

Fill Up! And Act Like It!
Col 3:1-11

Hook/Intro
Read Col 3:1-11

Bottom line:
Having been filled in Christ (2:10)
Totally and completely brought under his Lordship, power, and authority – Filled Up
We need to act like it!

Standard story line of royal son/daughter who doesn't want the royalty/label/constraint . . .
Goes off and finds themselves, and frustrates the parents to no end
They say . . .
Act like you know how
Act like you have some sense
Act like you've been taught
Act like who you are

So Paul urges us here . . .
1 – *If then you have been raised with Christ* – saved; united with Christ through faith
Act like it!
Gives reasons for each command

The first way to act like it is to . . .

Devote yourself to the things of God (1-4)

1 – *seek the things that are above* – pursue that which is godly, eternal, and of Christ
2 – *set your minds on things that are above* – establish a sustained devotion to God's purposes, plans, and ways
Not the things of this world – 2b
Desires of your sinful nature
But heavenly things, where Christ is

This requires you to . . .

- Change your perspective
Since your entire identity is wrapped up in Christ, start seeing things his way
Get your mind out of the gutter, the mundane
Is it so far-fetched, being full of Christ, that you should . . .
Focus your life on the things that he is focused on?
Passionate about the things he is passionate about?
His glory; His kingdom, His people, His worship
We should adjust our perspective to match his
- Narrow your focus
No room for double life when devoting yourself to ways, plans, and purposes of God
Can't effectively focus on both earthly things *and* heavenly things
Like getting a new job, new house, new responsibilities, new friends, in a new city
It demands a singular focus

If you keep looking in the rearview mirror, wishing you were back there (a geographic place, a situation, a job, and lifestyle, etc), you won't be able to fully devote yourself to the things at hand

The patriarchs of old had this down – Heb 11:9, 15-16
They had a singular focus for the things of God
Longed for a heavenly city and didn't think of where they had come from
Which is why God is not ashamed to be called their God

We need to change our perspective and narrow our focus in order to devote ourselves to the things of God

2 compelling reasons for devoting yourself to the things of God

- That's where the power for holy living is
1b – *seek the things that are above, where Christ is, at the right hand of God*
Allusion to Ps 110:1 – *The LORD said to my Lord, sit at my right hand*
Position of power, strength, authority, privilege
Paul associates the things above with the position of Christ to emphasize their power
In the things of God lie the power and fuel to act like we should

- It's risk free
You're present is secure
3b – *your life is hidden with Christ in God* – he possesses and protects you
4a – *Christ is your life* – he is who you are
Like your life hidden with the President in the United States
Handcuffed to the President, you'd enjoy – privilege, protection, provision
You're future is secure
4b – *you will appear with him in glory* – you'll eventually be in his presence
Christ will usher/escort you into the eternity of heaven
Rewarded and vindicated for your choice to follow him

Change your perspective, narrow your focus, and devote yourself to the things of God

The second way to act like you're filled up in Christ is to . . .

Conquer or Destroy or Defeat sinful desires (5-7)

5 – *put to death* – conquer, get rid of, no longer take part in
5 – *what is earthly in you* – the aspects of your sinful nature, physical and mental
Play on words between heavenly things (“things above”) and earthly things

Metaphor lost in translation . . .

Put to death – used to refer to the process of atrophy in old age

What is earthly in you – referred to physical limbs/organs of your body

- You are to conquer, get under control – like the slow process of atrophy in old age . . .
The limbs/organs of your body, through which you sinfully engage those around you

Doesn't take long to realize that this is a list of sexual vices
Sexual immorality – all types of sex outside of marriage
Impurity – indecency, immodesty; Passion – lust

Evil desire – the want of something forbidden

Covetous idolatry – consuming desire for more that displaces consuming desire for God

Plato used this word with the following meaning – the ruthless insatiable desire
evident when the sexual appetite is unrestrained

- Though a process, never use as an excuse to indulge in sin
Always wrestle and struggle against the lure of this sin-filled realm
Make progress – points where you stop doing something wrong

On account of sin . . .

God's wrath looms

6 – *On account of these the wrath of God is coming* – God cannot and will not let sin go
unpunished

His wrath will be poured out on those who continue to indulge

7 – *In these you too once walked, when you were living in them*

Though you participated and indulged in these sinful desires just like everybody else . . .

