

BR: A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life by William Law (Edwin Crozier)

William Law (1686-1761) was a priest in the church of England. Further, in some of his writings he gets quite mystical. However, in A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life, he very practically discusses the need to take personal holiness and discipleship seriously. Though he wrote in the 1700's, it fits the modern times and struggles with holy living and discipleship right on the nose.

He has a knack for using very practical illustrations to drive home his spiritual points. For instance, in one illustration he pictures a man locked in a room with various objects and substances but having no idea how to use them. He tries to eat the gold and bathe with the straw (or something along those lines). He relates this is how people who live life contrary to God's Word live. They have all that is needed to live but no idea what any of it is actually for or how to actually use it to live.

He creates characters to use as examples of people who either live faithfully or who do not. By describing their activities and attitudes, he gets down to brass tacks on how what he teaches actually applies to life. It is hard to read without seeing self in some of those illustrations and applications.

Certainly, some of the things he says come off with a Calvinistic flair. However, he drives home the need for personal submission and pursuit of holiness and discipleship. He drives home the need for spiritual disciplines such as prayer and Bible reading. Additionally, he makes a strong and motivating case to not simply read and pray but also to apply what is read and prayed throughout an entire day of life. He pulls no punches. He writes as a person who believes God's Word and the application of it to life is the only way for someone to have true life. He does not want to be mistaken or misheard. He does not want a reader to be lost for lack of hearing what is necessary to pursue holiness.

Of all the books I've read provoking daily, spiritual living, this one is at the top of my recommendation list. In fact, sitting down to write this recommendation, I realize how much I've forgotten. I will likely read it again myself even before we are together at SITS