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Brittany Winter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

HOW GEN Z YOUTH CAN USE APPAREL AS A MEANS OF EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN SELF-EXPRESSION

### **EVANGELIZING IN STYLE** HOW GEN Z YOUTH CAN USE APPAREL AS A MEANS OF **EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN SELF-EXPRESSION** This project was submitted as the thesis requirement for the student's Master of Fine Arts in Graphic Design degree through Liberty University. The personal, religious, philosophical, or political positions found this project are solely that of the student, and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the committee or Liberty University. JOSEPH WRIGHT, MFA, CHAIR ANDREA LEIGH LAWYER-LUCAS, PH.D, MBA, MA, FIRST READER JOSHUA WILSON, MFA, MFA, SECOND READER, THESIS ADVISOR PAMELLA MILLER, MFA, DEPARTMENT CHAIR

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### 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things for the glory of God."

### **MAD**

4 bstract



Generation Z, also known as "Gen Z", has grown up with a negative viewpoint on Christian apparel due to outdated and overused designs. As a result, today's youth do not express their faith through their clothes, causing a lack of potential evangelism. Generation Z makes up nearly half of the global population, and their unique qualities are vital to furthering the kingdom of God. Selfimage is an integral part of this generation, and by giving them the means to express themselves through trendy Christian streetwear, they will not only take pride in representing Jesus but also evangelize to their Generation Z peers in an unexpected way.

This thesis will analyze how Generation Z youth react to Christian apparel and how attractive designs will pique the interest of both Christian and non-Christian individuals. It will also examine how to better market to this unique demographic and encourage self-expression and representation in Christian youth circles, ultimately sharing the gospel. This problem will be solved by researching effective business models with similar clothing brands. Research has also been done on Generation

Z consumers, apparel design, garments, modeling, and more to collect accurate information to help with this thesis project.

With the completion of the research, a literature review was written, and three case studies and visual analyses were conducted to collect vital information that fits within this concept. A content analysis was also performed in addition to apparel prototypes to better understand and display this topic. Because of this research, an effective Christian streetwear brand was created that piques the interest of Gen Z youth, enabling them to use it as a means of evangelism and representation. As for deliverables, a brand identity was created for the apparel company, a social media marketing campaign was launched, and a photoshoot was held with models to display the products created. Through these deliverables, Christian Gen Z youth will be able to express themselves and share their faith through apparel that they are proud to wear.

## ZOHODOMHZ

RESEARCH PROBLEM
OBJECTIVES
RESEARCH QUESTION
KNOWLEDGE GAP
SIGNIFICANCE



### RESEARCH PROBLEM

Christian apparel fails to produce pieces that today's Gen Z youth are proud to wear, resulting in a lack of potential evangelism and Christian self-expression within the community.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of this thesis project is to create a Christian streetwear brand that produces apparel and graphics that capture the attention of Gen Z youth. Through this interest, Gen Z youth will wear the products produced, sharing the gospel while fashionably representing Jesus. They will be able to express themselves through the clothes that they wear while also sharing their faith. As a result, a faith conversation between a believer and a non-believer may be sparked. These are the main objectives of this thesis project.

### RESEARCH QUESTION

This research questions the Christian clothing industry and its cliché designs. While Christian apparel is one of the leading apparel categories, it still lacks attractive design. Because of this, today's youth is not consuming it in a retail market nor wearing it as a means of self-expression and faithsharing. This topic questions how this industry lacks a solid connection to Gen Z through its apparel and how we can improve this situation. A consensus will be reached through research on these questions, and the solution will become solidified.

### KNOWLEDGE GAP

There needs to be more attractive streetwear in the Christian community targeted to Gen Z youth to increase faith-based representation and community through self-expression. Most importantly, there is a lack of potential evangelism between Gen Z peers through clothing. This is most unfortunate because of how influential Gen Z is and because they can make a significant impact if given new ways to share the love of Jesus.

### SIGNIFICANCE

This thesis concept fulfills the need to give Gen Z youth an avenue for evangelism, community, and self-expression through the clothes that they wear. Not only that, but this clothing brand will update the Christian apparel scene and introduce a new perspective to today's Christian youth. This will draw in both believers and nonbelievers, ultimately increasing opportunities to share the gospel. It will also increase the marketability of Christian merchandise and diversify representation for the Christian Gen Z community. Having Gen Z youth wear these pieces will, in turn, be a means to more selfexpression and pride as believers. Gen Z should be proud to be Christian; apparel gives them the courage to express that.

### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

As for my personal background with this topic, I am familiar with the design aspect of apparel. As a professional creative, I once worked for a clothing apparel company designing graphics for the brand's garments. These designs were featured on many different types of clothing, such as T-shirts, hoodies, sweatshirts, sweatpants, hats, and more, allowing me to learn how to diversify graphics on different parts of apparel. Not only did I design for the brand itself, but many designs I created were also sold to seasonal collections for companies like Scheels. This experience enabled me to grow as a graphic designer and individual, expanding my expertise in a new area of design.

While obtaining this experience, I fell in love with apparel design and have wanted to create my own apparel brand ever since. This is one of my main motivations behind this thesis concept. Most importantly, I wanted to encourage Gen Z youth to share their faith through fashion and self-expression. I am passionate about street fashion and my faith, and I wanted to combine these things to create something that would empower others and encourage community. That is where this concept stemmed from and why it will be executed. Through this specific niche, I can better reach the Christian consumer market. This generation has so much to offer, and I would like to use my gifts to enable them to make a difference in the kingdom of God.



