PRAISE FOR
Crazy Faith

“In true Michael Todd fashion, his infectious, genuine, and compelling way of teaching translates to the page as if you are sitting in the same room with him. In Crazy Faith, he helps us remember that our biggest leaps of faith aren’t actually crazy. Each one is a demonstration of whether we believe God is faithful and we trust Him enough to follow where He is taking us. With responsibility and honesty, Michael gives us wise words and pumped-up encouragement that makes me want to walk with more faith and more of God in my decision-making. Get yourself a copy of Crazy Faith today!”

—LYSA TERKEURST, #1 New York Times bestselling author and president of Proverbs 31 Ministries

“Michael Todd is one of the craziest pastors I know—crazy in a good way. If you are struggling with your faith and need inspiration, this book is for you! Michael Todd is the perfect guide to jump-start your faith. His mountain-moving stories and practical wisdom paired with biblical truths will teach you to trust in the power and promises of God so you can step off the sidelines and into a crazy faith.”

—CRAIG GROESCHEL, pastor of Life.Church and New York Times bestselling author
“Hand to heaven, Pastor Mike’s faith has not only inspired me, but it has transformed me. I’ve always considered myself a woman of faith, but this book (and Mike’s life) has pushed me to dream bigger, believe for more, and possess crazy faith! The best part of crazy faith is that it transforms into contagious faith in which we cannot help but tell everyone about a big God who does big things and fulfills big dreams. This isn’t something Mike just believes; this whole book is what he breathes.”

—Bianca Juarez Olthoff, author, podcaster, and co-pastor of the Father’s House, Orange County

“Crazy Faith is a beautifully inspiring, laugh-out-loud funny, and incredibly profound journey into the lifestyle of faith. Faith is so important to me because I believe it’s how we honor God. I trust Mike’s words in this book because he’s walked this journey before writing about this journey. Lean in and get ready because you won’t be the same after you read this book!”

—Chad Veach, lead pastor of Zoe Church, Los Angeles

“It’s tempting to think that either you are born with lots of faith or you aren’t, but that’s not how it works! Faith is a muscle that can be strengthened as we walk with God, and even a mustard seed of faith can move mountains. In Crazy Faith, Michael shows us exactly what that looks like, pointing to a crazy big God who will be there for you even when it seems impossible. Don’t read this book if you are okay with where you are; it will spoil your appetite for the status quo.”

—Levi Lusko, lead pastor of Fresh Life Church and bestselling author
MICHAEL TODD

Crazy Faith

IT’S ONLY CRAZY UNTIL IT HAPPENS
To my only son, Michael Alexander Todd Jr.

You have given Daddy a reason to believe God in *Crazy Faith* that goes beyond my ability to express in words. I can’t wait for us to have a conversation about how God did this miracle.

It’s only crazy until it happens.
IT’S ONLY CRAZY UNTIL IT HAPPENS

TODAY’S NORMAL WAS YESTERDAY’S CRAZY

Imagine with me that the year is 1979. I walk up to you, brimming with excitement, and announce that I have in my possession an electronic device that fits in the palm of your hand, with no cord or long antenna attached, that you can use to communicate with another person on the other side of the world. “I call it [pause for effect] . . . a cell phone!” You would probably think I need to be locked in a cell somewhere because clearly I am crazy.

Or let’s say it’s 1955, and racial tensions between Black and white people in America are sky high. In some parts of the country, they’re not even legally permitted to drink from the same water fountain. Imagine a young Black man walking up to a crowd of white people and declaring that his children and theirs will one day go into business together, attend the same church, and “maybe even [pause for effect] . . . marry each other!” That crowd wouldn’t just think he was crazy but would probably go crazy on him, yelling racial slurs and possibly attempting to end his life.

How about we take it back a little further, to 1899. You’re planning to visit relatives across the country for the holidays.
As you approach the train station for your weeklong journey, I show up and confidently inform you that in just four years, someone will create a prototype for air transportation. “It will be something like a giant metal bird that will take people wherever they want to go in a fraction of the time! And it will be called [pause for effect] . . . an airplane!” You would probably dismiss me as a nutcase before boarding your reliable and time-tested train, because you know such an idea is just plain crazy.

