



# Abundant Living Ministries

*Encouraging Christian Living since 1978*

September 2021

## **“Your last several newsletters have announced a *Change of Address*. Has ALM relocated its ministry?”**

No, ALM’s ministry has not moved. But let me clarify about the change of address.

About six months ago, the 33-acre property (now named *Hopewell Forge Properties*) was sold to a retired Christian couple. They purchased with the simple desire of seeing the campus continue to be used for ministry purposes. These new owners graciously extended the invitation for ALM to remain right here... renting the same offices, with the same staff, same vision, same mission, and same services as when ALM was founded in September of 1978. (Happy Birthday! This month ALM celebrates its 43rd.)

HOWEVER - Although the counseling offices remain exactly where they have been for years, our *Administrative Office* has relocated, and our secretary now works remotely. With this administrative change, mail is now being received at Sharon’s and my personal home in Lititz. So, here’s what you want to remember:

**MINISTRY LOCATION** - remains at 541 W. 28th Division Hwy, Lititz... that’s along Rt 322, two miles west of Rt 501. The sign along the highway says, **Hopewell Forge Properties**. But on ground level of the “barn,” there is the sign by our Entrance, **Abundant Living Ministries**.

**MAILING ADDRESS** - 400 E. 4th Ave, Lititz, PA 17543

**As of this mailing, we kindly request that  
ALL future correspondence be sent to our NEW Mailing Address.  
I hate to ask you to do this but,  
please discard all remaining *Return Envelopes* you may have on hand.  
Going forward, please use only the NEW Mailing Address.**



Joe & Linn, John & Sharon, secretary Chris, Naomi & Lamarr  
For many years, we’ve enjoyed working together.

more photos on page 4

# ← From Reaction To Action →

## QUESTION:

A member of our extended family said some very hurtful things to me several years ago. Since then, I have found myself avoiding any family get-together where he might be present. I admit that I don't like him very much and would just rather not be around him. But lately I've been convicted that distancing myself from my "adversary" is perhaps not how Jesus would want me to respond. Any thoughts?

## RESPONSE:

Yes, I do have some thoughts on this which may be very helpful. More importantly, I trust that MY thoughts are in alignment with Christ's thoughts. He addresses your situation with clarity.

Most Christians agree that God holds each of us accountable for our *actions*. We know that we must shoulder responsibility for our own words and behavior. When standing before God, we cannot blame our choices on anyone else.

But what many believers are not so aware of, is the fact that we must also answer to God for our *RE-actions*!

Jesus repeatedly emphasized *REactions* in His teaching. Consider a few of His clear instructions:

**Love** your enemies. (Matthew 5:44)

**Do good** to those who hate you. (Luke 6:27)

**Pray** for those who persecute you. (Matthew 5:44)

**Bless** the one who curses you. (Luke 6:28)

**Return good** for evil. (Romans 12:21)

Choosing to **react** with kindness, patience, love when someone has mistreated us, goes against human nature. In such situations, everything within us calls for vengeance, justice and "settling the score." These are typical human reactions. That is why we absolutely need God's help to respond differently. ***SUPERnatural reactions require SUPERNatural help!***

Take these initiatives after you have suffered at the hands of someone else...

**Ask God to forgive you for *your own sin* in holding onto resentment.**

That's right... Jesus instructed His disciples to forgive, so failure to do so is a clear case of disobedience. Scripture tells us that if we know to do good, and don't do it, that is sin (James 4:17).

**Make a conscious choice to forgive that person.**

Forgiving someone does not whitewash or deny what they did. On the contrary, it is precisely when a wrong had been committed that forgiveness is required. Pray something like this... "Lord, I choose to forgive (insert the name of the offender). I do not own him/her. I recognize that ultimately they are responsible to You for their actions, not to me. One day they will have to stand before you and give account for their life. That is a sobering thought. Father, I am choosing today to let go of their offense(s). Would You bless that person today, please... would You work in his/her life as only You can do? Thank You."

**Don't allow yourself the "luxury" of mentally re-playing the hurt.** When that irritating person comes to mind, or a memory of their wrong-doing returns, immediately remind yourself of your decision to forgive and



pray again for the Lord to bless them. Then put your mind on something else... sing a praise chorus or hymn, quote a Scripture, focus on a task. Parking thoughts on hurts from the past will only resurrect painful emotions.