## RESEARCE

LITERATURE REVIEW
RESEARCH METHODS
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
CONCLUSION



### LITERATURE REVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

It goes without saying that the clothes that people wear represent who they are (Neal). When a person sees a man wearing a team jersey or a woman wearing an "I love London" shirt, they assume they are passionate about those things (Neal). Similarly, Christians may wear apparel that shows their passion and love for God. However, when it comes to today's Christian apparel designs, many of them are outdated and overused.



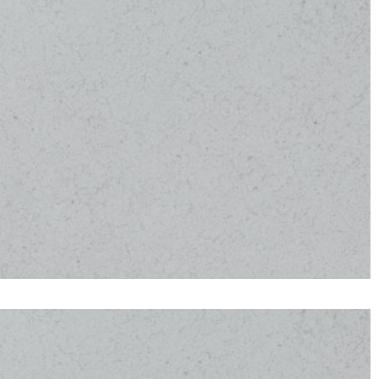
The Christian clothing industry became popular in the 1970s as Christian merchandise became available. Christian designers discovered how to mix spiritual meaning into everyday life during this time through secular fashions and trends (Neal). However, times have changed since then, and so have the trends. Unfortunately, Christian apparel designs have not kept up with the times or the trends of the ever-changing fashion industry; the Christian apparel market needs revitalization as the current designs are severely overused. A prime example of this need may be seen in the gifts many have received from loved ones that flaunt cliché Christian saying or graphics that look like they came straight out of the 2000s. These items are generally gifted because they are Christian despite not being "cool." Christian apparel needs to be revitalized to appeal to the Gen Z youth of today. The result of this could create not only a community for these youth but also a means of sharing the gospel. In addition, it could give these youth the confidence to wear Christian apparel with pride, an idea that gives hope to and contrasts with the current outlook as many Christian youth are seemingly embarrassed by Christian apparel due to its outdated design. In other words, an updated Christian clothing market could allow its customers to proudly represent what they believe rather than be embarrassed by how they are being represented.

Revitalizing the Christian clothing industry is essential because it may produce new ways to evangelize Gen Z youth while aiding the marketability of Christian apparel. To clarify, the problem is that Christian apparel fails to produce pieces that Gen Z youth are proud to wear; a consequence of this is a lack of potential evangelism and community. The solution lies in creating attractive graphics to be sold to Christian Gen Z youth to represent Christianity and Jesus in a way that intrigues others and shares the gospel with them. Through this alternative means of ministry, Gen Z may be reached in an unexpected way. This will ultimately further the kingdom of God.

In today's ever-changing world, there are many different ways in which one can share the gospel; apparel can be one of them. Not everyone is comfortable sharing the gospel through their speech, especially people who are shy or possess a disability related to speech (Brodie). Additionally, many of the youth in the Gen Z community are tired of words as they

often consider them full of empty promises and lies (Brodie). Knowing this information, companies may be benefited by approaching this group differently. The good news is that the gospel may be shared through several means. Communicating it through speech is not mandatory. The ideas behind Christianity and the love of Christ may then be communicated without verbal articulations (Brodie). Through apparel, Christian youth will be able to capture the attention of others their age and, in turn, spark conversation that furthers the kingdom of God. In other words, they can use the pieces they wear to share Jesus.

Clothing is one means of self-expression. Personal style hints at the wearer's personality through original combinations and creations that garner the attention of onlookers ("The Value of Style"). It highlights the complexity of humans as individuals ("The Value of Style"). Personal style, therefore, may be seen as a means of communication as individuals arrange their clothing in ways that bring out different aspects of their identities ("The Value of Style"). To clarify, a person's style is more than just clothes; it is the additional "self-knowledge and self-confidence expressed through what you choose



to wear, a life-affirming expression of your character and spirit" ("The Value of Style"). Therefore, Individuals may benefit from further incorporating personal style into their lives. People may embrace self-expression then by representing their beliefs through the clothes that they wear while, in turn, showcasing their passion for such beliefs. Matthew 5:14-16 tells us that God desires Christians not to hide but rather be light to the world to glorify Him (NASB). The thoughts within this verse are also visible in this thesis concept through the following ideas: apparel may be used to share our pride and passion regarding Christianity, shine a light into the darkness, and represent Jesus. Creating a Christian clothing brand that appeals to Gen Z youth may, consequently, then help them shine their light and show their love for Jesus.

### THE BACKGROUND

Gen Z has grown to become the world's largest population, making up 32% of the global population, and has, in turn, made a definite impact on the world (Djafarova and Bowes). Due to this high population of digital-savvy individuals, the world has begun to change and will continue to change as this generation grows older. It is important to note how different these digital natives are from any other generation that has come before Gen Z. They have no literal comprehension of what the world was like before digital technology, as they were born into a world where digital technology predates them. Gen Z is uniquely positioned in society because of this technologically advanced upbringing. Gen Z has brought the world out of the past and will lead the way from the present into the future (Koulopoulos and Kelten 6). This is due to how they think and function as a generation. There are many different perspectives regarding Gen Z. One perspective is "to look at Gen Z not as just a generation, but as a new set of behaviors and attitudes about how the world will work and how we will need to respond in order to stay current, competitive, and relevant" (4). This perspective denotes, to a certain extent, that anyone may be Gen Z if they understand, value, and adopt Gen Z behaviors (4). In any case, it is evident that the world will change as it interacts with these individuals.

