



Believer's Voice of

# VICTORY

April 2011



*Happily Ever After*

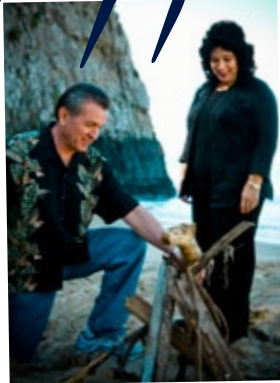
Diana & Richard Escobedo



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# Happily Ever After



Diana Escobedo swallowed the fear that clawed at her throat as she thought of the huge lump in her breast. It had grown in spite of her prayers. It insisted on continuing its malicious march, threatening all she held dear. She and her husband, Richard, had only been married six months, and this *wasn't* the happily ever after she had imagined. She was too young! She was too happy! And now, she was too scared!

Diana's family was third generation Christians from the San Fernando Valley in California. Richard had grown up in Brownsville, Texas, where his family pioneered churches in a major denomination. Converted in the early 1900s, his grandparents and uncles had owned property on both sides of the Mexican border. She and Richard met while attending the Latin American Bible Institute and had agreed to follow the Lord's call into full-time ministry. They prayed the way they'd been taught—by begging and pleading with God and ending each prayer with the respectful, "If it be Thy will." They knew how to pray.

*Didn't they?*

One day when the pain was severe, Diana stayed home from work to pray. She went into her bedroom and knelt down, praying and begging and crying for God to heal her. After about an hour, a scripture came to her mind—Isaiah 53:4-5.

"I started quoting that scripture to the Lord," Diana recalls, "telling Him through my tears, 'You said in Isaiah 53: 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.'"

Moments later, Diana was completely healed! "I wept with gratitude, but I didn't understand that the Word had healed me—I thought I had just done a good job of begging and crying and had moved the hand of God. At the time we knew nothing of our righteousness in Christ Jesus. We had been taught we didn't deserve anything from God, and *if* He felt like it, He might heal us. Since we were taught that He punished with sickness, being healed was a very big deal!"

Going to bed that night, she smiled contentedly. They *did*



know how to pray—begging and pleading had moved the hand of God.

*Or had it?*

### Knowing God

“It never occurred to me that my healing might have manifested because I’d prayed the Word of God,” Diana admits.

Pleading with God for an answer to prayer wasn’t common only in their denomination, it crossed denominational lines. Everyone they knew prayed that way. As a result, they couldn’t pray in faith because they didn’t know God’s will.

The following year when Richard graduated from Bible school, he and Diana launched a traveling ministry, and Richard sang with The Escobedo Singers. In 1975, a respected friend brought them Kenneth Copeland’s teaching series *The Laws of Prosperity*, and asked them to listen to it. They listened to the tapes over and over, then Richard began teaching the message.

A few years later, in 1978, Richard and Diana were thrilled to learn Kenneth Hagin was holding a meeting in Anaheim, Calif. The other speakers were Kenneth Copeland, Fred Price and John Osteen. Richard cleared their schedule and they attended. Hungry for the Word, they needed some answers. Diana was again struggling with her health—a new lump had appeared.

After that, the couple traveled to Texas to minister and Richard’s cousin loaned them books and tapes by Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland. Pregnant with their second child, Diana opted to stay home one evening and rest. As she read Brother Hagin’s *Authority of the Believer*, she was stunned at what she learned.

Diana was asleep when Richard returned from the meeting. However, she roused and urged him to read the book. Richard stayed up most of the night reading. Afterward he knelt in the closet to pray. Their 3-year-old daughter curled up on the floor beside him and slept.

“Lord,” Richard prayed, “I’m learning from Brother Hagin that it *is* Your will for us to be healed and walk in health. I’m confused. I’ve been taught that sometimes it’s *not* Your will to heal.”

*Behold your daughter, the Lord said. Do you love her?*

“More than life itself.”

*Do you ever want her to be sick?*

“No! I’d rather take it myself!”

*Do you want her to be poor?*

“No.”

*Hungry?*

“No.”

*I also love My children. I never want to see any of My children sick, hungry or poor.*

Richard pondered the words and then covered his face in remorse at the unspoken truth. Although he’d been a Christian for years, he had never really grasped the nature of God.

### The Good Fight of Faith

The next day Richard discussed what he’d learned with Diana. “We’re not going to ask God to heal you anymore,” he said. “According to God’s Word, you were healed. Past tense. From now on, we’ll praise and thank God for your healing.”

The battle had been joined. The more they spoke God’s Word over the situation and thanked Him for Diana’s healing, the worse her symptoms appeared to be. The area around the lump swelled, and the swelling continued up her arm to her neck and the side of her face.

A few months later, Richard paced beside his wife’s bed. The right side of her beautiful face seemed pale as death—the left side flushed as though by a blistering sun. The color trailed down her arm to the breast where a lump protruded like a fat egg. She’d lost the use of her arm.

Diana seemed closer to heaven than earth. As her husband watched, Diana’s eyes rolled back into her head like the glass eyes of a doll. Convulsions wracked her body like an earthquake followed by a series of aftershocks.

