

## JESUS LOVES ME! *By Vicki Croan*

**I** had been searching for a church that preached the truth for four years – something genuine. I believed I was “saved” and had gone to church since I was three years old. I decided to try out Desperation Church in Liberty, Missouri, pastored by Michael Craft. Having come from a strong Pentecostal upbringing, Pastor Michael’s approach was completely different from anything I had ever heard. Instead of preaching damnation, guilt, and judgment, I kept hearing of this amazing, awesome love God has for each and every one of us. I heard I should live for God for today...right now...for today’s happiness – not only to get to heaven – but to have a bit of heaven right here on earth by serving and loving others, by daily nailing my flesh to the cross.

Tuesday, March 18, 2008, less than a year of sitting under Pastor Michael’s teaching, I had this unbelievable encounter with God – right in my bedroom while saying my nightly prayers. Michael had been preaching about true transformation of the heart. I had been praying for the peace of Christ Paul spoke of, that peace from knowing that, regardless of your circumstances, you are free in Christ – free to be happy and free from death and pain. I so wanted that peace.

That night in my bedroom I was enveloped in a clarity that was so personal and so close – so real it is difficult to verbalize. It was suddenly clear. Jesus died for me. Jesus died for icky ole’ me. And God so loved me! I felt so grateful, so thankful, and so terribly sorry for my sins, and for wasting so much time. For at least two hours I lay in my bed, crying, thanking God, and



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begging His forgiveness. I asked God to please take my life and do whatever He “darn” well chose. And I meant it.

But God had more to give me. I had been a diabetic for nearly three years and needed four to six shots of insulin every day to stay alive. Because of the disease I nearly went blind and had three surgeries on each foot.

Since the night of that God encounter on March 18, 2008, I have not had a drop of insulin. I believe while God was healing my heart and my mind, he gave me a big old bonus and decided to heal my body as well.

I never even dared ask Him to heal me. God is just that gracious.

While grateful for both gifts, if I had to give back my physical healing in order to keep my spiritual healing, I would do it in a hot second. No question. The important thing to me is what happened to my

heart. The very God of glory looked my way!

Had I not found Desperation Church and learned of this amazing love Pastor Michael adores talking about and Pastor Bil “Baltimore” Brown, our worship leader, so loves to sing about; and had I not felt the genuine love – from the pastors and the congregation as well –

I honestly do not know where I would be, spiritually or otherwise.

Jesus suffered and died for my salvation, and Pastors Michael Craft and Bil Brown helped me find my salvation. I think if Jesus were here today, He would definitely enjoy Pastor Bil’s sweet “songs of salvation” and Pastor Michael’s realistic and applicable rendition of the Bible. God is definitely alive in our church!

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Vicki Croan works for a law firm in Kansas City, Missouri. She was born and raised in Kentucky, but has been a Missouri resident for five years. While Vicki misses her home and family in Kentucky, she said she cannot bring herself to leave her church – where she found salvation.