### THE DECLINE OF CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA

One idea that should be acknowledged is the gradual decline of Christianity in America as people continue to identify with no religious affiliation in increasing numbers (McKnight 32). Gen Z youth hold a distinctive view of the world and religion as they are the first post-Christian generation in America, with only 4% claiming a biblical worldview (32). Despite this and its decline in America, Christianity is still the most followed faith (White). To clarify, Christianity maintains the lead when the global population is considered. This lead does not seem to waver after consulting 2050 projections regarding this topic (White). One of the reasons for Christianity's decline in America, however, is Gen Z's use of pluralization when it comes to religion; this is one of the most damaging ideas in today's generation (White). This conglomeration of religions may distort the truth and cause confusion within this generation (White). The treatment of Gen Z within the church holds some correlation to the decline of Christianity in America. Gen Z is less involved than the older generations in the church due to how church members treat them. This is an issue that many people in the church fail to realize. It, in turn, goes unnoticed and unchecked. The church treats Gen Z like children

rather than disciples (McKnight 21). Such treatment may hinder the potential growth of Gen Z within the Christian community. Older generations may course correct and cultivate this growth via their encouragement and personal examples of disciplining (21). However, this course correction is time sensitive as Gen Z is starting to graduate and leave their mark on the world (21). The mark Gen Z leaves behind may then hold a connection to how the church and its members treat and communicate with them. Encouragement and discipleship seem to be the critical ingredients for creating strong Gen Z leaders for the kingdom of God (21). Strong Gen Z leaders are essential because God often uses youth at the heart of Spirit-led movements (21). The older generations, therefore, may set the stage for future generations by equipping them with various evangelistic methods. To clarify, Gen Z will make a difference in the world, but the older generations of Christians may guide them to further the kingdom of God.

Another idea with which Gen Z struggles is identity. The Christian clothing brand that will emerge as the result of this thesis project intends to target this issue. The creation of this brand will create a community in which youth can interact and bond with one another through a shared love for fashion and Jesus. This may

encourage Gen Z to find their identity in Jesus and, in turn, develop their identity within the context of biblical teachings (50). By finding an identity in Jesus, they may also find that fear and anxiety are replaced with hope and peace (50). The benefits of this development may extend past the reduction or elimination of anxiety and fear, however, because while the gospel combats doubt and purposelessness, it also redeems the negative attributes of this generation for the glory and purpose of God (50). Therefore, developing this Christian clothing brand and their identity in Jesus may assist Gen Z and others with the struggles presented in this life. It may increase their confidence and give them a purpose.

### **GEN Z CONSUMERS**

It is no secret that Gen Z consumers are taking over the fashion industry. In recent years, the spending power of Gen Z has reached 150 billion within the United States alone. In 2020 they represented 40% of consumers worldwide (Wang 72). Within the coming years, the primary consumers will transition from millennials to Gen Z (72). This idea highlights the need for companies to gain the perspective of these young consumers in order to market to them effectively. This generation then necessitates that companies evolve as their reactions to this group of individuals may determine the success or failure of their company (73). One perspective that would be advantageous for companies to see is that Gen Z views fashion as an opportunity to express who they are (73). This thought process may be vital in producing products this specific generation would buy. Suppose these clothing companies put in the effort to satisfy Gen Z customers by considering these customers' thought processes. In that case, they can expect to not only weather the storm with the Gen Z consumer but also emerge from it more successfully than they were before (73). As for the companies that do not consider the Gen Z consumer, they risk possible elimination from the market altogether (73). Therefore, a successful company must pay attention to the following primary fashion generation of consumers and their needs.

### THE GEN Z DEMOGRAPHIC

This demographic was chosen because they are the generation that will lead the next. They have a strong voice that, in turn, can be a powerful tool when equipped correctly. This brand can help to empower them. Gen Z has also become the leading retailer in today's world. They comprise 40% of retail consumers worldwide ("Why Ge-Z Teens"). This brand will benefit from this statistic. Gen Z should also be reached





because these individuals "are loyal and want to build relationships with authentic brands that stand for something," much like some of the main values of this clothing line (Macura). These are just some reasons why Gen Z was chosen as the target audience. It is essential to shape this generation's teens and young adults so that they can pass on God's love to future generations.

### THE PROBLEM

### THE CURRENT CHRISTIAN APPAREL INDUSTRY

Research shows that the Christian clothing market is indeed profitable. This profit, however, stemsfromthepurchasesoftheoldergenerations. To clarify, Gen Z is not the primary consumer of Christian products. Current Christian apparel does not align with what is considered stylish or trendy. Many of the Christian designs produced are outdated and overused. This may be due to the fact that Christian fashion is constrained by ethical concerns of modesty (Smit). The problem is that people often think in extremes when discussing topics such as modesty. This has had negative consequences as it has caused the Christian apparel scene to be known as old-fashioned and, ultimately, unappealing to today's Christian youth. Therefore, the current Christian clothing market is being carried by the older generations. The Christian market in America boasts an annual 1.75 trillion in spending power (Davis). This market and the older generations within America have embraced the idea that Christianity can be communicated through clothes (Neal). Such clothing items often incorporate Bible verses or biblical slogans to communicate their religious identity, even though it is severely overdone (Neal). This points to the idea that the older generations of Christians will buy Christian apparel regardless of whether it is an attractive design. Christians

want merchandise to wear to show their love for Jesus; this creates a strong market. Despite these facts, ignoring the Gen Z consumer would be a mistake by several standards.

