

CHAPTER THREE

*Planes, Strings and
Toilet Paper Rolls*

“But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.” Ephesians 4:7 (NIV)

*M*y mom and I have shared many special moments throughout the years. Several of those memories have been made as we travel to women’s events where I minister. While my mom fondly remembers days of tearooms and trellises, a favorite memory of mine occurred in the Nashville airport.

Mom and I were preparing to board a plane headed back to Houston from Nashville, and I decided to go to the restroom before we left.

My mom quickly reminded me that I would not have time because we were due for boarding any minute and the restroom was two gates down from ours. I found this rather humorous, knowing that no matter how old I get, my mom continues to monitor my bathroom breaks. *Promising to return quickly*, I jumped from my seat and headed down the terminal.

Upon finishing my business in the restroom, I reached for the toilet paper and found myself in a most peculiar position. Unbeknownst to me, as I had been unwrapping the toilet paper from the roll, the long strings of my sweatshirt hoodie had mysteriously become entangled in the toilet paper holder. The more I tried to free myself, the tighter I was bound to the toilet paper roll. With my head now glued to the wall above the paper holder, I did what any 40-something-year-old would do. From that stall in the airport bathroom, I began yelling at

the top of my lungs, “MOM! MOM! MUHHH-THERRRRR!”

Amazingly, no matter how old a child grows, a mother instinctively hears their cry. This episode was no exception. With the speed of Superwoman, my mom sprinted past two gates, burst into the bathroom and screamed, “WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH YOU?” “*I am hung in the toilet paper roll holder,*” I cried. With a pause that seemed to last for eternity, she managed to utter her only word, “WHAT?” “*You heard me,*” I quickly retorted. “The strings of my shirt are wound up in the toilet paper roll holder and I cannot get loose.” “Well, just open the door,” my mother suggested.

Obviously, she did not realize the tug of war that had ensued inside that stall. The toilet paper roll holder had won, and I could not move forward, backward or sideways. I cer-

tainly could not reach the door! At this point, I could only imagine the janitors finding us at midnight as they put out their “Wet Floor” signs. The only alternative was for my mother to crawl under the door of the stall.

With the determination of a bull, my mother, the epitome of a Southern Bell, kicked off her heels, hiked up her skirt and started under the bathroom door. After what seemed like hours of wiggling and squeezing, she completed her mission and met me face to face with a warning unlike any I had heard from her before: “Don’t you *EVER* do this again!” We stared at each other in disbelief, and then began to laugh uncontrollably. After freeing me from the toilet paper holder, we quickly made our way back to the gate and caught our flight just in time for our trip home.

As women, we have many things to balance in our lives. At times, we get into situations that

are awkward to say the least because we take on too much. We find ourselves struggling to find a starting place because we don't know how to say, "No." Then we get mad at the ones we said, "Yes" to because we don't really want to do what we said we would do. This trap can cause us to hurt ourselves, our relationships with others, and even with God. How? Because *God will only give us the grace to do what He has called us to do.*

When we become frustrated and "stuck," we need to stop and ask God about our part. If we are taking on too much, we need to find out where He would have us cut back, then do it. We will be a lot happier in the long run and much more pleasant to be around. We will also avoid some very awkward situations that keep us "wrapped" up in things much worse than toilet paper holders!

Reflection

1. What are some awkward situations you have found yourself in because you could not say, “No”?
2. What are some moments where you said, “No” and felt confident about your decision?
3. What part does God’s will play in your decision to say, “Yes” or “No”? How can you keep His will at the center of your decisions?