

FAMILY SERMON.

1 THESSALONIANS v. 8.

“ But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.”

THE Apostle Paul, in the chapter from which my text is taken, divides all mankind into two principal parts, and marks the great difference subsisting between them by the opposite extremes of light and darkness, night and day. He makes no intermediate distinction, he supposes no such character as that of the lukewarm half-hearted Christian; ‘religion must be all, or is nothing;’ we cannot serve God and the world at the same time; if we are not the children of the light and of the day, we must be the children of the night and of darkness. Let us pause, my friends, and ask ourselves under which of these two great divisions are we to be ranged? Are we seeking God with all our hearts? Do we pray earnestly and with persevering constancy for the aid of the Holy Spirit to help our infirmities? Do we read the Scriptures with prayer and make them, what they are intended to be, the guide of our lives, and a lamp to conduct us through the dark and intricate paths of human life? Or are we indulging ourselves in all the follies and sinful pleasures and occupations of the world, utterly disregarding the salvation of our souls which are destined for immortality; or at best making the subject but a Sabbath theme on which, if we hear a discourse once in seven days, we think that we have done all that is necessary? If this latter case be ours, whatever good opinion others may form of us, we are not the children of the light, we are of those who sleep the sleep of indifference, out of which like fabled Endymion, we may never be aroused in this life, never till the last trumpet shall summon us to judgment. Or we are intoxicated with the cup which the world offers to its votaries, whose taste at the moment is sweet but whose bitter dregs will remain through all eternity. In this state, if from apathy or headstrong obstinacy we remain, though we may be secure in the possession of life and happiness, though we may talk of peace and safety yet ‘sudden destruction shall come upon us as travail upon a woman with child, and we shall not escape.’ If there be one among you, my friends, whose conscience tells him that he cannot be numbered among the children of light, let me earnestly exhort him to arouse from his lethargy. “The night is far spent—the day is at hand,” you know not at what hour you may be summoned to give account of your mispent time, to answer for yourself at the judgment seat of Christ, “this night thy soul may be required of thee.” “Cast off therefore the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, walk honestly as in the