

Wilt Thou Be Made Whole

#0679

Study given by W.D. Frazee—January 11, 1963

I want some manna. Don't you? Is there going to be some at that long table? Yes. The Lord's messenger saw the manna on the table. We want Jesus to share it with us. He has some for us tonight, thank the Lord.

“After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered Him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steps down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath” John 5:1-9.

That is a wonderful story of a wonderful experience. A wonderful Savior did a wonderful work.

There is the pool. From time to time there is agitation. It was commonly believed that it was supernatural, and that there was healing in it (*The Desire of Ages*, page 201). The people, believing in it, came. There they lay waiting for the moving of the waters.

Many today who are sick in body and mind and soul are looking for something to happen that is going to fix them up. Some think they can get it out of a bottle. Some think they can get it out of a hypodermic needle. Some think they can get it through consultation with a human being. Some think they can get it through reading certain things, or through certain diets, or through certain exercises. Far more than back then there is a multitude of impotent folk who are weak and sick, waiting for the moving of the water.

I wonder if there is someone like that here tonight who says, “Yes, that is me. I need help. I have a sick stomach. I have a weak heart.”

Maybe the difficulty is in the spirit. I wonder if there is somebody here tonight who is not sure of your relationship with God. There is a burden of sin, a burden of anxiety, a burden of care. I wonder if there is someone here tonight who has been in a physical or spiritual infirmity as long as this poor man was that Jesus focused His attention on.

He had been that way for 38 years. Doubtless he was considered a hopeless case. Doubtless he was as far as men could evaluate the matter. But thank God, to the great Physician there are no hopeless cases.

Jesus raised two points. First He said, "Would you like to be well?" We might say that is an unnecessary question. But Jesus never asks any unnecessary questions. Jesus drew from the man his heart's desire in order that his spirit might be awakened to the possibility of receiving the fulfillment of that desire. It is the Holy Spirit that prompts our prayers, if they mean anything. So Jesus was working to bring to the surface the life longing of that poor sufferer.

Would he like to be well? Indeed he would. But he said, Sir, there is nobody that cares for me. It was the truth. There was no relative, no friend, no neighbor watching over him. He had been there day after day, month after month, waiting for the moving of the water; but all in vain. He was nearer death than when he came.

Jesus didn't even discuss the pool. He didn't waste a moment on that subject. Jesus encouraged the man to exercise faith in the immediate help that was there for him in the person and presence of Jesus. For all earth's ills there is one divine remedy. It is in the person of Jesus.

We are told that Our Savior's words, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest," is a prescription for all physical and spiritual ills. Christ is indeed the answer. How quickly the man's faith took hold. When Jesus said, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk," immediately his will responded.

As he rose to walk the Holy Spirit energized those withered muscles, those unused nerves. As he willed to walk the mighty power of the Spirit of God enabled him. What a joyful Sabbath walk he had.

It is Sabbath again, and again the great Healer is present to point to Himself as the one who has the answer to our particular needs. Tonight some souls are going to get help. Some souls are going to be relieved, healed, saved. I wonder if there is someone here tonight who says, I am like that poor man. I must have help. I have been waiting and hoping that this thing would heal me, or this person would help me, but I see my only hope is in Jesus.

Suppose you had been an acquaintance with this man at the pool. Suppose you had been in the habit of dropping in from time to time to see how he is faring. One morning you come by and look around and he is not there. You ask where he is. People say they do not know. He left yesterday. How did he get away? He walked.

He walked? What would you do? You would make inquiry, and you would hear the story. How thrilled your soul would be with this man's deliverance. How glad you would be to grasp his hand and hear from his own lips of the healing power of the great Physician. Do you suppose he told people? Of course he did.

Suppose after a few weeks you are passing by the pool of Bethesda and you see that man lying there again. What would you think? Suppose you say to him, Friend, I thought you were walking. What happened? What are you doing now?

I don't know. I just seemed to lose out. I am waiting for the moving of the waters again.

