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THE PRACTICE OF THE HOLY LIFE
AS SET FORTH BY
OSWALD CHAMBERS AND WILLIAM LAW

by

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INTRODUCTION

THE PRACTICE OF THE HOLY LIFE
AS SET FORTH BY
OSWALD CHAMBERS AND WILLIAM LAW

INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject

1. The Subject Stated and Explained

The subject of this thesis is The Practice of the Holy Life As Set Forth by Oswald Chambers and William Law.

Ever since the birth of Christianity, men have struggled to discover that set of habits which would honor God and also satisfy their own desires for the expression of their faith. Individuals vary in the quality and quantity of struggling done, perhaps because each finds his own spiritual needs distinctive. Yet, there has come to exist some agreement as to basic practices of all who desire to be holy. For our consideration, the practice of the holy life will mean those habits of mind and life which go to make up the actual living of the individual who has purposed to be holy or to resemble the holiness of God.

An examination of such habits as set forth by Oswald Chambers and William Law will be presented in this

study. These views will be then compared in an effort to determine relative values for Christians today.

2. The Subject Justified

The primary purpose of this study will be to set forth the similarities and differences between the practice of the holy life as advocated by a well known eighteenth century mystic and those of a more recent, lesser known Christian writer.

The secondary purpose will be to reveal the great need for effective Christian living by way of habits and practices which will convey to the world something of that power which holds forth within. Oswald Chambers himself expresses this need as follows:

Mystic belief means that we enter into a conscious inheritance of what the redemption has wrought for us, and daily, hourly, manifest the marvel of the grace of God in our actual lives....That is the difficult bit, and the bit the majority of us fail in, because we have not been taught that that is what we have to do, consequently there is a gap between our religious profession and our actual practical living.¹

And in another place he says:

...when we are born again, God does not give us a fully fledged series of holy habits, we have to make them; and the forming of habits on the basis of God's supernatural work in our souls is the education of our spiritual life.²

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1. Oswald Chambers: Conformed to His Image, p. 263.
2. Chambers: Grow Up Into Him, p. 10.

3. The Subject Delimited

The Practice of the Holy Life has been the major theme under scrutiny by mystics down through the ages. However, it is the purpose of this study to include only those habits set forth by Oswald Chambers and William Law. An exhaustive study of either author obviously could not be made and included in this paper; hence, only specific areas have been chosen.

It is extremely difficult to divorce practice from belief. One cannot conceive of belief without action; the two are almost synonymous. However, this study will deal with practice, in so far as it is possible, and still reflect the true nature of the mystic under consideration.

Finally, the comparison will be made to discover what contemporary Christians may learn of value from the experience and writings of the two authors.

B. The Sources for the Study

The main sources for this paper are the writings of the authors themselves. William Law was outstanding in his time and is most remembered for his Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life which will serve as a primary source for the chapter dealing with his views.

Also of value will be compilations made by Andrew Murray in which are included choice phrases from W. Law.

Oswald Chambers has written numerous books and pamphlets and all will be of value here. His writings include, not only guidelines for holy living, but frequent flashes of insight into the needs for following such a pattern of living. The insights render his books particularly important in accomplishing the secondary purpose of the thesis, namely, pointing up the need for effective Christian living.

C. The Method of Procedure

The first chapter will present Oswald Chambers' teachings and views regarding the habits of mind and life included in the practice of the Holy Life. It will contain a short biographical sketch of W. Chambers.

The second chapter will deal similarly with William Law.

The third chapter will be a comparison of the two authors, showing their similarities and differences. The fourth chapter will terminate the study with a summary and conclusion. An effort will be made to be as objective as possible allowing the writings to speak for themselves.

CHAPTER I

THE PRACTICE OF THE HOLY LIFE AS SET FORTH BY
OSWALD CHAMBERS

CHAPTER I
THE PRACTICE OF THE HOLY LIFE AS SET FORTH BY
OSWALD CHAMBERS

A. Introduction

The memory of Oswald Chambers is a fragrance
to the many who knew him. Mary R. Hooker says of him:

He had a brilliant intellect, a highly trained disciplined mind and body, and an outstanding gift for teaching; but his great power lay in his consuming devotion to his Lord, in his entire reliance on the Holy Spirit, and in his absolute trust in the revelation of God through the Scriptures.¹

Born in Aberdeen, Scotland, on July 24, 1874, Oswald Chambers early in life displayed outstanding artistic ability which, for a time, led him into the field of aesthetics.² Due to home influence which implanted in young Chambers a vital religious consciousness, he began to make his gift of art subservient to his Christian calling.³ Future years led him first to the position of principal at the Bible Training College, Clapham, England, from 1911-1915; and then until 1917 in Zeitoun, Egypt he superintended a Y.M.C.A. camp.⁴ It was during these

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1. Oswald Chambers: Workmen of God, p. vi, foreword.
2. Chambers: His Life and Work, p. 11.
3. Ibid., p. 14.
4. Chambers: My Utmost For His Highest, foreword.

years that Mr. Chambers' spiritual experience flourished¹ and the works which remain prove this to be true. While at the Zeitoun camp in 1917, still in his early forties,² Oswald Chambers died very suddenly.

All who knew Mr. Chambers recognized without doubt that "...his life was the interpretation of his teaching..."³ He conceived of the saintly practice of the holy life as an imitation of the life of Jesus and as such fairly simply worked out because the saint has the Spirit of Jesus in him. In The Psychology of Redemption Oswald Chambers states: "Christians are born, not made. They are not produced by imitation, nor by praying and vowing; they are produced by new birth."⁴ We do not then, work our way into holiness, rather we are born super-naturally into a holy relationship and the practice is the means by which we grow in this holy relationship.⁵ Again Mr. Chambers says:

...when Paul urges us to put on the new man, he is urging on the most practical line that we put on in our actual life the habits that are in perfect accordance with this oneness with God, and that we do it all the time.⁶

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1. Chambers: The Place of Help, pp. v-vi, foreword.
2. Chambers: My Utmost For His Highest, loc. cit.
3. Chambers: The Place of Help, loc. cit.
4. Chambers: The Psychology of Redemption, p. 35.
5. Ibid., p. 51.
6. Ibid., p. 127.

An elaboration of this concept follows in this chapter as the meaning of devotion, aspects of prayer, the element of faith and the meaning of discipleship are discussed.

B. The Meaning of Devotion

Oswald Chambers interpreted devotion to mean the giving over of oneself, without reserve, to Something. It has with it the color of abandonment¹ or yieldedness; a relinquishing of the individual's right to his own life and a giving over to Jesus Christ irrespective of outcome.

1. The Object of Devotion

Many individuals, though apparently sufficiently devoted, are off-centre in the object of their devotion. This is quite surely Satan's great aim. No truly regenerated person can be devoted to principles, creeds or causes.² Points out Chambers:

There is a great amount of Pharisaism abroad today, and it is based on 'devotee-ness' to principle. Devotion to a cause is the great mark of our day, and in religion it means being devoted to the application of religious principles.³

This devotion is empty and contains much in it of devotion

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1. Cf. Chambers: My Utmost For His Highest, pp. 52:55.

2. Ibid., p. 71.

3. Chambers: Baffled to Fight Better, p. 72.

for devotion's sake; an exhausting atmosphere of "do, do". The place and outcome of devotion also claim in a very subtle manner the devotion of apparently sincere Christians. Of all these Oswald Chambers states:

The dissipation of devotion is seen over and over again in the practical issues of our lives. People give their lives to many things they have no business to. No one has any right to give up the right to himself or to herself to anyone but God Almighty, and devotion to a cause, no matter how noble or how beautiful, nowhere touches the profundity of this lesson. ...The only Being Who dare ask of me this¹ supreme sacrifice is the Lord Jesus Christ.

If then, one is not to be devoted to principles, doctrine or great enterprises, to what or to Whom does one direct his abandonment, i.e. devotion? Mr. Chambers' answer is: "Devotion to a Person is the only thing that tells; devotion to death to a Person, not devotion to a creed or a doctrine."² The only possible object of devotion for the truly regenerate man is the Person of Jesus Christ. He Himself proclaimed it when He said "...for my sake", hence all of the Christian life is marked by originality. "We know very little about devotion to Jesus Christ"³, says Oswald Chambers.

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1. Chambers: The Place of Help, p. 20.
2. Chambers: Studies In The Sermon On The Mount, p. 17.
3. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 40.

2. The Nature of Devotion

The devoted disciple of the Person of Jesus Christ is to be wholly given over from the "...real true centre of his personal life..."¹ This kind of devotion takes the form of a passionate devotion wherein the whole personality moves toward one object constantly and consistently. Our Lord, says Mr. Chambers, "...will use in His building enterprises...those who love Him personally, passionately and devotedly beyond any of the closest ties on earth."²

This devotion is motivated by the Holy Ghost within, for according to Mr. Chambers, "no man on earth has this passionate love to the Lord Jesus unless the Holy Ghost has imparted it to him."³ This is the only possible wholehearted and real devotion. Furthermore, the "...very nature of the life (of devotion) is that it is unobtrusive; it falls into the ground and dies: but presently it springs up and alters the whole landscape."⁴

Any devotion less than that which springs from the Holy Ghost within an individual will lack the nature advocated by Oswald Chambers which is characteristic of true devotion.

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1. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 62.
2. Ibid., p. 128.
3. Ibid., p. 184.
4. Chambers: The Place of Help, p. 174.

3. The Results of Devotion

The results of devotion are never under scrutiny of the Christian who is rightly devoted; they are entirely unconscious continually because the centre of life remains the Person of Jesus Christ.¹ Thus the life is useful to Him and He is able to move it about at will for the Christian has yielded his right to himself to Christ without regard for the consequences.² This is extremely important and prompts Oswald Chambers to say:

"One life wholly devoted to God is of more value to God than one hundred lives simply awakened by His Spirit."³

In practical ways this means that you can spend yourselves to that last "ebb" and serve humanity though men treat you as a "door-mat." It means that one must think; concentrate on Jesus Christ and detect Him in everything, even in ordinary eating and drinking. The individual goes un-noticed, seeing only the power of God all the time.⁴ In short, true devotion results in "He...doing through me all the time."⁵

Devotion to anything other than Jesus Christ results in the counterfeit of true spirituality.⁶

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1. Ibid., Cf p. 135.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 195.
3. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 115.
4. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 131.
5. Chambers: The Place of Help, pp. 135:136.
6. Cf. Ibid., p. 184.

