

all of me



Pursuing a Life Wholly
Devoted to God

Cheryl Marshall

“When life can feel too busy, Cheryl Marshall helps us slow down and consider a life of wholehearted devotion to God. With helpful illustrations and stories, she paints a picture of what it means for us to offer ourselves to God as a sacrifice of worship. What a timely topic! Cheryl writes like an older sister in Christ, pointing her younger sister to the unchanging character of God—especially the truth that God is rich in mercy. So, pour yourself a cup of tea and enjoy this book as you would enjoy the words of a thoughtful, faithful friend. Read it. Believe it. Live it. Share it.”

Emily Van Dixhoorn, Bible Teacher; Co-author,
Gospel-Shaped Marriage: Grace for Sinners to Love Like Saints

“Busy Christian women seeking to grow in their faith can be disillusioned by books that are long on stories and advice and short on sound biblical content. But *All of Me* jumps right to the heart of the matter. Cheryl’s writing is compelling. Her illustrations are on point. Her application of biblical truth is spot on. Using Romans 12:1-2 as a beautiful framework, readers are encouraged to live each day as living sacrifices and are given sound, practical suggestions on how to do so to the glory of God. I heartily endorse this book and plan to eagerly share it with women. Praise God for authors like Cheryl who point us to the undiluted gospel of Christ.”

Mary K. Mohler, Director, Seminary Wives Institute, Southern Seminary; Author, *Growing in Gratitude* and *Susannah Spurgeon: Lessons Learned from a Life of Joyful Eagerness in Christ*

“Cheryl Marshall has written a practical and God-honoring book which helps women grow in their desire and skill for living in complete dedication to the Lord. This book is Scripture-based and God-honoring. You will be blessed whether you use it in your personal devotions or read it and answer the study questions with another woman or a women’s group.”

Caroline Newheiser, Coordinator of Women’s Counseling, Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte; Certified Biblical Counselor; Co-author, *When Words Matter Most*

“The Bible calls us to offer every part of our lives to God as an act of worship. But while we may have the desire to obey, it’s hard to live out that desire well. Through inspiring stories and thoughtful biblical instruction, Cheryl Marshall helps readers understand what a life of wholehearted devotion looks like—and how to pursue it practically. Helpful and hopeful, this book will encourage any woman longing to live a life worthy of her Saviour.”

Carolyn Lacey, Speaker; Author, *Extraordinary Hospitality (for Ordinary People)* and *Amazed*

“*All of Me* is a richly biblical and spiritually invigorating reflection on Romans 12:1-2. By including historical examples of women whose lives were transformed by their devotion to God, Cheryl Marshall challenges women today to follow the path of biblical transformation. The study guide is a helpful tool to encourage the Christian woman pursuing a life wholly devoted to God. This is a wonderful book which I will undoubtedly read again and again.”

Diana Severance, Director, The Dunham Bible Museum, Houston Christian University; Author, *Feminine Threads* and *Her-Story*

“I remember when it first clicked for me that worship of God shouldn’t be relegated to Sunday mornings or some religious compartment of life. In her thoughtful book, Cheryl Marshall uses Scripture and engaging stories to showcase the mercies of God and lead us to whole-life worship. Reading *All of Me* was good for my soul!”

Katie Faris, Author, *Every Hour I Need You: 30 Meditations for Moms on the Character of God* and *He Will Be Enough*

“*All of Me* is a tremendous resource for women who long to grow their wholehearted devotion to the Lord in every area of life. Cheryl Marshall winsomely clarifies that in Christ it’s not only possible but also practical to serve God with all we are and with all we have.”

Lydia Brownback, Author, Flourish Bible Studies

“*All of Me* is a clear biblical challenge to live a life bent in awe, gratitude, and humble adoration of our triune God. Cheryl Marshall’s opening up of Romans 12 is a necessary, theologically robust call to the contemporary Christian woman. This book will help the church fulfill its chief end—dethroning self and enjoying God in the everyday doxology of life.”

Natalie Brand, Bible Teacher; Author, *From Crimson to White: Finding Gospel Joy at Calvary*

“Cheryl Marshall offers a clear and compelling call to wholehearted devotion to Christ. Grounded in Romans 12:1–2, this book beautifully shows how presenting our lives to God in holiness is both our calling and our joy. Saturated with Scripture and practical wisdom, it will encourage every believer seeking to live in a way that displays God’s glory.”

