

In His Hands

The Story



Hi this is Tom from the Sky Family. My Family, the SKY Family, has been accused among other things of having a lot of joy. Guilty as charged! We are probably more joyful than anyone I've known or met. However the joy we have is not from this world or from anything in this world. The joy we have is truly and honestly from God. That's probably a good thing! When you hear our story you'll see why! In fact true joy cannot be found anywhere but in Jesus. Everything and everyone else let's us down or disappoints us. If

we look to some achievement or goal as the thing that will satisfy us, how empty and short-lived it turns out to be! If we look to a person for our fulfillment...well, we all know how THAT turns out. Joy comes from the presence of God. It is the only place it can be found. So the foundational work of God is to remove the faulty stones that we are building our life and joy on and replace them with Himself. Only then can we be unshaken by the fickle events that so often leave us bewildered.

Loss 1] So God did some major foundation work in our lives. We had a cute little house on a river. It was a delightful place and it was exciting to have a house of our own. One night it burned to the ground while we were all asleep inside. The family just barely escaped with their lives and nothing else! Everything - clothing, furniture, precious irreplaceable keepsakes - all gone in a moment. At the time we were thankful for our lives but the extent of the loss became apparent after the numbness wore off. Most of the family received multiple burns but we were alive. Having nothing really brings you into a new reality. Isn't that what the scripture says? We came into the world with nothing and we will leave with nothing. It really helped us to sort out our priorities.

Loss 2] After a period of time we rebuilt and in a number of years built up a family business. We're all workers and like to work together so we wanted to build a business large enough to support everyone when they grew up and had families of their own. So we built a beautiful country inn and 4 star restaurant in the center of a quaint New England village. We also had a furniture shop and built hand-made Windsor chairs and hand-planed tables. We sold our furniture all over North America. The inn was a real showplace and was extremely valuable because we had built it all ourselves. After we had constructed it and run it for 7 years we became victims of an illegal foreclosure scam that was prominent at that time. We were not behind any payments, indeed after 7 years we had made over \$800,000 dollars worth of mortgage payments! We found out later that there were many victims just like us in that area that had fallen prey to unscrupulous lending practices. The result was in one day we watched helplessly as our whole property was taken from us. You can hardly imagine what it meant to completely lose all those years of hard labor and more than \$1,500,000 in equity! And yet because we were founded on the rock of Christ His amazing grace lifted us through that difficult time. In fact the day we lost our property [again] we had more joy than those who win the lottery but don't know Jesus. It was amazing how He gave us such peace and assurance. Then God turned that loss into the greatest good!

Later that same week we were propelled into full time ministry and we have been serving the Lord full time for over 10 years now. You are reading this right now because of that seeming tragedy! For 10 years we have had no earthly assurance that we'll be alive the next day or week and yet God has taken care of us all this time. And taken good care at that! Let that be a lesson to all who are deathly afraid



of market collapse and financial turmoil. There is a place of safety! It's in Jesus. Jesus is the ark, all who run into Him will be safe no matter what. We are a living testimony of the faithfulness of God!



Loss 3, the big one] All these things were nothing compared to what happened next. We were a very close family. In fact we were a home-school family. Home-school families tend to be very tight and loving and that's just what we were. We had weathered a lot of storms together. We adventurously started a homestead in another country. On our 25th wedding anniversary I looked at my wife and said, "Isn't it wonderful to be married to the person you love?" Meaning, everyone is dissatisfied today and always yearning after someone else. I thought it was the most awesome thing in

the world to be married to the person you really loved. I never imagined how dark and foreboding those words would become.