What if I told you that these little stories are based on actual events? There was a time when no one had ever imagined a cellular phone or racial integration or an airplane. A parking lot full of cars, the app you use to order your lunch delivery, women voting in elections, the chair you’re sitting in, social media—all of these were once considered crazy . . . until they actually happened.

So many things that seem normal today were crazy five minutes ago. (Okay, sometimes more than five minutes. But a lot can change in a very short amount of time.) Once we recognize that, it’s reasonable to acknowledge that many things that seem crazy to us right now could be normal in the future. Your student loan debt erased or your six-figure mortgage paid off seems crazy. Doctors going up to the ICU to tell the uncle you’ve been praying for that he’s cancer free and can go home seems crazy. The thought of your entire family accepting salvation and living for Christ sounds crazy. Getting your ten-year sobriety chip after abusing substances for decades sounds crazy. Leaving an inheritance of wealth for your great-

SO MANY THINGS THAT SEEM NORMAL TODAY WERE CRAZY FIVE MINUTES AGO.
grandchildren after you grew up in poverty seems crazy. Recovering from what seems like an unending downward spiral of depression to wake up with real joy sounds crazy. Finding out your wife is twelve-weeks pregnant after a diagnosis of infertility seems crazy. Being the first in your family to graduate college when you’re a single mom who barely finished high school seems crazy. Being truly loved in a healthy marriage after suffering years of verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse sounds crazy. Forgiving your absent father sounds crazy. Leading a thriving megachurch with only six months of junior-college education sounds just plain crazy.

But it’s only crazy until it happens.

You’re reading this book because there is something in you that believes the impossible, that knows greater is inevitable, that trusts destiny is unavoidable, and that is intrigued by the possibility of a miracle. This is my life message because this is the life I’m living: one of Crazy Faith. God has asked me to do some crazy things, and I’ve seen crazy results because of faith. Through this book, I want to be your coach, your guide on this faith journey, by sharing spiritual truth and practical wisdom to help you gain new perspective on God’s plans for you: a future you’ve barely dared to imagine.

Now, don’t get it twisted; I haven’t done everything perfectly. The Bible says the steps of a good man or woman are directed by the Lord (Psalm 37:23)—and let’s just say, I’ve missed some steps. But I’ve also learned a lot in the process. I wholeheartedly believe that life is more about progression than perfection, so let’s be
H.O.T. (humble, open, and transparent) with each other and discover more of the great plan God has for us as we walk by faith.

But first, let’s back up a little bit and get to know each other.

FOUNDATION OF FAITH

Hi! My name is Michael. I’m a devoted husband to Natalie Todd, my relationship goal, my baby mama, my boo, my good thang, the apple of my eye, the water to my thirst, the wife of my youth, the sweet to my sour that I need every hour . . . whew! Sorry, y’all, I got a little lost thinking about how fine she is. As a blessing of our love, we have four beautiful kids: Isabella Monet, who is her mother’s little twin; MJ, whom I call my fearless hero; Ava Rae, who is a sassy thirty-year-old in a three-year-old’s body; and our grand finale (fingers crossed), the newest addition to the #ToddSquad, Gia Simone. I’m an active father; lead pastor of Transformation Church, a ministry that impacts millions of people around the world (shout-out to TC Nation!); a CEO; a music producer; a designer; and—I don’t know how this happened—a #1 New York Times bestselling author.

Wow. Writing all that feels crazy because at certain points in my life none of it seemed achievable.

Let me explain.

I grew up as one of five brothers in a strong faith-filled family. My parents are ministers who have always modeled a life of extreme faith for me. In moments when most parents would have said, “I’m sorry, we can’t afford that right now,” my mom told me to pray and believe God for what I wanted.
She and my dad told me Bible stories of extraordinary faith all the time, and I would imagine myself as one of the characters. It built in me much more than a good imagination; it built a solid faith foundation.

