

Gifts of Service from Christin Fernandez 12/2/07

I hate to get up in front of people but I'll do it if I feel very passionate about what I'm speaking on. Our topic is stewardship which, to me, is "wise use of resources for the glory of God". The resource that this series of talks is about is our time and "talents", that is, skills and abilities. My skills and abilities are very, very ordinary but my relationship with God is extraordinary because He has chosen me and I chose Him back and so we have a long history together resulting in a lot of stories I could tell. My thought when agreeing to speak was that I might get up and just "take requests from the audience" of some of the stories that I have shared with some of you.

Instead, I want to talk about how God works with us: God always acts first: first, He demonstrates what we are to be, He teaches us by sending Jesus and giving us a textbook, the Bible. God then allows us to "try it" so that we learn by doing. Next, God, the perfect parent, rewards our good choices and leaves us to the natural consequences of our poor choices. Whether we're aware of it or not, God is teaching us about Himself and about ourselves from infancy until we join Him in heaven. Just as God sent Jesus to teach us about the nature of God and how to treat each other, God is using us to teach each other. Our job is only to believe and obey. Beyond that, we "do what we can, where we are, with what we have".

One day I went to a repair shop and while the shop owner was evaluating my job, I got to speak to a young woman who was part of the shop. On her left wrist was an ACE bandage and I asked her about it. She told me that she hurt it and didn't know if it was broken but that she couldn't afford to have it x-rayed or treated. I told her I did something like that, too, and after letting it go for too long, I had it x-rayed and was told that it was not broken but just sprained. After I left the shop, I remembered that when I injured my wrist, I was given a long wrist support that fits on the hand and has velcro straps almost up to the elbow for full support while healing. I raced home with the thought "I know what to do!" and I raced back to the shop with the wrist support I got from home. I asked where the lady was and she came out. I told her, take that (the ACE bandage) off. I showed her how to put the support on while doing it. She said "thank you" and seemed very appreciative. As I held her arm, I told her that whether she got an x-ray or not, to keep it on for six weeks. I smiled inside and said goodbye and left. As I drove away, I felt so wonderful! The phrase I couldn't get out of my head was "God is using me right now!" I was so excited and uplifted! This is what stewardship is. I let God use me and I was thrilled that God chose to use me. It didn't cost me anything but a little time. The resource I used was the love and compassion that I learned from everyone who taught me since I was so little. If you have never felt like this before, I hope you will. God allows us to be His partner! The great and powerful God partners with little us!

Our job is simply this: put yourself at God's disposal. Learn to be aware of others' needs, take care of yourself, keep balance in all areas, and let God lead you to do what He wants done and allow Him to provide for you to be able to do it.

For me, stewardship, using the gifts of time and talents, began so early. All I ever needed to know, I learned in pre-school Sunday School. It's so funny...where I started then is still exactly where I am today:

Two little eyes to look to God,
Two little ears to hear His Word,
Two little feet to walk His way,
Hands to serve Him all my days.

Christin Fernandez
Child of God