### WHY WE SHOULD EMBRACE CHRISTIAN APPAREL

The Christian clothing brand emerging from this thesis project aims to counter this statistic. It intends to produce a new and revitalized wave of Christian apparel that appeals to the Christian Gen Z market by introducing apparel as a source of religious pride as well as a potential new means of ministry and evangelism. One book in the Bible that demonstrates this idea is Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes explains how an ordinary life may be appreciated by drawing from the perspective that simple things such as clothing are gifts from God (Smit). In other words, God has given people the simple things in life to enjoy. People can, in turn, use those same things to bring glory to God. Clothing, specifically, may be used to bring glory to God not through dull messages of futility, injustice, and sin but rather through a celebration of Christianity (Smit). This clothing brand intends to change the idea that Christian apparel has to be bland. Despite certain teachings, "somber and simple clothes are not required by Scripture, even if they possess value in many circumstances: the prominence of fine clothing as a metaphor throughout the Bible "Somber and simple clothes are not required by Scripture, even if they possess value in many circumstances: the prominence of fine clothing as a metaphor throughout the Bible indicates that these cannot be strictly immoral, or beautiful clothing would not be spoken of positively."

- Harma-Mae Smit

indicates that these cannot be strictly immoral, or beautiful clothing would not be spoken of positively" (Smit). This can be clouded by the traps Satan lays for humanity, including the clothes people wear (Barnes 5). Style choices make statements; people, therefore, need to be careful what statements they are making and realize the importance of those statements (5). When they pass style off as unimportant, the statement it makes may be misconstrued by onlookers. Some individuals disregard fashion because they are worried it will lead them astray. It should be noted; however, that fashion holds every opportunity to draw people closer to God. It could be argued that people who take care of their appearances and take notice of their style choices may be better equipped to use their personal appearance to glorify God. Updating Christian designs may also bring glory to God. This task may be accomplished by exploring design avenues besides script font bible verses and cliché cross designs. Designs may be built upon the idea that biblical teaching may be viewed in a fashionable form. For example, fashion can communicate biblical virtues such as prudence and justice (Smit). Apparel may be used as a form of evangelism when unique Christian designs secure the interest of non-believers, as these designs may become conversation starters between Gen Z believers and non-believers.

### THE SOLUTION

### **APPAREL AS AN ALTERNATIVE MINISTRY**

Many things are beginning to change in the church today. Alternative ways to share the gospel are increasingly being explored. Much of this exploration is caused by the need to evangelize Gen Z uniquely. Apparel can be one way this can be achieved; this sort of evangelism has the potential to become a new way to reach others. In fact, many theologians have not only studied but defended fashion as it is created and used by humans and should therefore be addressed in theology (Ramsey). In this regard, "nothing can be considered to be outside of being understood and studied in the light of faith." (Ramsey). In other words, it is time that theology considers fashion and its effects and how it can be a powerful tool and make an impact (Smit).

### THE SUCCESS OF THE CHRISTIAN APPAREL INDUSTRY

Apparel can be a powerful means to share the love of Jesus. It has the potential to grab the attention of others and start a conversation. Not only that, but apparel is something that intrigues. Christian apparel has become welcomed into the industry by believers who have supported its message and enabled it to reach new heights. Christian apparel introduced a new way of representing Jesus through the clothes on your back, making it a potentially effective method of

sharing God's love (Ramsey). This is impactful and should be taken seriously as Christian apparel grows. Ramsey states that in 2004, a whopping \$4.34 billion in sales were caused by Christian merchandise (Ramsey). This shows the colossal marketability of Christian apparel. According to past research, Christian apparel is a huge market, even outselling sportswear apparel from popular brands such as the NBA, and this is due to this demographic of Christian young adults seeking apparel that suits their passion for Jesus (Ramsey). Christian youth are also a significant contributor to Christian apparel sales, as it is common for church ministries, such as youth groups, to display their own merchandise (Ramsey).

Reclaiming the Christian apparel market with Gen Z youth may make the market soar, considering Gen Z's love for personal aesthetics and sensitivity to visual identity. This generation of youth aims to showcase their personal style, which entails quality, function, and style, ultimately showcasing their personal aesthetic, or brand, to others (Goldring & Azab). This emphasis is something that designers can capitalize on when designing Gen Z apparel.

The proposed apparel and clothing brand is designed as a means of community and evangelism for Gen Z. However, there are certain things to remember when creating a clothing brand. One thing to consider is merchandising. This is an important part of an apparel company. This consists of all the planning and development involving a brand and the presentation of its products and styling (Keiser et al. 24). All of these things are important to keep in mind when creating a company like this. In addition, merchandising dictates what will be included in the company line, such as the price for items or fabric they will use (24). It also will determine the development of the products (24). An effective marketing strategy is essential for a brand to become established. However, a company's vision and values are the most important part of the brand, so it is crucial to establish this first (27). As a Christian clothing brand, these aspects should be thoroughly thought through. Apparel companies should also pay special attention to their target audience and its environment, which is why it is essential to do market research beforehand on Gen Z individuals (40).