Eventually the fire of natural devotion will go out and these people will falter, retreat and be heartbroken. True devotion is the flame which lights all other practices of the holy life.

4. Examples of Devotion

Jesus Christ is not only the one object of devotion, He is also the greatest pattern of devotion. "...Jesus Christ was always consistent to God, and the Christian must be consistent to the life of the Son of God in him..."¹ says Mr. Chambers. Although perfect devotion existed in the Son of God, Christians are, by discipline, to strive for similar devotion in their daily lives. This is most obviously seen in the Apostle Paul whose "...supreme passion was for Jesus Christ."² He determined to know Jesus Christ; to be rightly related and wholly devoted to Him. This gave singleness of purpose to his entire life resulting in a dominant enthusiasm.³ Chambers says of him:

He welcomed heart-breaks, disillusionments, tribulations, for one reason only, because these things kept him in unmoved devotion to the Gospel of God.⁴

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1. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 184.
2. Chambers: The Place of Help, p. 198.
3. Cf. Ibid., pp. 55:194.
4. Chambers: Called of God, p. 5.

C. Prayer

Concerning prayer Chambers says:

If we think of prayer as the breath in our lungs and the blood from our hearts, we think rightly. The blood flows ceaselessly, and breathing continues ceaselessly; we are not conscious of it, but it is always going on. We are not always conscious of Jesus keeping us in perfect joint with God, but if we are obeying Him, He always is. Prayer is not an exercise, it is the life.¹

Further, prayer is getting into perfect communion with God and as a conscious state of being provides the means by which the life of God is nourished in us.² It is an effort of will; an interruption to personal ambition wherein, by faith, all that is noblest in the personality is supremely active. In short, prayer is perfect and complete oneness with God.³

If prayer is to be defined as above, then the one basic motive behind all of it is to get a perfect understanding of God. Chambers feels that prayer from other motives than this will be useless and vain. Only the overwhelming desire to know God and be in fellowship with him will result in effective prayer, which is "...the building up of our character in the understanding of the character of God..."⁴ Prayer in keeping with this motive

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1. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 184.
2. Cf. Chambers: If Ye Shall Ask, p. 2.
3. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 219.
4. Chambers: The Discipline of Prayer, p. 50:51.

takes on the character of dogged determination, yet having at the same time an assurance about it which rests in the victory won. The individual whose prayer experience is in keeping with these statements does not expect to be lauded for his prayer life. Rather he takes no consideration of spectators but is intent upon forming the habit of "...breathing spiritually in prayer..."¹

The following poem by Trench, which Oswald Chambers has chosen as the heading for one of his chapters, expresses his conception of the prayer experience of the saint:

If we with earnest effort could succeed
To make our life one long connected Prayer,
As lives of some perhaps have been and are:-
If- never leaving Thee- we had no need
Our wandering spirits back again to lead
Into Thy presence, but continued there,
Like angels standing on the highest stair
Of the sapphire throne- this were to pray indeed!
But if distractions manifold prevail,
And if in this we must confess we fail,
Grant us to keep at least a prompt desire,
Continual readiness for Prayer and Praise-
An altar heaped and waiting to take fire
With the least spar, and leap into a blaze!²

1. Physical Aspects

Chambers does not capitalize on this phase of prayer. He is of the opinion that the individual saint must determine the place and time in which to pray most effectively. There is a marked lack of distinction be-

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1. Ibid., p. 19.

2. Trench, cited by Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 76.

tween the "place" of prayer, physically and the "place" given to prayer in the life of the individual.

Chambers warns against particular places for prayer which may confuse the object of our devotion. This occurs when great spiritual experiences are synonymous with a certain geographical location.¹ On the other hand he admonishes:

...get a place, not a mood, but a definite material place and resort to it constantly, and pray to God as His Spirit in you will help you...and remember, it is a place selected to pray in, not to make little addresses in, or for any other purpose than to pray in, never forget that.²

It is necessary in keeping with the motive of prayer, to discover a secret, shut-in place, an inner chamber, where one can talk to God alone, without anyone else knowing. Yet, more than being a material place for prayer, Oswald Chambers feels that this secret place may be known in one's daily activities, for he says:

You will find that the place to enter in is in your business, as you walk along the streets, in the ordinary ways of life, when no one dreams you are praying...and as you go on with God you learn more and more to maintain this secret relationship with God in prayer.³

Chambers has no question about the need for time spent in prayer, for again and again he states: "It is

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1. Cf. Chambers: The Place of Help, p. 18.

2. Chambers: The Discipline of Prayer, pp. 32:33.

3. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, pp. 58:59.

impossible to conduct your life as a disciple without definite times of secret prayer."¹ Still he warns that it is not our stated times of prayer that bring us into touch with God, rather it is the vitalizing death of our Lord Jesus Christ.² The early morning hour is recommended for then the day is more likely to become stamped with the presence of God.³

2. Spiritual Aspects.

By spiritual aspects is meant those characteristics and elements of prayer which are purely spiritual as apart from physical.

a. Repentance.

This first spiritual aspect of prayer is more a gift on the basis of personal realization of the Atonement than it is a learned habit or practice. However when Oswald Chambers says: "The new life will manifest itself in conscious repentance and unconscious holiness..."³ it would seem that there is something of practice involved. Repentance is a "...sense of unspeakable shame and degradation..."⁴ wherein a man becomes agonizingly sorry for his sin and knows he is unutterably unworthy and helpless before God. Repentance is also "...the possession of a

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1. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 260.
2. Cf. Chambers: The Place of Help, p. 267.
3. Ibid., p. 342.
4. Ibid., p. 294.

new disposition that will never do the same thing again"¹
which is the "gift" part of repentance. Observes Oswald
Chambers: "the only truly repentant man is the holy
man"² because "...it is only the forgiven man who is
holy..."³ This is why "the bedrock of Christianity is
repentance."⁴

b. Worship

The impulse to worship is natural in human
beings. It permits the choosing of the object of devo-
tion from natural instinct. The regenerated man chooses
according to God's will and worship for him becomes the
giving up of his right to himself.⁵

Worship is the tryst of sacramental ident-
ification with God, that is, I deliberately
give back to God the best He has given me
that I may be identified with Him in it.⁶

Any good then, or any blessing should be meditated upon
and offered back to God "...in a deliberate ecstasy of
worship."⁷ This is the "sacramental element" in the life
of the saint. It is not right that the saint should keep
a blessing unto himself for the result will be the death
of that blessing. To offer it back to God means that God

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1. Chambers: Grow Up Into Him, p. 29.
2. loc. cit.
3. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 342.
4. loc. cit.
5. Cf. Chambers: The Place of Help, pp. 17:19.
6. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 19.
7. loc. cit.

is made known in our flesh and to be effective in this way worship is a public testimony to all who are with us in like worship.¹ Worship must be carried on in private in order for it to be seen in public, so it becomes the basis for fitness for service.²

Just as all habits of the holy life are based upon the fact of the indwelling Son of God in the life, so worship is no exception. In worship one lays hold upon God to pour out Himself upon the ones for whom one prays.³

c. Intercession

All intercessory prayer is based upon one's relationship to Jesus Christ for one cannot truly do as He did in this respect (which is what Chambers advocates) without His spirit enabling within. Hence, Oswald Chambers says one must intercede for it is "...the real business of your life as a saved soul..."⁴ "Intercessory prayer (as) part of the sovereign purpose of God..."⁵ is a priestly work where in the secret place before God it becomes the passionate pouring out of the heart stirred by the Holy Ghost for souls.⁶ This type of prayer is the

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1. Cf. Ibid., pp. 19:41.
2. Cf. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 254.
3. Cf. Ibid., pp. 90:222.
4. Ibid., p. 172.
5. Chambers: The Discipline of Prayer, p. 57.
6. Cf. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 59.

work, not for work, because it is "...strenuous business¹
demanding the undivided energy of mind and heart."

These words define intercession:

Intercession means that I strive earnestly
to have my human soul moved by the attitude
of my Lord to the particular person I am
praying for...(it) means getting the mind of
Christ about the one for whom(I)pray..."²

Intercessory prayer based on the redemption
enables God to create that which He can create in no oth-
er way.³ for the basis of this kind of prayer is the cer-
tainty that God will answer because it is in keeping with
His nature to do so. Practiced intercession means the ex-
istence of a completely open relationship with God where
there are no snares of pride or uncalled-for infatuation
because it is a hidden ministry, often spontaneously
carried on while "...we go about our daily calling..."⁴
The fruit of this "...ministry of the interior..."⁵ is
of God Himself and results in the individual intercessor
being emancipated from a guilty conscience which "...makes⁶
(him) taken up with (himself)..."

d. Petition

Asking of God is based upon the abiding relationship to
Jesus Christ which means that ~~one~~ requests things of Him

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1. Chambers: Discipline of Prayer, p. 59.
2. Chambers: Conformed to His Image, p. 32.
3. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 348.
4. Chambers: Baffled to Fight Better, p. 109.
5. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 173.
6. Chambers: Baffled to Fight Better, p. 109.

which are in keeping with His nature. It does not follow that because our language is beautiful or our piety great we will receive answers to our petitions.¹ On the contrary Chambers writes:

Jesus has pledged His honour that everything I ask with the blood of my life in, I shall have. No false emotion is necessary, we have not to conjure up petitions, they well up.²

This is a state of being wherein one must ask what the will is in, not what is liked. The thing we ask must be a real problem and we show that our will is in it because God has brought it before us.³ This type of petition "...will detect spiritual rottenness (in a man) quicker than to ask..."⁴ in any other way. "We can always tell whether our will is in what we ask by the way we live when we are not praying"⁵ states Chambers.