I wonder if anything like that has ever happened? Oftener than I wish. And the pitiful thing is that thousands of people have gotten used to that level of the Christian experience. Sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting.

I want to deal with some simple and practical things. I want to ask, "Why do we come to Jesus, and what do we expect Jesus to do?" I want to ask, "Does He do it or not?"

Let me make very clear that the Scriptures do not teach that people can have something happen to them all at once that makes it unnecessary for them to ever need help again for the rest of their lives. We do not believe in instant sanctification. The Scriptures do not teach it.

We are sanctified by a lifetime of Christian experience. The language of the converted soul will always be, Deeper yet, deeper yet. More and more and more. Let me make very clear that no matter how great the blessing you have received today there is a richer blessing tomorrow. No matter how your need is met today there is a greater need to be met tomorrow. Paul makes it clear:

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" Philippians 3:12.

I am not seeking in any way to discourage the longing of the soul for more and more of the Savior's blessing, a deeper work of grace day by day. That is normal. In fact, if one has the type of satisfaction where he feels he already has everything, that Jesus has done everything and there is nothing left to do, instead of proving he had a deep Christian experience it would show he had a very shallow one, if he had any at all.

Having said that, I come to the point which is the thing I am most anxious God will help us see. The fact that God has something more to do for us tomorrow should not keep us from doubting what He did for us yesterday. It should not mean we lose what He has already done for us. Not at all.

In Bunyan's allegory Christian set out from the city of Destruction to go to the Celestial City. He had many experiences along the way. He got bogged down for awhile in the Slew of Despond, but thank the Lord He got out and went on his way. He went through the Wicked Gate after some discouraging and diverting experiences, and finally toiled up the Hill of Difficulty. He went down the hill on the other side and had a battle. He suffered some injuries, but he got through. He went through the Valley of the Shadow of Death and had some real battles there with the little imps that got onto his shoulder and whispered into his ears certain things which distressed him.

In company with a fellow pilgrim, Hopeful, they got clear out of the path and over into the enemy's ground and was taken by Giant Despair as a captive, and locked up in Doubting Castle. For several days and nights they were tormented. Finally, in the middle of the night Christian said to his fellow, "What a fool I am to lie in this dungeon when I could just as well be out breathing the fresh air of heaven. I have a key here in my breast, Promise by name, which will open any lock in Doubting Castle.

Hopeful said, "If that is what you have, get busy and let's use it." They got out and went on their way.

Suppose that somewhere along the journey from the city of Destruction to the Celestial city you accosted Christian and asked where he was going. Where is his home.

Suppose he said, I don't know. I wish I was going to heaven. I hope I am, but I don't know. Well, my home is in the City of Destruction of this world. I am trying to be a Christian, but I don't know whether it works or not. I don't know whether I have hold of the Lord or not. I don't know whether the Lord has hold of me or not. I don't know if I have made any progress or not.

What would you think of that sort of testimony? What would you think of that sort of experience? I say to you, it is a pitiful thing to be waiting for the moving of the waters, and for the Savior to come and lay His dear hands upon us and lift us up and send us on our way walking, and then come back in a few days and lie there as paralyzed as ever, waiting for the moving of the waters.

My brethren, these things ought not to be. We are to have an experience with God, and nail it down. Clinch it. Settle it. We know God did something for us, and we go on. If tomorrow we find we need something more done for us, fine. Let's call on the great Physician, and let God deliver us from that sin, that temptation, that doubt, that discouragement to which we are exposed at that time. But let us not deny the experience God has given us, and let us not fall back into the experience of defeat which we had. Do you see what I mean? That is most important.

Did you ever hear a phonograph record being played in which for some reason the needle kept going around in the same groove? Is it enjoyable?

Jesus is very merciful and very patient. I don't think we make Him impatient, but sometimes we make Him weary when we ask Him to do the same thing over and over again. He says, as He said to that poor sufferer, "Wilt thou be made whole?"

