

# DAMAGED BUT NOT DESTROYED

*from* TRAUMA *to* TRIUMPH

SNEAK  
PEEK



SAMPLE  
ONLY

UNCORRECTED  
PROOF

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *RELATIONSHIP GOALS*

# MICHAEL TODD

**DAMAGED**  
***BUT NOT***  
**DESTROYED**

FROM **TRAUMA** TO **TRIUMPH**

**MICHAEL TODD**



**WATERBROOK**

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Published in the United States by WaterBrook, an imprint of Random House, a division of Penguin Random House LLC.

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Hardback ISBN 978-0-593-44488-7

Ebook ISBN 978-0-593-44490-0

The Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file with the Library of Congress.

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper

[waterbrookmultnomah.com](http://waterbrookmultnomah.com)

2 4 6 8 9 7 5 3 1

ScoutAutomatedPrintCode

FIRST EDITION

*Book design by Simon M. Sullivan*

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This book is dedicated to my grandchildren. Because the Bible says “a good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children,” I am making the decision to live my life H.O.T. (humble, open, and transparent), and to deal with my trauma so that you grandchildren will be able to be everything God calls you to be.

G-Dad loves you!

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**DAMAGED**  
***BUT NOT***  
**DESTROYED**



## ***THE HIT YOU DIDN'T SEE COMING***

### **Sucker Punched**

The massive uppercut lands, and my head snaps back. Time slows, and I float to the mat, my too-short life passing before my dimmed and blurry eyes.

I see myself and my brother Gabriel suited and booted in matching fancy clothes. Gabe is just eighteen months older than me, and as small boys we got a lot of twin treatment. But as ten- and eleven-year-olds, that closeness is fading. Now we spend more time chewing each other out than twinning.

I see our family together just yesterday, joyful and laughing at the Tulsa State Fair. Gabe and I each won a set of boxing gloves emblazoned with American flags. We were so happy. Why couldn't we have stayed that way?

I see two brothers bickering and pestering until their mother can't stand one more minute. I see her help each of them tie on their boxing gloves and climb onto her bed, which magically morphs into a Vegas-sized boxing ring. Physical fighting is sternly discouraged in the Todd household, so this is extraordinary.

I see a microphone descend from the lighted catwalk (ceiling fan) above the ring and hear the announcer and referee (Mom) explain the rules:

1. No hits to the face.
2. No hits to the privates.
3. And . . . fight!

I hear the crowd roar and see myself, a frustrated baby brother whose time has come to shine. I'm quick and aggressive and more than ready to rumble, and I rain down blow after blow on Gabe's body: arms, chest, sides, even legs. Meanwhile, my brother—who is much bigger than me but also slower—stands motionless as a mountain, immobilized by the fury and speed of my attacks.

I hear the ref's whistle bring round one to a close, and I step back to catch my breath. I'm winning. I'm paying my tormentor back for everything. I'm going to absolutely destroy him! And I might want to be a professional boxer when I grow up, because, wow, I'm incredible at this.

“Mooooommm!” Gabe wails. “He keeps hitting me!”

“Well,” the ref replies, “try hitting him back. Now, fight!”

I see a menacing change in my brother's eyes. Something switches on, or maybe off. I see his arm wind up, like the Pop-eye cartoon on TV. I'm not sure what part of my body he intends to hit, so I'm waving my gloves all around my torso, trying to be there for the block.

The last thing I see before the lights go out is the American flag patch on his glove coming straight at my pretty face like a patriotic freight train. *Wait. Wha—*

*Boom.*

Right in the kisser.

TKO. (That's “technical knockout,” for those who aren't into boxing or MMA.)

Ain't no hit like the one you don't see coming.

Sure, there are physical hits like the one I took from Gabe.

But mostly I'm talking about hurts that hit deeper—*much* deeper. Hits that don't heal with an ice pack. Hits that leave bruises on your soul. I'm talking about relational hits. Emotional hits. Ego hits. Financial hits. Family hits. And even spiritual hits.

Those hits—and how we can heal from them—are what this book is about.

But before we talk deep . . .

### **Allow Me to Introduce Myself**

\*clears throat, in my best imitation of JAY-Z\*

My name is Mike.

My government name is Michael Alexander Todd. I'm the second oldest of five boys born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma, by two amazing parents, Tommy and Brenda Todd.

