

Camera/Photo Theme – Captured Hearts

DEVOTIONAL/LESSON STARTERS & WORKSHOP IDEAS

Add in your own points, illustrations, explanations, and relating Bible verses.

Portrait of a Godly Lady

- Eyes
 - That look at others with compassion
 - That look past appearances
 - That are guarded against the world
 - That read the Word of God
 - That don't lose sight of eternity
- Lips
 - That speak the truth
 - That encourage others
 - That share God's Word
 - That share God's love
 - That keep sealed (*seal your lips!* Keep confidences.)
 - That keep zipped when needed (zip your lip! Know when to keep quiet.)
- Ears
 - That listen to the Word
 - That will hear instruction and constructive criticism
 - That really hear others when they speak
 - That listen to the Holy Spirit's leading
- Nose
 - That doesn't turn up at others (sneer, etc.)
 - That doesn't turn up in the air with pride
 - That keeps itself out of the business of others (nosy)
 - That doesn't get out of joint easily (get feelings hurt easily)
 - That keeps clean (*keep your nose clean!* Stay out of trouble.)

- Shoulders
 - That bear the burdens of others
 - That give a place for a friend to cry on
 - That bear responsibility
 - That bear the work of the Lord
 - That don't have a chip on them
- Hands
 - That lift up others (*lend a hand!*)
 - That lift in praise to the Lord
 - That fold in prayer
 - That do good deeds (*helping hands!*)
 - That work willingly
- Things that Can Marr our Portrait
 - Brushing up against the world
 - Exposure to the harsh elements of worldly ways
 - Touching the art!
 - We have to allow God to do the leading and not us. When we get our hands on our own lives, we can make a disaster out of it. We have to let the Lord have control.
- People should be able to tell we are a *portrait of a godly lady*.
 - It should be *written all over our face!*

Chasing Light

- Good photographs need a lot of natural light.
 - It takes a better picture.
 - It makes the color more natural (or close to the actual shades).
- We need a desire to allow God's Word to shine in our life. As Christians we don't need the fake or manufactured light that the world offers. We need to go to the true light source, Christ and His Word.
 - The Light of the Word exposes our sin.

- The Light of the Word exposes our path (lets us see more clearly)
- "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Good photographs need a lot of natural light. As Christians we don't need the fake or manufactured light that the world offers. We need to go to the true light source, Christ." Psalm 119:105
- "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" 1 John 1:5
- "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalms 119:130

The Perfect Picture of a Christian

- Choose a Backdrop.
 - Choose where you place yourself as a Christian.
 - Watch where you go, what you do, and who you choose to hang out with.
 - A bad backdrop can ruin the whole picture.
 - Watch where you stand and what you stand for as a Christian.
- Follow the Light.
 - Good photos need light.
 - Allow Christ to fill you with His love and His Word.
- Use the Right Lens.
 - See the world through the eyes of Christ.
 - See with His compassion and His love.
- Center the Subject.
 - There is a rule of thirds when it comes to taking a picture.
 - You try to center the subject of the photo in the middle.
 - As Christians we need to rely on Christ. He keeps us centered.

- Focus In on the Target.
 - Keep your eyes on Christ.
 - Remember the story of Peter walking on the water and what happened to Him when He took his eyes off of Jesus?
 - Peter lost his focus and began to drown.
- Say Cheese!
 - Find joy in the Lord.
 - Everything will seem a little brighter.
- Click!
 - Take some action.
 - Snap into living for Christ.
 - Follow Christ and His example.

Camera Ready

- What do you do to prepare yourself for living a beautiful life in Christ?
 - Salvation, baptism,...to Christian living
 - Reading and studying the Word
 - Following Christ
 - Growing your faith
- *Put your game face on!*

The Picture Perfect Word

- God's Word is perfect.
 - It makes us smile.
 - It gives us hope.
 - It shows us our path in life.
 - It helps us face the world.
- Psalm 19:7-11
- Key Verse: "The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul..." Psalm 19:7

- Look what the Bible says about Ezra.
 - Ezra prepared his heart for God's law and Word.
 - "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." Ezra 7:10
- We need to prepare our hearts for God's Word and obey His Word.
 - "Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day." 1 Kings 8:61
 - This is King Solomon talking to the children of Israel in this verse in Kings.
 - I think it is interesting that Solomon starts off his speech to the children of Israel that day with the following.
 - "And he said, LORD God of Israel, *there is* no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:" 1 Kings 8:23