Dr. Shelbi Cullen, Assistant Professor of Biblical Counseling and Women’s Ministry, The Master’s University; Co-host, Women’s Hope podcast; Author, *Steadfast in Every Season*

“In *All of Me*, Cheryl teaches, guides, and probes so skillfully that I read and prayed my way through its pages. For those hungering for a biblically obedient and God-honoring way to live before the Lord, read this book! The study guide provides even more opportunities to reflect on how to worship the Lord with your whole life. You will come away encouraged and equipped to live all your life for him!”

Lisa Hughes, Author, *Unmet Expectations and God’s Priorities for Today’s Woman*

“Many women are faithfully serving—and quietly exhausted. *All of Me* meets women in that hidden place, anchoring devotion not in striving but in the mercies of God. Cheryl Marshall shows that wholehearted devotion is not a life wrung dry by sacrifice but one upheld by mercy—and that truth transforms how we live, suffer, serve, and endure.”

Kori de Leon, Founding Director, Adoring Christ Ministries; Author, *Age of Crowns*

“*All of Me* is a wise, gracious companion for women who long to honor God with their whole lives—not just in one season but in every season. With biblical clarity, humility, and warmth, Cheryl Marshall invites readers to wrestle honestly with Romans 12:1–2 and to pursue wholehearted devotion as an act of worship. This book is both grounding and galvanizing, meeting readers where they are and calling them forward in faith.”

Christine M. Chappell, Host, Hope + Help podcast, Institute for Biblical Counseling and Discipleship; Certified Biblical Counselor; Author, *Midnight Mercies*

“If you’ve ever wondered what it truly looks like to offer your whole life to God in joyful devotion, this book will serve you well. Cheryl Marshall has given us a beautifully written and theologically sound exploration of Romans 12:1–2, weaving biblical truth with real stories of women who lived out those truths in everyday life. I am grateful for this resource and look forward to placing it into the hands of many women for years to come.”

Dr. Venessa Ellen, President, Real Life Women’s Ministry; Vice President, Expository Counseling Training Center; Author, *Grace in the Mourning: A Faith-Filled Journey Through Grief*

“*All of Me* is an excellent resource that encourages women to pursue a wholehearted faith, resulting in whole-life worship. As we see in character studies of women in Scripture and stories from her own life, Cheryl’s trust in God’s providence and provision is a model for living with joyful confidence. No matter what season of life you’re in, this book is a reminder to prioritize personal relationship with the Lord before any public ministry to his people. If you want to deepen your knowledge and love for the Lord and your daily practical worship of your Creator, then this book is for you!”

Lauren Brown, Director of Women’s Ministries, Grace Community Church, Sun Valley, California

