



Abundant Living Ministries

Encouraging Christian Living since 1978

August 2019

The conversation with my friend was serious and sincere... the way I like it. "John," he asked quite directly, "When YOU face difficult times and dark days... what do you fall back on? How do you face those situations?"

My first response was to explain that I consider myself "abnormally" blessed. I am blessed to be in a family where, as a child, I saw so many events (healings, provisions) that I could not explain other than "God did it!" I came to understand, to believe, to KNOW in my "heart of hearts" that God IS. In fact, as my friend and I shared with each other, I explained my "life view" that is the bedrock... the foundation... the "go to" place when facing difficult situations. It's actually a pretty simple (but profound) life view.

1. GOD IS! Yes, God is!

2. GOD IS GOOD AND GOD IS LOVE! That means that God loves ME... every day and **all day long**. He sees me when I get up, lie down, go out, come in. He knows my thoughts even before I think them. He knows all about me... even the number of hairs on my head. In the darkest of days, God loves ME! At every moment!

3. GOD IS NOT A KILL-JOY OR SPOIL-SPORT! HIS INSTRUCTIONS ARE NOT BURDENSOME! He doesn't look for ways to make life miserable for John Charles. I don't think of God as the "law maker," but rather as "**my LIFE giver.**" Every single instruction He gives me (and He has given me many) is for my benefit... both here on earth and in preparation for heaven. HIS WAYS are for my **eternal benefit!**

4. THEREFORE, I CAN WHOLEHEARTEDLY ENTRUST MYSELF INTO HIS CARE AND WALK IN HIS WAYS! I am absolutely in the best hands as I relax in his care!

As my friend and I talked, I commented further on some practical strategies I use during "dark times." I sometimes sit at the computer, elbows propped on the desk, chin in my hands... and listen to old hymns. Sometimes it seems I have never heard the lyrics before as ageless truths are sung simply and clearly. Tears flow... as I sit in gratitude for all that God has done for me and my family.

I find that speaking scripture **OUT LOUD** helps. Perhaps I am one of those auditory learners... but it seems to register better within me when I hear my own voice proclaim the TRUTH of God's word.

Having Godly people around me sure helps during a dark day. They speak faith, encouragement, hope, optimism. What a blessing they are! I need to avoid giving ear to the pessimists.

And, I remember one of our favorite sayings in counseling: "The last chapter's not written yet!" God is still at work! There's still more to come! After the night, comes the sunrise and a bright tomorrow!

YES, Thank YOU, Lord, for bright mornings!

John (for Sharon and the rest at ALM)





Question:

I become easily irritated in conversations, often saying hurtful things. Several friendships have been ruined by my angry words. Now, my children are displaying this same behavior. Any suggestions?

Response: All of us can improve the way we talk, resulting in stronger friendships. Perhaps the following tips can help our communication:

- **Practice keeping your voice at a moderate, pleasant volume.** Loud, harsh tones tend to shut down good interaction, so decide to not shout, argue or get carried away with hyper-excited chatter. *A gentle answer turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up anger (Proverbs 15:1 NIV).*
- **Ask the Lord to help you remain good-natured, even in irritating moments.** Quickly forgive when others speak offensively. This choice can be made right at the moment you feel "attacked." Shoot a quick prayer to the Lord, for help! *When someone wrongs you, it is a great virtue to ignore it (Proverbs 19:11 GNT).*

- **Refuse to spread gossip.** *Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down (Proverbs 26:20 NIV).*
- **Graciously accept criticism, even if it was given in an unkind, accusatory way.** *Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise (Proverbs 19:20 NIV).*
- **Use your "guests" talking manners with your own family members.** Speak to spouse and children courteously and calmly, as you would to guests. When polite speech becomes a regular habit at home, it will be easier to maintain with others. *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially those who belong to the family of believers (Galatians 6:10 NIV).*
- **Generously express thanks and affirmation... even for a rebuke.** *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen (Ephesians 4:29 NIV).*

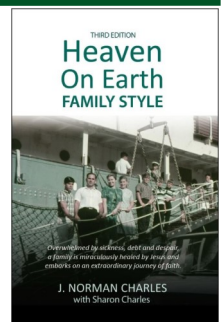
Written by Sharon Charles



Heaven on Earth Family Style

After 10 years out of print, this third edition has been recently released. Paperback and e-book versions can be purchased on Amazon or directly from our ALM office.

The life story of Norman and Betty Charles has been a great encouragement to many! Read how they encountered Jesus in a powerful way, regaining health and wholeness, and beginning an incredible adventure of faith!



Lay Christian Counselor Training

**6 Monday evenings:
Oct 7-Nov 11, 2019 7:00-9:00 PM
\$120 per person or \$150 per couple
(cost includes textbooks)**

For those who wish to be more effective people-helpers

Please register no later than September 20th by calling the ALM office or emailing Chris at info@AbundantLivingMinistries.org

Open Arms Childbirth Class

Five Consecutive Thursdays

October 3 - 31, 2019, 7:00 pm

Covering the important information offered in a hospital course, *Open Arms* adds a distinctively-Christian perspective. You will enjoy meeting other expectant couples as you gain practical help in preparing for a great labor and delivery. There is no cost for this course.

Register by contacting the ALM office.

Contact Information

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