



Abundant Living Ministries

Encouraging Christian Living since 1978

April 2020

A heartfelt *elbow bump* to all of you! It's amazing what changes take place in a month! I was texting this morning with a truck driver who, since March 20, was told to go home and stay there. His financial concern was evident, and he said emphatically that he "just needs to get out of the house... needs something to do!" Later today he is interviewing for a temp job at a local grocery store. And he's further frustrated because he thinks that healthy, able-bodied people ought to be permitted to keep working. I imagine we all have various levels of concern, hoping and praying for personal and family protection, asking the Lord to bring healing and relief to our community, county, state, nation, and world.

One thing seems clear. In times like this, we who are Christians... we who have Life, Light, and Hope within can demonstrate that we face life's challenges *differently*... because of Jesus.

Precisely at this time, let's recognize that MANY who don't know Christ are thinking about their own mortality. Now is an opportune time for Christians to speak about Jesus and salvation offered by Him. They need to be encouraged to place their trust in HIM, experiencing peace within, in the midst of troubled times. We parents and grandparents can be explaining the reason for the hope within us! Yes... God uses life's difficult moments to teach... to reveal Himself to OTHERS... to reveal Himself to US... and also to reveal our OWN SELVES to us.

In times of trouble, music becomes very meaningful to me... an expression from within, inviting my thoughts of gratitude, and trust in the Lord. On Sunday evening (March 29), Sharon and I enjoyed an evening of music... listening to *The Collingsworth Family* as they did "Sunday Night Worship Around the Piano." No sound tracks, no instruments other than the piano, just Dad, Mom, and four adult children standing around the piano singing in worship. I think you will be encouraged by their singing, so here is the LINK. Go on the internet and enter the address: [facebook.com/TheCollingsworthFamily/videos](https://www.facebook.com/TheCollingsworthFamily/videos). Once there, click on the video titled ***Sunday Night Worship Around the Piano***. If you don't particularly enjoy their style of music, then please just **scroll ahead to 1:11 (1 hour: 11 minutes)** where the wife sings a song which she wrote, within the last two weeks, in response to the COVID-19 situation. Keep watching through her reading Psalm 33. How encouraging!

What about Abundant Living's ministry?

- Respecting instructions from Pennsylvania's governor, we cancelled face-to-face sessions until further notice.
- We are using texting, phone, and email for communicating.
- We are in process of installing what's needed for us to provide "video counseling." More challenging than installing the equipment is us old geezers learning how to use the technology. Soon operational, we anticipate that we counselors will chat with clients from the comfort of our homes... able to see and hear counselees who will also be in the safety of their own house.
- Pregnancies won't wait, so we can't postpone Sharon's scheduled series of Prenatal Classes. We're recording Sharon's teachings. We then plan to present to the couples, over the internet, in "live" interactive format.

We will make it through this. And, because of CHRIST, we will make it through in joy and victory, providing a model of what it means to trust in the Lord... in the midst of troubled times.

As Dad would be saying... KLU - "Keep looking up!"

John (for Sharon and the rest at ALM)

SILVER LININGS

QUESTION: Our family is trying to survive being stuck at home together during this COVID-19 quarantine. It is difficult to not be afraid... as we think about the loss of income, the daily risk of contracting or spreading the virus, and the uncertainty about how long this situation will last. We could use some help and encouragement.

RESPONSE: The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly upended our daily lives. While there are obvious challenges... finances, schooling, health, relationships, use of time, isolation, etc... those very areas present believers with some amazing opportunities.

In any difficult situation, Christian families can give in to fear and discouragement. OR, we can trust God and look for His goodness in the midst of the circumstances. Particularly right now, our families have wonderful opportunities to implement daily faith-building times.

- ❖ Ask each family member to name benefits that have come to them, your family, your community, your country or the world through this unusual situation. Write them down. Maintain a running list, perhaps posting it on the refrigerator or other highly-visible spot. When praying before meals, or bedtime, include thanks for some of these blessings.

- ❖ Pray daily for state and national leaders who are carrying the responsibility of trying to make wise decisions for our country's citizens.
- ❖ If a child seems especially fearful, memorize a faith-building Scripture such as Isaiah 41:13: ***For I am the Lord your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, "Do not fear; I will help you."***
- ❖ When a new challenge arises, brainstorm together how it can be viewed in a positive light. Work together to come up with solutions to the problems this pandemic has brought to your family. Discuss ways the family can offer practical help to others who may be facing even greater hardship than you are. Choose a project aimed at helping others... even something as simple as phoning an elderly person or video-connecting with a neighbor family.

As we read in Romans 8:38, 39: ***I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Interestingly, it is in the tough times of life that we instinctively turn to God. When we talk to Him and read His Word, He encourages and strengthens us. His presence and the lessons He teaches us become priceless treasures that will outlast any pandemic. And as we support and encourage each other through this time, relationships will become even more precious. These are all silver linings for God's children.

Sharon
Charles



Lay Christian Counselor Training

For those who wish to be more effective people-helpers.

**6 Monday evenings:
Oct 5 - Nov 9, 2020 7:00-9:00 PM
\$120 per person or \$150 per couple
(cost includes textbooks)**

To register, call the ALM office or email Chris at info@AbundantLivingMinistries.org

Open Arms Childbirth Class

Five Consecutive Thursdays

July 9 - Aug 6, 2020 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

Address: 541 W. 28th Division Highway, Lititz, PA 17543
Website: www.AbundantLivingMinistries.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/alm4u

Phone: (717) 626-9575
Email: info@AbundantLivingMinistries.org