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Devoted to God

Cheryl Marshall

the goodbook
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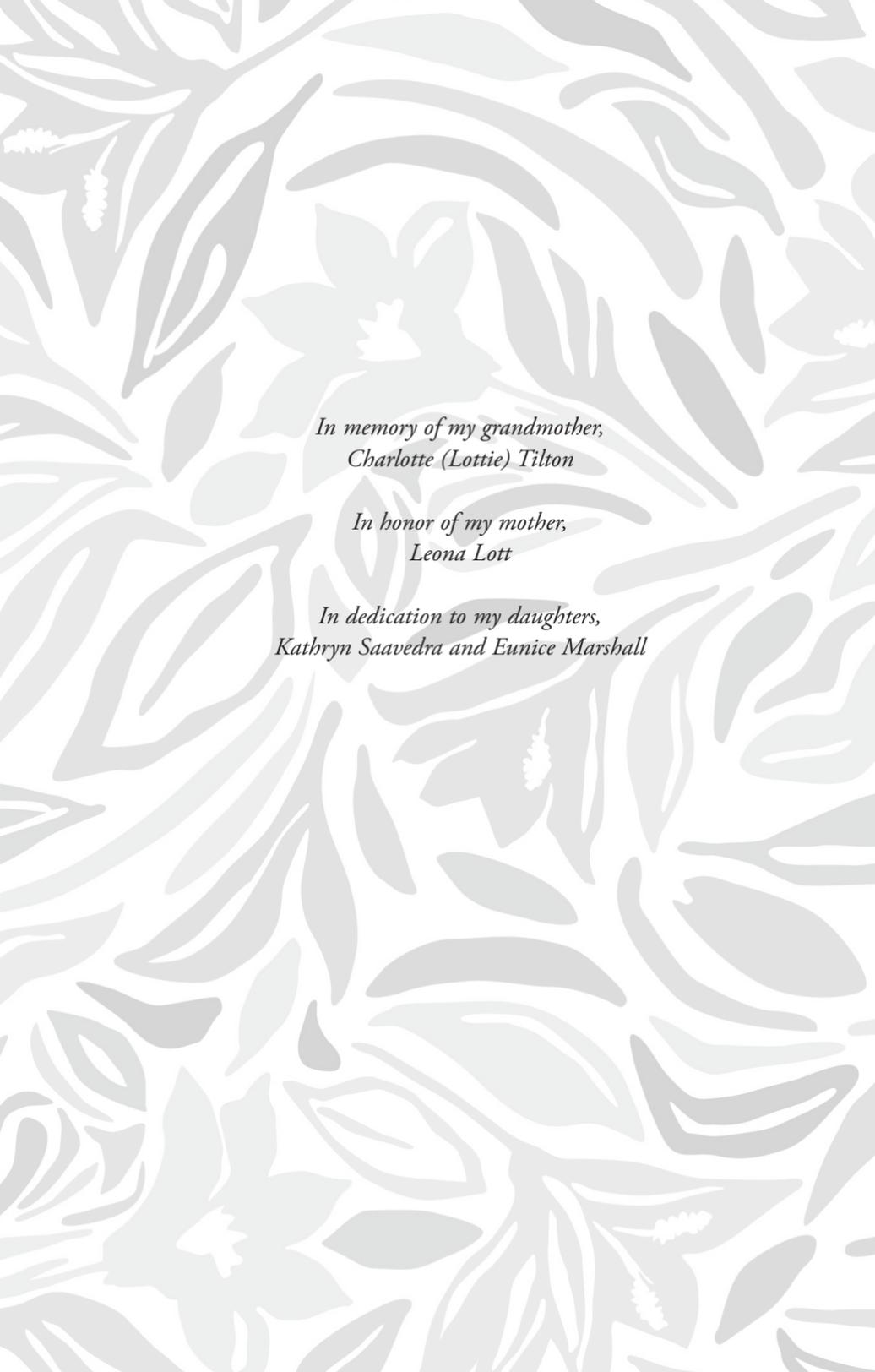
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*In memory of my grandmother,
Charlotte (Lottie) Tilton*

*In honor of my mother,
Leona Lott*

*In dedication to my daughters,
Kathryn Saavedra and Eunice Marshall*



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Preface

This is the book I wish I had read 35 years ago when I was a college student, enjoying the fun and freedom of early adulthood yet feeling uncertain of how my future would unfold.

I wish I had read this book 30 ago when I was a newlywed, figuring out how to balance being a wife, a young professional, and a church member.

I wish I had read this book 25 years ago when I became a mother, learning to care for my children physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually.

Or 20 years ago when I thought my life was settling into a predictable season of family, work, friendship, and church life. How naïve I was! Life has proven to be anything but predictable.

I could go on describing my life in five-year increments up to this very day, and at every stage I would have benefited from a strong grasp of the biblical truth presented in this book. I'm now middle-aged (how quickly time has passed!), but I don't claim to have written this book because I've become an expert on its topic. No, I've written because I sense my deficiency in it. From the beginning, I've wanted to grow

deeply in my understanding of how to live the rest of my days fully for God's glory. It's my privilege to now share with you what I've learned in the writing of *All of Me: Pursuing a Life Wholly Devoted to God*.

Regardless of the season of life you find yourself in, if you're a woman who professes to know and love Christ, this book was written for you. It's not age- or circumstance-specific, but it is specific in its aim: to help you devote the whole of your life—for the rest of your life—to God as an act of worship.

My hunch is that after you saw the title of this book, you began reading it because you have a desire, on some level, to grow in glorifying God with your life. I also have a second hunch: you don't always live out that desire well, and you're aware of that. We're probably alike in that way, but we're not alone. This has been a challenge for believers throughout the ages, in both the mundane and the significant aspects of life. As the psalmist once asked, "What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits to me?" (Psalm 116:12).

