

FOREWORD

By Terry M. Hightower

If you have read books on grief before, you will find this volume to be very different from most of the others. *Joy In The Morning* is a handbook written for those who are suffering from any kind of deep emotional bereavement caused by the death of someone through circumstances that are somewhat out of the ordinary events of life, such as losing one who was seemingly "taken before their time." It was also written for those who desire to understand (to whatever degree they can) what their friends are undergoing spiritually, physically and emotionally who have suffered just such a loss. Upon its completion, you will better be able to fulfill Paul's admonition to "weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15).

This book has been written by a Christian sister who has "been there" in the depths of tremendous and strongly felt personal loss. Predictably, this work will sometimes be "tough going." So keep a box of tissues close at hand, for likely you will cry for Barbara (or her family) or perhaps because the intimate details which she shares bring back old feelings of a similar sorrowful event in your own life. Yet, with these tears, you will probably experience a "good" kind of catharsis or downloading which will assist you in growing spiritually closer to the Lord.

Quite significantly, Barbara knows that our eternal existence is at stake here! As she points out, "the dreaded call" becomes a turning point (i.e., either as an instrumental good or an instrumental evil) driving us further into God's loving arms or away from Him—depending upon our reaction to it. In reading this treatise, those presently experiencing great sorrow and

seemingly ensnared in it will hopefully be enabled to place what happened (which sometimes almost uncontrollably plays over and over in one's mind) in a less accessible or less painful "drawer" of memories. Yet, no shallow attempt is made to merely numb the mind or to totally "block out" unpleasant recollections. Instead, the reader is helped to place the loss in proper (and ultimate) perspective by seeing it Biblically and through the eyes of one who has lived the roller-coaster ride of extreme sadness.

Barbara Hanna has extensive experience in teaching God's Word and has written many great materials for God's people, all from her perspective of endeavoring to restore New Testament Christianity in our present age (2 Tim. 1:13). Though the idea that we must measure every detail of life in the light of Scripture, even personal crisis and grief, is incomprehensible to humanistic thought, Barbara still doggedly clings to the notion of John 17:17: "Thy Word is truth." The Bible is the basis and contains the criteria by which she seeks to make every judgment. I have no higher compliment to offer than to say that I believe *Joy In The Morning* to be extremely practical and written from the perspective of one who loves God, truly knows the Bible, and has personally experienced "weeping that endureth for a night." Therefore, I can wholeheartedly commend this work for personal study at home or in the classroom, and for use in personal work.

Editor's Note: Terry M. Hightower is an evangelist and author, presently preaching for the church of Christ at Vega, Texas, where he and his wife, Vicki, reside. He graduated from Harding University with a B.A. in Social Science Education and a M.A. in Christian Evidences. He has preached for several congregations and has directed lectureships, editing the lectureship books. He also served as an instructor for the Florida School of preaching.