

In this choice we become one with the people of God—"Thy people shall be my people. If we love Him that beget, we love them that are begotten of Him. Their hopes, their aims, their pursuits, their joys are one. Moses made choice of affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Often the decision comes out by the open confession of Jesus, and a close and lively fellowship with the followers of the Lamb—"whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge." Church relationship and fellowship spring from the heart, being right with God—"they first gave their own selves to the Lord, and then unto us by the will of God."

There are some difficulties which must be surmounted in deciding for God.

The influence of example may be strong in the opposite direction. Orpah returned unto her own people, and unto her gods. Companions giving no heed to their soul's salvation may cross our path. Many a tender natural tie may require to be broken, because their power may be to hold the soul in sin. Dear as companions may be, yet it may be necessary to set out on the road to heaven alone. Religion lies between God and ourselves. Personal responsibility shows the need of securing personal safety. Then we must also venture boldly on the way, though it is untried and may bring trials. Ruth left home, country, kindred; thus the soul should give up all that before was near and dear, to follow Jesus. Going after Him there is a cross to carry. Our faith may be tested, but though tried with fire shall be found unto praise, and honour and glory at his appearing.

Alas, how many may be seen in the world who are *not quite* decided, halting on the boundary line between Christ and the world. To be almost a Christian is not enough, we must be one altogether. Not far from the kingdom, and yet to come short of it, is to be lost when almost home. Should any who read these lines have a consciousness that they are not quite saved, let them resolve to give themselves to Jesus "just as they are," and at once. Not yet decided! After years of opportunity. Not yet saved! But you admit the necessity of becoming truly godly, you feel the danger of losing the soul, flee then in this accepted time to the hope set before you in the gospel.

MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

The support of Gospel institutions has been, we believe, laid by the Head of the Church on his people, that by the exercise of liberality and holy affection the selfishness of the heart may be checked. This subject requires frequent and earnest discussion, that the law of Him who is King in Zion may be duly regarded, and the claims of His servants admitted. A just, enlightened, and constant beneficence would prove the vitality and power of the principles for which our contributions are cheerfully given. We have not sympathy with the spirit that represents it as a charity, as if it were a great favour, to support the ministry. "Let it not be thought," says John Angell James, "that what is given to a minister is a *charitable donation*; it is the payment of a just debt. It is what Christ claims for his faithful servants, and which cannot be withheld without robbery. I spurn for myself and for my brethren the degrading apprehension that we are supported by charity.