

Squish Like Grape

Give the Lord Your Entire Devotion

Have you ever tried to do something halfway? If we find ourselves hesitating, like Daniel San from the *Karate Kid*, maybe we need the timeless wisdom of Mr. Miyagi. "Walk left side," he told Daniel, "safe. Walk right side, safe. Walk middle, sooner or later get squish just like grape. Karate same thing. Either you karate do 'yes' or karate do 'no.' You karate do 'guess so,' squish like grape."

We're modeling our dedication after Jesus' dedication, as we continue our [Cross Training](#) journey. Dedication includes counting the cost, wholeheartedness, establishing priorities, and making ourselves available to others. So what does it mean to give the Lord our wholehearted — all-in — devotion?

What You Need to Know

Sometimes we may use words like "all" and "always," when we mean "some" or "most," like when a spouse says, "You *always* do that!" But when Jesus uses the word **πᾶς** | **pas**, meaning *all, whole, or every*— he *always* means it.

When a law expert asked Jesus, "*Which commandment is the most important of all?*" (Mark 12:28), Jesus answered, "*The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'*" (Mark 12:29-30). God says you'll find him when you pursue him with "*all*" your heart (Jer. 29:13). Doing what's right "*yet not with a whole heart,*" like King Amaziah (2 Chron. 25:2) is no way to honor the living God.

Jesus can't stomach lukewarm Christians (Rev. 3:16) who go through the motions. He knows that halfway will kill you. But *how* do you love and serve God with all your heart and soul (cf. Deut. 10:12)?

What You Need to Do

What keeps us from wholeheartedness? Sometimes it's fear and worry (Matt. 6:25ff). Maybe it's timidity and an overabundance of caution, holding back to protect yourself (2 Tim. 1:7). We can all get cynical when we give our all and it doesn't go well. It takes great courage to believe "*all things*" and hope "*all things*" (1 Cor. 13:7; Prov. 13:12). Spend time in confession, prayer, and worship, searching yourself to know what you've held back, what secret pain or wrong attitude might have kept you from wholehearted service (1 John 1:8-10; Prov. 4:23).

Sometimes trying to be like everyone else can stifle our wholeheartedness, but you're different by design (1 Cor. 12:18), to give Christ's body the diversity to accomplish his work (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:14-27).

Wholeheartedness requires us to do less to accomplish more. When we take on too much, we scatter our thoughts and fracture our focus, so that we can't fully listen to a friend or even sit quietly in prayer. We're told to "*work heartily*" not "*work hurriedly*" — there's a difference (Col. 3:23). No one

had more important tasks than Jesus, yet he often gave one individual his full attention (e.g. John 3-4). Troublemakers, distractions, and naysayers will come, leading us to say with Nehemiah, "*I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?*" (Neh. 6:3).

The poet, David Whyte, wrote of a season of exhaustion in his life, as his work utterly drained him. One night, a wise friend told him, "You know, the antidote to exhaustion is not necessarily rest. The antidote to exhaustion is wholeheartedness." Our bodies and minds will get tired. We might even get discouraged, but those who "*wait on the Lord*" will receive joy and renewal from him (Isa. 40:28-31; Matt. 11:28; Luke 6:38). So we keep presenting ourselves as a whole offering to the Lord (Rom. 12:1-2; cf. Lev. 1:9). Like the Macedonians, if we give ourselves first to the Lord, all the rest will follow (2 Cor. 8:5).

Through the Week

- **Read** — John 2:13-17; Deut. 6:4-9; 1 Chron. 28:9-10; Rom. 12:1-13; Rev. 3:14-22
- **Reflect** — Ask yourself, "*What dark corners of my heart have I not considered lately?*"
- **Request** — Pray, "*Prove me, O Lord, and try me. Test my heart and my mind*" (cf. Psalm 26:2).
- **Respond** — Confess to God all that has held you back, then sing *Lord, I Lay My Life at Your Feet*.
- **Reach Out** — Ask someone, "*What do you find most encouraging when your passion gets low?*"