

SERMON OUTLINE

ACTIVE – COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

SET THE SCENE

- Paul writes a letter to the believers in Colossae who were struggling with false teaching.
- He encourages them in their faith, highlights that it's all about God and challenges them to think about the new life that they have through Christ. The challenge is to take off the old clothes and put on the new. Paul reminds them that their lives need to be and look different now that they are followers of Christ.
- In Colossians 3:12-17 Paul lists the new clothes they should put on and gives some pointers on who they should be when they wear them.

OUTLINE

- This passage tells us that there's so much more to this 'new life' than simply putting on clothes. Being a believer – being a community of believers – has to be more than appearances. It's not just about wearing a uniform. We need to be active.
- We are reminded that we all need to be,
 1. Clothed: to be dressed by Jesus – our clothes need to reflect the designer.
 2. Equipped: to hold on to God's Word, letting the message of Christ dwell among us.
 3. Active: to allow our designer's brand to become a state of mind not just a stitched on slogan.

ILLUSTRATION

Have you ever made the decision to get fit? To do a bit more exercise? We can be full of good intentions – buying the outfits, picking out the right sports equipment, signing up for a gym membership – but what if we never follow it through to action? Our clothes can give us all the appearance of being active without us ever having to get off the sofa. But soon it becomes

noticeable that we're eating cake rather than going for a run; watching another box set rather than going to the gym. If we really want to be transformed we need to be clothed, equipped and active.

1. Clothed – Colossians 3:12-15

- These verses list the 'Christ qualities' that we should be clothing ourselves in.
- This teaching was given to a group of believers. Today we need to hear these words as a group. Does our church have a uniform? Are we all kitted out for the same purpose?
- Jesus has designed our clothing; he has picked it out of the wardrobe for us. When we put them on is it obvious that they have been stitched together with the love of the Lord?
- Read Wu's story from China, ["Why are you so different?" – BIBLE SUNDAY PROJECT](#)

2. Equipped – Colossians 3:16

- We are equipped for God's purpose – we have the message of Christ written out for us on the pages of the Bible. But what are we doing with these words? Are they sitting in our pews or are they dwelling among us. Paul challenges us to let this message be more than just a guest for the weekend but to let it make its home amongst us.
- Read Dorcas's story from Togo, ["The entire Gospel resides in my heart" – BIBLE SUNDAY PROJECT](#)

3. Active – Colossians 3:17

- Many clothing designers and brands have a slogan, a few words that make a statement about what their clothes stand for. The most obvious example is perhaps Nike with their slogan 'just do it'. These words are stitched onto jumpers. But they've become more than just words, they've become a state of mind. Nike want people to believe that when they wear their clothing they become determined, active and brave.
- Paul challenges us to 'do it'. We need to allow our designer's brand to become more than a stitched on slogan but a way of life. As the Church we need to do more than wear the clothes, we need to be active.
- Read Rev Elmer's story from Cuba, ["Every week people ask us if we have Bibles" – BIBLE SUNDAY PROJECT](#)

YOUR RESPONSE ON BIBLE SUNDAY: BE ACTIVE

- We have the clothes, but we need to do more than just wear them. We have the Bible, but we need to do more than just have it. We need to let God's Words dwell with us, transform us and equip us.
- Today on Bible Sunday we've been thinking about being active. As a group of believers how will you do this? Join with Bible Society NI as they challenge people to do more than just have the Bible. Be active in encouraging each other to lift the Bible off our pews and down from our shelves. Meditate on the message of Christ. Pray the Scriptures. Be equipped with the Word.
- You can encourage other believers around the world with this message. Download the ['Bible Twinning'](#) document and discover how you can take action today.