At the time I'm writing this book, my high school sweetheart, Natalie, and I have been married for twelve years. She is my good thing, the apple of my eye, the sugar in my Kool-Aid, the engine in my Ferrari (if I had a Ferrari), the best thing that ever happened to me, the finest woman to ever walk the earth, the wife of my youth (I'll stop there and leave the rest for *Relationship Goals: Part 2*; see below). Nat and I started dating when I was fifteen, which, now that I have children, is way too young. Out of our love, we have four incredible kids under the age of ten: Bella Monét, MJ (Michael Jr.), Ava Rae, and Gia Joy.

When people ask what I do, I say, "It's complicated."

But if you want to hear it, here it go.

I'm a retired drummer and semi-accomplished music producer who ran sound at a church in the hood of North Tulsa,

then got tricked into youth ministry and four years later was handed the church by the founding pastors, then watched our community of about three hundred mostly older African American church members snowball in a matter of a couple of years into a multiethnic, multigenerational, multiplying megachurch with influence around the world.

If that feels like a lot, it is.

But it's even more complicated than that.

In August 2017, I preached a sermon series called Relationship Goals that went viral. In the first message, I illustrated one of my points using ping-pong balls and water, and for some reason, two million people watched that clip within forty-eight hours. Two years later, I released my first book, *Relationship Goals: How to Win at Dating, Marriage, and Sex*, which went to number one on the *New York Times* best-seller list and has now sold almost a million copies. That's absolutely freaking crazy . . . until it happens, which is the theme of my second book, *Crazy Faith*, a handbook for doing extraordinary things with God based on what I've learned from my crazy journey with Transformation Church. It was also a *New York Times* bestseller.

But let me give you a little perspective. I dropped out of community college. (Shout-out to TCC! Nutrition 101 took me out.) All these crazy things happening to me? Nothing short of a miracle. For young Mike Todd, church and English class were the two most boring things in my world. God's funny, because now I'm both a pastor and a *New York Times* bestselling author. I'm proof that God uses foolish things to confound the wise. All of this is Him, y'all. And I'm so grateful.

But please don't get the impression that it's all fun and games and cash and fabulous prizes. The first time I ever saw

stars and birdies circling my head was when Gabe's mighty uppercut connected with my ten-year-old jaw—but it was certainly not the last. I've been knocked to the metaphorical mat many times, and I fully expect to be hit again in the future. And most of the time, I probably won't see it coming.

I'm proof that  
God uses foolish  
things to  
confound the  
wise.

Have you ever been hit like that? Some of you are like, *Nah, this face is way too pretty to put it in harm's way.* I agree! You're beautiful. But I'm not talking about physical hits. Let me be H.O.T. (humble, open, and transparent) and tell you about a few of the hits I've taken over the years so we can get on the same wavelength.

### ***The Dumb Hit***

First let me tell you about a dumb hit. It's dumb because I did it to myself. As a young adult, I foolishly bought a luxury car that I could pay for but I couldn't afford. You know what I mean? I could *juuuuuust* manage the monthly payments, but I couldn't afford for anything to break.

Well, guess what happened. Something broke.

During the time my fancy car was in the shop, I let my insurance lapse. I mean, no one was driving it, so why pay for protection I didn't need? (It made perfect sense at the time to my still-developing early-twenties brain.)

After suffering through weeks without my precious ride, I finally got the call that she was ready to be picked up—on a day when Oklahoma winter was doing its thing and there was ice everywhere. I was so excited to finally get my car back, I

decided not to wait for better weather. (This also made sense at the time.)

On my way home from the shop, I was ready to exit the highway when I saw a car spinning out ahead of me. By instinct I slammed on my brakes, which caused me to slide into the next lane. The car that was already occupying that lane smacked into me, and we both ended up on the side of the road. But when I started to get out so we could exchange information, that driver sped away on the icy shoulder to the exit.

It wasn't until I was climbing back into my beautiful, expensive car (which now needed even more repairs) that I realized I wasn't insured.

"Fifteen minutes could save you 15 percent or more" popped into my head. I called Geico right then and got insurance.

A couple of hours later, I called the claims department.

Taking my report, the claim adjuster asked, "Did you have insurance at the time of the accident?"

I answered, "My insurance was current on the day of the accident."

Yep. I lied.

And here's the thing: All lies are sin, but not all lies are a crime. That lie was a crime called insurance fraud, which was a felony.

It took five years for that lie to catch up with me, but it caught up with a vengeance. By the time all the paperwork and bureaucracy and hearings were done, I had mostly cleaned up my act and was a youth pastor.