We often abuse the privilege of asking, remarks the author, when it is perfectly natural that we should request things of our Father.⁶ When we lose sight of God "we hurl our own petitions at God's throne and dictate to Him as to what we wish Him to do."⁷ We talk about it and then don't ask; or worry and neglect to

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1. Cf. Chambers: The Psychology of Redemption, p. 126.
2. Chambers: The Place of Help, p. 195.
3. Cf. Chambers: The Psychology of Redemption, p. 126.
4. Ibid., p. 125.
5. Chambers: If Ye Shall Ask, p. 6.
6. Cf. Chambers: Studies In The Sermon On The Mount, p. 85.
7. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 90.

ask,¹ and often "...grouse before God...apologetic and apathetic...",² asking very few things. This is not the grand simplicity of a child-like relation to Jesus Christ!

e. Thanksgiving and Praise

Men must give thanks and praise in everything for in the regenerate individual Atonement is being experienced constantly. "Give thanks to God that He is there, no matter what is happening."³ The believer must offer the sacrifice of praise even when he is not particularly inclined to do so. This means our hearts are full of speechless thanks when God has led us through some crisis⁴ and the "...effect in (us) is obedience and service and prayer..."⁵

D. The Element of Faith

Faith, to Oswald Chambers, is nothing short of taking a step in the dark.⁶ He calls it implicit, deliberate, abandoned and vigorous confidence in a way we cannot see or understand yet the Source of which we know.⁷ It requires not intellect only but a moral giving over of oneself and is "...the heroic effort of you life (wherein) you fling yourself in reckless confidence..." on

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1. Cf. Chambers: Baffled to Fight Better, p. 77.
2. Chambers: If Ye Shall Ask, p. 5.
3. Ibid., p. 7.
4. Cf. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 226.
5. Ibid., p. 294.
6. Cf. Chambers: Baffled to Fight Better, p. 100.
7. Cf. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, pp. 88:129.

Someone or Something.¹ "Faith is unutterable trust in God, trust which never dreams that He will not stand by us."² An outstanding Bible character, Abraham, exhibits the type of faith which . . . Chambers knows. It is that of confidence in spite of everything that contradicts the object.³ This faith is an active principle in which one ventures out on the basis of the authority of its object even though it "...looks mad..." to do so.⁴ This is not unlike his concept of devotion stated earlier in this study.

1. The Object of Faith

The object of the faith which forms the basis for devotion previously defined is most certainly the Person of Jesus Christ who revealed God the Father through His life and death.⁵ God is the "Source and Support" of all existence and when He has said a thing, He will perform it. He is not deceived in anything He says or in the way He looks at things. This faith is submission "...to One whose character I know but whose ways are obscured in mystery just now."⁶ Plainly speaking, we cannot see God, but we know He sees us,⁷ and we trust in

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1. loc. cit.
2. loc. cit.
3. Cf. Ibid., p. 305.
4. Ibid., p. 304.
5. Cf. Ibid., p. 283.
6. Chambers: Baffled to Fight Better, p. 87.
7. Cf. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 60.

Him, not in what He says.¹ Mr. Chambers says:

Faith...loves and knows the One Who is leading.
It is a life of faith, not of intellect and
reason, but a life of knowing Who makes us 'go'.
The root of faith is knowledge of a Person...²

The final basis is the act of redemption which God performed through Jesus Christ. The fact of this redemption is made understandable to us by faith wrought within by the Spirit of God.³ It is imparted to us and no amount of working to bring about faith will create it.⁴ Undesirable results occur when faith is built on experience or other visible things.⁵ Anything can upset this faith for it is not founded upon the "almighty Reality of Redemption."⁶ States Mr. Chambers: "Few of us have faith in God, the whole thing is a solemn vow with our religious selves."⁷

2. The Nature of Faith

Faith defined above gives a graphic description of the act of faith itself. In this section one sees that faith in action means literally nothing between an individual and God. It is an unconscious result of believing,⁸ and is trustful, confident, humble and joyful.

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1. Cf. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 60.
2. Ibid., p. 79.
3. Cf. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 49.
4. Cf. Chambers: Facing Reality, p. 45.
5. Cf. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 82.
6. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 338.
7. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 64.
8. Cf. Chambers: Facing Reality, p. 17.

Faith is not logical or rational and by its very nature must be tried.¹ The trial of faith comes as a result of its desire to make its object real. When tested it becomes a personal possession and is constantly spendable.

3. The Results of Faith

Including any and all other results is the right relationship to Jesus Christ which is the experience of faith.² This means that one's center of confidence is shifted so that God is able to make choices through the individual to the end that God uses him for His own glory. A certain ability to discern what God is doing brings about a peace and permanence to one's faith. Faith thus in action does not earn anything, but in being tested it is purified and what is "earned" is a mature character in Christ Jesus which has an affinity for Him regardless of circumstance.³ The "fight" of faith occurs at the point where ideal faith is in the process of being made real.⁴ Chambers does not promise that one will ever stop fighting.

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1. Cf. Chambers: The Place of Help, p. 241.
2. Cf. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 304.
3. Cf. Ibid., p. 79.
4. Cf. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 113.

E. The Meaning of Discipleship

The whole tone of Chambers' writings reflects the fact of discipleship which was so very evident in his own life. He seemed to feel a crying need for individuals who had staked their all on Jesus Christ and signed away their right to themselves. Taking into consideration every cost, he states again and again that nothing is too dear to keep to oneself, be it family or material wealth, for it cost Jesus everything to make disciples of us.¹ Furthermore, even one's thoughts are concentrated on Him when these words become the theme of one's life: "Jesus only, Jesus ever, Jesus all in all I see."²

This definition of discipleship fulfills our Lord's command when He said: "...If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself..."³ Obedience to the "if" of this command indicates the extent which our devotion to God has reached. We do not need to obey, but when and if we do, it is out of complete oneness of spirit.⁴ Initial obedience here must be followed by prompt obedience in all of life based on a faith in Jesus Christ which wells up in great devotion to God. Clear

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1. Cf. Chambers: If Ye Shall Ask, p. 16:17.
2. Chambers: Facing Reality, p. 32.
3. The Bible: Luke 9:23.
4. Cf. Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest, p. 307.

action of this sort will mean far less dilemma in the personal life of the believer. Obedience, then, is an exercise of the will wherein we deliberately determine, by an intellectual grasp of His principles, to maintain in ordinary circumstances a child-like relation to God by faith.¹ After sufficient surrender in obedience one's own will becomes molded to know and discern His ways² so that understanding the will of God is implicit within one's experience. This action is the essence of the life of faith; i.e. "...to make the ideal visions of faith and the actual performance of life one in personal possession."³ The test then, is in every day life as Chambers states:

Being a disciple is to be something that is an infinite satisfaction to Jesus every minute, whether in secret or in public.⁴

All this demands decided discipline which calls for the use of all one's powers. Were it possible, however, to exercise to the fullest all available powers, without sacrificial love for The Power Who alone enables an individual to follow perfectly, any self-discipline would be in vain. One can only be broken to the will of God Who then imparts strength, wisdom and insight to do His will among others.

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1. Cf. Chambers: Conformed to His Image, p. 31.
2. Cf. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 128.
3. Ibid., p. 42.
4. Chambers: So Send I You, p. 72.

The discipline lies in allowing Him to transform the natural into the spiritual. States . . . Chambers: "... (this means) we start on a life of discipline such as nine out of every ten of us will have nothing to do with."¹ Jesus does not force His yoke upon us, we must take it on by deliberate discipline.²

What of love, then? . . . Chambers observes: "...supreme love for our Lord alone gives us the motive power of service to any extent for others..."³ No cost is considered, no service too great to be offered up to the One Who is the Source of motivation and ultimate object of love.

Oswald Chambers discusses several other disciplines of discipleship. These are enumerated below to permit clarity of presentation:

1. Purity of heart, required by Jesus, proven in one's deeds.
2. Sacrificial giving, both physically and materially, on the basis of the overall service principle.
3. Joy given to God out of thankful hearts.
4. Evidence, outwardly, of the life abounding within. This covers our walk and talk and the way we transact all our business.⁴

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1. Chambers: Not Knowing Whither, p. 102.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 103:104.
3. Chambers: Conformed to His Image, p. 90.
4. Cf. Chambers: Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, p.30.

5. The ability to receive anything from God.¹

6. Humility in keeping with the nature of Jesus Christ.

These conditions of the holy life cannot and will not exist on any other basis than that of the life of the Son of God within and on that basis they must exist.

F. Summary

It is very apparent that Oswald Chambers has keen insight into the elements involved in habits and practices of the holy life. His very evident self-discipline serves to substantiate the principles he advocates. He has shown how men are to work out by discipline the holy nature born within them at the instant they initially exercise faith. From that time forward it is a steady growth in this holy relationship.

Devotion is the deliberate experience of personally, passionately giving oneself wholly to God. One needs to be careful that he becomes devoted to God and nothing else. It results in the willingness to be entirely moved about by God.

Prayer is getting into perfect communion with God. It means that one intercedes on the basis of God's desires in others; requests things of Him taking into consideration His nature, and becomes overwhelmed with

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1. Cf. Chambers: Conformed to His Image, p. 30.

thanksgiving when the experience of forgiveness is his after having known repentance. It ought to be as natural as breathing, yet, as determined as if there had been an appointment made with a friend.

Faith forms the experience of devotion because it is a reaching out in the dark unaware of what will happen, yet knowing Who is there. To discipline oneself in the life of faith one must exercise it constantly in being wholly devoted.

Discipleship brings the individual to the attainment of character in Christ. It is the practice of making one's faith actual, not just ideal; of working out in one's surroundings what has been wrought within.

