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**I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed, and I will declare your greatness. They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness, and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.**

—Psalm 145 NRSV

# Walking with God

I was taught stewardship principles very early on in my life. As a young child, each of us siblings were given three nickels for a weekly allowance—one for saving, one for spending and one for offering (“the Lord’s work”).

Over the years the amount of the coins increased, but the percentages remained the same. When one has been taught to give 33% of their income back to God, it’s something that sticks with you all through life!

I have not always met those high standards in my young adult and family years, but those childhood lessons instilled in me the importance of giving a portion of my earnings. This has been difficult to do when not on a fixed income, but the desire is there and so my spouse and I give as we are able.

My upbringing also taught me that *giving* is not always monetary. My parents gave of themselves in many other ways, mostly in the church, but also in the community. Much of their commitment in the church was to the larger church and missions. So I have a desire to volunteer and give of my time and talents as well. I honestly believe that the projects into which I put my energy are my ways of following Jesus and being the disciple that Jesus calls me to be. Setting priorities ends up being a constant challenge.

Putting my family first much of the time takes up many hours of my day, but I believe that’s my calling as a parent—to take care of the precious gifts God has given me. Then at times I am pulled away from them to follow other callings—teaching music, school meetings, worship planning, meals, synod commitments, taking care of our home...

It is important for our children to see their parents involved in church and community life and caring for our home environment. Stewardship means that we are called to take care of all that God has given us.

My prayer is that as I give of my time and energy in each area of my life, God would fill me with a sense of fulfillment and confidence that I am following the path God chose for me. I need God’s discernment so that others, particularly those in my family, are not hurt by my busyness and resulting frustrations. I pray that my works and actions can be used to build them up and that I may be a vessel through which God’s love and healing may touch others.

*Wash me, Lord, with your cleansing baptismal waters and give me the strength and inner peace and desire to follow your guiding despite the cost.*

I am God’s precious child, as I am often reminded by my own children when they make a cross on my forehead in the way out the door or at bedtime. God will always walk with me.

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*Gail Berg, her husband Phil, and four kids live on an acreage near Eckville, Alberta. Raising her family (the oldest is attending LCBI), teaching Music for Young Children, and being involved in the worship planning and music leading in her rural congregation are important ways in which Gail gives of her God-given time and talents.*