

# Loss of a Child Part 5

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## God's Faithfulness in Suffering—Calvary Chapel Ministry Comforts a Hurting Family

Story by Carmel Flippen



*Photos courtesy of Julianna Grace Ministry*

*This is the final part of a series on Julianna Grace Ministry, a Christ-centered support group based out of Calvary Chapel Shreveport, LA. The ministry provides "Grieving Baskets" to mothers or families who have lost babies due to miscarriage, stillbirth, or early infant loss. The baskets include books, information, resources, and comfort items to help them cope with and process the loss of a baby. "Our greatest desire is to help grieving parents and families find their hope and peace in Jesus Christ," shared founder Lisa Rowell. To read the series from the beginning, [click here](#).*

Outside the Boggs family's home, a hundred friends and strangers, holding candles, gathered to pray. Inside, the family of four huddled together on the couch, shell-shocked from yesterday's tragedy—the death of their youngest member, 4-month-old Barrett. They were not ready to face the crowd, but as they watched from inside, each candle that was lit felt like a light turning on in their own hearts, shining God's grace and love in their darkest time.

As messages, prayers, and worship were led by various churches in their community, Natalie and her husband Walker gathered the courage to step outside. "Something supernatural happened as we stepped out that door," Natalie proclaimed. "The Holy Spirit took over, and we agreed that if we had to endure this pain, we would, but our prayer from that moment on would be that our pain and [our son] Barrett's loss would not be in vain, but that God would change lives through Barrett's life, for His glory.

"He has come through on that over and over again."



*Barrett Anthony Boggs, son of Walker and Natalie Boggs, died at 4 months and 17 days old after he stopped breathing. Julianna Grace Ministries, out of Calvary Chapel Shreveport, LA, sent her a "Grieving Basket" to help her process the pain.*

## Held in God's Hand

"It's funny how you look back on things and see God's hand on them," mused Natalie. For her, the story of God's faithfulness amidst losing Barrett started before she even knew his life had begun.

Between her close-knit women's discipleship group and reading through the Bible in a year with Walker, she had been growing spiritually in leaps and bounds. Though a Christian since childhood, "I'd never built on my faith that way before," said Natalie. When her church announced an upcoming trip to Israel, she quickly signed up. Soon after, she discovered she was pregnant. At 28 weeks gestation, Barrett accompanied her as she walked in Jesus' footsteps and was baptized in the Jordan River. Though Natalie could not realize then how significant these memories with her son would be, she knows God did. "There were so many people and circumstances the Lord placed in our lives," she testified, "to build our faith and grow our wisdom so that we could weather the storm none of us knew was coming.



*Natalie, 28 weeks pregnant with Barrett, is baptized in Israel's Jordan River.*

## Rainbows After the Storm

On September 25th, 2018, Natalie received a call from Barrett's babysitter, a trusted friend who had cared for their two older children. Through tears, she informed Natalie that Barrett had stopped breathing. A co-worker raced Natalie to the hospital to meet Walker. Within minutes, more than 30 friends and family members joined them to wait and pray. "At the time it felt as if we waited a lifetime to get the news we had been dreading to hear," Natalie remembered—despite the babysitter's and doctors' efforts, Barrett's life could not be saved. "We were cast into darkness, fear, and shock."

Stricken with grief, Natalie turned to one of her friends and asked, "Do you think God punishes people?"

"No, Natalie," the woman replied firmly. "That is not our God. He took on our punishment when He died on the cross."

As soon as the Boggs returned home, they looked up to see a stunning double rainbow arching across the sky. “Walker and I just hit our knees,” Natalie declared. “We knew it was no coincidence. [God] had placed it there right when we needed it.” Natalie lifted her hands to the sky and thanked God for that gift. Far from the vengeful judge she had been tempted to see Him as, their loving heavenly Father was sending a promise that despite their inexplicable and inconsolable loss, His faithfulness would carry them through. In that first month alone, Natalie saw six more rainbows; then one in each of the next four months.

*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. [Romans 8:28](#)*



*Natalie and Walker grieve Barrett's death after leaving the hospital without their son. When they saw the rainbow in the sky, they knew it was God reminding them of His faithfulness in the middle of their tragedy.*

## A Song is Sent

After being at the hospital with the Boggs, their friend Katie Garcia remembered, “I [was] so overwhelmed with grief, loss, and pain, knowing that some of my dearest friends were facing the worst tragedy that anyone could ever go through. I went home that afternoon just broken and felt a sense of urgency to run to my piano.” Though she had never written a song before, lyrics and music seemed to pour out of her. Within 15 minutes, she had composed “You Promise Good.” She explained, “It’s a simple song [about] wrestling with why God doesn’t always intervene in our pain, but choosing to believe in His promises: that while He does not promise that only good things will happen to us, He does promise to work in our pain and through our suffering, for our good.”

On the day before Barrett’s funeral, she felt prompted to text Krystle, a singer and Natalie’s close friend. Before she could push the Send button, Krystle called her. She said the Boggs had asked her to sing at the funeral; did Katie have any suggestions for her? “I just burst into tears,” Katie recalled. “I told her God had already given me a song.” That song, which continues to be sung at the Boggs’ church and is posted online, has helped heal not only their family but many others.





