

## Oswald Chambers – a Short Bio

Oswald Chambers was a Scottish evangelist and teacher best known for his devotional “My Utmost for His Highest.” He was born in Scotland in 1874 and spent much of his boyhood there. As a young boy of 15 he gave his life to Jesus. Soon after, he committed himself to reaching out to the lost with his church outside of London. In 1897 he enrolled at Dunoon College, sensing that God was calling him to focus on ministry. After graduating, he began to teach and preach throughout England, Ireland, Scotland, the United States, and Japan. In 1910 he married Gertrude (Bidly) Hobbs. The next year he founded the Bible Training College in London. Soon after the outbreak of World War 1, Oswald Chambers sensed God’s call to minister to the British troops in Egypt and moved there with his family to serve as a YMCA chaplain.

I was first introduced to his life and teachings as a young man just starting out in a small house church outside Chicago. God gave us links with other brethren and churches in England and other places. Oswald Chambers was a name that often came up in conversations, and I set out to read much of his writings. He was a very thoughtful man, often writing things that momentarily tips us upside down in our understanding of God and His ways. It was so good for me!

Oswald devoted his life to faithful ministry, teaching, and serving others, even as a chaplain during World War I. He was a gifted preacher and teacher who responded wholeheartedly to God’s call, dedicating his life to ministry and spiritual formation. He once wrote:

*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.*

Many Bible passages come to mind when considering his life and work. For instance, his work exemplifies Jesus’s message to “lay up treasures in heaven” rather than on earth (Matthew 6:19-20): Raised in a Christian home, he abandoned a promising career in the arts to serve God through preaching, teaching, and founding a Bible training college. He also led a life of self-sacrifice, in keeping with passages like Luke 9:23–24, Philippians 2:3-8, and Romans 12:1. For instance, during World War I, Chambers served as a chaplain to soldiers in Egypt, ministering with compassion and conviction despite difficult circumstances. His sudden death in 1917 did not end his influence, as his wife published his teachings in the devotional My Utmost for His Highest, which remains a spiritual classic. Chambers’ life challenges us to fully trust God’s calling (Proverbs 3:5), serve others selflessly, and pursue intimacy with God regardless of life’s trials.