

Reflections with Sharon

Words we could bank on

Read Hebrews 13:1-8

During our younger years, our list of absolutes seems to stretch on endlessly. We feel we know exactly how something should or should not be done. We do not think twice about what we consider to be acceptable behaviour and what we consider to be inappropriate. We love strongly and hate deeply. We have a very strong sense of justice and are very quick to form conclusions about anyone who does not fit into our particular mould. We believe we know right from wrong, good from bad, yes from no, black from white and we are not at all bashful about punctuating our sentences with adverbs like never and always. After-all, if anyone knows the answers to life's questions, we do!

As the years roll on into adulthood and life continues to unfold, however, our perspective on life changes and a spirit of tolerance replaces our judgmental nature, as glaring inconsistencies in the lives of others compounded by the reality of our own fallibility leave us wondering how many of the answers to life's questions we really do have. Little by little, many of our tenacious beliefs begin to give way to limp rationalizations; the obstinacy of childhood is replaced by adult diplomacy and the thread of caution is woven through just about every statement that we make. Scarcely do we see life in black and white anymore – there's so much gray. Rather than a very emphatic "yes" or "no," "good" or "bad," "right" or "wrong," we feel safer using words like "possibly," "maybe," "probably." Words like "impossible," "absolutely," and "always" all but vanish from our vocabulary; and we seem almost scared to use that formidable word "never."

But is there not a place for absolutes in today's highly tolerant society? Are the "always" and "nevers" ever necessary?

From one who has had to put her foot in her mouth more than a few times, I find that I need to be able to rely on some "nevers" and on some "always." I need to know that in spite of the zillion uncertainties that life could fling at me; some things are absolutely, positively, irrevocably sure.

"*Never* will I leave you; *never* will I forsake you... Surely I am with you *always* to the very end of the age." These are the words of Jesus to all who dare to place their faith in Him. They are words of life, words of hope, words of assurance. These are words we could bank on.