

**THE HIDDEN LIFE:
THOUGHTS ON
COMMUNION WITH GOD**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649602131

The Hidden Life: Thoughts on Communion with God by Adolph Saphir

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ADOLPH SAPHIR

**THE HIDDEN LIFE:
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COMMUNION WITH GOD**

THE HIDDEN LIFE.

Thoughts on Communion with God.

BY

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"EXPOSITORY LECTURES ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS,"
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NEW YORK:
ROBERT CARTER AND BROTHERS,
530, BROADWAY.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages, with the exception of chapters v., vi., and xi., contain the substance of addresses, given in the ordinary course of congregational ministration, on James iv. 8, "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." I have endeavoured to offer a few elementary thoughts on the great subject of the Christian's hidden life, and to describe the experienced reality of revelation and of prayer, or of communion with God.

Much is said and written in the present day in defence of truth against the attacks of unbelief and doubt; much also in the way of appeal and invitation to those who are still strangers to the enjoyment of Christ's peace. While fully admitting the necessity and importance of both these aspects, the apologetic and the evangelistic, we may yet regard as of still greater importance the unfolding of Scrip-

ture itself, the testimony of the reality of the things which are freely given to us of God in Christ, and by the Spirit. It is right to guard the house against the attacks of foes, or rather to point out the strength and security of the divinely-laid foundation. It is also right to point out the gate wide and open, and to declare to all the freeness and fulness of divine grace. But to describe the home itself, the inner sanctuary, seems to be more essential, and also more in accordance with the practice of the apostles, who declared the whole counsel of God, and regarded the preaching of the gospel, in its fulness, and with the power of the Holy Ghost, as at once the great argument to convince, and the great attraction to persuade. I have endeavoured to point out in chapters v. and vi. what I regard as the Scripture method of defence of revelation and prayer.

When we meditate on the hidden life, we realize the substantial unity of all who believe in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. We are often astonished that Christians hold doctrinal views which appear to us to be inconsistent with some vital truth, or that they

are able to live in communions or churches with which we could not feel at liberty to be connected. But however perplexing this may be, we know that none can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost; and when we are brought most fully and deeply into communion with Christ, in seasons of great soul-trial or spiritual elevation, we feel most clearly and strongly that there is one spirit which unites all who love the Lord Jesus, and who have experienced the power and sweetness of divine grace. Our want of union and brotherly love arises, it seems to me, not from attaching too much importance to the points in which we differ, but from our not beholding clearly enough, and our not realizing sufficiently the magnitude of the fundamental truth, held by all Christians, *God manifest in the flesh.*

Hoping that these simple pages may, by God's blessing, prove helpful to some believers and seekers, I conclude with the words of an old author, applicable to hearer as well as teacher: "It is a cold, lifeless thing to speak of spiritual things upon mere report; but they that speak of them as their own, as having share or interest in them, and some experience

of their sweetness, their discourse is enlivened with firm belief and ardent affection ; they cannot mention them (or hear of them) but their hearts are straight taken with such gladness as they are forced to vent in praises."†

A. S.

† Archbishop Leighton.

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
NOTTING HILL,
February, 1877.



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