Apparel companies with this aim may benefit from establishing a solid brand to draw Gen Z individuals more effectively to their products. Additionally, because their exposure to branding is integrated everywhere, Gen Z ends up "having extensive brand knowledge, evolved brand preferences, and a stronger brand

engagement in self-concept" (Goldring and Azab). Generation Z individuals have grown up with a shared knowledge of brands and branding, therefore, making them more aware of what to expect, which is why it is vital that companies also incorporate good branding into the company. Ultimately, all of these things aid in creating a solid brand.

### THE EFFECT RELIGION HAS ON CONSUMERISM

When it comes to the retail world, many things can affect the success of sales. One of these things is religion and the shared values associated with it. Religious values have been proven to affect personal standards, principles, mental health, and mental processes related to consumer behavior (Davis). This idea is showcased in how Christians choose to support some brands and not others. Christians want to stand up for what they believe in and will either accept or reject products and companies to do so (Davis). To illustrate further, these Christian consumers will search for brands that reflect their biblically based beliefs and values, even if they must pay more for this experience (Davis).

Similarly, over 60% of Gen Z youth give more business to companies representing their causes (Wang 73). Gen Zindividuals aim to express their uniqueness and want to display their beliefs



"through fashion products" and find companies that take their values seriously (73). Christian and Gen Z consumers are similar in this way. They both value these important things and want to buy from companies that reflect those views. As Christian Gen Z consumers, they especially know their values and what they stand for. It does not stop here, however. Gen Z can be drawn to many other things as well. They prioritize personalization when it comes to the industry. To them, this is a means to obtain a tailored brand experience (73). By providing an experience, more Gen Z individuals will be reached. When it comes to fashion, Gen Z views it as a reflection of their personality and values (73). Designers can take this into consideration. Designers should also remember that when it comes to Christian consumers, they will even go as far as boycotting a company that they deem morally corrupt or controversial (Davis). Because of this, a Christian clothing brand needs to display biblical morals to bring in the Christian demographic, especially when targeting Gen Z youth. Davis also states that religion can significantly influence the overall consumption of products and marketing plans worldwide based on their values (Davis). These trends help designers know what to prioritize when marketing to Christian Gen Z individuals.

### ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL CLOTHING BRAND

We must remember that fashion, regardless of what form, is art. Clothes inspire consumers, just as art does. In other words, "Popular brands don't just sell clothes; they sell stylish looks that inspire people" ("What Makes A Successful"). Because of this, we should remember this correlation and market products in a new way. That being said, several things must be done to have a successful clothing brand. First, a company must understand its audience to market to them. Without knowing the audience, a company will not know how to market to them ("What Makes A Successful"). Second, a brand must have a unique selling point. What are the company's unique features? By having a unique selling point, the company will succeed more in obtaining loyal consumers ("What Makes A Successful"). The third thing that must be done is to control company finances. A business will be better off tracking where the company's money is going ("What Makes A Successful"). Fourth, a brand should inspire by producing new content. By creating fresh content, consumers will stay inspired by their fashion styles ("What Makes A Successful"). Finally, a brand should be a good storyteller. A clothing line cannot succeed without marketing and selling the brand to

consumers ("What Makes A Successful"). This will help to capture and maintain interest within a brand. In conclusion, all of these things make up a successful clothing line and will help elevate branding. They are tools that can be easily implemented into a business plan and will make a lasting impact.

### MARKETING TO GEN Z CONSUMERS

As of 2020, over 65 million Americans, or 40% of the United States, are part of Gen Z, resulting in colossal sales opportunities (Goldring and Azab). In order to capitalize on this, it is imperative that designers take the time to learn and understand this generation so that they can market to them more effectively (Goldring). In other words, designers should consider the market and the consumers that make up the market. Social media is an effective means of reaching this generation. Since Gen Z stay connected through their devices, social media marketing campaigns have proven to be an effective means of marketing to this generation (Goldring). In addition, these individuals aim to reflect their personality through the companies they identify with and the merchandise they purchase (Goldring). This makes sense when thinking about how passionate Gen Z is about self-expression. Through Gen Z's constant exposure to social media apps and, therefore,

exposure to thousands of brands online, they have come to expect online brands to be reliable, providing the information and branding needed to authentically represent their company (Goldring). Gen Z needs to have access to information when they want it so that they can further engage with the brand. Not only that, but this demographic of youth values social media as a means to keep up with brands and their promotions (Goldring). A brand needs to have not only an online presence but a social media one as well. It will propel marketability to



Gen Z and boost sales. In addition, having been a well-educated generation, Gen Z knows the running price for goods (Ayuni 167). They have become a challenge for today's brands, having been different from other generations. They will continue to be so as they endeavor to obtain quality products for a reasonable price, all while keeping with the brands they know (167). As a result, companies need to be aware of this and assign value correctly to their merchandise.