The apostle Paul answers that question in Romans 12:1-2. Throughout the New Testament, Paul often describes his ambition to honor the Lord, but in these verses, he summarizes *how* to do it. Paul calls the church as a whole, and us as individual believers, to present ourselves to God as a living sacrifice. Out of hearts of love and gratefulness, we can now worship God with our lives by devoting to him all that we have and all that we are. Romans 12:1-2 provides us with a roadmap of Godward, whole-life devotion, and my prayer is that we'll experience the true delight of following it.

Each chapter of *All of Me* begins with a true story of a woman who pursued a life wholly devoted to God. The story illustrates an element from Romans 12:1-2 that we then explore for the rest of the chapter. I believe you'll find each woman inspiring, but more importantly, I believe you'll grow in devotion to God as you trust and obey the Scriptures that

are presented and explained on these pages. God's word is powerful to change us!

At the end of the book, you'll find a study guide containing questions for each chapter. These questions are designed for personal review or group discussion. When answering them, I encourage you to refer again to the chapters as needed, read the suggested Scripture passages, write down your thoughts, and ask the Lord to help you apply his word to your life.

Thank you, friend, for picking up this book. May the reading of it help you grow in your devotion to God, just as the writing of it has helped me grow in mine. Together, may we give God the glory due to his name.

Cheryl Marshall
August 27, 2025



Chapter 1

A Woman Wholly Devoted

*O how I love Jesus,
Because he first loved me!*¹

In October 1907, a young German woman boarded a ship sailing for America. Her heart was full of hope for better days ahead yet burdened by the losses she left behind. Her hands were also full. In one, she carried a heavy suitcase, and in the other, she balanced a toddler on her hip. The wide-eyed little girl clutched her mother's shoulder as they made their way to an open deck with the other immigrant passengers. The woman soon found an empty place to stand along the ship's railing. Did she wave goodbye to anyone on the dock below? Did she help her child blow kisses to an upraised, tearstained face? Or, without any well-wishers to bid them farewell, did she quietly stare toward the open sea, wondering if she was doing the right thing?

The toddler's name was Charlotte Erna Augusta Schaffer—quite a long and grand name for such a small girl. Charlotte was born on January 27, 1905, in Stettin, Germany. Soon afterwards, her parents divorced, and within two years, Charlotte and her mother, Anna, immigrated to the United States, never to return to Germany again. Charlotte, later known as Lottie, was my maternal grandmother. I never knew her. Oh, how I wish I had.²

After arriving in America, Anna and Lottie settled in Quincy, Illinois, where Anna found work as a housekeeper for a man named Louis. As things would have it, Anna married her employer, who had been married twice before and brought into his new marriage an abusive temper, tongue, and hand.³ He also brought five children from his previous marriages. Louis and Anna had three more children together, and eventually the large family settled on a farm in Lebanon, Missouri. Life was hard for Anna and the children, both physically and emotionally. But it was there that Lottie's life took its most significant turn.

When Lottie was 17 years old, she was introduced to Jesus Christ. On October 23, 1922, with the faith of a child, she received him as her Savior—and at the same time, with the conviction of a mature believer, this unassuming farmgirl embraced Jesus as Lord. Why do I describe her conversion this way? When Louis learned of Lottie's newfound faith, in keeping with his cruel character, he made it clear that his stepdaughter had to make an immediate choice: either forsake Christ and have a home or follow Christ and have no place to lay her head.⁴ Lottie chose Christ.

Louis banished Lottie from the family farm. Anna was devastated but could do nothing to change her husband's mind. Lottie packed her few belongings and walked out the door toward the country lane that ran past the farm. She knew what she was leaving behind, but she didn't know what lay

ahead. And yet, trusting her Savior, she didn't turn back. Later in life, Lottie recalled that moment: "I felt so good in my soul, I went down the path singing, knowing God would take care of me and that he had a home for me somewhere."

A neighboring family learned of Lottie's plight and took her in. They were kind to her and provided a refuge where she could safely grow in her faith and continue her education. Every morning as Lottie walked to school, she passed her family's farm. And every morning, Anna stood on the distant front porch, waving a white kitchen towel to say to her daughter what her words and touch could not. *I love you, Lottie. I miss you. I'm so sorry.*

Eventually, Lottie moved into town to work in a clothing factory, sewing buttons onto denim shirts. She lived in a boarding house and soon met a young man named Paul, the brother of one of her housemates. Paul was tall and handsome with dark hair and strong features, and he gave Lottie the care and companionship for which she longed. They fell in love and were married on February 28, 1928.

