



# Wisdom in Watercolor

## The *Being/Doing* Balance

(Encouragement for the Balancing Act of Women's Ministry)

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She was in desperate need of encouragement as she drove me to the airport that morning. "Debbie, do you have some words of encouragement for me?" she said with a deep sigh.

All the details of the women's ministry dinner the evening before had gone off without a hitch. After months of planning, hundreds of women had laughed and visited over a delicious dinner. They had been an attentive and appreciative audience. But despite her joy and enthusiasm over the success of the night before, she sat in the driver's seat a weary women's ministry leader.

You may be feeling the same way.

Perhaps you are in the driver's seat as head of an entire ministry or chairman of a sub-committee. You do things for others constantly. But, deep down, you feel weary. I have two bits of good news for you today: first, you are not alone and, second, there is hope.

When I heard her question, a word and an image popped into my mind. The word was *balance*. The image was a woman acrobat walking on the middle of a high wire, long balancing pole in hand (like something you'd see in a circus). I hope you find encouragement as I explain the imagery here. . .

### Doing and Being

Like the two ends of the balancing pole, two extremes have to be kept in balance in a woman's life in order for her to survive and thrive as a leader who points women to Christ: *doing* and *being*.

**DOING**-----**BEING**



If either of these get out of balance- i.e., has more “weight” in a life than the other- it can cause a tumble off the high wire.

We can go to the internet or visit a local Christian bookstore to find countless resources for the *doing* of women’s ministry--- DVD based Bible studies, fellowship themes, retreats in a box, clever titles for our ministries, advice columns on working out details of our next event, etc. What a wonderfully rich, creative time of *doing* ministry we’re living in today! We are so blessed!

Problem is, *doing* is the easy part of women’s ministry. These are the external activities that can easily consume our thoughts, drive our schedules, and overtake our lives. When this happens, the *doing* end of the balance pole gets overweight and the next thing you know you’re flailing around in a safety net (or, worse yet, spitting out a mouthful of dirt as you’re waiting for an ambulance to arrive).

Here’s the hard part for women’s ministry leaders: we can’t neglect our *being* side.

*Being* is more difficult. You can’t find a book series or kit to address this side of ministry. That’s because it’s internal- it’s who we are deep down in our souls. It’s what’s happening inside our hearts, originating from our precious personal, private relationship with the Lord. Out of this relationship flow the attitudes of our hearts that shape our words and actions as we go about the *doing* of ministry.

As you think of these two elements- *doing* and *being* -as the opposite ends of the balancing pole held by the woman on the tight rope, the importance of both become clear.

If the *being* part is missing, we can lose our balance and fall off toward the *doing* side. If the *doing* part is missing, we can lose our balance and fall off toward the *being* side.

How can we know the *being* side is neglected?

- we plow over people
- we toss grenades of harsh words or demanding attitudes
- we lose our enthusiasm for ministry

This imbalance can hurt and offend those around us, undermining and negating any activities we’re *doing*. (No leader can please everyone, but words like, “I’m not participating if *she’s* in charge,” indicate this is may be happening.)

How can we know the *doing* side is neglected?

- nothing gets done



- no intentional activities scheduled to encourage women to get together and grow in community. That's where we learn to live out our faith in Christ by exercising love, acceptance, and grace to those around us.

Scheduling and programming activities for your women is easily solved by all the readily available resources at our fingertips today. *WisdomInWatercolor* and many other ministries provide these kinds of resources free of charge when you schedule an event. But *doing* is not the big issue here.

## Keeping It In Balance

Since the *being* side is where soul weariness often originates, here are some wise steps that may help you address this critical element in your ministry to women. . .

### GET AWAY

Periodically plan a time of personal retreat that is outside your usual routine to spend time with the LORD. Jesus modeled time alone with the Father amidst His busy ministry. We should do no less. Whether it's for two hours or two days get it on your calendar.

Can't afford the time or money for retreat at a hotel near the beach or in the mountains? No problem- that's a time to get creative.

Spend an afternoon "retreating" in a local coffee shop or in the quiet lobby of a beautiful hotel nearby. Find a silent corner in your public library. The place does not have to be fancy, just out of your normal routine.

I have a dear friend who lives in a lovely home on a lake. Periodically, I ask her if I may spend a time of "day retreat" at her house while she is away. It's a blessing to me and a way she sees as being supportive of me as a woman in ministry.

On your "get away", I suggest you leave your "to do" list at home. (There's that *doing* thing again!) Take only your Bible. During this time. . .

### GET DEEP

Stop and ask these questions:

- *LORD, how is my personal relationship with You?*
- *Is there any unconfessed sin I need to admit to You?*
- *Are there any changes I need to make?*



## GET QUIET

Take time to listen. . . and listen some more.

## GET SCRIPTURE

Ask one other question. . .

- *LORD, is there a Scripture you have for me at this point in my life and ministry?*

Just one or two verses is all it takes. Ask the LORD to give you a personal Bible verse He has for you to meditate on through this season of your life and/or ministry (this could be for a calendar year or ministry year or for an upcoming event).

After your retreat, keep the Scripture on a card you carry in your purse or post as a screen saver so it's always before you on your computer. This can lead to heart memorization of this verse as you "let the word dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16).

Strength for service comes from savoring Scripture. It's also a means of battling against discouragement that sometimes accompanies the burden of leadership. Next time you're feeling weary in leadership, stop and make a wise assessment of your *being/doing* balance. Then get away, get deep, get quiet, and get Scripture.

That's our hope for energetic women's ministry.



Debbie Hannah Skinner is a follower of Christ who is also an artist, national speaker, and writer. Her colorful "paint talks" combine biblical teaching with a watercolor painting that comes to life on stage, inspiring women to strengthen and soothe their souls by savoring Scripture. She hopes you will drop by **WisdomInWatercolor.com** for a visit!

