

# In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do? The High Calling, The Pursuit of God and the Presence of God

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Aiden Wilson Tozer (April 21, 1897 - May 12, 1963) was an American Protestant pastor, preacher, author, magazine editor, Bible conference speaker, and spiritual mentor. For his work, he received two honorary doctorate degrees. Hailing from a tiny farming community in western Pennsylvania, his conversion was as a teenager in Akron, Ohio. While on his way home from work at a tire company, he overheard a street preacher say:

"If you don't know how to be saved... just call on God." Upon returning home, he climbed into the attic and heeded the preacher's advice. In 1919, five years after his conversion, and without formal theological training, Tozer accepted an offer to pastor his first church. This began 44 years of ministry, associated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA), a Protestant evangelical denomination; 33 of those years were served as a pastor in a number of churches. His first pastorate was in a small storefront church in Nutter Fort, West Virginia.

Tozer also served as pastor for 30 years at Southside Alliance Church, in Chicago (1928 to 1959), and the final years of his life were spent as pastor of Avenue Road Church, in Toronto, Canada. In observing contemporary Christian living, he felt that the church was on a dangerous course toward compromising with "worldly" concerns.

Living a simple and non-materialistic lifestyle, he and his wife, Ada Cecelia Pfautz, never owned a car, preferring bus and train travel. Even after becoming a well-known Christian author, Tozer signed away much of his royalties to those who were in need. Tozer had seven children, six boys and one girl. He was buried in Ellet Cemetery, Akron, Ohio, with a

simple epitaph marking his grave: "A. W. Tozer - A Man of God."

Prayer was of vital personal importance for Tozer. "His preaching as well as his writings were but extensions of his prayer life," comments his biographer, James L. Snyder, in the book, In Pursuit of God: The Life Of A.W. Tozer. "He had the ability to make his listeners face themselves in the light of what God was saying to them."

Brother Lawrence (1614 - 12 February 1691) was a lay brother in a Carmelite monastery, who is today most commonly remembered for the closeness of his relationship to God as recorded in the classic Christian text, The Practice of the Presence of God.

Brother Lawrence was born Nicholas Herman in Hériménil, near Lunéville in the region of Lorraine, located in modern day eastern France. He received a revelation of the providence and power of God at the age of 18, but it would be another six years before he joined the Discalced Carmelite Priory in Paris. In this intervening period he fought in the Thirty Years' War and later served as a valet. Nicholas entered the priory in Paris as a lay brother, not having the education necessary to become a cleric, and took the religious name, "Lawrence of the Resurrection". He spent almost all of the rest of his life within the walls of the priory, working in the kitchen for most of his life and as a repairer of sandals in his later years. Yet despite, or perhaps because of,

his somewhat lowly position, his character attracted many to him. He was known for his profound peace and many came to seek spiritual guidance from him. The wisdom that he passed on to them, in conversations and in letters, would later become the basis for the book, The Practice of the Presence of God.

C.M. Sheldon - (1857-1946), American Congregational minister and social reformer Charles Monroe Sheldon was born on February 26, 1857, at Wellsville, New York. In the fall of 1896 the sermon story was entitled "In His Steps." It was a tale of a group of committed Christians who resolved to ask themselves whenever they had hard decisions to make, "What would Jesus do"" Their dedication led them to avoid the easy choices, instead opting for difficult but spiritually rewarding projects in service of others.



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