Would you like to get help that lasts? Would you like to get an experience that sticks? We expect people to do that with some things.

Suppose a man comes in and he has a package of cigarettes in his pocket. I give a call and invite people to come and lay their idols on the altar. This man comes and puts his package of cigarettes down. Suppose next Friday night I give another call and he brings a package of cigarettes again and puts them down. Suppose at the next vesper service I give the call and again he pulls a package of cigarettes out of his pocket and puts it down.

Suppose that keeps up every vesper service for six months. Twenty-six weeks, week after week. Every Friday night as regular as can be the man comes and puts down a package of cigarettes. We might say, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah? Where is the power of God? Can't God save that poor man from going back to his cigarettes?"

I want to ask a question. Is there anyone who knows God can deliver people from cigarettes because He delivered you?

Brother, how long did you use cigarettes? Who delivered you? The Lord did. Do you believe the Lord is going to keep you for the rest of your life? Do you think you can keep yourself. Has God changed you, and are you glad to bear witness to it? Praise His name.

Does the anchor hold? Do you expect God to keep on delivering you? Is there a different way God deals with the tobacco question from the way He deals with evil temper and criticism and doubt and discouragement and darkness and foolishness and pride and worldly dress and a lot of other things?

I wonder if there is power in Jesus Christ to deliver men from other things. We do not have to get help tonight and by another Friday night be right back into the same rut of doubt or discouragement, sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting. Brothers and sisters, I say we have encompassed this mountain long enough. What do you say?

Don't misunderstand me. I am not trying to get anyone into some fanatical idea that all of a sudden they are going to reach the place where they can claim perfection of the flesh. No. But I say to you, there is deliverance in Jesus Christ such as many here have not fully entered into. And I long to see us enter in by the grace of God.

We will enter in on other things just like these souls have entered in on the tobacco question. We sense our need, and we cry to God for help. We believe in His help and exercise faith, and go and do what God says, believing in the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Let's do it. What do you say?

I gave a call in a meeting not too long ago. After the meeting someone said to me, "I wonder if it might not have helped some folks if some of us had set a good example and come forward?"

I explained something to him, and this brother thanked me. He said he had a great deal to learn.

I said that we should never answer an invitation merely to set an example for somebody else. Of course, there are various kinds of invitations and calls. If I should ask how many here tonight would like to do better, how many should answer that invitation? Everybody. If I should give an invitation for everybody who feels the need of drawing closer to Jesus, how many of you could come forward? I hope every one of you could and would. There are general invitations. But there ought to be something that marks the difference between an unconverted, defeated individual and a born again Christian that is rejoicing in the grace of God.

So I ask a question. Do you know that Jesus has forgiven your sins? Do you know that Jesus has heard your cry and pardoned your transgressions? Do you know that Jesus has come into your heart, and that He is a mighty Savior to save you from sin? I don't mean you have any perfection of your own to boast of. You never will have. But do you know that the One who bent over that paralytic at the pool has come to you and asked if you will be made whole? Has He said He is the Lord that heals and saves, and tells you to rise and walk? Then can you say you know that Jesus has come into your heart and is doing things for you?

There is a deeper work that needs to be done, and you are asking Him to do it day by day, but that doesn't deny the fact that He has done a great work in your soul. You know He forgives sin. You know you are His child. You know you are under the blood, the precious blood, and you know you are accepted. Is that the privilege of everyone?

Why do people lose Him? Because they do not get busy at once getting other people into the same experience.

"It is in working for others that they will keep their own souls alive" *Christian Service*, page 22.

How will you keep alive? Working for others. Now don't misunderstand me. Working for others will not make you alive. Oh, no. Only the miracle working power of Jesus reaching down will save you. But when Jesus has come into your heart and done something for you, the way to keep it is to start working for others.