I’m fully aware that not all kids grow up like that, but the beautiful thing about faith is that it’s never too late to build it. Sure, the best time to start laying that foundation may have been twenty years ago, but the next-best time is right now. In many translations, Hebrews 11:1 starts off with these two words: “Now faith.” So I’m encouraging you now, at this moment, that now is not too late. As a matter of fact, now is the perfect time. Right where you are, you can begin tearing down the walls of doubt, pulling out the lies of pessimism, and removing the framework of fear so that God can pour a new faith foundation deep within you.

We each have beliefs, standards, philosophies, and habits, and these are all built on some sort of foundation, whether from family, friends, education, religion, or culture—or a combination of all of the above. I wrote this book to help you build a healthy, purpose-revealing, God-honoring life of faith, but before we start building anything, we need to establish some things on a ground level. Even the most glorious building can be reduced to a pile of rubble without a sure and solid foundation.

A foundation is essential to hold a structure in place, but it does so much more than that. A well-built foundation keeps out moisture, insulates against the cold, and resists shifting with the earth around it. It is strong, deep, and dense enough
to last the lifetime of the building sitting on top of it. In the words of *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva, “Without a good one, you’re sunk.”

Over the past year, my wife and I have embarked on the relationship-testing journey of building a house, and we’ve learned a whole lot about construction and a whole lot about each other. (Y’all keep us in your prayers.) One of the things that has surprised us is how much intentionality goes into the planning, preparation, and configuration of the foundation: digging, measuring, steel reinforcing, cement mixing, leveling, and more. When I asked the foundation contractor why it was taking so long (because, honestly, I was ready to see some progress above ground), he reiterated that the foundation is the most important phase of construction. They never rush this part of the process because, as he put it in a very matter-of-fact tone, “We can fix a wall and we can repair a window, but once this house is up, the foundation is set forever—that is, unless we tear it down or do major reconstruction.”

I couldn’t help but wonder, *What areas of my life have I built on a faulty foundation? Where do I need some major reconstruction?*

Have you heard of the Burj Khalifa? No, it’s not Wiz Khalifa’s cousin. It’s currently the world’s tallest free-standing structure, at a staggering height of more than 2,700 feet—that’s two and a half times as tall as the Eiffel Tower and almost twice as tall as the Empire State Building! It cost an estimated $1.5 billion and took six years to build.†

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More than 110,000 tons of concrete were used to construct the foundation, which is buried 164 feet below ground level. That’s twelve stories of building under the building, because it takes a very deep, very sturdy foundation to keep that 500,000-ton tower standing tall.*

A foundation may seem insignificant because it’s under the surface, but it makes possible the part that’s on display for everyone to see. The integrity of the foundation you build your life on determines the type of structure that can be built on it. I am convinced that the foundation you should build your life on is faith in God and belief in His Word. God’s Word has remained from generation to generation, has seen empires rise and fall, and produces change but will never change.

The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever. (Isaiah 40:8)

Let’s take a moment to assess our foundations together. Now, I need you to be H.O.T. (humble, open, and transparent). Which of the following best describes the kind of structure your current faith foundation can support?

The truth is, you can’t build a skyscraper-sized vision on

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SKYSCRAPER
[Art TK] huge visions, giant goals, and daring dreams; lifestyle of faith on public display that is focused on serving countless others

MANSION
[Art TK] large, strong framework; intentionally designed to last a long time; aesthetically pleasing to attract others; set up to leave a legacy for future generations

FIXER-UPPER
[Art TK] pretty solid belief structure but compromised integrity due to doubt, disappointment, and damage over the years; needs some work

TRAILER HOME
[Art TK] not set in stone, easily moved, not anchored down; susceptible to damage from outside circumstances; doesn’t have much room for others

PORTA-POTTY
[Art TK] used only as a last resort; usually full of crap; requires a lot of maintenance; has just enough room for one

