

True, there are the traditions of the elders, concerning which there is, as there always has been, the effort to exalt them to equal or superior importance to the words of Christ. And it is ever, we remark in the passing, for violating these traditions that the stone of persecution is thrown.

Why should we fear to leave the sincere child of God to settle this question with the hearer and answerer of prayer? Will the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to lead into all truth, be unequal to the task, or will He abuse His trust to the damage of the praying one? Let the Christian who walks with God keep step with his Almighty friend, and let the onlooker wonderingly adore, and dismiss all desire to measure or criticise the stately steppings of God in His earthly sanctuaries.

"O Thou, our husband, brother, friend,
Behold a cloud of incense rise,
The prayers of earth to Heaven ascend,
Grateful, accepted sacrifice."

But are there not dangers and errors abroad concerning this thing? Multifarious is their form. But they all start from one and the same source—failure to walk with God. Enoch walked with God; this is the important fact of his life, and it would be a small matter to know whether he was methodical in his prayer seasons, like Daniel, or impulsive, like Peter.

But where failure to so walk exists, everything in life is, comparatively speaking, a failure, not excepting religious duties. To professed Christians, whether witnessing to justification or sanctification, to whom the duty of private prayer is an irksome one, the tendency is to accept any teaching which will enable them to lay aside their duties without troubling their conscience. Of course, it is a question to be considered whether such persons are not better off in the observance of a round of religious duties, including private prayer, than to give them up altogether. This question we shall not undertake to settle. At best the advantage is trifling, for, whilst religious duties may tend to morality, it must not be forgotten that from the ranks of religionists came those who crucified the Lord Christ, and in all

ages, not excepting the present, persecute His followers.

However, there are some forms of error that may, with advantage, be mentioned. Here is one: When testimony concerning accepting and walking in the Spirit is the result of a reasoning process, is at best the reciting of a creed, then all kinds of sins of omission and commission are liable to be the outcome.

Some will and do argue thus: I have placed my all on the altar; the altar sanctifies the gift, therefore I am sanctified, and my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; hence, whatever I prefer must be the leading of the Spirit. I prefer not to have stated times for prayer, therefore it is not right for me to spend time in the closet of prayer.

Of course, in this case, the preference will guide to a decision against private prayer, for to such all these things are irksome.

Such persons can easily reason themselves into doing anything that man in his natural, unregenerate state prefers, and to leave undone anything which those who are not in Christ's kingdom dislike to do.

This process of reasoning can be applied with success to ensure lawlessness concerning study of the Bible, liberality, resenting injuries, refusing reparation for injuries committed, slandering; in short, for all kinds of things forbidden in God's word.

But Paul asserts that if we walk in the Spirit we will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; that is, be guilty of these things. Therefore, the only remedy against these things is walking in the Spirit.

To discount the walk in the Spirit because of these evils is to pull up the wheat whilst trying to pull up the tares. Of what value is the crop if the wheat be destroyed, even if the weeds are killed? These evils will remain to a greater or less degree until the harvest. But our Lord has taught us that the wheat can grow in spite of the tares, and all will be adjusted in due time.

How, then, shall we adjust our seasons of prayer? and the answer is, by *walking* in the Spirit, not reasoning yourself into this walk, nor yet by professing to