Paul and Lottie first made their home in Kansas, but by the end of 1940, they had settled in southern California. During their first 14 years of marriage, Lottie gave birth to five children. The first was a baby boy who lived only three days after being delivered by an intoxicated doctor. The next four children were girls, and my mother was the last of the four, born on May 18, 1942. At the time, none of them could imagine the future significance of that date—the 18th of May.

Life was not easy for Lottie, being married to Paul. Their marriage had begun well enough, with a playful love and high hopes for their life together. But in time, it proved to be a challenging relationship. In addition, Lottie also suffered long-term health problems related to her first pregnancy, as well as diabetes and arthritis, yet she was never known to be a complaining or bitter woman. Rather, she was quite

the opposite. Lottie was patient, kindhearted, and joyful. Although soft-spoken, she often displayed a gentle sense of humor. She entrusted herself to her beloved Savior in doing what was right.⁵ Her life was devoted to God, and it showed.

Lottie prayed about everything. She prayed for sick children, troubled neighbors, future sons-in-law, broken appliances, stuck doorknobs, and misplaced Bibles. My mother remembers often hearing Lottie talk on the phone with a troubled friend, and then seeing her hang up and walk to her bedroom to kneel in prayer. My mother also recalls watching my grandmother's lips move silently as she ironed endless piles of laundry. She was always praying, and the answers were countless.

Lottie was also known as one who served. She loved others as an overflow of the mercies her heavenly Father had poured into her own life. Lottie cared for her family on a tight budget, without many modern conveniences. She kept their small two-bedroom home orderly and clean, sewed her girls' dresses from her own patterns, and prepared an old-fashioned Sunday supper from scratch every Saturday in her small kitchen. Her kindness and cooking were well known, even among the homeless. On many occasions, a transient would knock on Lottie's front door, and she'd invite him to sit on the porch steps while she made him a meal.⁶ Lottie also cared for her church family. She prayed for them, eagerly met physical needs, taught children's Sunday school, and quilted blankets with the Women's Missionary Society for the less fortunate. She loved others well, and she was well-loved in return.

Lottie's favorite place was in church. What joy she had as she worshiped the Lord, singing with his people! One of the gospel songs dearest to her heart was "I'll Fly Away," which happily expressed her hope that one day she would leave her suffering behind and see her beloved Jesus face to face. Attending worship services was so precious to Lottie that she

often remarked to her daughters that she wished to die in church. I wouldn't be surprised if she prayed for it. And if she did, I'm not surprised at how God answered her prayer.

On Sunday, May 18, 1969, Lottie spent the afternoon with her family, celebrating my mother's 27th birthday. Later that evening, she attended the worship service at her church. While the congregation was singing one of her favorite hymns, "O How I Love Jesus," Lottie collapsed in her pew and was carried to the back of the chapel. There, my grandmother drew her final breath. A sudden heart attack had taken Lottie home. It's no coincidence that this was her final song as she flew away:

*There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music in my ear, the sweetest name on earth.*

*It tells me of a Savior's love, who died to set me free;
It tells me of his precious blood, the sinner's perfect plea.*

*It tells of one whose loving heart can feel my deepest woe;
Who in each sorrow bears a part that none can bear below.*

*O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus because he first loved me!⁷*

Lottie was a devoted woman. She worshiped the living, triune God: the Father, who loved her; the Son, who redeemed her; and the Spirit, who kept and sustained her to the end. Lottie belonged to the Lord, and she knew it. Her life was not her own; she was bought with a price, and she glorified God in her body.⁸ At Lottie's funeral, a song was sung that summarized her life's journey and devotion to the Lord: "The Longer I Serve Him, the Sweeter He Grows." In rejection, loss, hardship, sacrifice, and even in the mundane of life, Lottie gave herself to the will of the Savior, Provider, and Comforter she knew and loved.

My grandmother was the worshiping woman I wish to be. In many ways, I'm a different woman than her. I live in a different time, place, and circumstance, yet there's something spiritually significant for me to learn from her and to imitate in my own life. Lottie—without fanfare or fuss but with sacrifice and simplicity—was wholly devoted to the Lord. She not only worshiped God with her songs; she worshiped him with her *life*. She's an example of a woman who lived to the praise of his glory. This book is written so that you and I might do the same.