Like, at a church.

Where parents and other parishioners and my boss (the senior pastor) expected me to be a role model for innocent

and impressionable young people.

Mm-hmm. Yes. Of course it was *then* that I had to turn myself in at the local police precinct and be booked into jail—fingerprints and mugshots and the whole shebang. (My mugshot appeared the following week in our local edition of the *Busted* newspaper.)

I paid my fines and served my hours of community service and stood up in front of the whole church to confess. It was horrifying and humbling and dumb. It was a self-inflicted hit that caused damage far beyond itself. And, I'm sorry to say, it wasn't the only one.

Have you ever dealt yourself a hit? Maybe you knew better at the time, or maybe you didn't (I did), but either way, you're reaping the painful and/or humiliating rewards of self-inflicted damage. You're not alone.

### ***The Distracted Hit***

When I was fifteen years old, I was fortunate enough to meet the woman I would marry. That's right—Michael and Natalie sitting in a tree, K-I-S-S-I-N-G.

But I'm not gonna front: Happily ever after wasn't the whole story.

When I was seventeen, after Nat and I had been together for a couple of years, I started to get serious about my relationship with God. In trying to be sensitive to His Spirit, I felt like He was prompting me to spend more time with Him and less with everyone else. So I concluded I should break up with Natalie and focus on God. My girl was heartbroken, but because she also loved the Lord, she tried her best to be understanding and supportive.

I repaid that selfless sweetness by letting my eye get caught

by another young lady. You can read the juicy, cringeworthy details in *Relationship Goals*, but long story short, I allowed my unchecked desires to fuel distraction. And distraction almost derailed my destiny! Y'all, I can't even imagine my life without Natalie Todd. But it almost happened, thanks to the hit I dealt myself with distraction.

Distractions have us looking the other way when we should be focused on where we're going. Has this happened to you? Perhaps you didn't see the hit coming, because your eyes were looking in the wrong direction.

The damage can permanently rearrange your face *and* your faith.

### ***The Delayed Hit***

Let's learn how to dive deep. Get your scuba gear ready.

When this kind of hit happens, we don't even feel it. It's what I've come to call a delayed hit: so ferocious that, in the moment, we're completely stunned because we don't have the capacity to deal with it or even the maturity to understand what has happened. In an instant, our growth is stunted.

I didn't realize I'd been hit until twenty-five years later. (More on that soon.) Sometimes we learn we've been hit when we find age-old debris buried in our behavior, coping mechanisms, and memories.

It's worth acknowledging that hits can be hard to talk about. We'd rather hide our hurts than travel back in time and deal with the difficult stuff. We prefer to put makeup on our mistakes. We want to edit our injuries and present a photoshopped picture that doesn't show who and where we really are. But if you're human, you'll get hit. (Honestly, I'd be shocked if you haven't already been hit.) Pretending other-

wise will stunt your growth and limit your greatness.

### ***The Direct Hit***

Are you one of those people (a) who believes somebody else when they tell you the stove is hot? Or are you the person (b) who has to touch it for yourself?

I need everybody to answer this one.

If you haven't already guessed it, I'm a solid (b). There are some things I've always known are bad and bad for me. But there was a time when I gave myself more credit than I deserved, believing I could cozy up to the heat because I was smarter, faster, and wiser, with enough common sense to get out before I got burned.

Well.

I was wrong.

The white-hot flame of perversion, lust, and temptation nearly burned me alive on the pyre of pornography. Instead of being in control of my thoughts and actions, I was a puppet to images, videos, and fantasies that directed my life and dictated my desires. It was like being a cup with the bottom knocked out, with no capacity to hold life-giving water. For years my partnership with pornography was a direct hit that left me completely empty with no possibility of fulfillment. Just a cycle of sin. Hit after hit after hit after hit after . . .

### ***The Disaster Hit***

Even if you've somehow managed to avoid all the previous hits (please tell me your secret!), I'm confident you've experienced what I call a disaster hit. It's a hit so big that you're not the only person knocked down by the punch. It affects entire

communities, counties, countries, even continents. I'm talking about disasters like hurricanes, tsunamis, mass shootings, tornadoes, wildfires, volcanic eruptions, even viruses.

The year 2020 delivered a right cross to the world that no one saw coming. Covid-19 rearranged travel, business, education, government, family finances. It pretty much changed everything. No one was unaffected.

