

Reading Group Guide for *Mrs. Oswald Chambers*

1. Oswald Chambers believed in being honest about the sacrifices involved in following Christ—wherever He sent him. In his proposal to Biddy (p.6), he spelled out their life together very clearly:

“Home would be meager,” with their lives “going heart and soul into literary and itinerating work for Him. It will be hard and glorious and arduous... I have nothing to offer you but my love and steady lavish service for Him”(p.10)

How would you have responded to a proposal that came with such a clear warning?

2. Oswald liked to say, “Never allow that the haphazard is anything less than God’s appointed order” (p.13). Can you see how “haphazard” events influenced both his life and Biddy’s? How have “haphazard” events worked in your own life?

3. “All my life my mother . . . never for half a second questioned what God allowed to happen, ever,” Kathleen said of Biddy’s unflappable faith (p.208). How does Biddy’s faith in God’s sovereignty, no matter the circumstances, encourage you? How do you remind yourself that God is in control when tough things are happening?

4. Like many women, Biddy apparently struggled with keeping her ministry priorities in order. How does Oswald’s advice, resonate with you?

“Remember, Kathleen is God’s gift to us, not someone we give to God. Do not allow the influence of the many loving women around you to turn your heart away from God’s supreme call of us both with Kathleen to His service . . . Beware lest the cares of other things, the absorption in duties, should come in.” (p.65)

5. Some would argue that while Oswald left Biddy no insurance to provide for her after his death, she had a wealth of potential earnings in the production of his books, yet she chose not to keep back earnings to fund her family life. What do you think about this decision? How did Biddy honor God and do you think you would have been able to do the same?

6. Biddy and Oswald both believed that God’s truth must be “caught, not taught,” and went through some extremes to demonstrate that faith while running the Bible Training College. How would you have handled the situation of the thieving employees (pp.52-53)? Would you, like Oswald, “tell God and leave it completely,” and not do anything else? Would you have been tempted to be an “amateur providence” in the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Morrison?

7. Bidy dealt with some hard choices in her marriage to Oswald. She followed him to a primitive YMCA camp surrounded by thousands of ANZAC troops in the middle of a world war with a two-year-old child in the days before antibiotics. Would this have been enough to turn you away? Would it make a difference to know that life would basically involve camping in a mud hut in a land of disease, heat and few women-in addition to traveling over U-boat infested seas to get there? What are some of the sacrifices you've made to make your marriage a God-centered one?
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8. Bidy and Kathleen returned to post-war England in 1919, impoverished and homeless. If you had been given Bidy's opportunity to become a Lady Superintendent of Ridgeland's Bible school, how would you have assessed the offer? Practically speaking, would you have made the same decision as Bidy did about God's will (pp.167-168)?
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9. Kathleen grew into an "angular, fair-haired girl resembling her father," but didn't come to know God until her late teens. How do you react to her observation? "It can be a handicap to be raised in a Christian family. You imagine you know more than you do, but you only know *about* God"(p181). Does her statement cause you to reconsider how you teach your children about God?
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10. Bidy spent her entire adult life producing the thirty books with Oswald Chambers's name on them as author. Yet the ministry came close to a perilous end on December 30, 1940 when the Blitz destroyed nearly all Oswald's books. Bidy's reaction was straightforward, according to Kathleen: "She was quite prepared to think the books had come to an end. If God wanted the work to continue, it would" (p.208). How do you recognize when God is calling you to end something that's a big part of your life? Do you always listen?
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11. Her friend Brother Andrew visited often in the 1950s, and Bidy and Kathleen both provided copies of *My Utmost for His Highest* for his smuggling ministry over the years. He noted her neighbors described Bidy as "being like Enoch, who walked with God" (p.217). What do you think they meant? What do you think it means to be an "Enoch" in our world today?
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12. How did you feel when you read of the final challenge Bidy faced at the end of her life (pp.219-221)?
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For more information about Oswald and Bidy Chambers, visit

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