### ▶ You Promise Good

(feat. Jacob Ambrose & Krystle Trosclair) -Single  
Written by: Katie Garcia

Two days after the funeral, Natalie posted about her experience on Facebook. She was honest about her pain, but also God's faithfulness. "The Lord surrounded us with so many armies," Natalie testified. "Our family had an enormous amount of people praying for us, some we didn't even know. That's what spurred us on." Thousands responded, including multiple women who had lost their own infants and said they wanted to exchange the anger they'd been carrying for the hope they heard in Natalie's testimony—a hope which Natalie made clear came only through Jesus Christ.



*The Boggs Family, left to right: Walker, Natalie, baby Judah—9 ½ months, Harvey—6, and Scarlett—4, holding a bear. "We use that bear in all of our family pictures in memory of Barrett. We called him "Bear" for short, even when he was with us, so it is very special to us," Natalie said.*

## Blessings for the Battle

After Barrett's death, Natalie battled crippling anxiety. At night, she lay awake imagining how Barrett had suffered, worrying about her other children. Always outgoing, she suddenly felt anxiety attacks coming on whenever she was in a crowd. It was weeks before she could return to church, but when she did, a friend handed her a Julianna Grace Grieving Basket. Its contents proved to be the spiritual weapons Natalie needed to fight her way forward. The mug which read *Courage* reminded her to have courage in Christ. She plastered the Bible verses all over her house so God's truth would be everywhere she looked.

Most importantly, there was a stack of books such as Angie Smith's *I Will Carry You*. Though Natalie had never been very interested in journaling, since Barrett's death books and journals had become her lifelines. "I holed up in my house and would just read and read," she remembered. "It felt like the only thing keeping my head above water. I needed to fill this void; I needed to understand. Reading about other people's experiences, and how they dealt with them through Jesus, allowed God's Word to pour into me. It mended something inside me."

*"[God gives] the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."* [Isaiah 61:3b](#)

Julianna Grace Ministry's founder, Lisa Rowell, also kept in close touch. She knew the right questions to ask and words to say. In time, she invited Natalie to begin blogging on the ministry's Facebook page, passing on her healing process to others. "I feel like I know Lisa, even though we've never met face to face," Natalie declared. "That's how much of an impact she's had on my life. The Lord is using her in so many amazing ways." In honor of Barrett's first birthday, the Boggs started a GoFundMe page for Julianna Grace Ministry, raising over \$1,000.

## **Praise Pierces the Darkness**

Exactly four months and 17 days after Barrett's death, Walker arrived home battling tears. He told Natalie, "I just realized that today Barrett has been gone as long as he was here."

Her reply was completely unexpected: "Walker, I just took a pregnancy test, and it was positive."

They named their fourth child Judah Pierce Boggs—'Judah' because of Leah's words during her fourth pregnancy in [Genesis 29:35b](#)—"Now I will praise the LORD"—and 'Pierce' because, while he could never replace Barrett, God used him to pierce the darkness of their grief. Natalie reflects daily on how aptly he was named. "He's just such a little praise," she laughed. "He's so full of joy. And he did pierce the darkness: He showed me that sorrow and joy can live together. It seems like such a paradox, but that's what Jesus went through. One of the devotionals which helped me was on the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus had so much sorrow in that moment, but after He arose from the dead, so much joy, because through His sacrifice all of us could have resurrection. Just because you have sorrow doesn't mean you can't have joy in your life. Just because you're broken doesn't mean you can't be whole again. Someday, our family will be whole again through Christ Jesus."


*"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."* [Revelation 21:4](#)



*Baby Judah Boggs at 9 months old. Judah, born after the death of his brother Barrett, is known as a "rainbow baby."*

Natalie and Lisa finally met in September 2020, at a worship service at Natalie's church. Natalie is beginning a ministry of her own called "Barrett's Bears Ministry," which comforts families who have lost babies to miscarriage, stillbirth, and infant loss. "My prayer is that this bear, personalized in the baby's memory, will serve as a constant reminder of Christ's love for them, as well as the hope we have in heaven," Natalie explained.



  
BARRETT'S bears

BARRETT'S BEARS AIM IS TO PROVIDE COMFORT AND HOPE TO FAMILIES WHO HAVE LOST BABIES DUE TO MISCARRIAGE, STILLBIRTH, OR EARLY INFANT LOSS. OUR PRAYER IS THAT THIS BEAR, PERSONALIZED IN YOUR BABY'S MEMORY, WILL SERVE AS A CONSTANT REMINDER OF CHRIST'S LOVE FOR YOU, AS WELL AS THE HOPE WE HAVE OF HEAVEN.

WE PRAY THAT EACH TIME YOU HOLD YOUR BEAR, YOU ARE COMFORTED AND REMINDED OF HOW MUCH YOU AND YOUR BABY ARE LOVED BY JESUS.

WHETHER THE BEAR IS PLACED ON A SHELF, USED IN FAMILY PHOTOS, OR SIMPLY HELD TIGHT IN YOUR ARMS, OUR HOPE IS THAT YOU WILL FEEL CONNECTED TO YOUR BABY, AND REASSURED YOUR BABY WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN!

*Barrett's Bears Ministry*

CALVARY CHAPEL  
MAGAZINE

Since Barrett's death in 2018, his mother Natalie has started Barrett's Bears, a ministry for families that have lost babies. She prepares individualized bears for them because she received a similar bear after Barrett's death that has meant a great deal to their family.

<https://barrettsbearsministry.com/>



[Juliannagraceministry.weebly.com](http://Juliannagraceministry.weebly.com)

<https://www.calvarychapelmagazine.org/loss-of-a-child-part-5/>