That includes churches like the one I serve, Transformation Church. There was no way we could have forecast that the doors of our building would be shut for more than nine hundred days. We had to reimagine, reconstruct, and receive a fresh vision for how we do church. It changed our team. It changed our philosophy. It changed me.

When they happen, disasters make us feel like everything is finished. Over. But together we've learned that disasters don't last forever and God's grace will bring us through to the other side, to a place we could never have imagined. But we had to take the hit to find that out.

### ***The Disguised Hit***

If you want to talk about a hit that I could never have imagined, let's talk about the haymaker I took to the jaw from success. I call it the disguised hit because it doesn't look like a hit at all.

More money, they say. More influence, they say. Climb the ladder. Boss up. Get to the top—fast. Fame! Fortune! Franchise!

But nobody mentions how success can negatively affect your family. How it can dilute your faith. How it can blur your focus. How it can erode your foundation and jeopardize your future.

There's nothing inherently wrong with success, but where do you get your definition? What—or, better yet, who—is your source for defining success?

I found out the hard way that success fueled by the wrong source is just stress. (We'll talk more about this in a later chapter.)

### *The Domino Hit*

A delusion is a false belief that is resistant to reason or confrontation with fact, and—let's be honest—we all get intimately acquainted with delusion and denial at some point in our lives. Unfortunately, I indulged in delusion at a moment when my family needed me to be clear-eyed and honest about reality.

It was right about the time that word started to get around about how God was blessing and multiplying my leadership at Transformation Church. I was getting invitations to speak not only around the country but also around the world. I was a featured guest on television, podcasts, and the radio and had just signed a book contract with a major publisher.

At the same time all that exciting stuff was happening, my wife started to express concern that our son, Michael Alexander Todd Jr. (we call him MJ), kept missing the developmental milestones that his big sister, Bella, had hit like clockwork. He wasn't responsive and interactive in the same way, and Natalie saw more red flags with each passing day.

I wasn't as concerned. Red flags? What red flags?

There was no way this strong and healthy boy, with my name but his mom's good looks, was anything but perfect. "We shouldn't compare MJ with Bella," I said, "because girls and boys mature at different rates. Apples and oranges. Give

him time. He's probably just a late bloomer. Besides, look at all the ways God is pouring out blessing in this season! Let's not lose sight of what He's doing and get distracted by what-ifs. God is at work in a big way, and I can't believe He'd let that get derailed. Everything and everyone in Michael Todd Land is up and to the right. Up and to the right. Up and to the right."

But the day finally came when I could no longer deny that our beautiful boy was regressing instead of progressing. Eighteen-month-old MJ had stopped looking us in the eye, had stopped babbling and saying "Mama" and "Dada," was no longer paying attention to the people who loved him. He became fixated on random objects and got stuck in repetitive behaviors, then threw epic tantrums when we tried to redirect his attention.

Eventually I relented and agreed with Nat that we should have MJ's development tested. I'll never forget sitting in the specialist's office and hearing her say, "Your son is on the autism spectrum." I'm sure she was trying to be helpful and informative, but the level of detail about what MJ might face—inability to control bodily functions! total lack of verbal communication!—completely overwhelmed us. It felt like standing by with our hands tied as someone nailed his coffin shut.

We had barely any idea what autism was! We had never even heard the word *neurodivergent*. We didn't know any families who were dealing with it. And from the way the specialist described it, I felt like our boy was being handed a death sentence.

Natalie and I dealt with the hit of MJ's diagnosis in totally opposite ways. Nat's impulse was to get quiet, seek comfort, and find help. Sadly, for too long she didn't get any of those

important things from me, because my impulse was to pray louder, work harder, and insist that everything was fine—or, at least, that it *would be* fine if we only had enough **Crazy Faith**. Our God would send the right ministers, the right doctors, the right therapists if we spoke life, hope, and healing over MJ in faith. Everything would go back to normal.

Instead of comforting my devastated wife, I isolated her. Instead of empathy, I offered her blame. Instead of confronting reality, where God is always already at work, I resisted it. I didn't even want to acknowledge the hit.

MJ's diagnosis was what I call a domino hit, a knockout punch that begins an unstoppable chain reaction toward one of two places: hopelessness or healing. I got hit so hard, and there was no going back. I would fall either into a dungeon of despair or into the Healer's hands.

