

April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>

## A DEVOTIONAL CLASSIC FROM GOD'S SERVANT

*"You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.' The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. He must increase, but I must decrease."*

**JOHN 3:28-30**

**“Y**ou can never give another person that which you have found, but you can make him homesick for what you have.” “Stop having a measuring rod for other people. There is always one fact more in every man’s case about which we know nothing.” “Never make a principle out of your own experience; let God be as original with other people as He is with you.” These words come from a humble believer who taught students and soldiers in the early 1900s. He died at the young age of 43. You might know him because of this published devotional: “My Utmost for His Highest.” His name is Oswald Chambers.

“My Utmost for His Highest” was first published in 1927 and has never been out of print. In fact, the daily devotional has been translated into 39 different languages and has over 13 million printed copies that have circulated worldwide. The title for the devotional classic comes from Chambers’ own words: “Shut out every other consideration and keep yourself before God for this one thing only—My Utmost for His Highest. I am determined to be absolutely and entirely for Him and for Him alone.”

Even if you’re familiar with the devotional classic, there may be some facts that you don’t know. It wasn’t written by Chambers. Even though Chambers died at a young age from an appendectomy, his wife “Biddy” was a gifted stenographer that could write 250 words per minute in shorthand. She had compiled all his teaching from his time as a teacher at his college and as a chaplain to troops during the war. It was through Biddy’s writing that the classic devotional was published. Warren Weirsbe describes its influence: “Each time I read a page from ‘My Utmost for His Highest’ I see something that previously had eluded me.” I agree with Weirsbe on this. My own time with God as a teenager was heavily influenced by Oswald Chambers. Although I didn’t know the story of the man, I did find his words as a daily invitation to reflect on God’s Word. God used his devotional as training ground for spending daily time in the Bible.

Men, what can God teach us through this devoted follower of Christ? Chambers reminds us of the gift of living for Christ in our everyday lives. You see, Christianity used to be separated quite easily by people into religious stuff like church, missions, and pastoring, while the rest of the world was the normal stuff. Most people saw the churchy stuff as truly important and the other normal things as less significant. Chambers challenges us today with this statement: “You can be much more for Him by just being yourself and relying on Him...Keep praying and playing and being yourself.” Men, God has made you as His masterpiece. You don’t have to have certain abilities to be used by God. God has already given you His tools to reach people in your life: your wife, your children, your coworkers, your neighbors, and your friends. It’s being faithful to the Lord where you are today than striving to be at a different time, place, or ability. I think this is what Paul is getting at when he says in I Cor 10:31, “Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God.” Even normal, everyday activities like eating and drinking can be used to make God famous. How will you be used by God today where God has placed you?

***Spend some time thinking about the people that God has placed in your life. Ask Him for wisdom on how to show them the love of Christ and encourage them in also following Jesus.***

**For Further Reading: Hebrews 11:1-12:4**