**The Purse Driven Life**

**INTRODUCTION**

Let’s take a look at purses and the women who carry them. We all know that a purse is just a purse until someone with pizzazz and purse-onality picks it up and makes it what it ought to be… A PURSE WITH PURPOSE! Guaranteeing a PURSE DRIVE LIFE! I am holding onto the idea that one can look at a woman’s purse and learn a great deal about her purse-onality.

I am intrigued with the concept of a PURSE DRIVEN LIFE. It should be intriguing to everyone as we contemplate our highest priorities in life. Not only do PURSE DRIVEN folks need to hang onto their purses with tight fists, but they worry endlessly about what is-or is not- in them. Let’s explore this further.

**THE EMPTY PURSE**

I guarantee you it didn’t take me long to find the words I want to share with you from deep within my purse. Look inside! What do you see? That’s right, nothing. It’s empty. I have many more empty purses at home in my closet. I can never decide what to carry with me as I go about my life so I just carry this empty purse in hopes that I will find something important to place inside it.

Come to think of it, my life has often been like my purse. Empty! There are so many choices out there. How can I decide when decisions are so final? Should I fill my life with music or dance? How about fine art, painting and sculpture? I know! I’ll fill myself with food and pop culture. I can fit a bunch of power bars and a few current CD’s and DVD’s in here.

But, those things still make me feel empty. There must be more to this PURSE DRIVEN LIFE. Old Testament leader Joshua meant it from his heart when he told God’s people…

**“Choose this day whom you will serve… As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:25**

That’s it! I choose to serve the Lord! I choose Christ! He will fill my life with good things.

**THE SMALL, OVERLOADED PURSE**

I can’t decide what to carry in my purse so I go with the old saying, “More is better’. I should get a bigger purse because I carry everything, for every occasion. I guess I keep hoping someone else will bear these loads so I can enjoy my own small purse.

I am ready for any emergency situation. In fact, I am famous for being able to carry burdens others cannot carry. People often come to me for things they have forgotten. Tylenol, Band-Aids, paper, pen, cough drops, calendars, bananas… you name it. I have it. Most of the time I am proud that I can carry a purse to help friends and family get through those little life crises.

I must admit, carrying everything that everyone needs is becoming a burden. Why do I have to be the women who knows everything, carries everything and answers every question? It would feel so nice to be free of this heavy burden. Isn’t there anyone else who can carry this overloaded purse?

[Pause…] Oh, I get it. There is Someone who can carry my burden. It’s Jesus. He is the perfect burden bearer. I don’t have to have all the answers or meet everyone’s needs. That’s what He wants to do. I must leave room in my life for God to work. It is time to stop stuffing and carrying around useless burdens.

How could I have missed the message in the book of Psalm…

**“Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you…” Psalm 55:22**

Or the book of Galatians

**“Bear one another’s burdens… for if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.” Galatians 6:2-3**

It’s not about me carrying out this PURSE DRIVEN LIFE! It’s Christ! He’s the One who will carry my overloaded purse… If I let Him.

**THE MAMMOUTH PURSE**

I just purchased a new purse. I should have been duly warned because this one came with its own light. Take it from me, if you r purse is cavernous enough to require a light to find what’s residing on the bottom, it is just too big! Another indicator that a purse is too big it that your cell phone always goes to voice mail before you can get your hands on it to answer.

My massive purse is symbolic of a larger life issue. Like my purse, my PURSE DRIVEN LIFE is full of good intentions, randomly packed. Lots of wonderful and necessary things are found in there, but it’s too crowded. It’s time to pare down. I need to readjust my priorities.

I need to have room for God - to give God elbow room. We calculate and estimate and say that this and that will happen, and we forget to make room for God to come in as He chooses. Would we be surprised if God came into our lives in a way we had never looked for Him to come? Do not look for God to come in any particular way, but look for Him. That is the way to make room for Him.

He wants to work miracles in my life but in order to receive his touch, I have to peel away the massive quantities of time I spend in busy-ness. After all, Jesus said as written in the book of Matthew…

**“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy burden, and I will give you rest .” Matthew 11:28**

**THE DESIGNER PURSE**

Don’t you love my designer purse? It is so fashionable. It’s what all the wealthy socialites are carrying this season. It’s the perfect color, perfect size and it carries the famous maker’s name on the outside so everyone knows where I bought it and how much it cost. It’s very expensive, you know!