I am thankful beyond words that I fell (and am still falling) into Jesus. My domino hit sent me on a journey of truth-telling, self-discovery, empathy, intimacy, forgiveness, maturing faith, and increasing wholeness.

Maybe you don't know yet what your domino is, if it's already fallen or if it's teetering, ready to topple over with the slightest puff of wind. But at some point, there will be a hit you didn't see coming that knocks you flat and demands that you deal with it. Delusion and denial work only for a limited time.

I'm sorry. I hate to be the bearer of bad news. No, I really hate it. I'm a good-news guy, literally. To me, the bad news is worth mentioning only because the good news is so much better.

**Reality is where  
God is always  
already at work.**

### The Covering, the Container, and the Contents

Let's do an exercise together. It relies heavily on your imagination. Now, I know some of you turned off your imagination in sixth grade and abandoned it as child's play. But I'm convinced that God gifted us our imaginations so we can catch His vision for our reality. So read this, and then close your physical eyes. I want you to see with your mind's eye: Imagine the most beautifully wrapped gift. The box is medium to large, big enough to fire up your curiosity about its contents. Could it be a new laptop? A designer handbag? Your favorite pair of shoes? Keys to a new Tesla? An all-expenses-paid ten-day trip to Tahiti and Bora Bora? Anything could be in there! Let your imagination run wild for a second.



Now stop reading. No, really. Actually visualize the gift for ten seconds. 10 . . . 9 . . . 8 . . . 7 . . .

Is your box heavy or light? (In my imagination, I can barely lift mine.) What color is it? (Mine is glossy black.) Go on—make it as pretty as you want. Something like this:

Maybe the wrapping screams *classy* (but in a subtle and understated way) or *fun* (with tons of color and ribbons). Either way, imagine that the wrapping was done by a profes-

sional, not by a parent, child, or significant other. The folds are too crisp and straight, and there isn't a fingerprint in sight. It's almost like you can't even see the tape! You find yourself staring at it and wondering, *How is this sculpted paper creation even held together?* There's a part of all of us that wants to leave something this perfect just the way it is, instead of ripping it open. But that would be dumb because then you'd never know what's inside.

Now imagine someone walks up to your perfect box, pulls out a Sharpie from their pocket, and starts casually doodling on the side of your gift. Nothing crazy, just their best cartoon version of you, with a big mustache. (If you already have a big mustache, don't worry. They also add a polka dot bow tie and a Flavor Flav-sized gold chain that says "Playa.") They're not trying to wreck it or anything, just adding some sizzle. Pretty soon they've filled up all four sides of the box, so they start creating a masterpiece on the top. Their sketches somehow morph from kittens and shapes to rants about their feelings and frustrations.

Let me point out: It's your box. You didn't ask for this. They didn't ask permission, but it's still happening.

Just as you're about to address their obvious violation, they take it even further. They pull out a baseball bat and begin to Barry Bonds your box. *Smack. Wham. Pow!* It's almost as if you're not even there.

The bat turns into a switchblade, and they start to carve. The switchblade turns into bleach, and one drop at a time, the once-saturated color fades. The bleach turns into a blowtorch, and by the time they're through, the bow is melted, the paper is mostly burned off, and the box itself is charred, smoking, and nearly shapeless.

Is your imagination working? Can you see it? The most

beautiful gift you've ever received seems to be nothing more than a smoldering pile of garbage.



What you're looking at is a visual representation of *damage*.

Let me be specific and personal: It's a visual representation of *my* damage. And I daresay this is a representation of *your* damage too.

Brokenness.

Insecurity.

Distorted self-image.

Fears.

Trauma.

Perversion.

Pain.

Failures.

Mistakes.

Disappointments.

Bad decisions.

Wrong relationships.

Ignorance.

Arrogance.

Every human being is made up of a mind, a body, and a

spirit. Think about your gift like this: The wrapping, or *covering*, is your mind; the box, or *container*, is your body; and the true gift, the *contents*, is your spirit.



Your relationships, circumstances, and choices inflict damage on your covering (mind) and on your container (body)—and whether you want it to or not, it affects your spirit. It's inevitable. Predictable. When it happens, many times it leaves you looking a mess. Your thoughts and feelings are fragmented and disorganized. Your physical, financial, and vocational health are limping along on life support. From the outside perspective, you look destroyed.

But I have good news for you: Your contents—what's inside, your true gift, your spirit—can't be destroyed by outside damage, because your spirit was handcrafted by God in His own image. Please hear me when I say this: No matter what happened to you, no matter who hurt you, no matter how hollow you may feel . . . I want you to know this.

