traditions superadded thereto, and  
blamed below.

**4.**] The warning was,  
*imitate* them not—for they do not themselves what they enjoin on others. And  
this verse must be strictly connected  
with ver. 3. The **burdens** then are  
not, as so often misinterpreted, *human  
traditions* and observances;—but the  
*severity of the law*, which they enforce  
on others, but do not observe (see Rom.  
ii. 21–23): answering to the **weightier**  
*matters of the law* of ver. 23. The  
irksomeness and unbearableness of these  
rites did not belong to the Law *in itself*,  
as rightly explained, but were created by  
the rigour and ritualism of these men, who  
followed the letter and lost the spirit; who  
spent all their labour in enforcing and amplifying ceremonies.

**5—7.**] {5} But whatever they *do* perform, has but one motive.

**phylacteries** were strips of parchment with certain of Scripture,  
viz. Exod. xiii. 11—16 and 1—10: Deut.  
xi. 13-21; vi. 4—9, written on them,  
and worn on the forehead between the  
eyes, on the left side next the heart, and  
on the left arm. The name in the text  
was given because they were considered  
as charms. They appear not to have  
been worn till after the captivity; and  
are still in use among the rabbinical Jews.  
Their use appears to have arisen from a  
superstitious interpretation of Exod. xiii.  
9: Deut. vi. 8, 9. See Joseph. Antt. iv.  
8. 13. The **hems** or *fringes*, were commanded to be worn for a memorial, Num.  
xv. 38. See note on ch. ix. 20.

**6, 7.**] {6} See Mark xii. 38, 39: Luke xx.  
46, 47. On **the uppermost place at  
feasts**, see Luke xiv. 7.

**8-10.**] {8} The  
prohibition is against loving, and in any  
religious matter, using such titles, signifying dominion over the faith of others. It must be understood in the spirit and not in  
the letter. Paul calls Timotheus his ‘*son*’  
in the faith, 1 Tim. i. 2, and exhorts the  
Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 1) to be followers  
of him as he of Christ. To understand  
and follow such commands in the slavery  
of the letter, is to fall into the very Pharisaism against which our Lord is uttering the caution. See (e. g.) Barnes’s note  
here.

**Rabbi:** i.e. ‘*my master:*’ an  
expression used, and reduplicated as here,  
by scholars to their masters, who were never  
called by their own name by their scholars.  
So the Lord says, John xiii. 13, “*ye call  
me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for  
so I am.*” The Teacher is probably not  
*Christ*, as supplied here in the received  
text, but the Holy Spirit (see John xiv.  
26: Jer. xxxi. 33, 34: Ezek. xxxvi. 26,  
27), only *not here named*, because this  
promise was only given in private *to the  
disciples*. If this be so, we have God, in  
His Triunity, here declared to us as the  
only Father, Master, and Teacher of Christians; the only One, in all these relations,  
on whom they can rest or depend. They  
are all *brethren:* all substantially equal—*none by office or precedence nearer to God  
than another; none standing between his  
brother and God*. ‘And the duty of all  
Christian teachers is to bring their hearers  
to the confession of the Samaritans in John  
iv. 42: “*Now we believe, not because of  
thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is the Saviour  
of the world.*”’

**9.**] Literally, **name  
not any Father of you on earth;** no  
‘*Abba*’ or ‘*Papa*’ (see the account of the  
funeral of John Wesley, Coke and More’s