

desert. This world is a Sahara, but God has given Christians the art to carry their oases with them, and wherever a Christian rears his home, there is paradise.

4. *All of which emphasizes our duty to have faith in God.*

Lesson Word-Pictures.

The old and stony heart has gone. The new life has come. A new spirit, even God's, is within. Love reigns in the life. It comes out in the very face, is seen in the smile, is heard in the words, is felt in the very grasp of the hand. It is the new spirit of self-denial, of love for God and love for man.

It is manifested in the home, insuring a blessing there. What a beautiful picture is an old homestead in the land of one's fathers, a Christian home! It stands just back from the road, half-hidden like a nest under the old elms. The spirit within seems to become a spirit without. There is an air of cheerful contentment all about the place, a look of conscientious diligence, and yet an atmosphere of rest, while some open door below and the big chimney above speak of a Christian welcome and Christian hospitality.

And the spirit within, how it crowns all things in the household with its own beauty! There is love between father and mother and parents and children. Prayer is heard at a home altar, and the head is bowed in the asking of a blessing upon the daily meal. Then what a precious day Sunday is in this old home where the law of a new, Christ-like life reigns. And Monday and Tuesday and all the days of the week are dove-tailed into Sunday and make one piece with it, one strong, beautiful fabric. And upon this Christian home the blessing of God abides, insuring a long stay in "the land of the fathers."

But all the fields about this home of a heart given to God seem to abide in the favor of the Almighty. It is out in the old orchard, seen in "the fruit of the tree." It is amid the rustling corn and the bending grain where God has blessed "the increase of the field." It seems to come forward in the very look of the barns never having an appearance of the "reproach of famine." Is it any wonder when conscience is the companion of diligence?

And with the new life of love, with the fleshy heart of obedience to God, with the indwelling of the divine Spirit, what a blessing goes when men come together and "dwell in the cities" and the "wastes are builded." What a village or town or city that is where righteousness rules, where men share with one another this world's goods, where justice is administered, where drink is dethroned and the saloon abolished, where Sunday is like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and God's

house overflows with worshipers! What a beautiful picture is the open country peopled by those leading the new life and obeying the divine Spirit! How the sun smiles on field and meadow till the land becomes like the garden of Eden! How the Golden Rule binds with its clasp all the days of the week! and how hallowed is the Lord's day, the Sabbath bells filling the valleys with swelling notes that overflow the hill-tops and rise higher and higher, beginning on the earth, but ending in heaven! How lovely the sight of the house of God that has summoned its worshipers and now greets them!

Impressive spectacle when the Church within bows down and supplicates holiness of Him "who will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them!" Solemn, delightful moments amid the lush of prayer, the humility of confession, the aspirations of faith! And now lift up your eyes! Who are these coming to Zion's solemn feasts? How fast they come, how multiplied! Of every age—the child and the silver-haired; of every station—the beggar and the prince. How they press toward the mercy-seat! O, like a flock, hastening, running, a great multitude, souls are coming to the Lord! Rejoice, lift up thy voice, O Jerusalem!

By Way of Illustration.

Verses 25. There is a passage in Revelation which I think a great deal of: "Unto him that loved us and washed us." It might be thought that God would first wash us and then love us. But, no, he first loved us. Some years ago the whole country was intensely excited about Charlie Ross, a child of four years old, who was stolen. Every State has been searched and men have been to Great Britain, France, and Germany to hunt for the child. Suppose that the mother was in this meeting, and while the preacher was talking she should see in the audience her son. Suppose he was poor, dirty, and ragged, shoeless and coatless, what would she do? Would she wait till he was washed and decently clothed before she would acknowledge him? No; she would rush from this platform and take him in her arms. After that she would cleanse him and clothe him. So it is with God. He loved us and washed us.—*Moody.*

The new heart is mentioned before national prosperity and coming civilization because they are an outcome of the new heart.

"You have seen the great reservoirs provided by our water companies. The heart is just the reservoir of man. Our life flows from it through different pipes—the mouth, the hand, the eye; but still all the issues of hand, of eye, of lip derive their source from the great fountain and central reservoir, the heart. Do you see the great necessity for keeping this reservoir—the heart—pure?"