Just a week or two later everything changed. Several traumatic events had converged upon the dear wife and mother of the Sky Family. Suddenly and without warning something snapped inside her. The warm loving mom of 5 was no longer present and a wild, vicious entity appeared her place. She looked the same but it was not her. This new person wanted nothing to do with us. Her whole personality had changed overnight. The cruelty of her words seemed beyond anything that a human could think of or say. In a moment she couldn't stand me, she went from loving me to hating me with a passionate hatred. When she became romantically interested in one of my employees she became consumed with an overwhelming desire for this man. She would stop at nothing to be with him. Where she had never gone 'out on the town,' now we could find her at a bar. Suddenly she imagined nothing more fulfilling than driving off with a stranger on a motorcycle. She was literally capable of doing anything. In her defense she was truly mentally ill but we were the only ones who really knew it. She could be found one night wandering down the river in a snowstorm, the next she could be picked up by the police. But it was the violence that really devastated our home. Her hatred was so intense that we were forced to hide the sharp knives and other potential weapons. We had five children and the youngest was just 8 years old when this happened. Then she moved out. Where she had been my partner in all things, running one business while I ran the another now I was suddenly on my own. While taking care of every aspect of 4 businesses suddenly I was in a position of needing to cook dinner for the family. I had never cooked ANYTHING! And prepare school lunches. That was new! And shop for school clothes. And somehow get the kids to school and back, more than 45 minutes each way. But it was the brutal hatred that was so devastating. The hatred never stopped, never took a break. The words kept stabbing and wounding. Our once happy close family was now a war zone. It was almost impossible to believe. These things couldn't happen to a Christian home-school family! We kept waiting for a miraculous delivery, the hand of God intervening. Instead we experienced a long train of new men that were going to fulfill her life. Years and years of endless torture followed. She was hospitalized, she was treated, nothing worked. The humiliation was beyond words. She actually took a job working for our main competitor! She left her own business to work for someone else, all the while filling the place with the most horrific stories about us. In a small town this is a hard thing to take. She would be picked up by police but would tell the most outrageous tales imaginable in order to justify her actions. Through it was the complete loss of all respectability. Friends turned away, close family members abandoned us. After eight years of praying for her and believing for a miracle instead of being restored to the family she got divorced and left for good. It was impossible to believe this was actually happening to us. Why am I telling you all this? Because this is a story of redemption.

All the joy we have comes from this one fact. When our hearts were bleeding and our guts were wrenched out instead of getting mad at God and shaking our fist at Him as is so common today, we ran TO God. We ran to God and clung to Him and we found in Him a comfort and a love that carried us through that time of unspeakable pain. And He's still carrying us to this day. The circumstances have not changed but God's love has become the source of our joy and peace. So our joy really IS from God. Today it is popular to get mad at God for anything and



everything that goes wrong. If anything has happened in our life contrary to our liking since we were born we blame God. So many people walk around with a chip on their shoulder against God. Even atheists hate God. They don't believe there is a God but if there is, they hate Him! If you've been hurt or rejected you're probably dealing with all these same thoughts and attitudes. There can be a deep resentment against God for 'letting this happen to you.' You think He doesn't care, that He has forgotten you. To that I answer with the scripture that changed my life and the direction of my family. It's found in Isaiah 49:15: "Can a nursing mother forget the child of her womb? Yet even if she could I will not forget you says the Lord. Behold I have written your name on the palm of my hand and My thoughts are continually toward you." THIS is God's heart toward you.



Try this - next time you feel completely alone. Lift up your eyes and say, "Jesus, I could really use a friend." And then just see what happens. Draw close to Him and He will draw close to you. Run to Jesus and YOU will find comfort. Turn to His word and YOU will find hope. The same hope we found. I've included below a few things to help you get started.

- Come to the Lord as though He were right in the room with you. Speak to Him like He's listening. He is.
- Tell Him all your troubles and sorrows. He cares. That hand nailed to the cross was nailed for you, in your place. That's a lot of care.
- Ask Him to forgive you of everything you've done wrong. Go into detail, it's good for the soul.
- Invite Him to come into your heart and be part of your life.
- This is how to begin a new life in Christ.
- If you've already begun your journey with Christ do all these things anyway and renew your walk with Him.
- Now begin to set apart time to be with Him each day. Set apart a half hour or 45 minutes to really seek the Lord. A good thing to do is to go to a quiet place [turn off all your devices] get a good old copy of the Bible and start reading from the first page of the New Testament. That's the gospel of Matthew. This book alone is enough to transform your life. It will give you new hope and set your priorities straight. Let the Word of God really penetrate your heart. Seek the Lord as though He is life itself.
- As you begin to do this regularly you'll begin to notice changes. First you'll begin to experience an unearthly joy. Joy comes from the presence of God. When you're spending time with Him the inevitable bi-product is that the joy of the Lord becomes YOUR joy! You'll begin to experience peace even if your circumstances haven't changed at all! This is the secret to a new life - the presence of God. Nothing in the world can compare to it and when you have it you can endure the most difficult trials.

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

- Try this as an experiment. Set apart time to pray to Jesus and read the Bible for a little while each day for 30 days. If God hasn't begun a wonderful new work in you by then we will send you a complete refund. Oh wait...this didn't cost you anything. So you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Here's one of my favorite passages from the Bible. It's from Psalm 34. "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good!" That means He's inviting you to find out if what I have just told you is true. It is!

Finally - besides reading the Bible first, spend time on our website. Just type in Sky Family. There's tons of helpful material and messages and music that will lift you right up out of the pit. And don't forget to contact us. Once you have done these things you have joined the family. The Sky Family!



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website: theskys.org