. The water was evidently subject to intermittent bubbling, and perhaps possessed many healing virtues. But it is not with those who went into the pool that we have to do, but with the man who did not get in, and yet was healed. Observe his—

I. Sorrowful Condition. "He had an infirmity thirty and eight years" (v. 5). This infirmity was probably the result of his sin (v. 14). Like sin itself, it was an old-standing disease. As far as his own ability, or any

- 38 yrs sin is old
- ONLY HOPE WAS GOD AS HE IS ONLY HERE CURE SIN IS MERCY

mere human power was concerned, he was past hope. This house of mercy was his last shift. The mercy of God is the sinners' only hope.

II. Humble Position. This "certain man was there." Where? There—among the "blind, halt, withered, waiting." He was not ashamed to take his place among the helpless and the needy. If he had refused to take this self-humbling step he never would have been healed. Pride and shame keep many a one away from the saving touch of Christ. To many God is still saying, "How long will ye refuse to humble yourselves?" It was when the wretched publican took his place as a sinner that he was justified (Luke 18. 13).

(vs 5)
Recognized
CONDITION
WOUND BE
SAVED UNTIL
TAKE YOUR
PLACE AMONG
SINNERS
PUBLICAN

III. Fruitless Effort. "While I am coming, another steppeth down before me" (v. 7). He had taken his place among the "impotent folk." Now he is doing the best he can; but his best only ends in failure and disappointment. There are a great many "others," seen and unseen, within and without, that are ready to step down before a soul seeking salvation. This the broken law of God is sure to do. Salvation is not of works, lest any man should boast. His repeated failure makes him more prepared for the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

helpless
ON LY
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IN FAILURE
STATUE PETER

IV. Merciful Deliverer. "When Jesus saw him lie, and knew... He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?" (v. 6). He knoweth the path of those whose spirits have become overwhelmed (Psa. 142. 3). This poor man was waiting for a more convenient season, but that was not what he needed. He needed one to save him where he was, and as he was, and that Christ offered to do. Wilt thou be made whole, where you are, just now? When he answered, "Sir, I have no man," etc., it was clear that he did not know to whom he was speaking, for those who are saved by Christ need no other man. Wilt thou that I should make thee whole?

CONCERN
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V. Personal Call. "Rise, take up thy bed and walk"

COMMAND OF
FAITH

(v. 8). This call must surely have come to him with startling suddenness. He had not walked for "thirty and eight years." But there is always that inexplicable something about the Person and Word of the Lord Jesus Christ that awakens the confident expectation of the diseased and the downcast. It was utterly useless for any other man to say, "Rise and walk." It would only be solemn mockery, but coming from His lips the words were "spirit and life."

FAITH

Results

VI. Sudden Change. "And immediately the man was made whole" (v. 9). He believed the word of the Lord, acted on the authority of it, and found in his happy experience that he had received the blessing for which he so much longed. He got it, not by working, striving, or struggling, but by simply believing. The change wrought in him was both sudden and complete: "immediately...made whole." The cure itself was a mystery, but the fact of it was a certainty—perfect and God-like.

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Testimony

VII. Fearless Testimony. "The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole" (v. 15). Having met the Lord in the temple (v. 14), he now confesses Him before men, and before such men as were bitterly opposed to Him. "With the heart man believeth, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10. 10). By grace are we saved through faith, but faith is manifested before men by works (James 2. 18). Some refuse to confess Christ because they love the praise of men more than the praise of God (John 12. 42, 43). To deny Him before men is to be denied by Him before the Father in Heaven (Matt. 10. 32, 33).

I AND MY FATHER.

JOHN 5. 17-43.

THE Gospel of John is the "Holy of Holies" in the tabernacle of the New Testament. John could no more invent