

DAMAGED BUT NOT DESTROYED

STUDY GUIDE

from TRAUMA *to* TRIUMPH



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

MICHAEL TODD

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WATERBROOK

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STUDY GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

This study guide is designed to work in a lot of different situations—including small groups, book discussion groups, or on your own as you walk through your healing journey. In any case, this book was created to be a companion to *Damaged but Not Destroyed*, where I share true stories and practical principles for everyone making the journey from hurt to healing.

We've all been knocked down, taken hits that have left us damaged in one way or another. The good news is, healing is waiting for you. But no one can heal *for* you. The damage you've experienced may not be your fault, but it is now your responsibility. Your healing can't happen without your participation.

So take a deep breath, commit to walking through this study guide with honesty and intentionality, and see how God shows up.

This participant's guide is a deep dive into the principles laid out in *Damaged but Not Destroyed*, with an emphasis on gaining wisdom from God's Word. The content here is structured for a ten-week study.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Start each session by reading a chapter in *Damaged but Not Destroyed*, and engage with the principles you discover there. Then jump over to this study guide, and begin applying those principles to your life. Read chapter 1 for session 1, chapter 2 for session 2, and so on.

Remember to allow yourself—and God!—the time and space to work on your heart and mind.

THE GROUP EXPERIENCE

God didn't design human life to be lived alone, and that goes double for life in the Spirit. The healing journey is best taken together, so if possible, I encourage you to find a couple of friends to walk with you. We need other Jesus people to help us live a Jesus-shaped life.

This guide will work best in a group setting if you personally walk through each session a day or two before you meet so that you can spend your time together in discussion. Each session includes enough material for about forty minutes of meeting time, though you can adapt the length to your group's needs. Whether you are the group leader or a participant, be kind, sensitive, and respectful of the other people in your group. Healing is hard! It isn't always linear, and each person's journey has its ups and downs. Do all you can to create a place of safety and love so that everyone can receive what the Spirit is so ready to give.

SESSION FORMAT

Each session includes three sections:

1. *Let the Word In.* Read, meditate, and reflect on a passage of Scripture. We English speakers read Scripture in translation rather than in the original languages (Hebrew and Greek). So try reading the same passage in a few different Bible translations to get a deeper feel for and fuller picture of what God is saying through the original writers. Some go-to translations are the New International Version (NIV), the New Living Translation (NLT), and the New King James Version (NKJV).
2. *Let the Truth Out.* Practice being H.O.T. (humble, open, and transparent) with yourself and God. Sit with each question, and let it guide you in identifying the damage you've experienced. This might bring up some discomfort—even pain—because the hits hurt. But pay attention to the pain spots because they will show you what is ready to be healed. And as much as you are able, share your thoughts and insights with the people in your group.
3. *Let the Spirit Guide.* Pray through the thoughts, feelings, and issues that come up for you throughout the study. Let the Holy Spirit guide you and heal you. Lasting restoration involves God's Spirit helping us understand our own damage in a new way. His healing puts our damage in context so it becomes part, not the whole, of our story.

BE H.O.T.

In this study, we're going to dive deep into the way God restores damaged people to His original design. We're going to get real about self-discovery and healing together, but in order to do that, we've got to commit to being H.O.T.—humble, open, and transparent about our damage.

Real healing isn't about saving face or trying to look cool. There's no need to hide. God wants to heal your damage—no matter how bad, how deep, or how ugly—and bring you into your destiny.

So I urge you to commit now to being humble, open, and transparent with yourself, with God, and with those around you. Because when you're ready to be real, you're ready to heal.

This journey is incredibly worth every bit of work because receiving God's healing will transform your life, your relationships, and your faith in the most important ways.

Ready?

Let's go.



SESSION

1

THE HIT YOU DIDN'T SEE COMING

BASED ON CHAPTER 1 OF *DAMAGED BUT NOT DESTROYED*

As we go along in life, our relationships, circumstances, and choices inflict damage that won't heal with an ice pack. Hits leave bruises on our minds, bodies, and souls. These hits come whether we expect them to or not. They're inevitable. Unavoidable. Predictable, even. Many times they leave us looking a mess. Our thoughts and feelings are fragmented and disorganized. Our physical, financial, and vocational health are limping along on life support. From the outside perspective, we look destroyed.

But here's good news for you: What's inside you—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 this: No matter what happened to you, no matter who hurt you, no matter how hollow you feel . . . *the value is still in you.*

LET THE WORD IN

Read Psalm 139:1–18, out loud if possible. Explore a few

Bible translations to get a fuller picture of what God is saying in this passage.

After you've finished reading, sit quietly for a minute or two. In our crazy, loud, busy, hyperconnected world, being quiet is a radical act that helps us make space for God. Don't check your phone! Just be here, right here, where you are.

As you read Psalm 139, what feelings come up in you? Assurance? Disbelief? Hope? Fear? Anger? Write them all down, even if they're mixed up or conflicting. Note which lines in the psalm provoke a particular feeling in you. (For example, verse 7 might inspire calm or anxiety in different people.) Take five to ten minutes with this exercise. The goal is to get an accurate inner temperature reading when it comes to your belief in the value God has placed inside you.

LET THE TRUTH OUT

1. In chapter 1, we learned about a few different kinds of damaging hits. Which ones have you experienced? Write down a few details about each hit you've taken.

