

of Abiezer. He is offered the throne of Israel in perpetuity; but aware that he could not live for ever, that his son might be a tyrant or a fool, and that it belongs not to man to give peace, stability and success, he refuses the tempting offer, and at once suggests that he who can command the blessing must rule. "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you,"—a ruler little thought of, or at least spoken of, at the present time. What a contrast to those who would empty the public purse to fill their own pockets; who would tread upon the necks of thousands to secure their own elevation; who would sacrifice the independence of nations to gratify their insatiable ambition.

We have here exemplified the well-defined difference between the Christian—I do not say professor—and the unbeliever. Put him where you will, the Christian lives for *others*; the unbeliever lives for *himself*. By both that situation is most coveted that is most directly subservient to the object contemplated. Hannibals, Cæsars, and Napoleons, you find in the world; but Moseses, who choose affliction with the people of God rather than the pleasures of sin; Gideons who refuse a crown that the people may be free; Pauls who suffer the loss of all possessions and prospects that the cause of truth and righteousness may prosper; and Calvins, who, leaving their impress on nations and generations, with the proceeds of a library can bequeath three hundred crowns, are found nowhere but under the banner of Him who sits in Heaven. I know there are some who would tell you they would place more confidence in others than professors of religion. But there is not one of them who, obliged to seek the hospitality of a solitary hut in the forest, would not feel himself more safe, and sleep more securely, under the roof of the man who reads a portion of Scripture, and bows his knees in prayer to God before retiring to rest, than of him who bids good night to his guest over a decanter of rum. The mountain and the plain meet, but no one laughs at the idea that the mountain is more elevated than the plain. You may find a point where the lowest in the Church and the most elevated in the world seem to meet, and the distinction between them could not be precisely indicated, yet that does not prove that there is not an essential difference between the Christian and the infidel.

Consider the character of our great example himself. We see Jesus identifying himself with his people, never standing alone, never for a moment forgetting in himself their responsibilities, sufferings, temptations, joys, hopes, their temporal as well as their spiritual necessities—in His life, in His death, in His resurrection, in His glory they are a part of himself. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; though He was rich, yet for their sakes He became poor, that they through His poverty might be made rich.

Are we Christians at all? Are we true men, which is the same thing? Then beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the same image, and the perfection of humanity; and of blessedness stands in union with Him, and being like Him as He is. As Gideon said to his soldiers, so the Captain of salvation says to us, "Look on me and it shall be, that as I do, so shall ye do."—Rev. W. 'ommerville.