



All My Knotted-Up Life

Beth Moore

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Beth Moore's moving memoir *All My Knotted-Up Life* concerns the troubles and triumphs of Christian ministry.

This confessional, powerful, and testimonial story of Moore's life begins in her childhood, treating her hardscrabble roots in rural Arkansas with nostalgia and charm, as when she recalls clutching the sides of a mattress to make a dramatic entrance. Later that façade started to crumble: Moore confronted the realities of the childhood sexual abuse that she endured, a subject that the book treats with great emotional depth. She is light on the specifics, leaving it at the fact that no "good dad does what my dad did to me."

But the book is also a hopeful testimony to God's grace: Moore's difficult beginnings don't stop her from hearing the call to ministry, which she answered by teaching and writing. Still, behind the scenes, she felt a sense of darkness and self-destruction. She struggled to fit the flaws of her past into the larger story of what God was doing in the world.

Moore also shows how her ministry evolved to meet the challenges of sexism and politics. Her book stretches through her recent struggles with the Southern Baptist Convention and covers her disagreements with former president Trump, too. It is by turns laugh-out-loud funny, heartbreaking, and maddening; at all times, it exemplifies honesty. Moore chooses to honor the past while also acknowledging painful and difficult memories. She also reveals her husband's mental health issues for the first time—an additional act of openness—and shares details of what they've faced as a couple.

All My Knotted-Up Life is a humane memoir that speaks to the challenges of being in ministry while also asserting that God can transform one person's life in great ways.

JEREMIAH ROOD (March / April 2023)

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