VACANT LOT
[Art TK] no vision or direction; available; full of potential
FRIENDSHIPS


CAREER GOALS


ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP


HEALTH
(MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, SPIRITUAL, PHYSICAL)


FINANCES


CHILDREN


PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT


HOPES, DREAMS, VISIONS FOR YOUR FUTURE


fixer-upper faith, and you won’t experience mansion-sized miracles with porta-potty principles. But let’s take it a step further. Think about some specific areas of your life, and then rate your faith foundation for each one. Your friendships, career goals, romantic relationship, health (mental, emotional, spiritual, or physical), finances, children, business, personal development, and any other hopes, dreams, or visions for your future—each and every one needs to be built on a deep, sturdy faith foundation. Be honest, though: What kind of foundation are they on right now?

Take a minute to plot it out.

No matter where you land, the exciting news is, this is just the beginning of our Crazy Faith journey. Whether your foundation is at vacant-lot status or has skyscraper capacity, your faith still has room to grow. We can all aspire to a deeper foundational level of faith.

Remember, Crazy Faith is about progression, not perfection.

**WHAT IS CRAZY FAITH?**

A simple definition of faith is “trust in something you cannot explicitly prove.” Today, people google everything and tend
to believe only things they can prove without a doubt. This makes having faith a challenge, so actually witnessing people act on faith is increasingly rare. Too often, *the facts that we see erode the faith that we need*. I’m sure you’d agree that this world we live in is pretty out of whack, and for things to get right, we need miracles taking place far more often. If we really want crazy results, we’ve got to put in a crazy amount of faith—even if it’s hard. So I’ve got one question for you: *How badly do you want it?*

*Merriam-Webster* defines *crazy* as “not mentally sound: marked by thought or action that lacks reason.” In other words, if something is crazy, it makes zero sense. There’s no reasonable explanation why it should be happening. Some synonyms for *crazy* are *insane, impractical, erratic, out of the ordinary,* and *unusual.* You can probably think of someone you know who fits that description—and if you can’t... well, then, it might be you!

I’m kidding. But for real, how many times have you called something crazy because it seemed impractical or unusual or out of your comfort zone? Can you think of someone who has become famous, popular, or respected for doing something the world considered crazy?

You’re going to want to highlight this: I define *Crazy Faith* as “having thoughts and actions that lack reason but trusting fully in what you cannot explicitly prove.” It reminds me of this old song that was made popular in 2006 by Gnarls Barkley—singer CeeLo Green and his producer, Danger Mouse—called “Crazy.” The part that caught my attention at first was the chorus, but when I
looked up the lyrics, something about the last verse stuck with me. It says, “My heroes had the heart to lose their lives out on the limb, and all I remember is thinkin’ I wanna be like them.”* That line always gets me thinking about the heroes we talk about every Sunday in church. The reason we’re still talking about them to this day is that somewhere along their journeys, they had faith to live (and sometimes lose!) their lives out on the limb. Even in the face of people who called them crazy, many of these biblical heroes believed so deeply in what God had called them to do that they became martyrs for the cause of Christ.

I can’t help but think about my own life as a believer and wonder if people will remember me as a guy who was crazy enough to live his life in faith out on the limb. Will my actions cause somebody to say, “I want to have the faith of Michael Todd”? It’s great that we talk about Abraham and Ruth and David, but will people ever say anything about me or you? Will your coworkers be able to say, “My friend was truly a person of faith”? Will your kids and grandkids know you as someone who wasn’t afraid to step out and act on your faith in God?

Think about someone you look up to or esteem highly.

You celebrate that person because she dared to travel a road that most others haven’t. The sad truth about Crazy Faith is that most believers don’t live their lives out on the limb. They live safe, quiet lives and never get to see the full promise of God.

This may not sound like the most theologically proper way of presenting a biblical truth, but some things God asks His people to do seem absolutely crazy. Sometimes He’ll ask you to do things that don’t seem rational or logical at all, things people misunderstand or even make fun of. The Bible is full of stories just like that.