CHAPTER II

THE PRACTICE OF THE HOLY LIFE AS SET FORTH BY
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A. Introduction

The most outstanding religious writer of the eighteenth century was William Law. Born at King's Cliffe, Northamptonshire in 1689, Law's life centered around three geographical locations; King's Cliffe, Cambridge, and Putney.¹ In 1705 he entered Emmanuel College, Cambridge, to begin the ministerial career to which he seemed to be destined. Law took Holy Orders upon election to a Fellowship in 1711, which he held until 1716, when he refused to take the oath of allegiance to King George I. This loss of all preferment in the Established Church, as a result of his self imposed discipline, caused him no little concern, especially as it affected the high hopes of his parents for him. "But", states Henri Talon, "considerations of worldly success could never deter a man of his stamp from obeying the dictates of his conscience."² Confirms J.V. Moldenhawer:

The William Law of this critical incident is the William Law of a whole lifetime. This is the plain-spoken and indomitable man of conscience, who never failed to speak to him-

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1. Cf. J. Brazier Green: John Wesley and William Law, p. 32.
2. Henri Talon: William Law, p. 3.

self and to other men the simple truth about right and wrong.¹

Although Law's next ten years are very obscure, we are inclined to believe that during this time he became prepared for a life of meditation and contemplation. States Andrew Murray, "The closing of the door to active work set him free for that life of contemplation and prayer of which we reap the fruit."² In 1723 Law was at Putney where for fourteen years he tutored young Edward Gibbon, the future father of a great historian. Later he retired again to King's Cliffe where he spent the remainder of his life with two pious women "...in utter renunciation of the world, yet without any ascetic excess, happy as only the pure of heart can be."³

William Law met many outstanding men of the day in religious circles, not the least of whom was the noted John Wesley. An account of their meetings is not apropos to this study except to include this quotation from Alexander Whyte:

We see not that William Law without John Wesley, as well as John Wesley without William Law, would have left the religious life and literature of the eighteenth century both weak, one-sided, and unsafe. Could they both but have seen it, both

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1. William Law: A Serious Call To A Devout And Holy Life, Introduction by J.V. Moldenhawer, pp. vii:viii.
2. Andrew Murray: Wholly For God, Introduction, p. xii.
3. Talon, op, cit., p. 5:6.

were indispensable: John Wesley to complete William Law, and William Law to complete John Wesley.¹

Towering above all the others whom William Law knew personally, or whose writings he read and studied, was his guide in mysticism, Jacob Boehme. A German who lived some years before Law, Boehme's writings became Law's sole interest in later life, so much so that he gave himself to the study of them constantly. Boehme's influence can be seen clearly in Law's later works for "Boehme taught Law what he had only faintly seen before, that God not only is All, and must have All,² but that He alone must do All."

The consideration of William Law in this chapter will reflect him as a man of great personal discipline. His works cannot be read without coming to the conclusion that he himself lived under strict "rules of piety" that he might with increased intensity realize the nearness and goodness of God, bringing to complete salvation the hidden spiritual seed within him.

B. The Meaning of Devotion

"Devotion signifies a life given, or devoted to God."³ It is a state of heart, or temper of mind,

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1. Alexander Whyte: Characters and Characteristics of William Law, Introduction, pp. xxvi:xxvii.
2. Murray, op. cit., p. xv.
3. Law, op. cit., p. 1.

which possesses right apprehensions and right affections toward God. It is a disposition of heart which is constant and represents "...a living principle of the soul, that is always believing, trusting and depending upon God."¹ This involves a "wholly giving up to God" wherein one continually gives oneself to God without reserve. Only in this sense do men become true followers of Jesus Christ for only as they give themselves up to what He was do they experience Christ within. This means seeking and possessing the mind of Christ in such a way as to imitate the process of redemption which he endured.² For states William Law:

...the Son of God did not come from above to add an external form of worship to the several ways of life that are in the world, and so to leave people to live as they did before, in such tempers and enjoyments as the fashion and spirit of the world approves; but as He came down from Heaven altogether Divine and heavenly in His own nature, so it was to call mankind to a Divine and heavenly life; to the highest change of their own nature and temper; to be born again of the Holy Spirit; to walk in the wisdom and light and love of God, and to be like Him to the utmost of their power...³

The one main business in life for all men is to be wise, pious and holy, wholly given over to God in every state and condition. No professor of Christianity is exempt, for every other way is living against oneself and will

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1. Arthur W. Hopkinson: The Pocket William Law, p. 62.
2. Cf. Andrew Murray: The Power of The Spirit, p. 66.
3. Law, op. cit., p. 112.

end in shame and confusion.

High devotion places a man in the highest state of knowledge for the possessor of great devotion has gained an understanding of the nature of God, the nature of man and the nature of devotion.¹ This elevates the understanding to a point contrary to the world for both the mind and soul have thus become possessed of the Divine, which is the ultimate aim of all devotion.

1. The Nature of True Religion

True Religion or Christianity consists of general rules as to direction or behavior in every state and condition of life. These are Law calls "tempers" meaning certain duties, acts of piety or exercises of specific prayers or devotions.² He asserts:

...Christianity supposes, intends, desires and aims at nothing else but the raising fallen man to a Divine life, to such habits of holiness, such degrees of devotion, as may fit him to enter amongst the holy inhabitants of the kingdom of heaven.³

It is not enough to patiently submit to God, for although

...the spirit of devotion is the gift of God, and not attainable by any mere power of our own, yet it is mostly given to, and never withheld from, those who, by a wise and diligent use of proper means, prepare themselves for the reception of it."⁴

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 341.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 342.
3. Ibid., p. 184.
4. Ibid., pp. 179:180.

The means by which preparation is made for God's Spirit are the same as those by which God's Spirit grows, namely the practice of various acts of devotion. This is the temper of devotion in action; this is wholly giving up oneself to God and knowing the mind of Christ; this is growth in and toward God. Hence one may call Christianity a "course in Holy Discipline" for it is this religion that quickens, raises and brings forth to fullness the seed of divine union of creature with Creator which the Spirit of God first sows in the soul.¹

True Religion requires a right belief about God which is implicit in the new birth and all devotion. It requires a life contrary to the world for all ideas of worldly wisdom are blotted out when one is born anew of the Holy Spirit and delivered from the power of sin. The gifts and graces of the heavenly life given by the Spirit must then be cared for, and to this one is required to be wholly and perfectly devoted. All that exercises and improves this spirit of a heavenly life is considered true Religion. States Law:

If you would be a good Christian, there is but one way - you must live wholly unto God: you must live according to the wisdom that comes from God; you must act according to right judgements of the nature and value of things; you must live in the exercise of holy and

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1. Cf. Murray: The Power of The Spirit, p. 7.

heavenly affection, and use all the gifts of God to His praise and glory.

William Law conceives of devotion as practice; as living and doing acts which please God and increase the operation of the Spirit of God within. They are carried out in the common business of everyday life. Although voluntary "poverty, virginity and devout retirement" are not necessary, they are highly beneficial and "much to be commended in those who choose them as helps and means of a more safe and speedy arrival at (Christian perfection)."² However, Law argues that the desire for a holy life need not necessarily send one to a cloister, but that the principles of cloister life may operate outside it's walls, although with considerable difficulty. Hence it follows that men are called to dedicate themselves to God in the strictest and highest sense of the words in every state and condition of life.³

2. The Necessity of True Religion

The Scriptures are full of commands to personal holiness, says . . . Law, more so than commands for public worship. The Scriptures portray "...a religion that is all life and Spirit, and joy, in God..." not only by Christ himself, but also by the Apostle Paul.

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1. Law, op. cit., p. 89.
2. Ibid., p. 340.
3. Cf. Hopkinson, op. cit., p. 33.

States William Law:

The Salvation of our souls is set forth
in Scripture as a thing of difficulty,
that requires all our diligence, that is,
to be worked out with fear and trembling.¹

Salvation consists in being wholly saved from oneself.

Therefore, to enter into this experience of victory over
self, the heart must be eagerly bent upon the work of
salvation. William Law asserts: "...to know the mys-
teries of Christ's redemption, and to know the redeem-
ing work of God in our souls, is one and the same thing..."
and it is only as we advance in this knowledge or exper-
ience that we can have any assurance that we are pleas-
ing God.² Salvation is conformity to Christ; it is a
total entrance into the whole process of Christ and we
can only expect to receive God's mercy when we have done
all we can do in our frail and imperfect state.³ This
Law states with much care:

The sum of this matter is this: ...From
...many...passages of Scripture, it seems
plain, that our salvation depends upon the
sincerity and perfection of our endeavors to
obtain it... We cannot offer to God the service
of Angels; we cannot obey Him as man in a state
of perfection could; but fallen men can do
their best, and this is the perfection of
our best endeavors, a careful labour to be as
perfect as we can. But if we stop short of
this, for aught we know, we stop short of the

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1. Law, op. cit., p. 21.
2. Cf. Murray: The Power of The Spirit, p. 19.
3. Cf. Hopkinson, op. cit., p. 66.

mercy of God, and leave ourselves nothing to plead from the terms of the Gospel. For God has there made no promises of mercy to the slothful and negligent. His mercy is only offered to our frail and imperfect, but best endeavors,¹ to practice all manner of righteousness.

In essence this means the "...manifestation of the nature, life, and Spirit of Jesus Christ in our inward (and outward) new man" as we practice rules of piety thus heightening the spirit of devotion.² He that neglects the holiness of the Christian life is disregarding the most important trust from an immutable God to His wayward creature.

Now all this attention to a pious and holy life is necessary in order that the spirit of the believer might be prepared for the Kingdom of Heaven. Yes, it is far better to suffer for Christ's sake in this life, which is really only a trial for eternity, than to reach the Judgment throne and discover that one's acts here on this earth have condemned one to eternal separation from God.³ So, just as perfection in holy tempers brings assurance of salvation, so also does it prepare believers for the mansions of eternal glory where their spirits, not chained by the flesh, will know complete perfection.