Whole-Life Worship

When you read the word *worship*, what other words, images, or emotions come to mind? I realize that those who read this book come from various backgrounds, and so the answers to that question may greatly differ. The word *worship* may make you think of words such as *praise*, *music*, *prayer*, or *church*. In your mind's eye, you may see the inside of a large cathedral or a small chapel, a formal choir or a praise band, a congregation silently bowing their heads or jubilantly dancing with raised hands. Or maybe you see yourself sitting alone on a large rock next to a stream, kneeling at the front of an empty church, or wrapped in a blanket on your couch in the early morning hours. The word *worship* might evoke emotions of joy and exuberance, or solemnity and reverence, or maybe even boredom.

This is a book about whole-life worship.⁹ It's not about worshiping God when you gather with other believers at church or worshiping him in times of personal Bible reading and prayer. Rather, this is a book about *devoting to God the whole of your life—the totality of who you are and what you do—as the ultimate expression of your worship*. The purpose of this book is two-fold: first, to help you understand what it means to be devoted to God as an act of worship; and

second, to show you from Scripture how that devotion is to be demonstrated in your life. Whether you're a teenager or a senior citizen, a young mother or an empty-nester, a working professional without children or a retiree helping with the grandkids, if you're a follower of Christ, then your whole person and every aspect of your existence belongs to him. Just like Lottie, you're not your own; you've been bought with a price, and you've been called to glorify Christ in your body. Your Savior redeemed you with his death, and he now calls you to be fully devoted to him—to worship him with your *life*.

A Divided Devotion

When my children were small, we memorized an adaptation of a charming poem by M. A. Stodart, a female writer and poet of the Victorian era. My hope was that as my children rehearsed the poem, its wisdom would lodge in their impressionable hearts. Now that they're young adults, they probably could still quote this perfectly:

Work while you work.

Play while you play.

This is the way to be happy each day.

All that you do,

Do with your might.

*Things done by halves are never done right.*¹⁰

I appreciate Stodart's sentiment. When it's time to work or play, it's good for us to completely give ourselves to that activity. When we're fully engaged in it instead of doing it "by halves," our work is more productive, and our play is more enjoyable. Both work and play become the meaningful and fulfilling experiences they were intended to be. As Christians, we should have the same focused approach to devoting ourselves to God. When we present all that we are to the Lord

as an act of worship, he's glorified, and our souls are satisfied. This isn't a half-hearted devotion to God but a wholehearted one. It's not a partial commitment to him but one that encompasses our entire lives.

As believers, it's not a new concept for us that we *ought* to live devoted to God—that our lives *should* display our grateful love and obedience to him. But even though we know this, sometimes a problem may arise in us: our devotion to God becomes divided. Ever so subtly, we may begin living for ourselves instead of living for him. Seeking after our own purposes and pleasures may gradually become more important to us than pursuing what honors the Lord. A self-oriented attitude may take root in the soil of our hearts and soon bear the fruit of a life more focused on what we want than on what our Savior deserves. It's as if we begin worshiping ourselves instead of God. How does this shift happen? How does our devotion to him become divided? I can think of three major ways.

Divided by Distraction

To begin, our devotion to God may become divided by the distraction of our busy lives. We may be pursuing education, rearing children, or caring for elderly parents. We may also be employed, working in or outside the home, providing for ourselves or contributing to our family budgets. We're committed to our local churches, investing in relationships, and serving in ministries. Blessed with full plates, we find ourselves living bustling lives. But in our busyness, we may have lost sight of living purposefully for the glory of God.

Does this kind of distraction resonate with you? Maybe you've become so preoccupied with your calendar and to-do list that you rarely think of your *why* for living. Take a moment to ask yourself, "Why do I do what I do?" In other words, what is your primary reason or purpose for fulfilling

your many responsibilities? Is your motivation to please the Lord first and foremost, or deep within, are you driven by the desire to find personal value and satisfaction, to receive praise and approval from others, or to achieve temporary goals and material success? As you give your attention to many worthwhile tasks and activities, are you distracted from the priority of living wholly devoted to God?