*She’s going to die!* the devil taunted.

Richard resisted the urge to weep and beg God to heal his wife. Instead he stood his ground and warred with the Word. He warred with praise. He worshipped the Lord. “Bless the Lord, O my soul,” Richard prayed. “With all that is within me, I bless Your holy Name. Lord, I thank You for all Your benefits. You have forgiven all our iniquities and You have healed all our diseases. Therefore, I thank You that Diana is healed in Jesus’ Name.”

A few days later, Diana Escobedo got out of bed totally healed.

“Afterward I read Gloria’s book *God’s Will for You*,” Diana remembers. “She wrote an entire chapter on healing. Until then I’d known in my *head* what God’s Word said about healing. But reading that book, I got the *revelation* that it’s God’s will to heal.

“I was sitting on my bed reading when I got it—it felt like a 300-pound weight lifted off of me. I knew it was a spirit. I was *free!* I was so changed that I wept in gratitude. Today, 35 years later, the memory still makes me weep with joy.”

### Effective Doors of Ministry

During that 1978 faith meeting, the Lord spoke to Richard and instructed him to take the Word of God to Spanish-speaking people. Changing their course, the Escobedos began preaching in Spanish churches around the country, teaching the uncompromised Word of God.

For months after the manifestation of Diana’s healing, they

“Without our connection to KCM, we’d be dead now. Because of what we’d learned from Kenneth and Gloria, we knew how to receive healing by faith and God healed me.”

applied themselves to the Word of God. They grew more in those three months than in the entire time they attended Bible school. They took the revelation they had gleaned and began to preach it. One of Richard’s relatives called and said, “You sure are popular. The denomination has sent letters to all the Spanish churches telling them not to let you fill the pulpit.”

“I was stunned and saddened,” Richard said. “My family helped pioneer the denomination and now they refused to renew my license because I taught the word of faith. The Lord told me that for every door they closed, He would open four. Soon, doors swung open in Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica and other Latin American countries.”

The Lord also opened doors for them in the U.S. At that time, they knew of no Spanish churches that had heard the word of faith. So the Escobedos translated Brother Copeland’s materials into Spanish, and started a Bible training center in Visalia, Calif. There they trained many of the people who were saved under their ministry. A strong church grew from that planting, and Richard’s brother is pastor there today.

In 1984, they started a second Bible training center at the YMCA in Torrance, Calif., which also grew into a church—Centro Palabra de Fe—now located in Compton, Calif. Today, Richard and Diana pastor there, with some of their former students serving as elders and pastors of evangelism.

### To the Ends of the Earth

In 1986, Richard and Diana began buying airtime on television and radio where they preached the word of faith. In 1996, a pastor friend introduced Richard to the founder of a television ministry in Costa Rica. He invited Richard to preach on television there. Richard traveled to Costa Rica every three months for three years. When they discovered he had a local television program, they began airing *Fe Victoriosa (Victorious Faith)* on TBN Enlace, the largest network in Spanish.

“KCM has changed our lives,” Richard says. “In addition to Diana’s battle, the enemy attacked my health and tried to take me out. They thought I had cancer, although none of the seven doctors could get a firm diagnosis. Because of what we’d learned from Kenneth and Gloria, we knew how to receive healing by faith and God healed me. Without our connection to KCM, we’d be dead now. Our children were filled with the Holy Spirit at KCM Believers’ Conventions. Until the Lord returns, we’ll stand with this ministry.”

Life is good for Richard and Diana. In addition to vibrant good health, people from the U.S., Mexico and other Latin American countries tell Richard, “I heard you when I was a child!” “I heard you when I was a teen!” “The word you preached changed my life!” But one of their greatest joys was helping KCM purchase the Citation X aircraft. Through their partnership with KCM, they are sending the gospel to the ends of the earth.

The days of begging and pleading with God are a distant memory for the Escobedos. They awake each morning with the knowledge of the authority they’ve been given through Christ Jesus. Rejoicing in their Father’s love, they speak His Word knowing that poverty, disease, debt, sickness and lack must flee.

They no longer have to wonder about the will of God.

They know it. They pray it. And they are living it day by day... happily ever after. **VICTORY**



## PARTNERSHIP

### Battling Together

**When Richard and Diana Escobedo** became

Partners with KCM, their lives changed. Through the teachings of Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, they discovered that the only effective weapon against the attacks of the enemy is the promises of the Word of God. The strength they received through their partnership with KCM has enabled them to stand strong on the Word and to turn every battle they have faced to glorious victory!

We invite you to join hundreds of thousands of believers worldwide who have discovered the power of partnership. Ask the Lord if now is the time for you to partner with us—we are here to help you fight your battles and win!



Inside your Partner package:

Contact us and ask for our FREE “New Partner” package with complete information about partnership, complimentary gifts and more.

- ▶ Brother Copeland’s personal letter of welcome
- ▶ Benefits of partnership brochure
- ▶ Covenant Partner Card—good for a 10-percent discount at KCM-meeting book tables
- ▶ Ministry report DVD
- ▶ Scripture promises CD
- ▶ *The Anointing in Partnership* CD