For many Gen Z youth, clothing is one of the essential things they will buy when they first gain their independence, and it is not hard to understand why since these youth use personal style as a means of self-expression (Djafarova and Bowes). In addition, many Gen Z individuals spend so much on apparel because these products are easy to access and do not require problem-solving skills, which ultimately encourages impulsive buying (Djafarova). There has also been research on Instagram impulse buying and how that is influenced by different elements such as attractive product styling, photography, and promotional advertising (Djafarova). Instagram followers and influencer recommendations also influence impulsive buying (Djafarova). Not only that but also, with the introduction of Instagram's shopping service, it has become elementary for users to access and purchase through the app, which

very much influences impulse buys (Djafarova). Fashion brands that incorporate solid branding on Instagram also influence the buying habits of Gen Z, as it encourages brand trust (Djafarova). Many of these ideas will be implemented into this clothing brand and how it markets to Gen Z youth.

Social media has always had a significant impact on Gen Z individuals. The Gen Z community does not remember a time without having social apps at their fingertips (Fomm and Read 11). This is a much different reality than other generations of consumers. As a result, social media marketing can significantly affect Gen Z's purchases in several ways. In today's world, social media influencers have become an effective marketing tool for Gen Z youth, as these influencers recommend products that interest this demographic of consumers (Pinto and Paramita). Companies can hire these influencers to "promote their brands, items, or services by displaying a good image of influencers on items or brands to attract the attention of followers to buy or use endorsed products or services" (Pinto). Influencer marketing is a powerful tool that can be utilized, and Gen Z individuals respond to it well. Just as it is important for companies to expand to the web to reach consumers and increase sales, it is also important for them to expand to social media, using practical tools found within, such as influencer marketing. In

addition, over 85% of products are advertised through social media to capture the attention of Gen Z individuals, as they are comfortable with online shopping (Pinto). This is one of the primary sources of marketing and purchases. Companies can market to Gen Z through social media for sales and engagement (Pinto). In addition, regarding how much Gen Z is affected by influencers, an influencer's suggestion affects 44%, and 70% of these individuals regularly follow influencers (Pinto). Through this, it is evident that social media influencers impact Gen Z's buying habits, and this demographic is much more motivated to purchase items with the influencer's recommendation than without (Pinto). Because of their considerable influence and reviews on products, Gen Z trusts the opinion of these social media trendsetters and, therefore, trusts the product (Pinto). However, it should be noted that females comprise the majority, or 55%, of those impacted by influencer recommendations (Pinto).

In other words, these influencers impact the buying choices of Gen Z youth and, therefore, can be used to increase product success. Many qualities go into a social media influencer when establishing a connection, such as their creditability as an influencer, their personal brand, and the connections associated with the company item that they are promoting, and

these are important factors as they create brand loyalty with influencers and Gen Z (Pinto). Gen Z will be more loyal to brands with effective influencers. In other words, influencers that can provide thorough reviews on a product will ultimately make it more difficult for Gen Z to look elsewhere for a product (Wang 75). Because of this reason, influencers can be utilized to increase marketability and sales for apparel. Word of mouth can be a powerful tool when equipped. It is the most effective means of marketing and what consumers trust most. This, in turn, causes higher sales to take place (Whitler). This tool should be utilized for this reason.

### MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN MARKETING TO GEN Z **CONSUMERS**

Regarding successful marketing with Gen Z consumers, some mistakes can be avoided. One of these mistakes is a brand not being truthful with its portrayal or narratives (Fomm and Read 14). In today's world, Gen Z youth force companies to reconsider consumer relationships (21). This is partly due to the fact that they are "a proud crew" and value things like diversity and intelligence (21). In addition, many past marketing schemes fail to effectively reach Gen Z youth because of their experience growing up with marketing all around them

in their daily lives (Djafarova and Bowes). Due to this exposure, they can sort through blatant advertisements quickly, dismissing them (Djafarova). This generation of consumers is more aware of marketing strategies and brand identity and can quickly determine their trust and opinion of a company or product (Djafarova). Because of Gen Z's social media intelligence, apparel companies might benefit from rethinking how they approach this new wave of consumers.

### **EVANGELIZING TO GEN Z** YOUTH

When it comes to evangelizing to Gen Zindividuals, some mindsets can be considered. According to Gen Z youth, evangelism impacts them the most when it is seen being lived out by Christians and not when they actively try to convert someone ("What Makes for an Engaging Witness"). By representing Jesus in their lives, Christian designers can minister to this community. Christian youth should know their actions reflect Jesus since Gen Z is watching. It is also important to approach Gen Z individuals without judgment when having faith conversations, according to 72% of Gen Z youth ("What Makes for an Engaging Witness"). That is one of the most critical factors that Christian youth can consider when sharing their faith and, ultimately, representing Jesus.

their interactions with these individuals when sharing their faith. More than 34% of nonbelievers in this generation think negatively toward believers quoting scripture to inform or prove a point ("What Makes for an Engaging Witness"). This is often overdone, and this generation has expected to hear it from growing up around other generations. In addition, over 30% say that they dislike when believers wish to pray for them as part of the faith conversation ("What Makes for an Engaging Witness"). This can also be overdone when evangelizing to others. While prayer is important, not everyone is comfortable being prayed over during faith conversations. It makes many non-believers feel uncomfortable from not being used to it. Also, over 23% disliked being asked to explain their lifestyle or personal ideas and values ("What Makes for an Engaging Witness"). This makes people feel as though they have to explain themselves, making the non-believer uncomfortable when trying to have a faith conversation. In most cases, Gen Z youth seem to view Christianity with open eyes. They are aware of and often agree with non-Christians' views regarding evangelism ("What Makes for an Engaging Witness"). We as Christians should be aware of this and try to approach evangelism in the right way to make an impact on Gen Z

