

# *Reflections with Sharon*

## **Happiness is**

### *Read Psalm 1*

Everybody wants to be happy, yet to so many it seems that the harder they pursue happiness, the more elusive it becomes. This may be because so few of us really understand what it means to be truly happy. I have discovered that happiness is not something you chase after; it is not living a trouble-free life; it is not always having things go your way; it is not indulging in every conceivable kind of pleasure; it is not having everyone think how great you are; it is not trying to control everyone and everything around you; it is not having all your needs met; it is not never having to deal with difficult people; it's not living life free of stress; it is not having extra money and material possessions; it's not stepping on people and using them for your own purposes; it's not even having all your dreams and wishes come true.

Happiness is living life in the now. It is enjoying the glory of a sunrise, the beauty of a sunset, the smile of a friend, the laughter of a child, the sound of the ocean, the scent of a flower, the chirping of birds; the softness of rain; the touch of a hand; the warm, gentle embrace of a friend. Happiness is contentment. It is accepting yourself even though you know you have not yet arrived. It is being able to look at yourself and not see only your shortcomings and imperfections. Happiness is having nothing to prove; it's being open and honest with ourselves and others. Happiness is knowing you are loved and special and valued and unique even on those days when you don't necessarily feel as if you are. Happiness is having a right heart.

Happiness is selflessness. It's loving others; it's thinking of others; it's assisting those in need; it's putting another's welfare above your own; it's helping somebody else achieve his goals; it's making another's dreams come true. Happiness is sharing and caring and learning and growing. It's belonging; it's taking time to build meaningful friendships. It's appreciating all the different people in your life. Happiness is making each day a celebration. It's learning to smile even when things aren't going your way. It's hanging in there and not giving up when you most want to run. It is not getting all bent out of shape when you have to deal with troublesome situations or impossible people. It is being faithful.

Happiness is being what God wants you to be; it's having a life of meaning and purpose; it's doing things God's way. It is staying focused even when you do not have all the answers, and trusting God when you do not understand. Happiness is knowing Jesus.