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1. Law, op. cit., p. 21.
2. Cf. Stephen Hobhouse: Selected Mystical Writings of William Law, p. 76.
3. Cf. Law, op. cit., pp. 156:240:241:257.

3. The Results of True Religion

Christianity has then had its most glorious effects upon your hearts, when it has ... changed your spirit, removed all the pride of your life from you, and made you delight in humbling yourselves beneath the lowest of all your fellow-creatures.¹

This inward action results in outward experience both personally and socially. Not only do individuals become filled with great personal happiness, but love and courtesy toward others follows as a natural outgrowth. A strong sense of inward satisfaction comes when one who is at peace with himself brings all of life under strict discipline and control. This is solid enjoyment; real happiness; peaceful living; true comfort, says Mr. Law.

Also, because William Law believes that there are degrees of holiness, known only to God, it follows that there are advances in piety which we must make. The rewards for deeper concern and interest in the things of God are the virtues themselves, such as charity, piety and humility. He states:

...as certain as the immortality of our nature and relation to God, are the most glorious circumstances of our nature; so certain is it, that he who dwells most in contemplation of them, whose heart is most affected with them...who best comprehends the value and excellency of them ...proves himself to have, of all others, the finest understanding, and the strongest judgment.²

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1. Ibid., p. 262.

2. Ibid., p. 347.

So Law calls everyone to the highest life, the noblest and the greatest, a life wholly given over to God in strict devotion.

4. False Religion

The most tragic form of false religion is found in the lives of those who, thinking they can live without God, or have some ignorantly contracted system of their own, live as unto themselves, neglecting all that God has placed within them. They are, indeed, setting up an image of self which they adhere to and obey completely. This is true of all who seek not the spirit of Christ within them. Says William Law:

....religion is but a dead work, unless it be the work of the Spirit of God...every religious trust or confidence in anything but the divine operation within us is but a sort of image-worship, which, though it may deny the form, yet retains the power thereof in the heart.¹

Outward means are useless in creating a new heart and spirit, for man as a human creature cannot be good alone.² It is God within him that is the sole cause for any good done by him. This Law feels strongly when he writes:

What a miserable mistake is it therefore to place religious goodness in outward observance, in notions and opinions which good and bad men can equally receive and practice, and to treat the ready, real power and operation of an inward life of God in the birth

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1. Murray: The Power of The Spirit, pp. 23:145.
2. Cf. Murray: The Divine Indwelling, pp. 65:66.

of our souls as fanaticism and enthusiasm! when not only the whole letter and Spirit of Scripture but every operation in nature and creature demonstrates that the Kingdom of Heaven must be all within us, or it never can possibly belong to us. Goodness, piety, and holiness can only be ours as thinking, willing, and desiring are ours, by being in us as a power of Heaven in the birth and growth of our own life.¹

All religion is false, then, which does not submit to the power of Christ within, allowing the operation of the Holy Spirit to be complete.

C. Prayer

The overall principle or habit of prayer in the devotional experience of the Christian is defined by Law as "...the desire of the soul turned to God."² This hungry state of the soul knows no limits, is not bound by time or space and is the condition of life one is to work toward and nourish constantly. It sums up completely in one spirit all the rules of piety and tempers of the holy life and draws them together in one great stretching after the life of God, leaving, as far as it can, all earthly things and natural tempers, in order to become one with God in holy union.³ This prayer has great benefits, not the least of which is the transformation of that person who prays thus into everything its desire reaches after,

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1. Hobhouse, op, cit., p. 155.
2. Ibid., p. 195.
3. Cf. Hopkinson, op. cit., pp. 148:149.

bringing him into real union and communion with God.

Now the observing of various times and hours for devotions is essential since it is by this care and concern that we give prayer its full power and "...Prayer is the proper fuel of (the) holy flame (of devotion)..."¹ So, although "...it is better to be holy, than to have holy prayers...", it is certain that holy prayers have a definite effect on becoming holy.²

The next consideration will be the aspects of prayer.

1. Physical Aspects

a. Time

Law recommends early morning prayers immediately upon arising. The temptation to indulge in needless sleep must be resisted in order that morning prayers may be spoken from the heart with soul awake and spirit ready.³ Then, following the hours of the day mentioned in Scripture, it is necessary to retire or withdraw to meditate, contemplate, reflect and pray. These hours are nine o'clock, called in Scripture the third hour; twelve o'clock, or the sixth hour; three o'clock, the ninth hour and six o'clock, the twelfth hour.⁴ Also "...you must afterwards look upon yourself as still obliged to betake yourself to prayer again

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1. Law, op. cit., p. 185.
2. Cf. Ibid., pp. 106:192.
3. Cf. Ibid., pp. 162-170.

just before you go to bed."¹

Thus every Christian is advised to take time to pray according to Law's suggestions, as much as one is able. Those who are exempt from common labour and who have more time at their disposal are necessarily required to make greater use of this advantage in various acts of devotion. However, those who out of necessity are employed at some worldly business must give as much time as possible to these practices and by all means transact all worldly matters in a spirit of devotion.²

b. Place

Law suggests that one reserve a certain place for devotion; "...any little room, or...part of a room..." where one does nothing but pray. It is very advantageous to have such a "chapel or house of God" in one's room, where the spirit of prayer is assisted by a certain sacredness of surroundings. In such a place "...you would be afraid of thinking or doing anything foolish..."³

c. Method

First, as to position, Law recommends kneeling, for this is indicative of lowliness and submission. It is wise at all reasonable times to use the body to assist

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1. Ibid., p. 339.
2. Cf. Ibid., pp. 36:48.
3. Ibid., p. 173.

one in devotion; for instance, the lips as in prayer or the voice in singing.¹ It is therefore proper to begin all devotion with the chanting or singing of a Psalm, for the Psalms "...create a sense and delight in God...awaken holy desires...teach you how to ask, and...prevail with God to give."² Then, in a time of silence "...let your soul place itself in the presence of God..." and become sensitive to the Divine presence.³ Following this, the prayer procedure may follow a form or may break out into words or thoughts which are genuine breathings and utterances of the soul. This will depend on the state of heart and physical condition. However, it is best to have some fixed subject for meditation and prayer. One need not be bound to this subject, but it is to be the chief matter for prayer at that time.

In offering up petitions, use expressions of the particular attributes of God, for, states ... Law; "...these...are excellent means of raising our hearts into lively acts of worship and adoration."⁴ When asking for any particular grace of Jesus Christ, precede the petition with much thought and prayer on the life and death of Christ. These appeals serve to strengthen one's faith as

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 195.
2. Ibid., p. 186.
3. Cf. Ibid., p. 172.
4. Ibid., p. 173.

well as to awaken all that is holy within. At all times pray specifically, for cold and general forms with no regard for one's particular need will have no effect upon the soul.

Although books of prayers and written prayers are not required, there are those devotions, confessions, petitions, praises, and thanksgivings found both in Scripture and elsewhere which are "...proper fuel for the flame of ...devotion." These may be collected, memorized or meditated upon and greatly increase the fervour of prayer.¹ The Scriptures are to be studied with an eye to one's own condition and as much as possible endeavoring to visualize the speakers in person so as to reverence and obey their words.² Any new insight from the Scriptures or books of devotion ought to be given place in one's prayers in the form of a petition.

Finally, because one's imagination has great power over the heart, Law advises:

...it would be of great use to you, if,
...you were to imagine yourself some such representations as might heat and warm your heart into a temper suitable to those prayers you are then about to offer unto God... Be still, and imagine to yourself that you saw the heavens open, and the glorious choirs of cherubims and seraphims about the throne of God. Imagine that you hear the music of

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 179.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 78.

these angelic voices, that cease not day and night to sing the glories of him that is, and was, and is to come...you will soon find it to be an excellent means¹ of raising the spirit of devotion in you.

2. Spiritual Aspects

The spiritual aspects of prayer refer to those recommended subjects for prayer which are to occupy one's thinking at the stated times for prayer.

a. Thanksgiving and Praise

As each day begins a fresh entrance into the world and it is, in a sense, a new creation, it is highly proper that the first devotion be praise and thanksgiving to God. It is in this that one devotes oneself, body and soul, to God as His own creation, to be used in His service. In all of common life, then, one will live in the spirit of prayer which is the ground and basis for all thanksgiving and praise.²

b. Humility

Because humility is essential to the right state of soul, "...I earnestly advise every devout person to begin every day in this exercise...that he may go on in safety..." says Law.³ The weakness of the human state, i.e. helpless poverty, is the great reason for humility. Also, beyond being unable to do anything for themselves,

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1. Ibid., pp. 202:203.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 176.
3. Ibid., p. 209.

individuals misuse their powers of reason, bringing on themselves great misery. Further, men are indeed sinful and full of shame, all of which disposes them to walk before God and their fellow men in a spirit of great humility.

Begin, then, to take pride of life for granted, and enter in upon the learning of the spirit of humility desiring all thoughts, words and actions to be governed by it.¹

c. Universal Love: Intercession

In this phase of prayer, intercession is the most proper exercise to raise and preserve love for God, and all men. Intercession is taken to mean "...praying to God, and interceding with Him for our fellow-creatures."² This principle of heart will make individuals more like Christ than any other, for it is His love for all men that they are to imitate and obtain. Specifically, we must wish and pray for relief and happiness in all men, using all our faculties to bring about as many benefits and assistances as their condition permits.³

Universal love which stirs the soul to intercession loves good into others, just as it loves good in one's own soul. This principle of soul will result in outward means of doing good, thereby fulfilling the intercession

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 216.
2. Ibid., p. 277.
3. Cf. Ibid., p. 278.

of one soul for the other. It will make us "tender, kind, and benevolent" toward all men, whether good or bad.

