

Reflections with Sharon

We need to slow down

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

I am naturally task-oriented and have no problem spending time alone to get my work done. A productive day for me is a day well spent. Maybe that's why one of my least favourite places to visit is the hair salon: You wait a whole hour until your turn comes (even though you had called ahead to make an appointment!), another hour to have your hair straightened, and a third hour for the shampooing. Then as if to really test your patience, they give the hair a deep conditioning treatment, don a plastic cap on your head and set you aside to wait another tedious hour as you listen to the ceaseless babble of other women trying to outdo each other with their tales of other people's business – people whom most of the time they barely even know. And all the while your tortured brain is thinking of the million things you could be doing, hoping that it won't be daybreak before your hair is rinsed, rolled, dried and styled!

Okay, I exaggerated a little; but it's very hard for me to be confined to a situation where I can't control how my time is spent. In our fast-paced world, however, even we task-oriented folk have to learn to slow down. When our carefully laid out plans are unexpectedly interrupted, we have to remember that people come first. We can't go through life shrugging people off as if they were nothing more than a bother. Our lives may be filled with activity that keeps us continually busy as we hurry from one assignment to the next, but until we slow down and take time to build meaningful relationships, we are missing what matters most in life: People!!

Constant activity can distort our perspective so that we're unable to decipher what is truly important. But life has a way of giving us a reality check; and sometimes it takes sickness or some other unplanned circumstance to steal its way into our lives and put us out of commission, at least for a while, before we discover how self-deceived we've been all along: Those million little things we often think need us to survive don't! With or without us, the show will go on!

When we have no time to pay attention to our children; no time to greet the neighbour over the fence; no time to share a cup of coffee with a friend; no time to lend a hand to someone in need; no time to sit down to a meal with our family; no time to pray; no time to really listen to a hurting soul; no time to help our kids with their home work; no time to give an encouraging word; no time to enjoy a good laugh; no time to get a decent night's sleep; no time to chill out by the hair salon... then we know we really need to slow down.