Christians also benefit from being aware of





individuals. Gen Z youth prefer to be evangelized through conversations that do not pressure them, which will benefit their relationships ("What Makes for an Engaging Witness"). This is a common theme in this generation's teens and young adults. As for trying to connect with Gen Z, it can sometimes be difficult for other generations, especially when it comes to faith. These leaders are challenged by the differences among generations, making it hard for some leaders to connect with this generation (Bergler 75). Instead, "We will be more effective in forming members of Gen Z into communities of mature disciples of Jesus if we adapt our methods to maximize the opportunities and overcome the challenges they face by their shared generational traits" (75). We should teach Spiritual maturity to Gen Z believers because it is vital to producing effective evangelism. When discussing the topic of spiritual maturity, biblical teachings share valuable characteristics of discipleship of individuals and how we can apply this to Gen Z, sharing the best way to handle spiritual hurdles through guidance (76). The Bible tells us that mature spirituality is discovered after spending time growing with Jesus, like the disciples in the New Testament (76). Spiritual maturity can be seen through a solid understanding of biblical teachings and faith (77). Understanding the basics of Scripture is essential so believers do not mislead others or

use Scripture out of context. Second, spiritually mature Christians thoroughly understand the importance of spiritual discernment, and they learn through experience how to apply this biblical knowledge in their daily lives (77). This is vital for Gen Z youth to understand as well. Third, believers must show spiritual maturity by casting off sinful behavior and adopting healthy ones (77). Gen Z must also be in control of themselves concerning this and realize the importance of casting off sin. Fourth, spiritually mature Christians see the importance and value of serving or being involved in the church (78). This is especially important for Christian youth to do in order to learn from others so that they can be a Godly example to other Gen Z. Lastly, these believers show maturity through understanding suffering and consolation as a way to grow in their relationship with the Lord, using spirituality found in Christ as their foundation (78). Believers would benefit by having a Christ-centered spirituality that can be utilized in their walk through life. Ultimately, these things aid in spiritual maturity, which Gen Z youth can exercise while sharing the gospel or representing Jesus. Engaged Christian Gen Z youth in the body of Christ assist in defining how to make spiritually mature disciples among their Gen Z peers (80). They provide this because they know how to speak to their generation; they need the right tools to help



them along. Christian youth that is engaged in the church assist in sharing the gospel effectively with Gen Z due to knowing the culture of their generation (80). This is such a wonderful thing, and we should continue to encourage our Gen Z believers to reach their generation for Jesus. Through this Christian apparel brand and the items produced, Gen Z will be able to reach their peers more effectively, maintain their relationship with them, and encourage them in their relationship with Jesus. By not reaching and equipping this generation, the globe will find itself in a post-Christian world, robbing them of experiencing the love of Jesus (McKnight 33). This is something that should be remembered. The Gen Z believers of today should realize the importance of evangelization and take it upon themselves to bring others to the Lord. In order to adequately share the gospel, believers understand the culture behind the generations so as to "better contextualize the gospel for its members" (32). In other words, we must understand the culture of Gen Z youth in order to minister to them more effectively. Who better to minister to this generation than their own peers-Gen Z Christians. By teaching and mentoring these Christian youth, the church will bring up strong individuals in faith. Gen Z is different and has the potential to do amazing things for God. They need a bit of direction, encouragement, and some style to make this happen.

### CONCLUSION

This paper discusses how Gen Z individuals are bringing changes across the globe and redefining the apparel industry. As a result, ministries and designers adapt. In order to encourage Gen Z youth to share the gospel through alternative means such as apparel, designers can make it easier for them by first giving them the means to shine their light on Jesus. In other words, the consensus of this project is that apparel can be a tool that Gen Z youth can use to share their faith and express their love for Jesus. Doing this will give them the confidence to stand up for what they believe in, a community to connect with, and pride in themselves as believers.

This paper highlights studies showing that the Christian apparel industry has a faithful market and has the opportunity to grow even larger with the introduction of modern designs targeted to Gen Z youth. Studies have also found that Christian apparel can be a tool that Gen Z individuals can use as a means of ministry and evangelism. This is significant because it gives this generation a means, besides verbal, to share Jesus and be proud and confident in what they are wearing. 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things for the glory of God" (NASB). This can be applied to clothing as well. We can use it to bring glory to God. This proposed apparel can assist believers in this goal by designing the clothes believers wear. Believers can proudly

wear this apparel to share the light with others. Ultimately, every Christian generation's mission is to share the love of Jesus with others. The Lord instructs us to "'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation'" (NASB, Mark 16:15). Gen Z youth can be encouraged to take up their sword and do just that.

### RESEARCH METHODS

### **CASE STUDIES**

The research found within this thesis project benefited from additional information collected on Christian clothing brands similar to this concept. The information gathered from these studies aided in providing vital details regarding this concept, while also helping to shape the deliverables that will be presented within the thesis. Additional research regarding Gen Z trends and business creation was also performed to better understand the project's concept.

