

#9 of 12 - 5 & 10 on the 15th

(a monthly series on impactful Christians who poured out (5) their lives in Christ's strength and power (10) sent out around the 15th of each month)

“A Life Utterly Given: The Legacy of Oswald Chambers”

Scripture that Characterized His Life:

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”

— Galatians 2:20

Intro Refrain

This is the ninth in a monthly series this year entitled *Victorious Christians You Should Know* from Warren Wiersbe's book by this title, introducing you each month to one amazing Christian from the past.

Church history is so important! It's both encouraging and inspiring to hear how Christians have sought the Lord, lived for Him, been sustained by Him to accomplish great things in the Kingdom of God, and then die and pass into eternal life. We are the church in our time! We must both take up the cause of Christ in our day and also live for Jesus with dedication and passion – laying down our lives so that the life of Christ might be lived in us and through us. I hope these short sketches inspire you to read more about each of these Christians and to go out, asking Holy Spirit, to help you live a more earnest and uncompromising Christian life.

“A Life Utterly Given: The Legacy of Oswald Chambers”

An Oswald Chambers quote that Characterized His Life:

“The thing that makes a missionary is the sight of what Jesus did on the cross and to have heard Him say, ‘Go.’” — Oswald Chambers

Oswald Chambers (1874–1917) is best remembered for the devotional classic *My Utmost for His Highest*, a collection of his sermons compiled and published posthumously by his wife. His life was brief but burned with singular passion for Christ and His glory. Chambers was a man wholly given to God, focused on calling others not to comfort or ease, but to absolute surrender and full consecration to Jesus Christ.

Early Life and Education

Born on July 24, 1874, in Aberdeen, Scotland, Oswald Chambers grew up in a devout Christian home. His father was a Baptist pastor, and the family emphasized spiritual discipline and study. Chambers came to a deeper personal faith in Christ in his late teens, and soon after sensed a call to ministry. He studied art at the University of Edinburgh, and later theology at Dunoon College, where he also taught.

Even as a young man, Chambers displayed deep spiritual insight. He longed for believers to move beyond superficial Christianity and to enter into the deeper life of faith — what he called “the white-hot devotion” of a soul wholly surrendered to God. He wrote, “Sanctification is not my idea of what I want God to do for me; sanctification is God's idea of what He wants to do for me.”

Ministry and the Birth of a Devotional Legacy

In 1906, Chambers helped establish the Bible Training College in London, where he served as principal and spiritual guide until 1915. His teaching style was penetrating and prophetic — he often challenged his students with direct, heart-searching questions and rarely allowed for spiritual complacency.

He married Gertrude “Biddy” Hobbs in 1910, a woman whose quick shorthand and faithful transcription would become vital to preserving his legacy. During World War I, Chambers served as a YMCA chaplain in Egypt, ministering to soldiers stationed near Cairo. His simple sermons spoke with power, clarity, and authority. He preached Christ crucified — not for admiration, but for obedience.

Tragically, Oswald Chambers died unexpectedly at age 43 from complications following an emergency appendectomy in 1917. His last spoken words, whispered on his deathbed, were, “Surely this is the end.” And then, in his final breath: “For His sake.”

Legacy and Ongoing Impact

After his death, Biddy Chambers spent the rest of her life compiling his sermons, lectures, and devotionals from her meticulous shorthand notes. In 1927, *My Utmost for His Highest* was published, and it has never gone out of print since. The devotional is a piercing, uncompromising call to radical discipleship — a daily summons to live for God’s glory alone.

Through his writing, Chambers continues to challenge readers to let go of self-will, personal ambition, and comfortable religion. He points instead to the Cross, the Holy Spirit, and the call to give “utmost for His highest.”

In one of his most famous lines, he wrote,

“God never gives us discernment in order that we may criticize, but that we may intercede.”

Selected Scriptures and Quotes:

“Whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.” — Matthew 10:39

“Be filled with the Spirit.” — Ephesians 5:18

“The destined end of man is not happiness, nor health, but holiness.” — Oswald Chambers

“We have to pray with our eyes on God, not on the difficulties.” — Oswald Chambers

“Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One who is leading.” — Oswald Chambers