

# "Dry Land"

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"The earth is full of Thy riches" (Ps. 104:24), but "set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." (Col. 3:2).

Water is good and useful, and we could not live without it. But we need dry land just as much as we need water. The earth at first was covered with water. We could not have lived upon it because there was no dry land. God created the earth to be lived upon, therefore, on the third day he gathered the waters together by themselves so that dry land could be seen. And you remember He called the great bodies of water Seas, and the dry He called Earth.

God did not make all the dry land flat and level like the floor; but in some places it is high, in other places low, in still other places level, and in certain places in the ocean dry land is seen, with water all around it. The high places are called hills, the very high places, mountains; the low places between the mountains, valleys; the level places, plains; and the small places in the ocean, islands. How much more pleasant than if it were all alike! We think the hills and mountains very beautiful now, but they were much more beautiful when God first made them. Then no barren, ragged rocks could be seen, for the mountains were perfect in shape and beauty.

We live upon the dry land, and see it every day. But did you ever stop to look closely at it? It is wonderful. Dry land is not merely one great rock, but it contains many different kinds of rocks and stones, and little specks of dust and sand more than you can count. You can scarcely count the grains even in one handful! There are so many that no one but God knows how many. He knows because He made them.

The dry land is good for many things; we walk, and ride, and build upon it. We get clothing and fuel from it, also food for ourselves and our birds and our animals. We dig from it stone and marble for our houses, iron for our stoves, coal for our fire, and paint for our buildings. In it we find salt for our food, silver and gold for our money and our watches, lead for our pencils, slate for our slates and our roofs, chalk for our black-boards, mica for our lanterns and stoves, clay for our brick and our dishes, sand for our glass, besides diamonds, rubies, and many other precious things. Oil and gas are taken from the dry land, and out of it grows every tree and plant that is pleasant to look at and good for food, fuel, and clothing.

Surely the earth is full of riches, and our Heavenly Father is very kind to prepare for such a pleasant home. The Bible says that He did not place all these things here for our pleasure alone, but for us to use in a way that will please and glorify Him. It would grieve Him very much if we were to make our gold and silver into idols and get down on our knees and pray to them, or if we should get all the money we could and carefully laid it away not doing any good with it. This would show that we thought more of the money than we did of the kind Father who gave it to us. Again, if we should use all our money for buying fine houses, clothing, jewelry, and something good to eat, it would show that we thought more of pleasing ourselves than pleasing God.

God wants us to enjoy the treasures that He has given us, and He wants us to lay up all that we can that we always may have them to enjoy. Yet He knows that if we lay them up on the earth, they surely will be stolen, or spoiled, or burned up; he therefore tells us to do good with our treasures. If we do this He says that we shall be laying them up in heaven, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

God has far better things to happen for us than anything we can find on earth; and they will never pass away. He does not want us to forget about them, so He says, "Set your affections [love] on things above, not on things on the earth."

1. Did you ever take a walk out under the shady trees and through the green fields?
2. Upon what did you walk?
3. Was this earth always dry enough to walk on?
4. How was it when God first made the earth? Gen. 1:2.
5. When did it first become dry?
6. Why did God not leave it covered with water? He created it to be lived upon. Isa. 45:18.
7. What did God do with the water that was all over the earth? Gen. 1:6-9.
8. What did He call those places that no longer had water upon them?
9. When we look closely, what do we find the dry land to be?
10. Did you ever count the grains of sand? Why not?
11. Who alone knows how many there are? Isa. 40:12-26.
12. What is dry land good for?
13. How does God feel when we never thank Him for it?
14. Why did God put so many good things in the earth? Not for our pleasure alone, but for us to use in a way that will please and glorify Him.
15. How will He feel if we make our gold and silver into idols, or carefully lay it away and never do any good with it?
16. How will He feel if we use it all for ourselves? Why?
17. Does He not want us to enjoy or keep any of our treasures? Yes; He wants us to lay them up and enjoy them for ever.
18. What does He know will happen to them if we lay them up on the earth?
19. Where only can they be kept safe from thieves and moth and canker?
20. So where does God tell us to lay them up? Matt. 6:19-21.

21. Can you think of the ways in which you can do good with your treasures and thus lay them up in heaven?
22. What does He say about our loving them? Col. 3:2.
23. Why does He not want us to love these earthly treasures? Because that would make us lose the better things that He has in heaven for us?