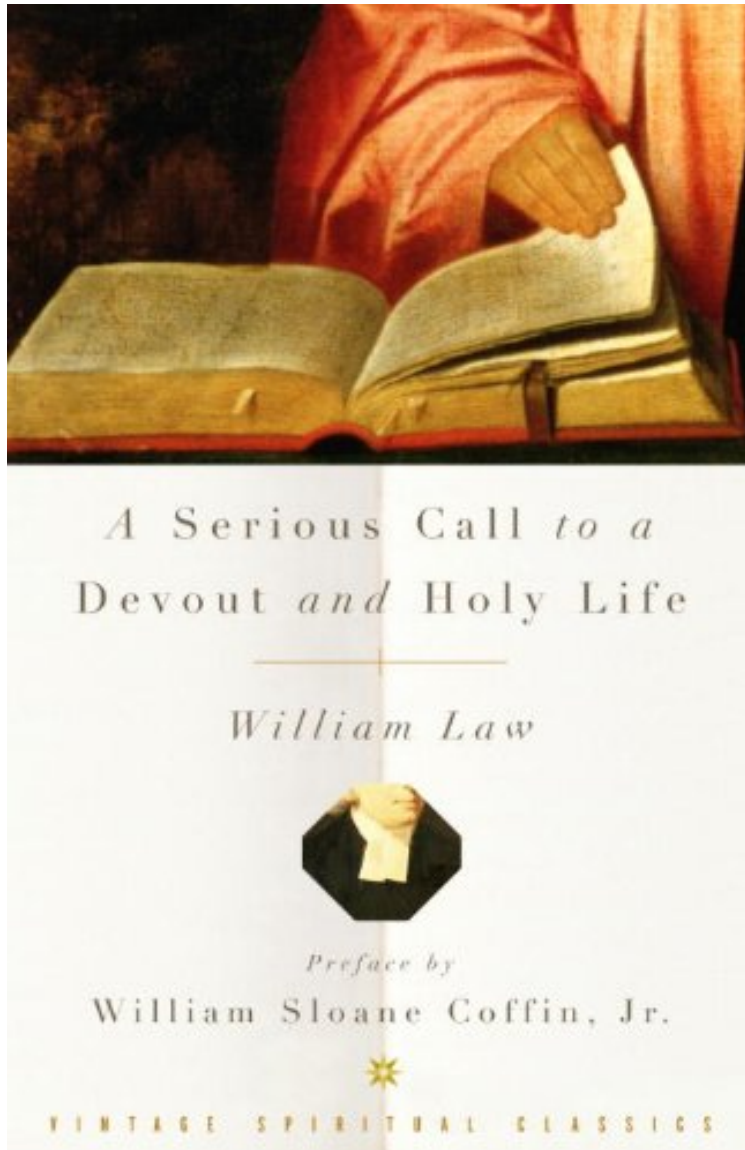


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## A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life

Von William Law

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**Von William Law : A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 3 von 3 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. This is not the book William Law wrote Von mmm1001@worldnet.att.net This "edited" version is a great disappointment. William Law's elegant prose has been dumbed down for "reading comprehension," and is dull as a junior high civics