They are things of the past

If you've indulged in the past, keep it that way

If you're presently indulging, stop

The only way to do this effectively and long-term is to . . .

- Pursue a sustained devotion to the things of God
The more you desire Jesus and his purity, the less you'll desire sin
The more you devote yourself to the things of God, the more you'll savor them and
find them wholly satisfying . . .
And the less you'll find sin to be satisfying

It's the only way to effectively conquer your sinful desires – no amount of self-discipline,
self-help, or self-esteem will do it

The third way to act like you're filled up in Christ is to . . .

Watch or Discipline your mouth (8-10)

8 – *put them all away* – stop doing them, the former list and these

Focuses on sins of the tongue here

- Starts with anger . . . Anger is a problem
Cancer of the soul – eats away at you
Leads to wrath – outbursts of rage; bad temper
Feels good – Anesthetic of the mind when it explodes; pit example
Does not lead to righteousness
Js 1:19-20 – *The anger of man does not produce the righteousness that God requires*

Malice – ill-will, spitefulness; Slander – ripping on someone's character; cousin to gossip

Obscene talk – dirty talk, filthy language, abusive speech; Lying

Watch your mouth because in doing so . . .

- You demonstrate God's powerful work within you – past, present, and future

Past . . .

9 – *You have put off the old self* – you've stepped over the line; left your old way of
life, your old nature that was biased toward sin

Imagery of stripping off of clothes, similar to 2:15 where Christ stripped or disarmed
the rulers and authorities of their power and pride

So too, you have removed your old grave clothes of sin

Not only that, but . . .

10 – *You've put on the new self* – you've embraced a new way of life; a new nature that is
biased toward righteousness; put on new clothes; robes of righteousness

Is 61:10 (Isaiah speaking on behalf of God's people) – *God has clothed me with the
garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness*

This putting off and putting on is in the *past* tense, as if it's a done deal

Why? Doesn't seem to describe me!

Because God *will* bring it to completion; it is certain – *Future*

Goes with the context of having been reconciled and delivered (Ch 1)

Phil 1:6 – he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion

That's the *past* and *future* work of God in us that we demonstrate by watching our mouths

We also demonstrate God's *present* work within us when we watch our mouth

10 – *Your new nature is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator*

Your new nature is constantly being refreshed and renewed according to . . .

The will of Christ of which we have knowledge (1:9)

In conformity to the image of Christ, our creator (1:16)

That's the *present* aspect of putting off and putting on that we need to demonstrate by
watching our mouth

The last way to act like you're filled up in Christ is to . . .

Show or Distinguish or Display no favorites (v11)

11 – *Christ is all, and in all* – Christ in us defines us; he is who we are

We gave up our own identity and let Christ take over

- His presence overshadows social, physical, and cultural distinctions
Here – in Christ, unified in him, as part of his body . . .
Race and former religious affiliation don't matter – *Neither Greek or Jew*
Physical characteristics don't make any difference – *Circumcised or uncircumcised*
Minority people groups are not distinguished – *Barbarian*
Speakers of unintelligible languages; un-reached people groups
Bad people aren't differentiated – *Scythian*
Worst of worst, crude, excessive, mean, repulsive, murderous, wild
Social status makes no difference – *Slave*
Bottom of the social spectrum; poor

Christ's presence overshadows social, physical, and cultural distinctions

Show no favorites

When you see other believers . . .

Don't categorize them in your mind:

Black or white, white collar or blue collar, rich or poor, beautiful or average
See Jesus! Someone indwelt by Christ

Doesn't mean that cultural distinctions are meaningless . . .

But they should never be used as a way to pigeon-hole people into categories of rank or
distinction, especially as believers

I had a wake up call on this one

Amsterdam, 10,700 pastors/evangelists from 209 different countries; 27 languages

We worshipped God together in one voice

All were hungry for the Word; Passionate to see Christ exalted

I truly began to understand similar to Peter in Acts 10:34-35 – *that God shows no
partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is
acceptable to him.*

Christ IS our identity

His presence overshadows all social, physical, and cultural distinctions

Show no favorites

Display his ongoing work in you by watching your mouth

Conquer sinful desires by devoting yourself to the things of God