



Abundant Living Ministries

Encouraging Christian Living since 1978

April 2018

Before I forget it, let me encourage you to visit our updated website. We have staff photos, some BLOG articles, and recent newsletters awaiting you. Check it out!

It's simple... just go on the internet and type in *AbundantLivingMinistries.org* and there you are! Well, hopefully you'll be there! I say "hopefully" because it seems that quite often my computer just doesn't do what I want it to do! Oh, how I admire the technicians who fool with these machines all day long! What patience they must have!

But let me brag on myself a little bit... to make the point of this letter. A few weeks ago I asked a friend for help with a computer-related problem. He (my friend) is actually very skilled with such stuff but wasn't getting it figured out. I asked a question and made a suggestion - a suggestion so basic that only a clueless layperson like myself would think of it. Guess what? My idea resolved it. (This was rare - my theories don't work very often with computers! 😊)

This is something I think of frequently; the importance of NOT FORGETTING THE BASICS! Sometimes we expect a problem to be so complicated that we overlook the *simple* solution! I remember when I was selling *Lance*-brand snack foods 40 years ago. My vending machines, placed in factories and gas stations would sometimes malfunction. Not once did I need to call a technician to repair them. Why? Because I took to heart what my branch manager had emphasized. "John," he explained, "never forget the basics. Yes, coins will sometimes stick in the chute and the coin return might jam and the product won't always fall properly but, listen to me. Just open the machine and clean the internal parts thoroughly. Dirt, grime, dust and sticky stuff is the culprit almost every time."

He was right. I carried my cleaning supplies and had every machine operational in no time. Which brings me back to the point I'm trying to make... almost every time, we can resolve problems by sticking to basics.

When Jesus was asked, "Which is the greatest of the commandments?" He responded so simply, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself." *Back to Basics!*

The six of us, who work together here at ALM, are privileged to meet every week with individuals facing a variety of challenges and problems. Although those challenges come in many different forms, they can, in most cases, be addressed by "getting back to the basics!" The Bible gives us numerous powerful basics. Here are a few:

In humility consider others better than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3)

Be kind and compassionate to one another... and forgive one another. (Ephesians 4:32)

Don't grumble against each other. (James 5:9)

Serve one another in love. (Galatians 5:13)

So let's not forget the basics!


John Charles (for Sharon and the rest at ALM)





One Day at a Time

Question: I find myself dreading each day. It's a chore just to drag myself out of bed in the morning and then I find little pleasure in the day's tasks. Can you help me to get out of this daily "pit of despair?"


Response: Psalm 118: 24 says, *This is the day which the Lord has made: we will rejoice and be glad in it.* Each new morning is a gift from God and He wants us to experience "life more abundantly" (John 10:10) every day. Try some of the following suggestions to put more joy back in your daily routines.


 **In the evening,** plan out the tasks you want to accomplish the next day. Don't attempt more than you can reasonably complete. Remember... one goal met is better than none! As you finish a job the following day, enjoy crossing it off your list and thank the Lord for helping you be successful!

 **As you fall asleep,** listen to quiet, peaceful praise music. Don't fall asleep watching the late-night news or reading scary novels. Don't dwell on the disappointments of the day, but review the blessings you experienced and take time to thank the Lord for each one. An attitude of gratitude is one of the most powerful antidotes to discouragement.

 **Our thoughts** when we first awaken will often set the tone for the entire day. As you open your eyes, envision yourself looking first into the face of Jesus. Commit your day to Him. Ask Him to help you guard your words, actions and thoughts! Tell Him that you love Him and that you want to go wherever He leads you that day. Sometimes we seem to just expect the Lord to follow us through our day, tagging along with OUR plans, ready to bail us out of trouble when we yell

for help. How much better to accompany Him wherever HE wants to go. When we walk through our day with Him, we can be relieved of worry and actually look forward to an exciting adventure!

 **Utilize Scripture** throughout the day. Carry Scripture cards with you and read them aloud frequently. Remember that Jesus said we will not exist on bread alone but *by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God* (Matthew 4:4). Bible verses are much more than just nice-sounding words... they are as necessary for spiritual vitality as good food is for physical health. Quoting God's Word is an effective way to combat depression, anxiety and apathy and replace these with joy, courage and purpose.

 **Include one or two** quiet breaks in your day. Enjoy a cup of coffee or sip some lemonade. Sit on the porch and listen to the birds singing. Plunk in your favorite chair and read an uplifting article. Snuggle close to your spouse on the sofa and discuss something positive. Pull your child or grandchild onto your lap and read them a story. The Lord told us to *Be still and know that I am God* (Psalm 46:10). These short, reflective breaks can be powerful reenergizers throughout the day.

The psalmist said, *"Every day will I bless Thee; and I will praise Thy name for ever and ever* (Psalm 145:2). Even if yesterday was a struggle, today can be better and so can tomorrow. Commit your day to the Lord each morning and keep in close communication with Him throughout the day. Oh the places you will go and the joy you will know as you follow His agenda, not your own!

- Sharon Charles

Open Arms Childbirth Class

Five consecutive Thursdays at 7:00pm
July 5– August 2, 2018

Taught by an experienced childbirth educator, this class covers the same information offered in a hospital course, but includes a distinctively-Christian perspective. You will meet and connect with other expectant couples and gain many practical helps as you prepare for a great labor and delivery. There is no cost for this course. Please register by contacting the ALM office (see contact information below).

Lay Christian Counselor Training

**Six Monday evenings
October 1-November 5, 2018
7:00 - 9:00 PM
\$120 per person or \$150 per couple
(textbooks included)**

Designed for those who wish to be more-effective people helpers within the Christian community. Please register no later than SEPTEMBER 10th by calling the ALM office at 717-626-9575.



Contact Information

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