textbook. In Chapter VII, which talks about Miranda and Flavia, Flavia has been omitted. Presumably to keep everything "positive." The very spirit of truth so eloquently championed by Law in HIS book has been made a mockery of, because there are no warning labels to tell us that some anonymous hack has tampered with his text. O tempora, o mores! This book doesn't even deserve one star. 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An amazing spirit... Von FrKurt Messick William Law was one of the great mystics, clerics, and educators of the Church of England. Born in 1686, he was educated at Cambridge, eventually taking a teaching position there in addition to being ordained in the Church of England. He lost his position at Cambridge for being a Non-Juror (the Church of England being a state religion, clerics and others are required to swear oaths of allegiance to the monarch, and this Law could not do with regard to George I). He wrote the first work, 'A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life', one of his best-known works, while in retirement as tutor in the Gibbon household (he was tutor to the father of the historian noted for the work on the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire) in the 1720s.. He wrote the second, much shorter work, 'The Spirit of Love,' in 1750s. The first is a major work of spiritual practice, rightly deserving the description as a 'classic' or 'masterpiece'. For a course we teach at my seminary, this book is on the list of spiritual classics one may choose to use for inspiration and spiritual reflection, and for good reason. Influenced by Law's readings from other mystics such as Thomas a Kempis, Johann Tauler and others, this book is full of mystic insight and practical wisdom. It was popular from the start, and remains an enduring classic of post-Reformation spirituality. Law has a fairly ecumenical audience, though he is not without controversy. Law is very much a man of the church, and of a high-liturgy and sacramental church at that, thus some Protestants may find difficulty with some of his unstated but very present assumptions. Law resists bibliolatry, does not accept the doctrine of Calvin of a complete corrupt humanity, and never assumes to try to prove the existence of God, taking that for granted. It is interesting, in our post-Christendom world, that Law is more widely read than ever before, given that it would seem there is much concern about whether or not there is a God, and often those of a more mystical mindset shy away from mysticism so firmly influenced by ecclesial structures. Law's work in 'The Serious Call' takes the form of 24 chapters, each one beginning with a simple spiritual rule, observation or proposition. Sometimes these can take a directive form as a spiritual practice - some chapters, for example, recommend prayer at certain times of day (chapter 16 recommends 9 a.m., chapter 20 recommends 12 noon, etc.) and prescribes the content and the manner of the prayers. Some work from a proposition (chapter 13 - that any life, full of vanity or even more humble, will ultimately show misery and emptiness) and some work from proclamation and argument (chapter 24, of the excellency and greatness of a devout spirit). 'Devotion signifies a life given or devoted to God,' Law writes in the beginning. This devotion is not just church work (although it involves that), and not just prayer (although it involves that, too), but is an entire life given over to God, and as such can be something all can do, not just clerics, mystics and monastics. Unlike 'A Serious Call', the second work contained here, 'The Spirit of Love', can be very difficult reading, as there is no organising principle similar to the logical progression of the earlier work. It is done in a dialogue form, in the shape of letters, and better known according to the editors in piece-meal collections of highlights or selected passages, given Law's general lack of method and organisation of texts later in his life. However, there are those who love 'The Spirit of Love' and proclaim it to be Law's best work, particularly for his identification of the wrath of God as something that separates us from God, but is in fact not to be found in God, but in us. Our redemption and reconciliation with God requires our removing this wrath and embracing the divine love always freely offered. The editions here are fairly standard, authoritative ones. The history of Law's work in print is laid out, and selection reasoning is given in the introductory material, which also includes (as do all of the Paulist Press editions of this wonderful series) biographical information (not just simple historical, but also spiritual biographical information), textual notes, and other information of interest. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An amazing spirit Von FrKurt Messick William Law was one of the great mystics, clerics, and educators of the Church of England. Born in 1686, he was educated at Cambridge, eventually taking a teaching position there in addition to being ordained in the Church of England. He lost his position at Cambridge for being a Non-Juror (the Church of England being a state religion, clerics and others are required to swear oaths of allegiance to the monarch, and this Law could not do with regard to George I). 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**Kurzbeschreibung** Originally published at the beginning of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, a time when rationalist criticism of religious belief was perhaps at its peak, William Law's *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* succeeded in inspiring the most cynical men of the age with its arguments in favor of a spiritual life. More than simply articulating a set of rules to live by, Law's book examines what it means to lead a Christian life and criticizes the perversion of Christian tenets by the Establishment whether secular or spiritual whose real aim is temporal power. With a preface by the Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Jr., whose own direct engagement in social causes still finds inspiration in Law's argument, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* is a book that can still speak to our time. From the Trade Paperback edition. From Publishers Weekly William Law, the 18th-century Anglican priest who heavily influenced the theology of John and Charles Wesley, lambastes pious hypocrisy and the corruption of the church in *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, the latest reissue in Vintage's Spiritual Classics series. Law's prose is fresh and vivid as he illustrates the holy Christian life as one lived wholly for God. His thoughts on prayer, personal holiness and service to the poor will resonate with many contemporary readers. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. **Pressestimmen** "If Mr. Law finds a spark of piety in a reader's mind, he will soon kindle it into a flame." Edward Gibbon