Take my boy Noah for example. He spent a ridiculous amount of time cutting down trees and building an enormous boat that sat on dry land in the middle of town where everybody could see and clown him publicly. You see, he’d heard from the Lord that a flood was coming, but up until that time nobody had ever seen rain. Everybody thought Noah had no sense—that is, until it started raining. Call me crazy, but I believe the soundtrack blasting from the boat’s speakers at that moment was Mike Jones’s hit song, “Back then, you didn’t want me. Now I’m hot, you all on me.”* Noah was like, “Told you so! You’re not getting on this boat, baby. Sorry, not sorry. You should have believed the word of the Lord!”

Okay, okay. Maybe it didn’t happen exactly like that, but you get my drift, right? Everybody thought Noah’s actions were crazy. If you were there, you might have thought so too.

But let Noah’s story challenge you.

Maybe the thing you wrote down in your journal seems crazy now, but it’s only crazy until it starts raining.

Maybe you’re faithfully working a job you don’t really like so that you can remain financially stable until the side-hustle, entrepreneurial venture you’ve been passionately pursuing takes off. Maybe people around you are telling you to give it up and settle for a nine-to-five, but something inside you can’t let go of what you believe God told you would happen.

Maybe it seems crazy to save yourself in purity right now because the world tells you to just go out and do whatever you want with whomever you want.

Maybe it seems crazy to wake up at the crack of dawn, go into your daughter’s bedroom, and write down a vision statement that declares you will own a 163,000-square-foot arena that will one day become the headquarters of your worldwide ministry. (True story. More on it later.)

But maybe—*just maybe*—what seems crazy in one season will be counted as faith in another.

It’s only crazy until it happens, and maybe the fact that you stick to your guns and stand firm in your faith will be the deciding factor in someone else’s heart and help him turn his eyes toward Jesus!

God wants you to be His modern-day hero. He wants people to be able to look at the faith *you* have and model their own after it. The faith you have to start the business in the middle of an economic crisis, to believe for a healing that doctors deem impossible, to let go and move forward after a dev-
astating heartbreak—your Crazy Faith is what He wants to use to make a miracle happen. He’s not looking for somebody to give Him all the reasons why it can’t happen. He’s looking for somebody to believe that if He says it, it will happen.

TRUE STORIES OF CRAZY FAITH

I’ve personally seen quite a few stories of Crazy Faith play out in my lifetime. The stories you are about to read are 100 percent true and have become amazing examples for me and many others to follow. It’s time for us to start taking cues from heroes of the Christian faith who have gone before us, and I’m not just talking about people in the Bible. I’m talking about learning from heroes that are right in front of us, like Transformation Church’s founding pastors, Bishop Gary and Pastor Debbie McIntosh, who had the faith to do something crazy. Let me paint the picture for you.

The north side of Tulsa, Oklahoma, where Gary and Debbie planted a church, has historically been inhabited mostly by African American families. In 1921, a devastating race massacre took place in a prominent upper-class district of North Tulsa called Greenwood, where many distinguished Black people lived and owned thriving businesses.* The area was known as Black Wall Street because it was a uniquely affluent national epicenter of economic prosperity for African Americans. Close to one-tenth of the population of the city of Tulsa back then was Black, and most of them lived in the

Black Wall Street area.* Some white people saw this prosperous, expanding district as a threat to their comfortably segregated lives and allowed their hearts to be filled with hatred, like a pot of boiling water on a hot stove.

