

The Truth is in the Handbag

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Shari Braendel – from Proverbs 31 – Encouragement for Today Daily Emails

*"Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me."
Psalm 31:3 (NIV)*

I recently watched as a frazzled shopper fumbled around in her bag trying to find her allusive keys. As she dug through her overstuffed purse, multiple items spilled out, landing on the counter and falling to the floor. Quickly, she began collecting her items.

I thought about her pretty purse, beautiful on the outside but hiding an unruly mess on the inside. And then I started thinking about how alike women and purses can be.

Maybe you're like a small purse that only has the capacity to hold a few things. Yet you try stuffing more into your life than you can hold, only to get frustrated. Perhaps one of those things is God: He's been crammed into a tiny space in your world and you don't give Him much room to rule because you feel more comfortable when you are in control.

Perhaps you're like a big purse, carrying all kinds of things. You're involving yourself in so many activities just because you can; with no real purpose to why you're doing it. You end up flustered like the shopper digging for her keys because you haven't spent the time needed to organize your spiritual life.

I know you're not a handbag, but when applying biblical truth and application, what kind of purse are you most like?

It's not God's desire for our inside to be out of sync with our outside. He desires for us to have our hearts turned toward Him and have our very pulse in beat with what He is doing in us.

Where should we start to curb the chaos, release our controlling tendencies and lighten the busyness to fall in step with God?

Start by being still. For some, that will go against every fiber of your being, but try it. Perhaps you abide in chaos because it's masking what is really going on with you, just like your pretty purse hides the unorganized mess within. Sit quietly and pray for God to help you be keenly aware of Him. Nothing that you are going through is a surprise to God.

Next, relax and trust the Lord. Sometimes feeling out of control causes you to hyper-control everything around you. Let go of your fears, doubts and worries and make room for God in your life.

Finally, clear your calendar. We overbook and over-schedule out of habit and now busy feels normal. Is your fast pace driven by fear, or does it define your value or identity? If so, re-evaluate where your time and energy are being spent and why.

Making a change doesn't come easily, but it can be done. Although seeking out time with God, learning to trust Him, and reorganizing your priorities can feel uncomfortable and difficult at first, I know for sure that it's not nearly as hard as living overcommitted and out of control.

Together, let's commit to cleaning out our "purses!"

Dear Father, will You please meet me right here, right now and quiet my heart so that I can rest and regroup? Thank You for the comfort of knowing that while I sometimes get waylaid, You never take Your eyes from me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Application Steps:

Take a moment to journal what you are thinking right now. This is for you only, so feel free to be absolutely honest and dig deep.

Challenge yourself to make one change; slow and steady wins the race.

Reflections:

Do I believe God is in control?

Do I trust Him with my whole heart? If not, what am I holding back and why?

If God has more planned for my life than just coping, can I embrace a change for the better?

Power Verses:

2 Thessalonians 3:3, "The Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one." (NIV)

Hebrews 13:20-21, "May the God of peace...equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." (NIV)

Zephaniah 3:17, "The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing." (NIV)

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