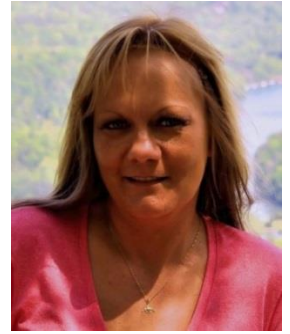


# The Story of Lori

In November 2012, Lilly Renee Gross, the precious three year old granddaughter of Lori Lynn Robbins, tragically died in a horrific automobile accident, the result of a drunken driver. Thus began a journey for Lori that changed her life. This is her story, much of it in her own words.



Lori and I first met April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012. We fell in love immediately, were engaged two weeks later and began to plan a December wedding. Life was good and Lori was happy. The evening of November 18<sup>th</sup> that year, however, Lori received a phone call that changed her world. Her beloved "Lillybug" was dead.

*The horrible crash happened as the result of a young man driving drunk, passing another car on a 2 lane road at 130mph and hitting the car my granddaughter was in head on. Also killed was my daughter's best friend, Brittney, who was watching Lilly that day, as a best friend would, while my daughter was at work.*

*A month after the accident, our family and Brittney's gathered together and went to the fire department to thank the paramedics for doing everything they could. I had only one question for the paramedic that was at that accident scene. With tears rolling down my cheeks, I said, "I just need to know that Lilly and Brittney didn't suffer." He looked at me directly in my eyes, and said, "Ma'am, I can assure you that it was instant, and there was no suffering."*

Lori spent the next two months with her daughter, trying to help her cope with her loss while privately struggling to cope with her own. Wedding plans were put on hold. Life was put on hold. But Lori was deeply depressed and angry, very angry. Mad at God for taking her precious granddaughter, angry that the other driver had died, as well, rather than having been made to suffer for his foolish actions.

*During that time I was very angry at God (although I was even raised in the church). I became bitter, and deeply depressed. I could barely stand to go by the little girl's clothing at a store, or look at the foods that were my Lillybug's favorites. I isolated myself in my angry little world. Dark, alone and sad, I have never felt such emotional pain. I was at a loss. I isolated myself from my friends, my family and even my own husband.*

May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013, Lori and I finally married in a small chapel in Gatlinburg, TN, she being the most beautiful bride I had ever seen. But Lori's anger and depression were still eating away at her, little by little, as she sank deeper and deeper into her "angry little world". Things worsened as the first anniversary of Lilly's death came around. Medications didn't seem to help the depression and nothing would make the anger go away.

*Then about 4 months ago, things started to change. I started noticing things, supernatural things, things I can't explain, and that don't even make sense in everyday life. But I knew what it was, and who it was.*

*God was telling me, "I've been here the whole time." Thoughts raced through my mind of times when I was at the lowest point, like getting the phone call that my grandbaby was gone, making funeral plans for my daughter because she was just so distraught and the candle light service we had at the accident scene.*

*God was there with me the entire time and not ONCE did I lean on Him or pray to Him.*

The end of March 2014, Lori and I moved to Blacklick, OH, near Columbus, as I began a new job. Lori loved our new home and the two cats we adopted. We found a church home at Eastpointe Christian Church, a few blocks from our house. Lori began to be happier, less depressed and less angry.

*As if the things I'd witnessed weren't obvious enough to let me know He was there all along, I had a very eye-opening experience in my kitchen about 3 weeks ago.*

*Standing in my kitchen, I heard the most beautiful singing I have ever heard. The highest soprano voices, to which nothing on earth compares. While the singing was going on, time stopped, and a peace came over me. I had just heard God's angels singing! Of course, I thought I was losing my mind. No one else heard it. But then I remember how I felt when I heard it. I couldn't tell you how long I was standing there. Time had stopped. And the peace that came over me was like being wrapped in a warm blanket.*

Lori told me of the angels singing, and a few days later informed me she was no longer mad at God. She still didn't understand why Lilly had been taken from her, but she knew it was part of God's plan.

A few weeks later we celebrated our first anniversary and Lori asked to go see the movie 'Son of God'. The happy Lori was returning as she decorated our new home and we looked forward to summer.

The next week Lori suddenly turned to me while riding in the car and said, "I've forgiven the other driver, the one who caused the accident. Did you ever think you'd hear me say that!?"

"No.", I replied, "Never." As we drove home Lori seemed finally to be at peace with the loss of Lilly.

*I have forgiven the man that caused the accident, and I never thought I could do that. There's life after this one. I absolutely believe that now. I cry now, not because my granddaughter is gone, although I do miss her terribly, but because I didn't lean on God to get me through all the hurt, and I didn't believe He was in control the whole time.*

The next day, when I arrived home from work, Lori excitedly told me, "God spoke to me today! He wants me to preach His word. He wants me to be an evangelist!"

"How can I do that," she asked, "you know how shy I am. I can't talk in front of people!" But she knew in her heart, with God's help, she could, if that were His will.

The following Sunday, our church bulletin announced there would be a Baptism Celebration the next week. Lori turned to me and said, "I want to be baptized."

She told me later she had never before believed God would accept her because of her sinful past, but she knew that He would. Hard to believe this loving, caring, compassionate woman had a sinful past, but I knew she did, she had told me about it. She had never felt she was worthy of anyone loving her, least of all God. That insecurity had allowed others to manipulate her into doing things she knew were wrong and sinful, only making the insecurity worse and separating her further from God.

Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, Lori was not feeling well, a stomach bug, but she insisted we go to church because she *needed* to be baptized. After an emotional confession of her faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Lori was baptized, remarking later, "Did you hear how emotional I was, I almost cried." On our way home, Lori was more at peace than I had ever seen her in the two years since we had met.

Still not feeling well, Lori spent most of the next two days in bed, but was "on the mend" as she put it.

Wednesday morning, May 21<sup>st</sup>, I readied for work, as usual, while Lori lay in bed, still half asleep. I kissed her goodbye, we said our "I love you's", and Lori went back to sleep.

It was a sleep from which Lori would never wake. Within an hour, Lori had gone to be with her Lord.

#### Epilogue

The preceding words, those written by Lori, were posted April 25<sup>th</sup> on her website, where she was selling the handcrafted jewelry she had begun making in an attempt to deal with her loss of Lilly. I discovered those words on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

It's the final few words she wrote that day that I believe are a true summation of Lori's life:

*If you have lost someone tragically and you'd like to talk, I'm here. Just email me. You don't have to buy something to talk to me. I hope in some small way, what I've written brings you some peace.*

Once Lori had found her own healing from tragedy, her first thought was to help others, through her own story and her new found faith in God.

What still troubled me, however, was why God would call her to be an evangelist, only to take her away? God answered my question. Although Lori's earthly body cannot do God's work **HER STORY CAN!**

If you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, now is the time. No matter your background, your past, your problems, accept the Lord, be baptized and be at peace, as Lori finally was.

Do it now. God may not send angels to lead *you* home.

**Lori Lynn Robbins**

**February 1, 1969 – May 21, 2014**