The Picture Perfect Heart

- A perfect heart (Psalm 101:2)
 - Desiring to be more like God, know God more, and obey God
- God is perfect (Matthew 5:48)
 - Striving to be merciful and loving as God
- God's Word is perfect (Psalm 19:7-11)
 - Allowing God's Word to change our lives
- God's love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:12)
 - Allowing God to perfect us with His love to show that love to others

Captured Hearts

- Allowing the Lord to have full reign of our hearts.
 - "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Colossians 3:15
 - "...bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" 2 Corinthians 10:5b
 - "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." Proverbs 23:26
- Look what God told the prophet Ezekiel to prophecy to the children of Israel in Ezekiel chapter 36.
 - Key verses: Ezekiel 36: 26, 27
 - "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*."
 - A new heart is different.
 - It is a changed heart.
 - It doesn't cling to the past.
 - It doesn't do the same things as it did in the past.
 - It isn't "stony" so it allows God's love and Word to grow deep within. (vs. 36)
 - It allows God to give it direction. (vs. 37)

Learning from a Camera

You may have seen these phrases on signs or t-shirts made for photographers or camera happy people, but I thought they would make a good devotional starter.

- Develop from the negatives (learn from the bad)
- Take Another shot (never give up)

- Capture the moment (don't go through life missing anything)
- Focus on what is important (decide on what is near and dear to you)

Focus on Your Speech

These three you may have seen on signs or t-shirts as well.

- Don't be "negative".
- Don't "shoot" people in the foot.
- Don't "snap" at people.

Note: *The following I made up to develop as workshop topics, but they could also be developed as devotionals.*

Workshop Topics

- *Living Chaotic Lives in a Picture Perfect World* - Instagram, Pinterest, and other social platforms all show us the pretty. Life isn't always that way. Life gets messy. Don't let the devil and the world wipe that smile off your face!
- *Living from Low to High Resolution* - Getting through both the good and the bad of our lives and still holding onto our faith.

Philippians 4:12

"I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

- *Shattered Images and Focused Lives* - Getting rid of what we "think" we should be looking like as a Christian and getting back to the basics of what the Bible says about how we should act and live. Focusing in on the things that build up our faith.
- *Say Cheese and Choose Joy!* - Choosing joy in our lives. Combatting depression. Overcoming the doldrums of everyday life.
- *Living in Sharp Contrast* - How to live in sharp contrast to the world.

Revelation 3:16

"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

- *Developing Compassion in an Uncompassionate World* - Concentrating on compassion like Jesus had. With haters, bullies, and hurtful people all around us, how do we do this? How do we develop that compassion like Christ?
- *Setting Visual Goals* - Goal setting. Priorities. Choosing tangible goals in our lives. Physical life goals and spiritual life goals.
- *Capture the Moment* – Journaling Session. Appreciating the blessings God gives in life as they happen.
- *Shadow and Light* - Coming out of the shadows and into the light. Leaving your past and failures behind and stepping out in faith to live for Christ.
- *Zoom In! Zoom Out!* – The ups and downs of the Christian life. Learning how to stay focused on Christ.

- *Understanding Exposure in a Dark World* - Realizing the danger of living ungodly lives. Avoiding the temptations of the world and what it has to offer. Desiring that "perfect exposure".
- *Destroying the Negatives* – Getting rid of bad attitudes. Squashing the negative ways in which we speak.
- *Just Picture It!* – Taking a look at Heaven and what the Bible has to say about it.
- *Click into Place!* – Find your spiritual gifts. Find where you fit in in life and in the body of Christ.
- *Cropping Your Life* – Cutting out sin.

Hebrews 12:1

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,"

Devotional Starter Terms of Use:

Feel free to add and expand upon this material to complete your own devotionals and lessons, but please do not share the material as is.

I ask for the sake of the women's ministry leaders and pastor's wives that gather ideas here, that you do not print your finished devotionals online. It will help keep a fresh take for the ladies that attend our women's ministry events (banquets, conferences, retreats, etc.). It's nice when we can share in person something our guests haven't already read on Facebook, or a blog somewhere, or saw on Pinterest. Let's keep it fresh!