

DONNA OTTO

*with* Anne Christian Buchanan

FINDING  
YOUR  
PURPOSE  
*as a*  
MOM



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## FINDING YOUR PURPOSE AS A MOM

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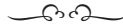
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PART ONE

# IT BEGINS WITH YOU



*And Mary said, "...may it be done to me  
according to your word."*

LUKE 1:38

## YOU ARE HOLY GROUND

THE YEAR WAS 1945, AND THE YOUNG NEWLYWEDS had a dream: They would build a house together. They found a small piece of property with a narrow but wonderful view of Puget Sound and planned their dream house. The dream was for a modest home with a two-car garage—an extravagant vision for that day when housing was scarce. But the plan was to work on the dream a little at a time. So they began. They bought the lot and saved for the house. They built the garage first and then, in order to save money, moved into it, partitioning the space into small rooms.

Some 55 years later, the now-widowed wife was still living in that little converted garage. For a variety of reasons, the dream house had never materialized, and trees had gradually obscured the view. Yet, as neighbors and relatives will tell you, that small space had served well the family that was raised there. And to the daughters and grandchildren who traveled back often to visit, that tiny converted garage always felt like a haven of love.

Later, at the mother's funeral, the two daughters marveled at how warm and alive that little garage-house had seemed during their growing years. Without the presence of their mother, the little space looked tiny and incomplete. With her, it had radiated

joy, faith, energy, and warmth. There they received large portions of encouragement, grace, and beauty. That converted garage had never seemed small to them. It always felt as spacious and embracing as the love that lived there. The space their mother had made so special always felt—well, like home.

*Home.* It's a beautiful word to most of us. It sounds like comfort, acceptance, relaxation, and love. It sounds like a warm place to be, a good place to grow up. Like a place where most of us would love to live, even if we've never had that kind of home before.

Our culture, in some ways, seems to be obsessed with the idea of home, especially in the early years of the twenty-first century. At the same time, most of us would admit that the institution of the home is in trouble. The fallout from dysfunctional and broken families litters the landscape. To our culture, home is often a status symbol, a way of showing off (or of judging others). It is sometimes a hiding place, a way of isolating ourselves from everyone else. And for many home is a source of inner conflict as our yearning for fireside comforts clashes with our ambitions and outside interests.

As believers, I believe we are called to see our earthly homes as something completely different. We are called to look at our homes the way God sees them—as vital centers for accomplishing his work on earth. Homes are tangible places where his love, mercy, and righteousness are taught and practiced on a regular basis. In a sense, a home is an incarnation center—a place where important attributes of God become real in the material world.

Think about it. Our homes are a refuge, just as the Lord is our refuge. Our homes give us comfort and strength and serve as tangible reminders of the God who is the Source of all comfort and strength. In our homes we can experience beauty and stillness and hilarious joy, just as we serve the God of all beauty and stillness and joy. And just as God is relationship in his very triune nature—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—home is where our deepest, most meaningful relationships can flourish.

Ideally, in other words, whatever is good about God should actually be fleshed out in the physical spaces of a believing home, just as it is lived out in the lives of individual believers. When we share our homes with others, we are extending the grace of God to them. When we teach our children and love our husbands, we are helping them grow in truth and understand the depths of the Father's love. Even when we take off our shoes to relax, we are in the presence of God's awesome and lovely reality.

And yes, I know that's a difficult proposition—because homes are also places where sinners live. And that means our homes, like our lives in general, will always be in need of some sprucing up. Sometimes they scream out for a complete remodeling job! Our homes, like our lives, will always be in the process of becoming what God wants them to be. And our homes here on earth, remember, just like our bodies, will never be more than temporary dwelling places anyway. As the old gospel songs remind us, this earth is not really our home.

And yet this earth is the place where God has chosen to make himself known. He has given you an earthly body, an earthly home in which to dwell, an earthly life in which to grow and learn and make a difference, an earthly family to raise and nurture. And if you have made the choice to follow Christ, Christ has promised to dwell with you. Which is why it's not just your home that's holy ground.

You yourself are holy ground.

And that's exactly where the act of shaping your home and finding your purpose as a mom begins—with you. With the woman you are and the woman who, with God's help, you can become.

You may be like me and come from a barren background, one without affirmation, joy, or safety. And you may have fallen short in your desire to create and maintain a wholesome, godly environment for yourself and your family. But wherever you are, that is not where you need to remain.

Within the family of God, you can establish a home environment that is anything but barren, one rich with tradition, encouragement, and personal growth. Your home can be a place where wonderful memories are created that will resonate across generations, a place where each person lives for the other and all live for God. Your home can be a taste of heaven on earth—a foretaste of heaven for everyone who lives there.

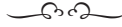
And where do you start that amazing adventure?

You start with you. And you start by saying yes.

### *A Moment of* **REFLECTION**

1. When you see the word “home,” what pictures spring into your mind? What does this tell you about yourself?
2. What does it mean to think of *yourself* as holy ground? Is this hard for you to imagine?
3. What does the word “homemaker” mean to you? Can you relate to the word, or does it seem foreign and scary? What word would you use to describe the important task of creating and maintaining a godly home environment?





## THE BEAUTY OF A HOME



*The beauty of a home is order.  
The blessing of a home is contentment.  
The glory of a home is hospitality.  
The crown of a home is godliness.*

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