‘Our attitudes shape who we are.’

‘You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever’ Psalm 16:11.

1. Several years ago, Tim suffered a serious stroke that left him with mental fatigue and poor balance. He told me that when walking, he kept close to the passage wall and looked down. When I asked why he stayed near the wall, he said he was afraid of falling. When I asked why he looked down, he said he was trying to work out where he might land if he fell! I suggested he use a walking stick, but he wasn’t interested. We both had a good laugh about it.

2. Another friend has been very unwell, yet he spoke with joy and gratitude about having a support walker that enabled him to move freely around his home. He was a happy man.

These two stories show how our attitudes shape us.
Recently, a neighbour kindly offered to help with our property, noting that I was an elderly gentleman. I appreciated his offer, though the description amused me. It is true that I’m an elderly gentleman, but growing older does not have to define me.

Prov 23: 7 ‘As a person thinks so is he or she’.

A positive attitude does not require a perfect life. As we grow older, we face additional challenges, including:

a. Health issues
b. Live with regrets.
c. Not the centre of attention (if we once were).
d. Have too much time on our hands which may cause us to worry too much.

We do not have to thank God for our problems, but we can be grateful for the good things we enjoy—creation, our needs being met, friendship, and much more.

How can we grow in faith and have more of a positive outlook in life even when we don’t feel like it:

a. In Acts 3:1–8, when Peter and John entered the temple they brought healing to a cripple man crying out for help. This caused a great stir in Jerusalem which upset the religious educated leaders of the day. Inn Acts 4:13ff, the religious leaders opposed them, imprisoned them overnight, and questioned them the next day. The leaders recognised Peter and John as unschooled, ordinary men, but also noted that they ‘had been with Jesus’. Time with Jesus had transformed them. Once timid and fearful, they became courageous and faith-filled after Jesus’ resurrection and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Getting to know Jesus as your friend who loves you dearly can also make that same difference in your life.
b. Galatians 6:2 tells us to ‘share each other’s burdens’. Over the years, I have shared my burdens with trusted friends, while others have shared theirs with me. A burden shared is a burden halved.
c. Be outward looking. ‘Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but *take an interest in others*, too’ Phil 2:3,4.

Conclusion
We live in a troubled world, and our life is not perfect but ‘in acceptance of our challenges’ lies peace’.
‘You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever’.

‘Your outlook is what shapes you’.