On May 30, 1921, racial tensions came to an explosive head. A young Black teenager stepped onto the elevator of a fancy office building, and moments later, the young white elevator operator screamed of foul play. After the teen’s arrest the next morning, angry white mobs assembled in the streets and by evening were burning Black businesses and homes to the ground without remorse. Hundreds of innocent people were murdered in violent attacks. Those eighteen-plus hours of chaos caused immense devastation that Black people are still working to recover from a century later. An already-divided city was torn apart.†

Many years later, in 1999, a man and woman of God heard the Spirit of the Lord calling them to start a ministry in that very part of Tulsa. Now, if you have never seen the McIntoshes, I want to give you some information to help you understand the context. They are white. Like, white white. Like Snow White white, with a side of Barry-Manilow-mixed-with-Neil-Diamond white. Nevertheless, they were convinced that God was calling them to the Blackest part of the city, and they acted on their Crazy Faith. They moved across town. They rented out a space. Pastor Debbie started hosting small-group prayer meetings with some friends. And then one day, Bishop Gary drove downtown to the corner of Greenwood and Archer—the exact location where the devastating fires of

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† “Tulsa Race Massacre.”
the race massacre were sparked seventy-eight years earlier—and he heard the Spirit say, *Take off your shoes.*

*Take off my shoes? Outside?* He looked around and thought, *This is crazy. What if somebody sees me?* But still he obeyed. He took off his shoes right then and there—and right then and there, God said to him, *I want you to reverse the curse in North Tulsa.* Can you even imagine?

Gary and Debbie started a church not where it was easy but where they were called. They were obedient and stepped out in faith—and over the course of twenty years, a group of forty dedicated people meeting weekly in a downtown strip mall has become more than four thousand people gathering in an arena to experience a ministry that helps transform the lives of people of all races worldwide. It gives me enormous joy to honor them any chance I get, because Transformation Church wouldn’t be what it is today if not for the Crazy Faith of Bishop Gary and Pastor Debbie McIntosh.

I wouldn’t be writing this book and pursuing the purpose of God without the Crazy Faith of my parents, Brenda and Tommy Todd. Over thirty years ago, when they lived in New Orleans, Louisiana, they heard from a man of God who was starting a church in Tulsa. He told them, “You should come visit Tulsa.” What they heard was “You should *move* to Tulsa.” Now I don’t know whose version of the story is right, but in the end, it was definitely God’s will for them to be here. They left the comfort of what they knew and moved to a town where they knew only one other person. They began a journey of faith that would produce so much life and freedom in others—praying dozens of ministries forward and serving with everything they had—all while trusting God in Crazy Faith.

My dad initially worked for the State Farm insurance com-
pany, but he and my mom sought God and decided that they were going to stop trusting in that system for finances because they felt God calling them into full-time ministry. This was crazy! They had children. They had a mortgage. They had bills. But crazy or not, my dad said, “This will be my last year working at State Farm, and we’re going to believe God for everything that comes into this house.”

(Now, I bet some of you reading this are thinking, Oh, I’m quitting my job tomorrow! But let me caution you: you’d better be sure you heard it from God, or you’re going to be on an involuntary fast for a long time!)

Over and over again, I experienced God supernaturally provide for the Todd family, who had five hungry boys to feed and no groceries in the refrigerator. My mom would get down on her knees and pray, and the next morning the doorbell would ring and there would be nobody there—just a week’s worth of groceries on the front porch. Nobody can convince me that believing God does not work!

Through the years, I have witnessed my parents sacrifice and give and trust God and give some more. Then I’ve watched God not only meet our needs but also bless us with more than enough to share with others. Their ministry has gone on to impact millions of people around the globe, all because they keep saying yes to God.

I hope you feel inspired when you read the stories I tell in this book—but more than that, I hope you are compelled. I hope you glimpse how many other stories are waiting to be told. There are destinies waiting to be altered, hearts waiting to be turned, lives waiting to be transformed, inventions wait-
ing to be created, buildings waiting to be designed, philosophies waiting to be shaped, and a world desperately waiting for answers that can come only from the God who created it.

But He needs something too. He needs willing vessels. God’s Word says that all creation is groaning, waiting for the sons and daughters of God to be revealed (Romans 8:18–23). God is ready to load and fire some spiritual weapons of mass destruction aimed at the devil’s territory, but He needs some all-in believers who will trust Him and step out in Crazy Faith.

You ready?
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