

## *Reflections with Sharon*

### **It's all about perspective!**

*Read Philippians 4:4-9*

Perspective! Perspective! Perspective! How often must I remind myself that it's all about perspective! Perception can be as far from reality as night is from day, but unless we face the situation with an open mind, we may never see the clear truth of whatever is before us. I'm generally a pretty optimistic person, but I recall going through a certain period a few years ago where, although I maintained a positive attitude outwardly when faced with great odds, inwardly I somehow always caught myself attaching a negative label to every seemingly unfavourable situation.

Thankfully, I knew enough to know that I held the key to my thought process - if I look for the bad, that's what I would find; and if I look for the good, I would find it every time - and was able to regain my old sense of optimism. That's not to say that I never have one of those days when everything that could go wrong does, but at least I know better than to go looking for the negative when the positive is also staring me right in the face. Why not just expect the best instead of moping around thinking the worst? We usually find what we expect to find, anyway.

I believe having a positive outlook on life is as infectious as a negative attitude can be contagious. Those we hang around with draw strength from our positivity and feel motivated and inspired as they face their own battles. No one likes the company of people who are cynical always anticipating the worst. The fact that we see something as negative doesn't mean that it is. We may see failure on the dawn of our biggest success; we may see doom on the brink of a significant victory; we may see darkness even as the light prepares to appear; we may see confusion but behind the scenes peace is at work; we may see futility where God sees results; we may see death while salvation approaches around the corner; we may see the end, little realising that things have only just begun – It's all about perception!

I have discovered that when I have the right mental attitude, it affects everything about me, from my health to my relationships – I have more energy and the will to tackle even what I consider to be challenging tasks, and because my optimism tells on me, those around me naturally find they enjoy my presence. Considering the world of difference one's outlook on life can make, is it any wonder that God outlines to us how to direct our thoughts! He says, "...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things." If we do that, we couldn't help but have the right perspective!