The following points summarize the practice of intercession:

1. Be daily...on your knees, in a solemn deliberate performance of this devotion, praying for others in such forms, with such length, ...and earnestness as you use for yourself...
2. ...always change and alter your intercessions, according as the need and necessities of your neighbours or acquaintances require...
3. ...when at any time you find in your heart motions of envy towards any person...immediately betake yourself at that time to your prayers, and pray to God to bless and prosper him in that very thing which raised your envy...¹

The benefits of intercession are three-fold. First, the prayers of holy men have great power with God so that He grants pardons and blessings through their prayers. Second, one cannot despise another for whom he prays constantly. Intercession will bring true unity of friendship because the intercessory prayer is a prayer of love. In this connection, one of the greatest benefits is the discovery of one's own state of heart. For one who prays for another will in love desire all holy tempers and therefore will seek after all holy acts of devotion.

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1. Ibid., pp. 293:294:302.

d. Resignation to Divine Will

"Resignation to Divine Will signifies a cheerful approbation, and a thankful acceptance of everything that comes from God."¹ This resignation may be thought of in two respects:

...First, as it signifies a thankful approbation of God's general providence over the world; Secondly, as it signifies a thankful acceptance of His particular providence over us.²

Now, the first respect means that one be willing to submit to God's general providence in the world as, for example, in times and seasons, or weather. Law sees all things as God's and the whole frame of the world is sacred so that murmuring against anything is out of order, for in so doing one is murmuring against Divine Providence. Just as the believer trusts in God's providence in the world, so by faith must he resign himself to God's providence and direction over his life.

So, make definite application to God for this gift, constantly praying for it and being ready always to exercise this resignation making possible the exercise of other virtues in the holy life.³

e. Review of Behaviour: Repentance

This aspect of prayer is necessary "...lest we load ourselves with the guilt of unrepented sins."⁴

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1. Ibid., p. 312.
2. Ibid., p. 314.
3. Cf. Ibid., p. 323.
4. Ibid., p. 325.

Let everyone observe all his daily actions, particularly in the evening, so that he will know of what sins he is repenting. Repentance and confession must be acts of deep sorrow and real concern and each individual will need his own method in this prayer since each one has his own weaknesses. However, Mr. Law suggests:

...You are not to content yourself with a hasty general review of the day, but you must enter upon it with deliberation; begin with the first action of the day, and proceed, step by step, through every particular matter that you have been concerned in, and so let no time, place, or action be overlooked.

A sensibility to sin and need for repentance constitute the beginning of the Holy Spirit's work within, so this temper is not to be neglected. Rather, one is to be attentive to it, disregarding one's own will, reason and judgement while silently, passively and humbly allowing God's Spirit to root out sin and cast His glorious² light in all the dark corners of the soul.

The chief benefit of such repentance is the amending and perfecting of our lives to such a degree as will bring assurance of salvation and happiness in life.

f. Death

Petitions at the late evening hour are such as concern the subject of death; "... (its) dangers, un-

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1. Ibid., p. 333.

2. Cf. Hobhouse, op. cit., p. 94.

certainties, and terrors."¹ Seek God for such a spirit of resignation as will make you ready to awaken in His presence, thankful "...that you are to have no more to do with this world..."²

This sense of the nearness of death will make one aware of the nature of this life and of the great need for much deeper devotion than one has ever known before.

D. The Element of Faith

Faith, defined, is nothing short of a hunger or thirst after God and Heaven believing that God is always present within in the form of the Holy Spirit.³ It is a longing and desire to be one with Christ which never ceases. Therefore, it is the means by which the believer communes with and keeps close to the Presence and power of God.

This faith comes by a knowledge of one's own misery and sinfulness. Then, realizing he can do nothing in himself, the believer yields, by a definite act of free will, to Jesus' knocking on the hearts' door, (for he is already within), and true faith is born in him at that instant.⁴ William Law states:

...therefore when the creaturely power of our will, imagination, and desire leaves off its working in vanity and gives itself

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1. Law, op. cit., p. 339.
2. Ibid.
3. Cf. Hobhouse, op. cit., p. 32.
4. Cf. Ibid., pp. 79:80.

wholly unto God in a naked and implicit faith in the divine operation upon it, then it is that it does nothing in vain, it rises out of time into eternity, is in union and communion with God, and so all things are possible to it.¹

1. The Object of Faith

Since the Spirit of God in the soul is the only source of true faith, it follows that the object of this faith must be God alone. Now any faith which does not have God as it's object is certainly not true faith.

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity, says Law:

...is revealed to us, to discover our high original and the greatness of our fall, to show us the deep and profound operation of the triune God in the recovery of the divine life in our souls; that...our faith and prayer have their proper objects...

Adhering to Christ by faith, and also to His work in us, since the two cannot be separated, is indeed the proper object of faith. So, to exercise faith, one need only to turn inward, there seeing God's great desire for full operation in one's heart and life.

Now, faith which trusts to something other than this object alone puts a stop completely to the operation of God. Furthermore, the soul is lacking desire for Christ as Saviour, and will by it's own power, seek salvation.³ If one is in haste in prayer, or impatient, the work of God is greatly hindered for it means one lacks

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1. Ibid., p. 54.

2. Ibid., p. 41.

3. Cf. Ibid., p. 78.

restful faith in the Holy Spirit.

2. The Nature of Faith

First, faith is not of man, it is of God. It is given to man, born into his soul by the birth of Christ within. Hence it can be equated with Christ, the divine nature in operation in man.¹ So, all that Christ is of love, hope and patience, faith within us may become.

Faith is simple in nature; it is certain that Christ is God and that in Him lies all hope of deliverance from a sinful nature. So it "...trusts solely in Him, depends absolutely upon Him, expects all from Him and does all it does for Him..."² This is the spirit of faith; a state of heart which is everywhere and in all things in action. Implicit in this is humility; a bowing down in a sense of complete nothingness, then a looking up to God, who is the one great power for good in one's life.

3. The Results of Faith

The results of faith depend entirely upon the degree to which one is trusting or practicing faith in God. Law states: "...as our faith is in Him, such is His power and presence in us."³ Hence, the more one is turned toward God in true faith, the greater will be the knowledge and understanding of Him. So it follows that the one who

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1. Cf. Murray: The Power of The Spirit, p. 102.

2. Murray: The Divine Indwelling, pp. 39:40.

3. Ibid., pp. 36:37.

exercises the highest faith, or leans and trusts himself to God most completely, possesses the greatest of all virtues, a knowledge of God beyond thinking, based on the vastness of His work of redemption in that one's heart.

Mr. Law's own words express the results of faith beautifully:

There is nothing that so sanctifies the heart of man, that keeps us in such habitual love, prayer, and delight in God; nothing that so kills all the roots of evil in our nature, that so renews and perfects all our virtues, that fills us with so much love, goodness, and good wishes to every creature as this faith that God is always present in us with His light and Holy Spirit. When the heart has once learnt thus to find God, and knows how to live everywhere and in all things in this immediate intercourse with Him seeing Him, loving Him, and adoring Him in everything, trusting in Him, depending upon Him for His continual light and Holy Spirit; when it knows that this faith is infallible; that by thus believing it thus possesses all that it believes of God; then it begins to have the nature of God in it, and can do nothing but flow forth in love, benevolence and good will towards every creature; it can have no wish towards any man but that he might thus know and love and find God in himself as the true beginning¹ of Heaven and the heavenly life in the soul.

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1. Hobhouse, op. cit., p. 32.

E. The Perfection of Holy Tempers

The principles stated in the discussion of faith above are essentially one and the same for the birth and perfection of every holy temper in the soul. Each of them, whether humility, love, patience or meekness; all are a gift to men on the basis of resignation to Divine Will. All are, however, helped on to perfection by acts of devotion which are the duties required of all who display concern for the work of God in their souls.¹

Resignation to Divine Will, or yielding oneself up to God, is the key-note of practice according to Law. This is the beginning, middle and end of the entire process of salvation.² It is the greatest thing with which man has to do for the freedom of choice is the one power which is entirely in his hands. States William Law:

...the life of the soul is in itself nothing else but a working will and therefore wherever the will works or goes, there, and there only, the soul lives, whether it be in God or the creature.³

The one constant action, then, must be a surrendering of will to God; realizing the nothingness of one's own condition and knowing full well that in Him lies all perfection of holy tempers. Now, resignation to Divine Will takes up into it's meaning all other tempers, namely; self-denial,

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1. Cf. Hopkinson, op. cit., p. 20.
2. Cf. Hobhouse, op. cit., p. 134.
3. Hopkinson, op. cit., p. 149.

faith, humility, meekness, love, hope, and patience.

Essential to the birth of Christ in men is a total death to self; "...all earthly desires, views, and intentions..."¹ This is what is commanded in the verse: "...If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."² Dr. Law admonishes:

...our own life is to be hated, and the reason is plain: it is because there is nothing lovely in it. It is a legion of evil, monstrous birth of the serpent, the world, and the flesh; it is an apostasy from the life and power of God in the soul, a life that is death to Heaven, that is pure unmixed idolatry, that lives wholly to self and not to God; and therefore all this own life is to be absolutely hated, all this self is to be denied and mortified, if the nature, spirit, tempers and inclinations of Christ are to be brought to life in us.³

Included in this theory is the very evident value of mortifications and fastings.. Says Dr. Law:

...they remove the impediments of holiness, break down that which stands between God and us, and make way for the quickening, sanctifying Spirit of God to operate on our souls.⁴

All who lack this resignation to God or denial of self are in effect resisting the work of God because they do not submit, nor contribute to His desire in their hearts.

Denial of self takes into it's borders a proper

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1. Murray: The Power of The Spirit, p. 198.
2. The Bible: Luke 9:23.
3. Hobhouse, op. cit., pp. 95:96.
4. Ibid., p. 99.

examination of one's sinful condition and the resulting humility. Pride, the opposite of humility, is blind to the actual state of things and makes self it's god.

