

Todd Starnes: They Popped My Hood and Found Gravy on the Dipstick

Looking at Todd Starnes, a network reporter and anchor for  Fox News Radio, today, it's hard to imagine that just three years ago he was on the brink of death. In May 2005 Starnes was a news reporter for talk radio station KFBK in Sacramento, Calif., and weighed 300 pounds. While covering a story, he developed a slight cough but thought nothing of it. A few days later he could barely get out of bed. His doctor said he needed a new aortic valve.

But Starnes didn't realize at that moment how serious his condition was and thought he could plan the surgery after the summer, when his schedule was less hectic. His doctor explained how replacing his aortic valve was a life-or-death matter. Starnes had two weeks to get his affairs in order.

This was the start of a life-changing journey. Over the last three years, Starnes has had open-heart surgery, lost 150 pounds, grieved the death of his parents and run his first marathon. He shares his experiences in his new book, *They Popped My Hood and Found Gravy on the Dipstick*. Starnes acknowledges that others have had open-heart surgery, lost loved ones and shed pounds—his story is not unique. But this is *his* story.

Based on an audio journal he kept during his surgery and recovery, Starnes' memoir is about more than weight loss. While describing his health journey, Starnes weaves in tales from his childhood (some admittedly embellished) and chronicles his career. Throughout the book he offers the lessons he's learned and relays how God has sustained him,

taught him and directed him.

Starnes says he wants people to laugh when they read his book, and he'll likely get his wish. His thoughts and stories are deep-fried, smothered, covered, slathered and buttered with Southern charm and humor. As he told The Buzz in our interview he wants people to feel good about themselves and "know that some average Joe can make it through an obstacle and difficulty in life."

More than anything the core message of Starnes' book is one celebrating God's saving nature. "God's grace is sufficient to get us through those difficult times," he says. "Not only can He get us through those times—and He will sustain us—but we're going to be able to look back and we're going to be able to laugh and smile and understand why we had to go through what we had to go through."

[Click here to purchase Todd Starne's book.](#)