

Women Making Deposits and Withdrawals

By [Chris Adams/www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com)

Many years ago my husband Tom and I met a pastor that served a growing church north of us. He was nearing retirement age and was a great man of wisdom. He told Tom that leading the “flock” was kind of like collecting coins in your pocket. And that every time you did something good; like visit someone in the hospital; or preach a great message; send notes of encouragement; share in a celebration or a funeral—that you were collecting coins in your pocket. But then when you did something “not so good” like; miss someone’s greeting in the hallway; lose your temper in a meeting or let a less than complimentary word come out of your mouth; you spent the change in your pocket. The secret to success he told Tom was to make sure you always had “change in your pocket.”

I thought he was a genius. And we’ve served our church (our one and only church) from the month after Tom graduated from seminary to today (23 plus years later) keeping this wise pastors’ advice in our minds (and the change in our pockets).

As we’ve spent the past few months dealing with my very serious health issue (something I NEVER imagined I would be dealing with) I’ve thought often about this law of deposits and withdrawals. When Tom was so good to me in the hospital (staying right with me from Monday-Saturday when he begged me to put a smile on my face so the doctors would let me go home) I realized that I didn’t have that man by my side because we’d just met one another a few years ago. The years of relationship we’ve built with one another is what we pulled from during those days. It’s what we’ve pulled from these past few years! And it’s what we pulled from on Monday when we were hearing how difficult chemo is going to be. Because we’ve worked hard to make some great deposits in our marriage relationship we have a vast storehouse of riches from which we can make withdrawals.

The same is true for my relationship with my children. A mother’s heart cannot help but break over the burden her own health causes for her children. Never in a million years would I want my children to have to deal with a sick Mama. In fact, most of my own tears have been over this aspect of my cancer—not how it’s affecting me but how it’s affecting Tom, Mikel, Kaleigh and TJ (Austin, Misty and my parents and sisters too). But where my two daughters and son are concerned, I’ve got “change in my pocket.”

For years our children watched Tom and me deal with other people’s crises. They’ve seen us pray and love and serve and cry and laugh and...they have watched the reality of living and dying in this sin-stained world bump up close and personal to us as we’ve ministered to our “faith family.” We’ve talked about our confusion over why babies, and young mothers, and daddies, and others die. We’ve admitted our limited knowledge in the face of suffering. And we’ve assured them that God never abdicates his throne to another. No matter what comes our way, we honestly believe that God remains sovereign and if suffering is a result then we explain to them that we nailed our own will to the cross when we chose to follow Him.

Today they know that if I survive this (and we all hope and pray that I do) God has given us all a beautiful gift of family and love and life and support and encouragement and more than that PURPOSE for being here!

I've also made investments into my physical body. All my adult life I've exercised (it's a leftover from being on the track team in high school). Many mornings I got out of bed at 4:45AM to go swim or participate in "boot camp" at the Y. When my children were small we were ALL on swim teams. The week before surgery in June my current exercise routine included riding my bicycle at least 30 miles and jogging 15 (over the course of a week). I've eaten fairly well all my life—not the greatest but not the worst, and for 7 weeks prior to surgery I really got after it and increased my fruits and vegetables decreasing my sugar and coffee and other things that are not good for our bodies. It's true, it still makes me kind of mad that I've done all this and still gotten cancer, but the way I choose to look at it today is that during chemo I'm going to have to make a whole lot of withdrawals...and praise GOD I have made plenty of deposits so I have plenty to withdraw from. I believe that my rapid recovery from surgery is attributed to these deposits and PRAYER!!

And that's my final account. I am praying, my family is praying, my church family is praying, countless people across the nation and world are all praying for my healing! What a fantastic account this is!! I have an endless supply of prayers from the saints all being piled up in an account with my name on it. I believe that is why I'm doing well today—why I'll be doing well tomorrow and why the day I turn 84 I will be able to rejoice in what the LORD has done.

We make deposits and withdrawals every day. Deposit well and when it comes time to withdraw you will have plenty there. I am rich in the richest way and am looking forward to not only the withdrawals that will come over the next year...but also the deposits that will continue to be made.

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