Colossians 3:1-11 **Scott MALCOM**

**Do you ever look at your wardrobe, be honest about what you see, and decide to have a clean out?**

To old, to tight, to big, to young, trying a bit hard, worn out, makes me look a little mature, doesn’t work for me anymore, sick of it, needs an update, to dull, wrong colour?

Does that ever happen? Does to me. I look in the cupboard and think … time for a cleanout.

So, what I normally do, is go through it all and put everything in to piles. The out of here pile for the bin or the op shop, the staying in pile for “I definitely want to keep this”, and the “I’m not sure” pile for thinking about. This pile, unlike my lovely wife’s, in my wardrobe, is the smallest one.

Then all the stuff I don’t want, gets the biff.

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Once that’s done the fun part is getting the new stuff. You might not think it, but I like going clothes shopping, or at least clothes looking. The shopping part is a bit of a hassle with the trying on and mucking about … but the looking is great fun. Seeing what’s available and for what price.

In the past few years, I have tried to be a more careful clothes shopper, in that I try to replace what’s getting the biff to the bin and the op shop … and not overstock on stuff. Unlike some people I know, I don’t have 1000 tops in my 5 wardrobes.

And depending on what I’m after, I will go from the Warehouse to Smith and Caughley’s, looking for the right thing. 2 pairs of shorts, 2 tee shirts and a winter hoodie; all on sale for $89, is a good deal in my mind.

I have a weakness for Jackets, I especially like long coats. And if I am going to spend up large it will be on something like that. But I have so many now, that by my guiding principle, I won’t be buying anymore until 2034, or I biff some, or give them away.

**Do you ever look at your wardrobe, be honest about what you see, and decide to have a clean out?**

Our text from Colossians asks the same question of the little congregation whom we have been following, and it asks us that question too. Have we looked in to our inner wardrobes and been honest about what we see, and had a clean out.

We are asked to sort out our old clothes, our old habits, our old selves. The way we used to be and live. To make a few piles of stuff, and some definitely for the bin. Fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire and greed. A lovely fashion starter package.

Now we know from last week, that removing these things cannot be a new law, so that’s not what is being said here. We are being called to bin this old stuff. We also know from the gospel of Matthew that Jesus says, “if you lust after another in your heart, that is as bad as the act”, so it’s not just about the physical side of these things, either.

“Oh, I don’t have any of these things in my wardrobe”, we say to ourselves.

Which is exactly the point of all of this. This is why honesty is so important, it is the only way to check self-indulgence, which becomes self-righteousness, and leads us to thinking that we are better than we are.

Honesty about what we are like. That in spite of our love for Jesus, we fail, are frail, make mistakes and commit sins … I certainly do. All the time and every day. My mind is a continual worry, and I’m being asked to be honest about that here.

I’m not suggesting that you are all like me, but I am asking that we all enter an honest space this morning. The writer to Colossians, knows about churches, knows about people and is gently saying to us … that the answers to the things that bother us, start with us being honest with ourselves.

**Do you ever look at your wardrobe, be honest about what you see … and decide to have a clean out?**

Throwing out the stuff we have no more use for, anymore. The stuff that doesn’t help us. The stuff that is too small for us and squeezes our growth.

Putting it all into a pile for the rubbish. They are the clothes we choose not to wear; and don’t want to wear.

We have a new wardrobe to put on and a new life to rise into.

In fact, in Jesus we are already wearing those new garments, sometimes we just need time to grow into them, and allow them to fit comfortably. In these clothes we are called to seek the things that are above, the Jesus things.

Freedom, honesty, and love for one another. This is the wardrobe of the new life. These are the garments of the future. Clothes that help us to be who we want to be. Who God has made us to be.

Clothes that help us to live with our brothers and sisters, as “no longer Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free … rather as human beings, equal and precious in God’s sight … because … Christ is all in all.

**Do you ever look at your wardrobe, be honest about what you see, and decide to have a clean out?**

Amen.