

# First Conversation

by Brother Lawrence

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*Establishing a sense of God's presence through continual conversation and surrender to His will is key to spiritual advancement and a life of devotion.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 16:11, Psalm 37:4, Psalm 40:8, Hebrews 11:6, James 4:7

**Topics:** "Divine Providence", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

Brother Lawrence shares his testimony of conversion at the age of eighteen, where he experienced a profound revelation of God's Providence and Power, leading to a deep love for God that lasted over forty years. He reflects on his previous employment as a footman and his unexpected satisfaction in a monastery, emphasizing the importance of establishing a sense of God's presence and feeding our souls with high notions of God. Brother Lawrence highlights the duty of faith, the need for resignation as a fruit of watchfulness, and the significance of making acts of resignation during spiritual dryness and challenges.

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## Transcript

Conversion and previous employment. \* Satisfaction in God's presence. \* Faith our duty. \* Resignation the fruit of watchfulness.

THE first time I saw Brother Lawrence was upon the 3rd of August, 1666. He told me that GOD had done him a singular favour, in his conversion at the age of eighteen. That in the winter, seeing a tree stripped of its leaves, and considering that within a little time, the leaves would be renewed, and after that the flowers and fruit appear, he received a high view of the Providence and Power of GOD, which has never since been effaced from his soul. That this view had perfectly set him loose from the world, and kindled in him such a love for GOD, that he could not tell whether it had increased in above forty years that he had lived since.

That he had been footman to M. Fieubert, the treasurer, and that he was a great awkward fellow who broke everything. That he had desired to be received into a monastery, thinking that he would there be made to smart for his awkwardness and the faults he should commit, and so he should sacrifice to GOD his life, with its pleasures: but that GOD had disappointed him, he having met with nothing but satisfaction in that state. That we should establish ourselves in a sense of GOD's Presence, by continually conversing with Him.

That it was a shameful thing to quit His conversation, to think of trifles and fooleries. That we should feed and nourish our souls with high notions of GOD; which would yield us great joy in being devoted to Him. That we ought to quicken, i.e., to enliven, our faith. That it was lamentable we had so little; and that instead of taking faith for the rule of their conduct, men amused themselves with trivial devotions, which changed daily. That the way of Faith was the spirit of the Church, and that it was sufficient to bring us to a high degree of perfection.

That we ought to give ourselves up to GOD, with regard both to things temporal and spiritual, and seek our satisfaction only in the fulfilling of His will, whether He lead us by suffering or by consolation, for all would be equal to a soul truly resigned. That there needed fidelity in those drynesses, or insensibilities and irksomenesses in prayer, by which GOD tries our love to Him; that then was the time for us to make good and effectual acts of resignation, whereof one alone would oftentimes very much promote our spiritual advancement.

That as for the miseries and sins he heard of daily in the world, he was so far from wondering at them, that, on the contrary, he was surprised there were not more, considering the malice sinners were capable of: that for his part, he prayed for them; but knowing that GOD could remedy the mischiefs they did, when He pleased, he gave himself no further trouble. That to arrive at such resignation as GOD requires, we should watch attentively over all the passions which mingle as well in spiritual things as those of a grosser nature: that GOD would give light concerning those passions to those who truly desire to serve Him.

That if this was my design, viz., sincerely to serve GOD, I might come to him (Bro. Lawrence) as often as I pleased, without any fear of being troublesome; but if not, that I ought no more to visit him.

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