"...Humility leaves all for God, falls down before Him and opens all the doors of the heart for His entrance into it."¹ Here one learns Christ and begins to know the mind of Christ. So long as each opportunity for pride is turned into humble acceptance and action, so long will humility and meekness be perfect.² Law persuades his readers with these words:

Could you see what a sweet, divine, transforming power there is in humility, what an heavenly water of life it gives to the fiery breath of your soul, how it expels the poison of your fallen nature, and makes room for the Spirit of God to live in you, you would rather wish to be the footstool of all the world than to (lack) the smallest degree of it.³

When self has died or becomes more and more denied, love, hope and patience can be born into the soul to a greater degree. Love in the soul is Christ, This leads Law to say that all religion is the spirit of love; "...all its gifts and graces are the gifts and graces of love; it has no breath, no life but the life of love."⁴ The true spirit of love is obtained only in the perfection of one's attitude toward all occasions when love might be displayed

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1. Hopkinson, op. cit., pp. 147:148.
2. Cf. Law, op. cit., p. 263.
3. Hobhouse, op. cit., p. 108.
4. Ibid., p. 109.

or called into action. Writes Law:

But the Spirit of Love is not in you till it is the spirit of your life, till you live freely, willingly, and universally according to it.¹

It is needful, then, that we do all we can to obtain this spirit of love which renders our deeds of goodness to others more than "empty sounds and tinkling cymbals."²

This will be one of the greatest means of truly knowing God and becoming a follower of Christ, for it will mean living as Christ lived.

Every individual is to be intent upon the care of the inward condition of his soul. Since all virtues are progressive tempers of mind and are always labouring to preserve themselves, it is each man's responsibility to resign himself to God by definite acts of devotion in order that these tempers may be as perfect as this earth will allow.³ Says Law:

...let your own soul be the object of your daily care and attendance. Be sorry for its impurities, its spots, and imperfections, and study all the holy arts of restoring it to its natural and primitive purity. Delight in its service, and beg of God to adorn it with every grace and perfection. Nourish it with good works, give it peace in solitude, get it strength in prayer, make it wise with reading, en-

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1. Ibid., p. 139.
2. Law, op. cit., p. 291.
3. Cf. Hopkinson, op. cit., p. 48.

lighten it by meditation, make it tender with love, sweeten it with humility, humble it with penance, enliven it with psalms and hymns, and comfort it with frequent reflections upon future glory. Keep it in the presence of God, and teach it to imitate those guardian Angels, which, though they attend on human affairs, and the lowest of mankind, yet 'always behold the face of our Father which is in heaven.'¹

F. Summary

William Law is very persuasive in setting forth the principle of life which he has found most useful in his own experience. The necessity for all that he advocates is very obviously based upon his theology. This only adds to the power of his argument, for one cannot call himself a Christian without exercising rules of piety.

Devotion is taken to mean a life wholly given over to God. This involves doing acts of devotion as well as maintaining a progressive state of mind which imitates the experience of Christ as he endured the process of redemption which is the bringing of human souls back to God from their fallen state.

Prayer refers to the concern of the soul for God. It is characterized as being hungry, thirsting for the Divine. It stretches forth to God attempting to leave behind all that is earthly, human or worldly. Prayer brings the soul into communion with God.

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1. Law, op. cit., p. 50.

Faith, similar to prayer in it's reaching after God, contains a firm belief that God is a living reality and furthermore, is that One who stirs within to bring a sense of helplessness. It is one of the gifts of God, or virtues which must be cared for and perfected by one's several acts of devotion.

The perfection of holy tempers depends entirely upon the extent of resignation to God, allowing these tempers to become a habit of mind. God's working in an individual to make these tempers a condition of being is greatly aided by his initiative in the practice of holy acts.

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON OF THE PRACTICE OF THE HOLY LIFE AS

SET FORTH BY

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A. Introduction

The preceding chapters of this study have presented the views of Oswald Chambers and William Law on the practice of the holy life. It will be the purpose of this chapter to compare, briefly, each author's views, centering around the general subjects of Devotion, Prayer, Faith and further practice of holy living.

In this comparison attempt will be made to remember that Law has become an outstanding eighteenth century writer and was, in the midst of a rational age, the most well-known religious figure of the day; while Chambers, more recently renowned, comes from the period following the revival of evangelical thinking in England and was not prominent until after his death. The comparison will be made as parallel as possible in order that the forthcoming summary and conclusion will be firmly grounded in the views themselves.

B. Comparison of the Meaning of Devotion

Both Chambers and Law assert that devotion means giving over oneself to God. It has to do with turning one's life in it's entirety over to God without reserve, permitting Him to do with it what He desires.¹

1. The Nature of Devotion

Although both men agree as to the general meaning of devotion, there are wide differences as to the nature which characterizes devotion. Mr. Chambers prefers to leave the expression of devotion to the individual in whom the Holy Spirit has come to dwell as a result of regeneration. He is more concerned with the state of heart which calls one to Jesus Christ and even in all of this, his greatest interest is the Object of devotion. His view contains a freedom of spirit, mind and body wherein it is only fitting and proper that one who is a new creature in Christ passionately devote himself to Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, Mr. Law conceives of devotion as both a state of heart and pious acts or rules of devotion. Perhaps the greatest contrast in this area, with Mr. Chambers, is his belief that the practice of devotion is a means of redemption. That is, acts of piety serve to raise fallen man, who bears in his body a sinful nature, up to God where the new nature, which is divine,

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1. Ante, pp. 3:27-29.

may be found and nourished. He feels that the birth of the Presence of God in a man's life is synonymous with God's working in that life; similar to such a degree that man must allow the Divine to come forth, and the way to do this is by acts of devotion. Therefore devotion, according to Law, takes on an air of strictness or severe discipline whereby the natural man is continually suppressed in order that the spiritual may become supreme. Although it is not necessary to become an ascetic, the holy life Law recommends does conform to many principles well known to those who withdraw from ordinary life.¹

2. The Results of Devotion

Again Chambers is greatly interested in the object of one's devotion. He believes that when one is rightly devoted the outcome will be God's concern, not the individual's. Chambers does not study the effects of devotion except to liken the life of one who is wholly devoted to that of Christ, who, in love for all, served men to the end. He believes that the nature of devotion in the Christian will have a bearing upon everything he does, for if he sets his mind to be wholly Christ's continually, he will consistently live that way. Others will become aware that Christ is within him and that he does not live to please himself.

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1. Ante, pp. 5:29-33.

Law, in keeping with his rules of piety, believes that men grow to know a greater salvation the greater their devotion becomes. Or, one advances in the degree of devotion receiving such virtues of the Christian life as one therefore deserves. This brings a sense of true happiness, such as those who neglect devotion have never known. All other experiences involve a submission to pride or a permitting of the natural self to rule which results in the height of misery and confusion.¹

3. False Devotion

Both men are agreed that false devotion implies a misguided surrender. Devotion, at all times, must be directed purely and simply to God in Christ. Anything aside from this is idolatry for Jesus Christ is the only Person who dare claim one's full devotion.

Chambers believes that life is empty when one's devotion is directed to creeds or forms of worship. The truly regenerate man will give himself to Jesus just as he trusted Him for initial salvation. Law, however, feels that men become devoted to Christ both as a result of, and as a cause for, His birth within them. Law also agrees that outward observances, notions, and opinions, contain no goodness aside from that powerful working of the Spirit of God which alone makes life meaningful.²

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1. Ante, pp. 6-7:34-35.

2. Ante, pp. 3-4:35-36.

C. Prayer

Mr. Chambers and Mr. Law are, for the most part, like-minded as to a general definition of prayer. It is a principle of life, they say, wherein one hungers after God and deeply desires His fellowship. They both agree that it is the means by which ~~men~~ know communion with God.

A slight difference may be seen in the idea that Mr. Law sets forth when he asserts that prayer attempts to leave behind all natural tempers in order to become united with God. This Mr. Chambers omits entirely and may be opposing when he states that prayer is the one activity of the holy life wherein all that is noblest in the personality is supremely active. Also, Chambers makes no mention, as does Law, of the fact that holy prayers have any effect on becoming holy. His concept is basically that which holds that prayer is the breath of the soul. In contrast to this and on the basis of his beliefs regarding devotion, Mr. Law holds strongly to the great necessity of specific¹ times of prayer and meditation.

1. Physical Aspects

In this area, which involves the mechanical part of prayer, Mr. Chambers and Mr. Law differ greatly.

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1. Ante, pp. 8-9:36-37.

Chambers states no specific time for prayer, other than the recommended early morning hour, choosing to leave this matter to the individual. He believes that it is very necessary to spend secret times with Christ in prayer, but places no merit whatsoever in so much time, per se, spent in prayer. The benefit lies in the object of the contact, namely Jesus Christ, and the means by which He made prayer possible, i.e. his death.

On the other hand, Law advocates prayer at various times during the day, particularly at the early morning and late evening hours. Also, those who have no regular employment are expected to pray at the third, sixth, ninth and twelfth hours, as they are known in Scripture.

Chambers suggests that one discover a definite place in which to pray where one is in secret, away from distracting influences. He advises resorting to that inner chamber again and again for repeated communion with God. Also, he suggests that the "place" of prayer may well be in the secret of the mind, even in the busiest of atmospheres. The important thing, however, is not the place, but the One with whom one has fellowship. This makes the place, in itself, unimportant; for if the place were essential the object of devotion might become confused.

Law definitely sees the necessity of a sacred situation in which to pray. He believes it is valuable to select a spot only for prayer even if it be merely a room corner. There is a certain feeling of respect and reverence which such a place carries with it.

Chambers says little about actual method except for his comment regarding the selection of a place for prayer. He believes that prayers are not to be "little addresses" implying that prayer is conversation with God. Further, he gives the matter little consideration, leaving the method of that conversation up to the individual.

Law is quite explicit in the method of prayer. He feels that very definite procedures are needed to keep the mind and heart in proper fellowship with God.¹

2. Spiritual Aspects.

Chambers calls the spiritual aspects of prayer it's elements or characteristics, whereas Law sees them as subjects to be learned or meditated upon at the various times for prayer.