**When possible, bless that person with practical acts of kindness.**

There are certainly some situations which prevent reconciliation from taking place. For example, if a babysitter were to molest a child under their care, the parents of that child would need to forgive the offender. But it is not likely the Lord would want the parents to again invite that babysitter into their home.

However, the majority of offenses should not prevent your efforts towards reconciliation. The offender doesn't even need to be repentant, in order for you to choose kindness.

Actually, many people who say or do hurtful things are totally unaware of the pain they inflict on others. At some point, the Lord might want a Christian brother or sister to lovingly help that individual see areas that they need to work on improving. But often, simply reaching out in kindness to such difficult people is all the Lord



asks. A note of encouragement, a cheery text or phone call, a little gift, or offer to help them with some chore or errand... these are like good seeds planted in that individual's heart. The Lord can take those seeds and cause them, in time, to bear good fruit in their life.

Of course it would be so nice if the rude person recognized their wrong and apologized. But it is God's job to

convict of sin, not ours. Their lack of apology and even their not recognizing their offense does not need to prevent you (a child of GOD!) from extending the gift of forgiveness.

Jesus forgave those who crucified Him and they were not apologizing for their actions. They were not promising to "never do it again." Yes... Jesus understands our challenge and wants to help us react SUPER-naturally!

**Pray regularly for that difficult person.**

When we spend time praying for someone, it is hard to remain angry at them. We may disapprove of the way they continue to speak or act, but the more we talk to Jesus about them, the more His compassion begins to fill our heart.

It is good to remember Luke 6:35 & 36 which tells us that "the Most High... is kind to the ungrateful and wicked." So we should "be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

**"When we reflect on the countless times God has forgiven our sins and extended loving kindness to us, how can we refuse to forgive and reach out to those who have wronged us?"**

When we reflect on the countless times God has forgiven our sins and extended lovingkindness to us, how can we refuse to forgive and reach out to those who have wronged us?

**Believe for better days ahead.**

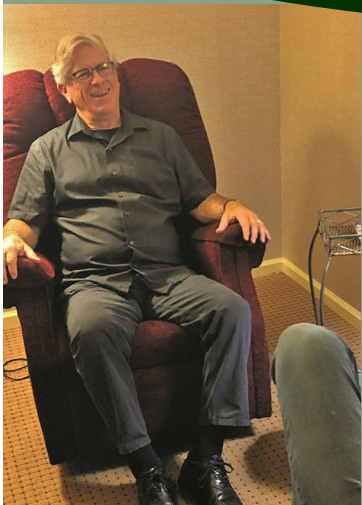
*Hope* always believes the best about someone. And *faith* believes what is not yet visible. God is pleased when we exercise faith and hope... even with tough individuals... yes, even with "that miserable person" from your own immediate or extended family.

Remember that the most difficult people you encounter are made in God's image. They are loved by Him! Look at them through HIS eyes and expect HIM to work. **RE-act with ACTIONS** that demonstrate God's view of that challenging individual. You may be surprised, even amazed at the miracle He brings about!



Written by  
Sharon Charles

*Counseling is offered with no required payment, so finances are never a reason for non-service. But that is only possible because of those who, like you, affirm and support its ministry, through prayer and contributions. Will you "help to help..." will you pray and contribute, enabling ALM to assist those who are seeking scriptural guidance and encouragement? THANK YOU SO MUCH!*



*John enjoys making new friends through*



*Sharon, getting a report on progress*



*John teaches at ALM's annual Lay Counseling classes. Sharon is in her 37th year of teaching expectant couples through the Open Arms Childbirth classes.*



## Upcoming Events at ALM

### Open Arms Childbirth Class

**Four Consecutive Thursdays  
October 7-28, 2021**

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

**Mailing Address:** 400 E 4th Avenue, Lititz, PA 17543  
**Physical Location:** 541 W 28th Division Hwy, Lititz, PA 17543  
**Website:** [www.AbundantLivingMinistries.org](http://www.AbundantLivingMinistries.org)  
**Email:** [info@AbundantLivingMinistries.org](mailto:info@AbundantLivingMinistries.org)  
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