Instead of running a medical missionary institute here for the training of soul winners, suppose we were down on an ocean beach somewhere running a training program for lifeguards. Suppose we had fifty people enrolled in that school. But suppose we had to admit that quite a number of the students were getting drowned every week, and we had to get out there and give them artificial respiration just to save them, and that happens over and over and over again. What would you think of that program?

Well, you would either think there was something wrong with the program, or something wrong with the students. Wouldn't you? And the fellow who is out there drowning again and again and again, has to be pulled in and laid out on the beach and be worked on to get the water out of his lungs. We give him artificial respiration, and finally he gasps and starts to breath again. Then we say we are so glad he is alive. How many times do you think we ought to go through that? Once a week? I am afraid some people think it ought to be done once a day.

God have mercy upon us, and show us that there is something better in a Christian experience than that. Certainly if we are drowning we ought to cry out for help. And if a person has been drowned a hundred times and is going down he had better cry for help, and someone who loves Jesus and loves that person had better plunge in and get him and bring him out. But we ought not to think that is the program, for it isn't.

We ought not to encourage it in ourselves or one another. We ought not to let souls drown in sight of land and help. No. We ought to plunge in and get them out. But somewhere along the line, lifeguards ought to get beyond that.

Are you a lifeguard? Are you in training to be a lifeguard?

“Throw out the lifeline across the dark waves.
There is a brother whom someone must save;
Somebody's brother, oh, who then will dare
To throw out the lifeline, his peril to share?”

If we are going out there on those billows I want somebody who can swim to be in the boat. What do you say? Are we training medical missionary soul winners, or are we training people who have to be given artificial respiration over and over and over again?

That is putting it plain. I think it ought to be. I think we ought to understand that the purpose of these studies in these meetings is not to keep us where we can get just enough help to last us until the next time.

Oh, there is something better for us. There is balm in Gilead, and there is a Physician there. God has laid help upon One who is mighty. But no matter how much help you get, if you do not get busy working for souls you are going to get weak, and it will all have to be done over again.

Don't let anyone misunderstand. Don't let anyone get discouraged in coming to the altar a hundred and fifty times if you need to get help. There are some people who quit tobacco once and that is it, but there are some people who will quit tobacco again and again and again.

I have a box I call my trophy box. In it I have an old pipe that a railroad engineer gave me. I have a plug of tobacco a hotel clerk gave me. I have a number of packages of cigarettes.

I was talking to a very dear friend of mine who twenty-five years ago gave me his package of cigarettes. This was many years after he became a teacher in one of our colleges. I spoke to him about that package of cigarettes he had given me 25 years before. He said, "Yes, Brother Frazee, but that was not the last one." Thank God it was near the last one.

I repeat, I do not want to discourage anyone from going and getting help, no matter how many times you have to. The thing I am trying to get at is not to stop trying to get help. It is encouraging you to believe you can get some help that lasts. That is what I am trying to get at.

There are some people who are sick, and the only way they can get going is to get a shot every few days. Well, if the only way I can keep going is to get some kind of vitamin or shot of some kind, I had better keep going, hadn't I? Certainly. But if there is some way to get help on the tobacco question or temper question or doubt question or discouragement question so we do not have to keep going over and over and over again, wouldn't that be fine?

I repeat, how are we going to do it? "It is in working for others that they will keep their own souls alive."

I wonder how long we have to wait after we are converted before we do that? Friends, we do not have to wait one day.

I bring in to the witness chair the man who had the Devils in him on the shore of Galilee. The Lord Jesus healed him. He said, Dear Jesus, I want to go with You. I feel safe with You. If I am with You and I should get into difficulty, I can run to You and I know You will help me. There is so much I need to learn. I would like to take some classes with You. I would like to get a good course with You.

Did Jesus have some men in training with Him? Yes. There was nothing wrong with this man's request. Those men who Jesus had in training certainly needed the training. But on this particular occasion with this particular man, Jesus said. No. You don't come with me. You go home. It was a heathen home. Go home and tell your friends, and show them what great things God has done for you.

