1. BIBLE STUDY: WHAT’S IN YOUR PURSE?

Purpose: Each of you carries many items in your purse. We are going to relate some of those items to witnessing your faith to others. Not only will there be a few suggestions for actual items in your purse to help with witnessing, I hope this lesson encourages you spiritually and personally in whom you are in Christ. Let each of the items in your purse serve as a memory hook for witnessing.

1. What item(s) in your purse do the following verses suggest?
   
   1 Peter 3:3-4  Your beauty should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.
   
   There is nothing wrong with the use of make-up. What other qualities for beauty does God encourage in the following section from Galatians?
   
   Galatians 5:22-23  But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
   
   Think about a precious woman in our past—one who has influenced you a great deal (a mom, a sister, grandmother, other relative, teacher, friend, choir director). Her beauty most likely exhibited the characteristics in Galatians.
   
   How is inner beauty important for witnessing your faith?

2. Many of us carry pictures of our loved ones. We have pictures of our spouse, children, and grandchildren. Many of aren’t shy about pulling them out and sharing them with someone.

   Keep in mind we don’t know what Jesus looked like physically, but that wasn’t the most important to Jesus.

   John 14:6  Jesus answered, “I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
   
   How might it be useful to put a small picture of Jesus in with our precious loved ones, for certainly, isn’t he one of the greatest loved ones?

   We may not carry a photograph of what someone thought Jesus looked like, but what type of mental picture of Jesus do we carry with us for witnessing?

   What type of picture of Jesus come to mind with the following passage?

   John 6:67-68  “You don’t want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the gift of eternal life.”

3. What item in your purse comes to mind with this verse?

   Luke 5:30-32  But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners”? Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

   Be reminded by your medicines that in Christ you have the real doctor to help the sick—those sick to death with sin!

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4. What over-used item is in many purses?

Romans 4:3-5  What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

In Christ you can pass on a real way to reduce debt fast and completely!

5. Many of us carry an address book of people we know and care about. Do you carry an address book of those you know who don’t know Jesus as Savior? One might be useful to keep their names before you for prayer and concern.

What is the weakness of life-style witnessing?
What is the weakness of vocal witness without life style?

Romans 1:16  I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Acts 4:20 “…For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

1 Peter 3:15  But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect....

6. We carry many receipts of what we have purchased. When you look at a receipt think also of how you have invested your time with others and those you have told about Christ.

7. What item in your purse is part of Luther’s small catechism? The item is shown by the verse:

Matthew 16:19 “…I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Jesus told us that we are his witnesses. He will come to people through the means of grace, in the case of witnessing, through the Word. We are given the responsibility and joy to proclaim the gospel so people can hear and by the grace of God, through the Spirit, believe.

8. Other items you might carry with you to help with witnessing—some for our use and some which might be useful for beginning a discussion:

♥  file card(s) with your favorite verses on them
♥  your business cards with a verse on the back or some of your pastor’s business cards
♥  a small Bible for reference
♥  the book of John or Luke to give someone
♥  a key chain with Jesus on it

In all your witnessing, remember what Peter said in 1Peter 3:15c  But do this with gentleness and respect, …

We are not trying to beat someone into the kingdom of God. The witness is ours, but the work is Jesus’.
9. Deodorant: We may be nervous about meeting other people and witnessing to them. Some of us/all of us may be, but remember:

Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Be bold in the Lord for we are going home to heaven.

10. So far we have not mentioned one of the most important “items” which we pray that you will carry daily. The purse itself, the bag which contains all of the above items, serves as our example.

Colossians 3:14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Remember Jesus’ summary of the Ten Commandments.

Matthew 22:36-38 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord you God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all you mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

What is common in both summaries of the law?

Summary:

What witnessing doesn’t need:

1. You don’t need the gift of evangelism.
2. You don’t need to use theological language or have a degree from one of our training schools.
3. You don’t need guilt about what you haven’t done in the past, for you have the forgiveness and love of Christ to witness today.

What you do need:

1. A knowledge of the love of Jesus in your life which has forgiven your great debt of sin.
2. A thankful love for what Jesus has done for you.
3. A love for people which recognizes that people without Christ are going to hell.
4. A willingness to witness Jesus’ work and nature using your own language and words to people. If you feel that you haven’t done as well as you wanted, or might not have used all the right words, or can’t answer some of their questions, refer them to your pastor.

2Timothy 1: 7-9 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.

To Jesus be the Glory,
Pastor John Baumann

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