Hmmmm, the maker’s name. Why do I feel the need to have everyone know the famous designer who manufactured my purse? After all, it isn’t like he is personally sitting somewhere hand stitching these things. He has “people” who make these purses. Who is this guy anyway?

If this crazy PURSE DRIVEN LIFE world, there is another Maker who should be more prominent in my life. Why don’t I feel the need to carry my real Maker’s Name on the outside of my life?

Jesus proudly carried my name in his Heart when He gave his life for me. It’s time for me to carry my Maker’s Name. The Psalmist explained why:

**“For thou dist form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Thy works, and my soul knows it very well.” Psalm 139: 13-14**

Forget the Designer Purse! I am a Designer Child of God, the Maker of Heaven and earth!

**THE COMFORTABLE OLD PURSE**

I have always been a bit smug about my own free-spirited approach to purses. I don’t lead a PURSE DRIVE LIFE at all. I prefer older, smaller bags so that I can’t carry too much with me. I left bigger bags at home and carried only an old wallet purse all over the country my last vacation. I will carry the same handbag for years and pay no attention to the season of the year. Still, it is embarrassing to clean a closet and discover that I really do have a plethora of purses. I just can’t bear to get rid of my old ones. And I have a vast collection of tote bags, backpacks and duffel bags to carry all the stuff that won’t fit into my old purse. There goes my smugness!

Sometimes I wonder if that’s how I treat Jesus? Is He just another comfortable, old tradition I have hanging around the house. Where is the excitement I used to feel when I sang praises to Him and studied brand new stores from God’s Word? Has my faith in Christ become “ho-hum”? I use the same old rationality for being a Christian without realizing my ‘Believer’ closet is full of many joyful choices for serving the Lord. It’s time to bring those comfortable traditions into the light of day, shine them up and shout for joy!

**“Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing….” Psalm 100**

**THE MESSY PURSE**

My purse if an entire “Ecosystem”! I mean it! I think I have things growing in there. Don’t worry about me. I heard recent statistics that “Messies” are 36% more efficient than “Neatniks”. I judge the condition of my Messy Purse on a variety of levels. It ranges from ‘Cluttered but clean’, ‘Messy yet meaningful’, ‘Danger Zone so don’t reach in without looking’ and ‘Whew – something died in there!’ Trust me, I know when it’s time.

Don’t look at me that way! God loves Messies! He always sees such an amazing improvement when we catch on to a specific spiritual concept. It’s the way He knows His truth is working.

In my heart of hearts I hear the prayer of the Psalmist…

**“Make me know Thy ways, O Lord: teach me Thy paths. Lead me in Thy truth and Teach me, for Thou art the God of my salvation; for Thee I wait all the day.” Psalm 25: 4-5**

And my prayer? “Teach me. Lead me. I will wait for you.”

**CONCLUSION**

The PURSE DRIVEN LIFE may be wth us for some time. As long as God keeps creating women, there will be purses. Fads may come and go but there she will be, a woman carrying a purse filled with wondrous items.

It’s always risky to go to lunch with one of my friends. She either has a $100 bill or a quarter in her purse. If she breaks the $100 bill, it is a sure bet that she will be down to a quarter within hours and I get stuck with the bill for lunch. She just cannot keep cash in her purse. She doesn’t worry about it. She is confident that she will have another $100 bill in there tomorrow. Even though I often end up paying, it is refreshing to be with this friend. She and her family are fairly well off financially and they are generous with their financial support at church and worthy community courses. They are not PURSE DRIVEN. They are confident that the Lord will provide them with all they need. If fact, that’s just how the Lord deals with them – bountifully!

And listen to the verse I found to prove it.

**“Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful. The Lord protects the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me. Return, O my soul to your rest, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.” Psalm 116: 5-7**

Why do we cling to our purses when God promises that no matter the circumstances, we always will have enough? Many in our nation have more than enough. What are we to do with the excess? We’re mostly told we must save it for a rainy day, of course! Open another bank account, hide it in a mattress, keep it in a purse under your pillow. That is the way to live a PURSE DRIVEN LIFE. With all the abundance stashed away and no intention to ever use it, a PURSE DRIVEN person is planning a future of worry and fear. For many of us, there will never be enough in savings to give us complete assurance of a well kept future. We can only get assurance from trusting in a God of abundance. As we ponder our own abundance, our own fears and our own commitments to serving the Lord and the Lord’s children, let us also be careful to make sure that we live mission driven, purpose driven, love driven lives and leave the PURSE DRIVEN LIFE to the real pros!