Friends, what an assignment. And what a pity to lose the glory of it and the power of it and the strength of it just because there are fifty or a hundred of us together. Oh, if there is some weak paralyzed person here tonight, I pray that in God's name you may find deliverance, and go from this chapel with the firm determination to witness to others.

If your tongue has been dumb, pray God it will be loosened. If you are paralyzed so you cannot get up and witness, pray God you will have strength to stand like that paralytic did at the pool of Bethesda. There is power in Jesus. And if you will witness in public and in private, God will help you.

Get into this thing as a lifeguard. I wonder if anyone thinks they are just training material to work on. I wonder if there is anyone who thinks your part of the

total picture is to drown out there so somebody can have the experience of going out and rescuing you and working over you.

Ah friends, there are plenty of people who need that without our furnishing any laboratory material. We do not have to have any play like thing. We do not have to put on any show. We do not have to have any gymnastics in this thing merely for exercise.

There are hundreds and thousands of souls going down. Every one of us should be busy, not in giving one another artificial respiration, but in getting out and pulling the lost out of the briny deep, and bringing them home to safety. Will you do it, or will you take up the time and absorb the energies of God's workers to pull you out again and again and again?

Somebody says, But Brother Frazee, isn't that what the ministers and workers and elders and deacons and Sabbath School teachers and home heads are for?

The best answer I can give you is what I read, "It is in working for others that they will keep their own souls alive."

There was a time when every one of you who are walking around tonight could not walk. You don't remember it. Earlier than you can remember someone got you out of that crib. Someone encouraged you to walk. You promptly fell down, of course. But they didn't say, Bless his little heart. I guess he can't walk. I guess we are going to have to care for him all his life.

There are a few people like that. Somebody has to look after them morning noon and night. Somebody has to feed them and do other things for them. They can't do anything for themselves. We pity people like that, but we certainly don't want to emulate them. And certainly medical missionaries, ministers, physicians, nurses, Bible workers, teachers, fathers and mothers in Israel do not want to make spiritual invalids.

We do not want to hover over people and minister to them in such a way that they become altogether dependent upon human help. Nine out of ten of them with the right kind of management and training and instruction can become lifeguards, out pulling in the people who are drowning; pulling them in by the dozens and scores.

Do you want to be weaklings, or do you want to be giants for God? Which will you do? It is up to you. I say God has men and women who are ready to help you when you stumble, but I hope that the picture you get is not lying in the cradle and having your meals served to you, and everything done for you. Let us be up and about our Father's business.

Somebody says, I don't think I can help others until I get past these things myself.

Listen. Where is your faith? If that man Jesus took away from the pool of Bethesda and sent walking had said, Well, I had better not tell anybody about this

until I have waited a year and see if I can still walk, what would you think of him? Do you think he did that way? Why no.

Those ten men who Jesus healed of leprosy came to Jesus for help, and Jesus said to go to the priest. As they went what happened? They had to show their faith. One of them came back and gave testimony. The other nine went on. Elder W. C. White told me he heard his mother say that the leprosy came back on the other nine.

That is in harmony with the way things work. I want to say to you, when Jesus does something for you, and you are not out thanking God publicly and privately every change you get, your disease or your failure may come back on you. You may say, "Well, it doesn't seem to work with me." But some other soul who has plunged right into working for souls, and telling others what God has done, goes on his way victorious. It can be done for you. I pray that the potential of this group can get turned loose on the outside world that is going down in sin instead of so much time spent in nursing one another.

We are running a school for missionary nurses here. But it would be too bad if just about all the students were so sick all the time that they had to be the patients in the beds. Wouldn't it? There ought to be something about the program that takes people and transforms them from having to be helped all the while, and they can spend their time helping others. I mean this very literally in a physical as well as a spiritual sense. Would you like to?

You folks who have had to be fished out again and again and again, would you like to come to the place where you can say? Brother Frazee, from now on I am a lifeguard.

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W.D. Frazee Sermons
PO Box 102, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org