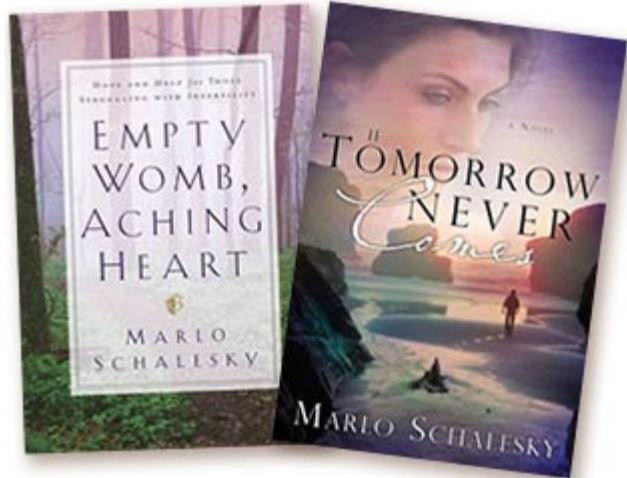


Surviving Mother's Day

by Marlo Schalesky

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(provided courtesy of www.MarloSchalesky.com)



I hate Mother's Day. There, I've admitted it. But before you think I'm strange, you should know what Mother's Day means to me. It means dreams unfulfilled, hopes dashed, heartache that no one seemed to understand. It means another painful reminder of infertility.

After all, how many times can I endure walking into church and seeing "Happy Mother's Day" plastered on the bulletin? How many times can I stare at my hands while the mothers are honored? How often can I smile politely when someone wishes me a Happy Mother's Day just because I'm a woman?

And yet, after a dozen empty Mother's Days, I've found a way to get through *that* day with hope, even with peace. I've found a way to face it. Here's what I've learned:

What to Remember on That Day:

- You are not alone! It may seem that every other woman in the world has the family of her dreams, but in truth, one out of six struggle with infertility. Over 6 million women of child-bearing age in the U.S. alone are facing problems conceiving.

- God cares about you, even when it doesn't seem like it. Psalm 34:18 (NIV) says, "The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Today, especially, that's you! On Mother's Day, those struggling with infertility have a special place in God's heart.
- You *can* lessen the awkwardness. But to do that, you can't just ignore the day, you have to confront it with some plans of your own. Read on . .

What to Do on That Day:

- Get Real! Unless you stayed holed up in your house all day (not recommended!), reminders of Mother's Day are going to come. Decide beforehand how to respond to innocent wishes of "Happy Mother's Day" and other reminders so you can quickly dismiss those things when they occur. However . . .
- Watch Out! There are certain situations you know will hurt. Does your church make a big deal out of Mother's Day? Will that only heap on the pain? Don't go! And don't feel guilty about it. But don't just curl up and spend the day thinking of how miserable Mother's Day is. Make the time special. Here's how . . .
- Enjoy! Do something fun that you love, something special that you usually don't have time for. Plan it in advance so you can look forward to it.
- Worship! Put on some worship music and decide to spend time praising God, despite it all.
- Escape! Read a novel for fun. Pick an author who transports you.

- Set Goals! Take time to write down five things you'd like to do in the coming year – things that have nothing to do with children. Would you like to take a class? A trip? Learn a new hobby? Figure out how you could do it and what steps you need to take to make your goals a reality.

Most of all, don't hide from Mother's Day. Plan for it. It really can be a day of healing instead of hurt. Even if, like me, you hate it.

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