

MY
UTMOST
FOR HIS
HIGHEST[®]

DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

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MY
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—DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL—

UPDATED EDITION

OSWALD
CHAMBERS

EDITED BY JAMES REIMANN



Our Daily Bread
Publishing™

Authorized by the Oswald Chambers Publications Association, Ltd.

This book is dedicated to the reader, especially
my parents, Gil and Violet,
my wife, Pam,
my children, Jeremy, Aaron, and Bethany,
and each generation of readers they represent.

May you know God better and draw closer to
Him as a result of applying the truths of
God's Word expressed in this book.

—James Reimann

My Utmost for His Highest Devotional Journal

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Introduction

My Utmost for His Highest has been a close companion to me through most of my Christian life. It was first recommended to me by my pastor, Charles Stanley, who has often expressed his love for its powerful content. It is a work that has endured far beyond the author's death in 1917. Oswald Chambers, who died at the age of 43, originally shared these thoughts as lectures at the Bible Training College in Clapham, England, from 1911 to 1915, and as devotional talks while serving with the Young Men's Christian Association from 1915 to 1917. The YMCA had appointed him to serve in Egypt with the Australian and New Zealand troops who were guarding the Suez Canal during World War I. These lectures and talks were later compiled by Chambers's wife and published in book form in 1927 in England, and in 1935 in the United States. It has since become the best-selling devotional book of all time.

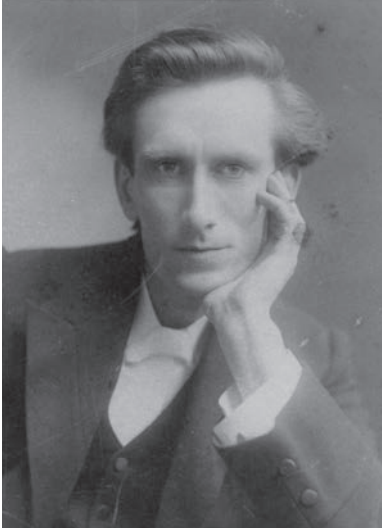
The idea of a new edition was prompted by the changes in the English language over the last century. As a Christian bookstore owner, I have sold thousands of copies of *My Utmost for His Highest* through the years. However, because of these language changes, I have had an ever-increasing concern that readers were not gleaning all they could from the book. One morning, after reading the devotional selection for that day, I asked the Lord to impress on someone a burden to write a new edition. Much to my surprise, I immediately sensed God's directive to write it myself. I began that same day.

What you hold in your hand is the culmination of approximately 1,800 hours of research and editing. It is not a paraphrase of the original work, but could be considered a translation of it. Thousands of word studies have been done to render an accurate yet readable edition. This edition also includes the reference for every Scripture quotation to allow the reader to further his study of the biblical passage. (Note: Scripture quotations without references are passages that have been referred to earlier in the selection.) I encourage you to read with this book in one hand and your Bible in the other.

This book is not the Bible—it is intended to point you to the Bible. The desire of my heart is that this work will unlock for you the treasure of the truth of God's Word and the insights into that truth that Oswald Chambers explored. May you use this book as a help in meditating on God's Word, and as a help in applying it to your life.

James Reimann
Joshua 1:8

About Oswald Chambers



Oswald Chambers was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1874, the youngest son of a Baptist minister. He spent his boyhood years in Perth; then his family moved to London when Oswald was fifteen. Shortly after the move to London, Oswald made his public profession of faith in Christ and became a member of Rye Lane Baptist Church. This marked a period of rapid spiritual growth, along with an intense struggle to find God's will and way for his life.

A gifted artist and musician, Chambers trained at London's Royal Academy of Art, sensing God's direction to be an ambassador for Christ in the world of art and aesthetics. While studying at the University of Edinburgh (1895–96), he decided, after an ago-

nizing internal battle, to study for the ministry. He left the university and entered Dunoon College, near Glasgow, where he remained as a student, and then a tutor for nine years.

On May 25, 1910, he married Gertrude (Biddy) Hobbs, and on May 24, 1913, their daughter Kathleen was born. Oswald loved children and found unending delight in his daughter.