The differences in these aspects, as Chambers and Law see them, are difficult to point out. In fact, there is some overlapping of ideas as, for example, in the thoughts concerning worship and thanksgiving. Chambers calls worship the giving back to God for His use, all that

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1. Ante, pp. 10-11:38-40.

he is by God's grace. To Chambers, praise means that one's heart is thankful at all times for the experience of the Atonement, even when one has no particular feelings of thankfulness. Law calls 'resignation to Divine Will' the thankful acceptance of all that comes from God. This Chambers would label surrender, for it involves God's direction over one's life and is involved in all of prayer, particularly as a result of repentance.

The same is true of the aspects of repentance and humility. Although both agree that the repentant nature of deep sorrow and concern is the basis of Christianity, Law advocates that men ought to learn humility rather than expect it to be implicit in the act of repentance. This last is . . . Chambers' belief. When man becomes full of a sense of shame and unutterable unworthiness, then the Holy Spirit plants the gift of a new disposition within him which desires never to do the thing again. Repentance, says . . . Law, is necessary to keep from accumulating unrepented sins.

As for petition, again there is overlapping of ideas. It is in repentance that men must disregard their own will, says William Law, but Chambers reckons upon new desires (wills) when he says that in petition men must ask for what their wills are in, or for what they really desire. Petitions are perfectly natural, he believes, and the

requests must be in keeping with God's nature. This is Law's reason for including the attributes of God in all petitioning..

It is in the beliefs about intercession that we see greatest similarity. Both men feel that intercession is the act of petitioning God for other people. They agree essentially that men must pray that God will work in others bringing a sense of His own Presence with the resulting relief and happiness. Chambers places great emphasis on this phase of prayer and calls it "the real business of a saved soul." Law, not quite so emphatic, sees it, along with actions, as one of the necessary practices of the holy life.

Law also includes prayer about the subject of death which serves to make one ready to meet his Creator.¹ This Chambers omits entirely.

D. The Element of Faith.

Both writers are in agreement as to the element of faith in the practice of the holy life. They say it is essential to regeneration as well as to Christian living. Chambers calls faith a step in the dark, trusting oneself to God who is entirely trustworthy. Law calls it a hungering and thirsting after One in whom we have complete confidence. He also believes that the practice of faith

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1. Ante, pp. 11-16:41-46.

never ceases. It's continual work is to bring men into contact with God, says Mr. Law. Chambers believes faith involves such a surrender that it cannot be logical or rational. It's very nature is such that it must be tried, he says.

The results, according to both men, come as faith is purified or practiced and the individual grows to become more mature in Christ, possessing a greater knowledge of Him than he has ever known before. Law places more emphasis upon the practice of faith whereas Chambers seems to expect that the Christian will follow the Spirit's¹ moving him to faith in his heart.

E. Further Practice of Holy Living

The discussion of God-given virtues of the holy life is very similar in both Chambers and Law. However, as has been already pointed out, Chambers' system is far less binding for it is built upon a regenerate experience. Law's "perfection of holy tempers" is more from a sense of duty which seeks the certainty of salvation.

Resignation to Divine Will is central in William Law's thinking. It is essential for it is the one thing man can control. Also, all of Mr. Chambers' life of discipleship is a deliberate act of will or obedience in yielding to God.

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1. Ante, pp. 16-19:46-49.

Obedience means discipline, the like of which many believers have never known, he says. It makes possible the transformation by faith of the ideal into the actual in daily living. Chambers calls nothing too dear to be surrendered for Christ's sake, whereas Law advocates deliberate and certain death to self by fastings etc., which removes the barriers of separation between God and man. When the impediments have been removed the nature of Christ may be more fully born in the soul. Only then will love, hope, patience and humility find expression in the outside world.

Both men challenge their readers to definite discipline and perfection whereby they may obtain all that God is and gives to His children.¹

F. Summary

Generally speaking, there are more similarities in Chambers' and Law's views on the practice of the holy life, than differences.

Both agree as to the meaning of devotion but Law believes that devotion involves acts of piety whereby one becomes progressively certain of his salvation. Chambers sees devotion as a state of heart which bears the nature of Christ, it's object, in all it's manifestations. False devotion consists of one being wholly given up to

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1. Ante, pp. 20-23:50-54.

something or someone, other than God.

Prayer means communion with God according to Mr. Chambers and Mr. Law. However, the selection of a time, place, and method are definite concerns to Mr. Law. Chambers permits the judgement of his readers to operate in this area. The spiritual aspects of prayer find both men in fair agreement again. A slight difference appears when Chambers sees them as elements of prayer and Law, as practices. Other than that, the meanings given to the various aspects are similar.

Faith is a venturing out, trusting one's life to God, agree both Chambers and Law. It never ceases to exist, and grows with use. Mr. Chambers and Mr. Law both state that the practice of faith brings a greater understanding of God.

As for further aspects of holy living, both men hold to similar ideas except for a shade of difference in their emphases. While both place great import on discipline, Mr. Chambers sees obedience as being the natural life of the regenerate man, whereas Law lacks this expectancy in his dutiful performance of acts of devotion. This might well be the greatest over-all comparison of Chambers and Law in their views on the practice of the holy life.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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A. Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to bring into relief the similarities and differences in habits of mind and life which comprise the holy life as set forth in the writings of Oswald Chambers and William Law. Next, it was proposed that from this observation and study certain insights into the need and nature of holy living might be gained thereby encouraging Christians to persevere in this difficult task which continually confronts them.

The procedure was slated to present in the first two chapters the views of Oswald Chambers and William Law respectively. Each chapter was preceeded with a short biographical sketch, followed by the writer's own thoughts grouped under the general practices of Devotion, Prayer, Faith and further holy living.

In chapter one, Chambers strongly urges that men become personally and passionately given over to God in devotion to Him. Nothing else can substitute for this entire surrender of mind and life to the only One who dare make such a request of men. Prayer becomes the means by which they commune with God and discover His desire for them as well as for others. It takes on the nature of breathing,

spiritually, for life becomes one long connected prayer in one who is truly devoted. Faith practices in actual outward life the beliefs of devotion that are made personal in secret. It trusts in God although He is not seen, knowing full well He is reliable. Discipleship, to Oswald Chambers, means consistent practice of the beliefs of faith and devotion. Growth in discipleship draws us close to the character and nature of Christ, who, at all times is to be our object and example.

In chapter two William Law asserts that devotion is a giving over completely to God both in heart and life. Devotion in life involves the performance of acts or rules of piety which carry one through the process Christ endured in the redemption of mankind, thereby redeeming one's own soul. In prayer, one stretches forth to God in deep desire and hunger to know Him, leaving behind all earthly influences which might hinder this communion. Faith, given by God, reaches up to Him, firmly believing that God is a living reality. Other virtues, including faith, which are born into the soul as one resigns oneself to Christ, must be practiced and perfected in order to bring about a certainty of salvation. Law believes that the extent to which holy tempers are practiced and perfected will control the degree of salvation.

The third chapter presented a comparison of the two men's views. It was discovered that both were more

similiar in practice than different. In essence both men agreed as to the meaning of Devotion, Prayer, Faith and furthur practice of holy living. Law, however, was found to be far more specific in his fulfillment of these meanings than was Chambers, as, for example, in the physical aspects of prayer such as time, place and method. Also, it was discovered that Law placed great emphasis on the perfection of the virtues by attention to holy acts of living. Although both men agree that love, patience and hope are a gift from God, Law believes that men may greatly increase their capacity for these tempers of heart by various deeds of piety. This was not found in Chambers' writings. Both men reflect the great necessity of holy living on the part of all who claim Christ as Lord.

B. Conclusion

Both Chambers and Law have significant contributions to make to the practice of the holy life. Chambers' style snatches one's mind from the usual frame of thought causing it to turn over and over one phrase or paragraph to glean all that has been so skillfully worked into one or two sentences. Law's style of writing is persuasive, presenting a very appealing argument for the rational minds of his day. One certainly could not question any point, for he exhausts every possible means and having been forced into the corner it is clearly unreasonable to contradict

him. This makes the study of both men very valuable for new insights are to be seen in both.

Law's system of piety, for the most part, seems a bit rigid and forced. This probably is a result of his great emphasis upon the mortification of the flesh. It would seem that Law held to the belief that matter is evil, and not swinging as far as did the early monks who lived solitary wilderness lives, he certainly moves in that direction with his exhortations to deliberate fastings and the like. This calls for the placing of the physical and spiritual sides of life at opposite ends of the scale.

Oswald Chambers makes no mention of separated concepts resulting in practices which would tend to bring hatred on the physical side of life. His writings, however, lead one to believe that matter is basically good and God has created man to glorify Him once he becomes regenerated. This renders Chambers' practice of holy living a free, natural and wholesomely positive sort of thing. Although the sinful nature, and all its temptations, must be resisted, this is the battle men are constantly fighting. This is the glorious heritage of victory. Jesus Christ is the power residing within the regenerate ones.

These general conclusions color the entire practice of the holy life. Devotion, when it is forced, is unreal, superficial; but when it is natural it becomes vital and dynamic. Acts of prayer must flow from a natural

state of mind wherein one is in constant communion with God. Times of prayer which are habitual become dead and methods routine when Jesus Christ is not real in one's heart. Faith is not simple and trusting but becomes a theological concept which is difficult to practice. Continued practice becomes forced and not that which characterized the simple delightful obedience of a child.

The great bearing which belief has upon practice has made it difficult to examine practice, per se, in this study. For this reason, a further investigation on the relation of the two in either of these authors is advised, particularly Dr. Law. This may well be the deeper reason behind the rigid nature of his system, for possessing and striving for salvation seem to be synonymous to him.

The great need for a state of heart which is continually disposed to the practice of a holy life cannot be overemphasized as a conclusion growing out of this study. This has perhaps been the most outstanding contribution to the personal life of the writer of this thesis. Oswald Chambers' simple giving over to God in whole hearted devotion, which forms a basis for prayer, faith and discipleship has been used of God to stir many hearts to become a-blaze with the fire of service for Jesus Christ.

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