*The value is still in you.* The priceless value that is laced through every strand of your DNA is still in you.

I want to clearly tell you something you may not have heard before: Your covering and your container may be beaten halfway to hell, but *nothing* you or anyone else can do

**The value is still  
in you.**

will ever lower the value of what God has put in you.

Take another look at that busted-up gift. If you were seeing it for the first time, would you even wonder what's inside? If you hadn't seen it *before* all the damage to its covering and container, would you even care about the contents? Probably not. In our consumer culture, we design packaging to communicate what's inside. We expect the covering and the container to reflect the value of the contents.

But that's not how God does it.

When He tells the prophet Samuel to visit the sons of Jesse to identify and anoint Israel's next king (1 Samuel 16), the prophet is surprised to find out that the boy God has in mind isn't the oldest, the strongest, or the best looking. "Don't judge by his appearance or height," God tells Samuel when the oldest son steps forward. "The LORD doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" (verse 7). David is the youngest, smallest, and least impressive, just like many of us feel today: underqualified, underequipped, and overlooked. His packaging doesn't communicate "king" contents.

But David's Designer—God—knows what's inside him. The same way your Designer—God—knows what's inside you. He put it there. Get used to me saying it, because I'm going to say it a lot: The value is still in you.

You may feel like you'll never find love again.

You may feel like addiction will always control your life.

You may feel like the failure of your business defines your reputation.

You may feel like infertility has robbed you of identity.

You may feel like the college rejection letter determines your future.

You may feel like your success leaves no room for mistakes.

You may feel like raising kids alone will leave your family deficient.

You may feel like the public shame will haunt you for life.

You may feel like depression is going to debilitate you.

You may feel like anxiety is going to outlast you.

You may feel like your best days are behind you.

You may feel like abuse is inescapable.

You may feel like loneliness will never leave.

You may feel like money makes you and that you're only as good as your last deal.

You may feel like the pressure to perform will always be your prison.

You may feel like your hope is hopeless, your joy is jacked up, your faith is fading, and your love is leaking.

But find a mirror or switch on your phone camera, and tell yourself, "The value is still in you." This may be the most crazy-faith statement you've ever made, but it's true: *The value is still in you*. You are full of the King's contents.

That's right. I said it: You're full of it.

I'm writing *Damaged but Not Destroyed* because most of us have a hard time believing we have value, especially when our covering and container have been battered, cut, bleached, and torched. When you put this book down, I want you to be anchored in the truth, way down deep in your bones, that your contents—your spirit, your core, your eternal essence—were handcrafted with love and purpose by the Creator of the universe.

Your value is so significant that once you understand who

God has made you to be, you have the power to achieve victory in every circumstance. Your value is for victory.

But that's not even the craziest part.

### **God Can Use Your Damage**

No, really. Read the heading again. The terrible, disgusting, painful crap that happens to us isn't all God-*caused*, but all of it can be God-*used*. He doesn't waste material. Our God is the ultimate upcycler, taking what anybody else would throw away and making art. "All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28, NKJV). He wants to use your damage—no matter how bad, how deep, or how ugly—to bring you into your destiny. He can and will use all the hits.

In this book, we're going to dive deep into the way God restores damaged people to His original design for the purpose of serving others and showing His glory on the earth.

It's an invitation to you—yes, *you*—to experience everything God planned for you even before He laid the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). How do I know? Because I'm living it. But even more, I know because the truth is in His Word, the Bible.

I understand that many people reading this don't believe like I do. And that is completely okay. As a matter of fact, I love it. You can belong here before you believe. The principles in this book have the potential to transform your life no matter what you believe.

We're about to go on a journey of self-discovery and healing together, but first we've got to make a deal.

I, Michael Todd, promise to be H.O.T. (humble, open, and transparent) about my own damage.

Your turn.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, promise to be H.O.T. (humble, open, and transparent) about my own damage.

Now that we're on the same page, I commit to sharing the almost too real and raw truth about how my damage was inflicted and how God is healing me. Notice I said *healing*, not *healed*. I'm in process. This journey we're starting is about progression, not perfection.

I want to warn you that dealing with your past pain, your present problems, and the fight for your future will get messy. But it's so incredibly worth it. Stepping toward God is more important than staying the same.

Buckle up.

Get ready.

Let's go.