In 1906 Oswald had traveled to the United States, spending six months teaching at God's Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio. From there, he went to Japan, visiting the Tokyo Bible School, founded by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cowman. This journey around the world in 1906–7 marked his transition from Dunoon College to full-time work with the Pentecostal League of Prayer.

Much appreciated as a teacher of rare insight and expression, Chambers served as: traveling speaker and representative of the League of Prayer, 1907–10; principal and main teacher of the Bible Training College, London, 1911–15; and YMCA chaplain to British Commonwealth soldiers in Egypt, 1915–17.

Oswald Chambers died in Cairo on November 15, 1917, at the age of forty-three, of complications following an emergency appendectomy.

During the seven years of their marriage, Biddy Chambers took verbatim shorthand notes of nearly all her husband's lectures and sermons. After his death, she spent the rest of her life publishing his spoken words. From the earliest days of publication, following World War I, Mrs. Chambers was advised and assisted

by a small group of personal friends. In later years this group became known as the Oswald Chambers Publications Association, which was incorporated in 1942, and exists today as a Registered British Charity. It oversees the publication and distribution of Oswald Chambers's material around the world.

Chambers's best-known book, *My Utmost for His Highest*, has been continuously in print since it was first published in 1927. Many of his other books are published individually, and all of his works have been compiled into one volume, *The Complete Works of Oswald Chambers*. Also, the complete story of his life is told in *Oswald Chambers: Abandoned to God* and *Oswald Chambers: A Life in Pictures*.

How to Use This Journal

Keeping a daily appointment with God is a vital part of the Christian life. The more time we spend with God—reading His Word, conversing with Him in prayer, meditating on thoughts from His Word—the better we get to know Him and the more our lives begin to reflect His image and His truth.

We hope that this devotional journal will help you keep those daily appointments and give you spiritual guidance along your way.

Here are some suggestions for getting the most out of your reading and your daily time with God:

Select a time and place. If possible, set aside a time and place each day for reading the Scripture passage and the daily devotional and thinking about what you've read. Your time will be more meaningful if you can concentrate and establish a regular practice.

Read the Bible passage. Begin by reading the Scripture verse, which is printed above the devotional article and relates to the day's theme. Often it is helpful to read the chapter in your Bible from which the verse is drawn.

Read the article thoughtfully. As you read, seek to learn more about God, your relationship with Him, and how He wants you to live each day.

Use the journaling section to help you remember. Use the journaling section for each day to record truths you see in the Bible passage and insights you gain from the devotional.

Take time to pray. After you have read the Scripture passage and the devotional, talk with the Lord about what you've discovered in His Word and what your response will be to Him.

May you find encouragement, hope, challenge, and comfort throughout the year as you draw closer to God and grow in your love for Him.

MY
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Biblical Truth

Will You Go Out Without Knowing?

"He went out, not knowing where he was going."

Hebrews 11:8

Have you ever “gone out” in this way? If so, there is no logical answer possible when anyone asks you what you are doing. One of the most difficult questions to answer in Christian work is, “What do you expect to do?” You don’t know what you are going to do. The only thing you know is that God knows what He is doing. Continually examine your attitude toward God to see if you are willing to “go out” in every area of your life, trusting in God entirely. It is this attitude that keeps you in constant wonder, because you don’t know what God is going to do next. Each morning as you wake, there is a new opportunity to “go out,” building your confidence in God. “Do not worry about your life . . . nor about the body” (Luke 12:22). In other words, don’t worry about the things that concerned you before you did “go out.”

Personal Application

Have you been asking God what He is going to do? He will never tell you. God does not tell you what He is going to do—He reveals to you who He is. Do you believe in a miracle-working God, and will you “go out” in complete surrender to Him until you are not surprised one iota by anything He does?

Believe God is always the God you know Him to be when you are nearest to Him. Then think how unnecessary and disrespectful worry is! Let the attitude of your life be a continual willingness to “go out” in dependence upon God, and your life will have a sacred and inexpressible charm about it that is very satisfying to Jesus. You must learn to “go out” through your convictions, creeds, or experiences until you come to the point in your faith where there is nothing between yourself and God.