The Dumb Hit: *I did it to myself.*

The Distracted Hit: *I didn't see it coming, because I was looking the wrong way.*

The Delayed Hit: *So ferocious that I couldn't feel it until later.*

The Direct Hit: *Straight-up sin that I couldn't or can't escape.*

The Disaster Hit: *A widespread event that affected everyone around me.*

The Disguised Hit: *I thought it would be a blessing, but instead, it knocked me on my butt.*

The Domino Hit: *A knockout punch that began an unstoppable chain reaction toward hopelessness.*

Other Hits: *Anything and everything not covered by the definitions above.*

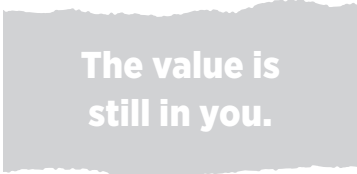
2. When you think about the hits you've taken so far in your life, which have made the biggest or most lasting impact? Why do you think that is?

3. Which areas of your life have been most affected? Which areas are top priority for you when it comes to healing? Why?

4. Dealing with our past pain, our present problems, and the fight for our future will get messy. But it's so incredibly worth it.

—

How do you feel about the healing adventure you're starting here? Nervous? Excited? Skeptical? Is it easy or hard to believe that it will be worth it? Why?



**The value is
still in you.**

Most of us have a hard time believing we have value, especially when the metaphorical gift of our lives—our covering and container—has been kicked, cut, bleached, torn, and torched. But anchor yourself in this truth until you know it way down deep in your bones:

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, it becomes power to achieve victory in every circumstance. Your value is for victory.

5. When you imagine victory in every circumstance of your life, what might it look like? Be honest with yourself and God. He may want to tweak or transform your definition of victory, but that can happen only if you're H.O.T. (humble, open, and transparent).

LET THE SPIRIT GUIDE

Take a few deep breaths.

Recognizing the damage that has shown up in our lives is hard work. As much as you might want to jump to problem-solving, don't try to fix anything yet. Just practice being aware of the damage and turn your attention to God's presence with you in the pain and discomfort.

LET'S PRAY

Holy Spirit, I believe that You are with me.

Or at least, I want to believe it.

*Give me courage to face the damage of my
past and the new hits I take each day.*

*Help me respond in faith instead of fear,
trusting that I'm not alone on this
adventure.*

*I want to know You and live the destiny You
planned just for me.*

Amen.

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire width, providing a guide for handwriting or typing. The background is a clean, solid white color.

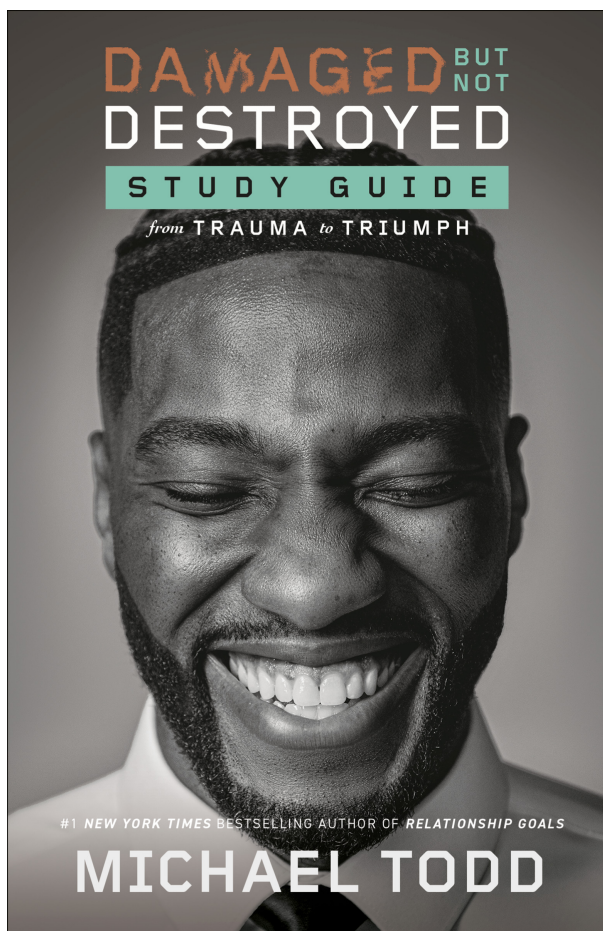
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MICHAEL TODD is the lead pastor of Transformation Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, alongside his wife, Natalie. They were entrusted with Transformation Church by the founding pastor, Bishop Gary McIntosh, in 2015, after fifteen years of leadership.

Their personal philosophy and driving passion at Transformation Church is re-presenting God to the lost and found for transformation in Christ. They aspire to reach their community, city, and world with the gospel presented in a relevant and progressive way. You can find out more about Transformation Church at www.transformchurch.us.

Michael is also the multiple *New York Times* bestselling author of *Relationship Goals* and *Crazy Faith*, and each year he speaks at influential churches and conferences, such as Elevation Church, VOUS Conference, XO Marriage Conference, Gateway Church, and others. Michael and Natalie have been married since 2010 and live in Tulsa with four beautiful children—their daughters, Isabella, Ava, and Gia, and their son, Michael Jr.

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