

in the Christian Church. Religion is progressive, for "the path of the just is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Paul's principle was to forget the things that were behind, and to reach forth to the things that were before, pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And believers are exhorted to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. This can be realized only through cherished communion with Him in the fulness which it has pleased the Father should dwell in him, a fulness of official as well as of personal grace. Transformation by the renewing of the mind results from looking unto Jesus not merely as an example, but as a fountain of supplies. Accordingly it is the great concern of every believer to "abide" in Christ, that there may be progress in life, vigour, and fruitfulness.

Yet it must not be overlooked that the Holy Ghost is the Agent by whom this advancement is effected. He guides into all truth, purges out the old leaven of depravity, causes to increase with the increase, and in due time, fills with all the fulness of God. If it is from the contemplation of "the glory," it is no less true that it is by "the Spirit of the Lord," that believers are changed into the Divine image. It was by him that form, and order, and beauty were given to the natural creation, and it is by the power of his working that the souls of the regenerated are made perfect even as their Father in heaven is perfect. It is on account of this fact that the solemn exhortation is addressed to believers not to "quench" nor "to grieve" the Spirit, and their great duty is to abstain from every thought, desire, and action which might provoke him to withhold his assimilating influence from their souls. Undue prominence should be refused to the demands of the world. The heart should be kept with all diligence. Fleshly lusts should be abstained from. Privileges should be improved, and the truth received in the love of it.

The statement must not be omitted that it is by the means of grace that the Spirit works in the hearts of men, both the unconverted for their conversion, and the converted for their edification in the privileges of the kingdom. He who expects to make progress in religion, or to be brought to feel its power and possess its principles, while he neglects the *ordinances* of religion, is guilty of the greatest presumption, for he has no warrant for any such expectation and it is only by a spiritual miracle that it could be fulfilled. He must come to the wells of salvation, if he would draw water with joy. He must wait upon the Lord and keep His Word, if his soul would prosper and be in health. The closet must be frequented, and the exercises of reading, meditation, and prayer there engaged in. At the family altar, amid the tender associations of the household circle, there must be heard the voice of melody and praise, of reading the Scriptures, and of supplication. Delight must be taken in the meeting for social prayer, and mind and heart must be given to its exercises. The Sabbath must be welcomed with its privileges, and the sanctuary with its ordinances. Sacramental seasons will be times of special joy and refreshing. The soul will then find Christ to be as rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Compliance having been accorded to the voice of God inviting him to go up to the mount of ordinances upon which he has spread the feast of fat things, of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined, the believer experimentally realizes that his partaking of them is to his spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

Personal religion manifests itself to the believer himself by the tone and temper it gives to his heart and mind, and which form one part of the internal witness that he is a child of God.

It will manifest itself again to the household circle in which he dwells, in the graces of meekness, humility, and such like, in his regular observance of the duties of household religion, if he is a household head, and in his attendance upon them, if he is a household member, whether child or parent, servant or lodger. In another article we may dwell more at length upon the constitution and order of a