Divided by Disobedience

Second, our devotion to God may become divided by disobedience. Even if a woman professes to know Christ, receives baptism and joins the church, reads her Bible and prays, talks about God and generally seeks to do good to others, if she has unrepentant sin in her life, then her fellowship with God and service to him are being hindered. In her heart, there may be a persistent attitude of discontent, jealousy, bitterness, selfishness, or pride. In her daily life, there may be a habit of lying, gossip, idleness, angry outbursts, substance abuse, or sexual immorality. Although she may attend worship services on Sundays, she's harboring some sort of sin the rest of the week.

Can you identify with this woman? Have you tried to compartmentalize your life spiritually? Do Sundays belong to God but all the other days belong to you? Do you give God the praise of your lips while you keep the controls of your life? Do you submit some aspects of yourself to him but hold back the rest? Friend, if this is your normal approach to the Christian life, I encourage you to examine whether you're truly in the faith. Have you turned from your sin and trusted in Christ alone for forgiveness? If you have but you now find yourself straying in disobedience, confess your sin to God today. He's faithful and just to forgive and cleanse his children. If you're not a genuine believer, now is the time to forsake your sin and believe in

Christ as your Savior and Lord. Call upon him, and you'll not be disappointed.¹¹

So pause to consider: is there any ongoing disobedience in your life that's hindering you from living wholly devoted to God?

Divided by Discouragement

Lastly, discouragement in our hearts can divide our devotion to God. Although we desire to honor the Lord, at times we may mistakenly think that our circumstances hinder us from being able to glorify him as other Christians do. That misunderstanding can produce great discouragement in us. For example, perhaps you're in a season of sacrificially caring for your family or faithfully working a couple of jobs to make ends meet, and you think you should be doing something more "significant" for the kingdom of God. Maybe, like a friend of mine, you're suffering from a debilitating physical condition, and you're struggling to see how you can serve God in your weakness. Or perhaps, like a dear sister in my church, someone violated you in the past, and you now believe your brokenness excludes you from being fruitful for the Lord. Or maybe you sinned against others, and now you wonder if your failures disqualify you from offering any acceptable service to God.

Although the details of your own life may differ from these, have you ever known a desire to live wholeheartedly for God, only to see the obstacles instead of the opportunities? Be encouraged: not only does your sovereign, all-wise God know your limitations; he's also ordained them.¹² And he can use every one of them to put his grace and glory on display through you.

So, consider: is discouragement holding you back from living wholly devoted to God?

The Ultimate Ambition

God is gracious. He's our compassionate Father, who is patient with us even as our distractions, disobedience, and discouragement may undermine our commitment to him. He understands our weaknesses and tendencies to live for ourselves instead of fully for his glory. God demands our complete devotion, and he also leads us to it. His Spirit uses his word to arrest our attention and to draw us again to a place of faithful loyalty to him. Scripture presents us with the Christian's ultimate ambition to be a whole-life worshiper, consecrated to God:

Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, *do all to the glory of God.* (1 Corinthians 10:31)

So whether we are at home or away, *we make it our aim to please him.* (2 Corinthians 5:9)

And [Christ] died for all, that those who live *might no longer live for themselves but for him* who for their sake died and was raised. (v 15)

But perhaps the clearest call to whole-life worship, which captures both the priority and the path of this most noble ambition, comes in the apostle Paul's letter to the 1st-century Christians in Rome. These verses will serve as our guide for the rest of this book:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2)

Today, 2,000 years later, Paul's appeal is still weighty and relevant for you. Worshiping God in prayer and song—praising

him for who he is and what he's done—is good and right and glorious. But God wants more. He wants your very life. He calls for the *whole of you* to be devoted to him as a living sacrifice to the praise of his mighty name. In the following chapters, we'll walk through Romans 12:1-2 and discover the elements of whole-life worship: the motivation, the presentation, the transformation, and the *living* of it.

It's unlikely that my grandmother Lottie ever read a book about whole-life worship. But she had God's Spirit and his word, and he taught her that he was worthy of her undivided devotion. Because the Lord first loved her, she loved and lived for him. He was gracious in making Lottie a true and faithful worshiper, and now he gives you the same grace. Through Christ, God has redeemed you to glorify and enjoy him forever.¹³ He's preparing you for heaven as you learn to live wholly devoted to him here on earth. Even now, "the single most important activity of your life is to worship God. You were made for this—to offer your whole life, in all its parts, as a hymn of praise to the Lord."¹⁴ My prayer is that you will become a worshiping woman who, for the rest of your days, pursues a life wholly devoted to God.