Biblical Truth

“Why Can I Not Follow You Now?”

“Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, why can I not follow You now?’”

John 13:37

There are times when you can’t understand why you cannot do what you want to do. When God brings a time of waiting, and appears to be unresponsive, don’t fill it with busyness, just wait. The time of waiting may come to teach you the meaning of sanctification—to be set apart from sin and made holy—or it may come after the process of sanctification has begun to teach you what service means. Never run before God gives you His direction. If you have the slightest doubt, then He is not guiding. Whenever there is doubt—wait.

Personal Application

At first you may see clearly what God’s will is—the severance of a friendship, the breaking off of a business relationship, or something else you feel is distinctly God’s will for you to do. But never act on the impulse of that feeling. If you do, you will cause difficult situations to arise which will take years to untangle. Wait for God’s timing and He will do it without any heartache or disappointment. When it is a question of the providential will of God, wait for God to move.

Peter did not wait for God. He predicted in his own mind where the test would come, and it came where he did not expect it. “I will lay down my life for Your sake.” Peter’s statement was honest but ignorant. “Jesus answered him, ‘. . . the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times’” (John 13:38). This was said with a deeper knowledge of Peter than Peter had of himself. He could not follow Jesus because he did not know himself or his own capabilities well enough. Natural devotion may be enough to attract us to Jesus, to make us feel His irresistible charm, but it will never make us disciples. Natural devotion will deny Jesus, always falling short of what it means to truly follow Him.

Biblical Truth

Personal Application

Is My Sacrifice Living?

“Abraham built an altar . . . ; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar.” **Genesis 22:9**

This event is a picture of the mistake we make in thinking that the ultimate God wants of us is the sacrifice of death. What God wants is the sacrifice *through* death which enables us to do what Jesus did, that is, sacrifice our lives. Not—“Lord, I am ready to go with You . . . to death” (Luke 22:33). But—“I am willing to be identified with Your death so that I may sacrifice my life to God.”

We seem to think that God wants us to give up things! God purified Abraham from this error, and the same process is at work in our lives. God never tells us to give up things just for the sake of giving them up, but He tells us to give them up for the sake of the only thing worth having, namely, life with Himself. It is a matter of loosening the bands that hold back our lives. Those bands are loosened immediately by identification with the death of Jesus. Then we enter into a relationship with God whereby we may sacrifice our lives to Him.

It is of no value to God to give Him your life for death. He wants you to be a “*living* sacrifice”—to let Him have all your strengths that have been saved and sanctified through Jesus (Romans 12:1). This is what is acceptable to God.

Biblical Truth

Personal Application

The Opened Sight

“I now send you, to open their eyes . . . that they may receive forgiveness of sins.” Acts 26:17–18

This verse is the greatest example of the true essence of the message of a disciple of Jesus Christ in all of the New Testament.

God’s first sovereign work of grace is summed up in the words “that they may receive forgiveness of sins.” When a person fails in his personal Christian life, it is usually because he has never *received* anything. The only sign that a person is saved is that he has received something from Jesus Christ. Our job as workers for God is to open people’s eyes so that they may turn themselves from darkness to light. But that is not salvation; it is conversion—only the effort of an awakened human being. I do not think it is too broad a statement to say that the majority of so-called Christians are like this. Their eyes are open, but they have received nothing. Conversion is not regeneration. This is a neglected fact in our preaching today. When a person is born again, he knows that it is because he has received something as a gift from Almighty God and not because of his own decision. People may make vows and promises, and may be determined to follow through, but none of this is salvation. Salvation means that we are brought to the place where we are able to receive something from God on the authority of Jesus Christ, namely, forgiveness of sins.

This is followed by God’s second mighty work of grace: “an inheritance among those who are sanctified.” In sanctification, the one who has been born again deliberately gives up his right to himself to Jesus Christ, and identifies himself entirely with God’s ministry to others.