### **VISUAL ANALYSIS**

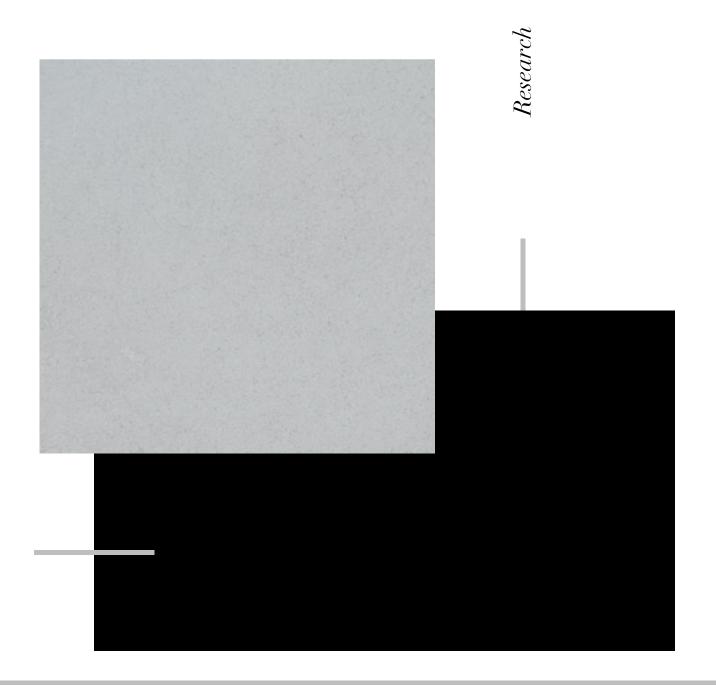
The visual research conducted for this thesis project consisted of fabrics, apparel designs, apparel styling, trending designs, and product packaging. Additional visual research was performed in the areas of photography, modeling, social media graphics, and more. Through this exploration of information, the student has become more well-rounded in understanding this information and has learned to execute the areas more effectively.

### **CONTENT ANALYSIS**

A content analysis was also beneficial as the student prepared for their thesis. This aided the concept in evaluating all of the content that would be presented as deliverables for the thesis. These materials were analyzed, and the student considered apparel design themes. Overall, the concept of the pieces presented for the thesis deliverables was examined to ensure their similarity to trendy Christian design that would capture the attention of Gen Z youth.

### **PROTOTYPING**

Prototyping is an effective way to secure additional information regarding the products developed for the thesis deliverables. To accomplish this, the student printed some of the apparel designs and "tested" them to see if they were of good quality and if they appealed to Gen Z individuals. This research will be beneficial to the eventual deliverables for the thesis.



### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### GOD THE FATHER APPAREL

### **CASE STUDY ONE**

With the skills he acquired through his experience in marketing and design, Drew Urquhart created the streetwear company God the Father Apparel for Christians to represent God in style. He is the founder and sole owner of God the Father, and through great effort, he has successfully launched his company. Urquhart's motivation for this project was to give believers a way to share the gospel with something other than words. He understood how difficult it can be to share Jesus and has personally experienced how "awkward and confrontational" it can be (Arroyo). As a solution, he wants his products to spark the conversation for you (Arroyo). In other words, through the pieces worn, believers are given a new means of evangelism. That is his main motivation with this project.

Fresh out of college, Urquhart started God the Father in the fall of 2019 with a goal to launch a Christian streetwear brand that would "fill a gap in the market" and give Christians a means to share their faith subtly through the clothes that they wear ("God the Father Apparel")—ultimately, furthering the kingdom of God. Urquhart wanted his clothing line to start a faith conversation without the pushiness or awkwardness attached (Hughes). In addition, he wanted to give young Christians apparel that is "cool" and a brand they can proudly represent. Based in Los Angeles, this company creates apparel similar in style to the Yeezy brand (Sola-Santiago). Yet, more affordable and without all the holes (Arroyo). Through Urquhart's success with this brand, he is effectively reaching the multitudes and providing a means for Christians to share the gospel.

As for challenges he has faced, Urquhart stated that one of the most difficult ones was figuring out the overhead when it came to business (Hughes). While he did have the design and marketing portion of the business in a solid position, he had admitted he had no business

experience when he first started this company. Another challenge for Urquhart was having to hire help when it came to creating designs for graphics after God the Father exploded in popularity. When Urquhart first began God the Father, it was just him. Now that his company has expanded, he finds it difficult to outsource and blames it on his perfectionist nature as a designer (Hughes). Despite these challenges, Urquhart's company continues to grow with God's grace.

This project has led to success for the brand in modern Christian circles. In fact, within its first year, the brand racked in nearly half a million in profit, which enabled Urquhart to expand his business from his house to a new company warehouse (Hughes). This success was partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While more prominent apparel brands decreased their engagement with marketing tools like Google and Facebook ads, smaller companies, such as God the Father, were able to soar, allowing them

to make more than ten times their profit as a result (Hughes). Another factor that contributed to success was Urquhart's decision to incorporate brand ambassadors into his marketing strategy to advertise God the Father's products. This was a genius idea on his part and allowed his company to grow substantially. In fact, within the first month of incorporating brand ambassadors, the company went from making \$5,000 to \$50,000 in sales ("God the Father Brand Ambassadors"). He also stated that micro-influencers also had a part in the company's success ("God the Father Brand Ambassadors"). He claims that all the work and effort "is worth the reward when he receives DMs, texts, and emails saying that a conversation started from God the Father Apparel" (Hughes). This shows that when we use our gifts for God, He will also bless us.

God the Father Apparel is like my own concept through the heart and passion behind the brand and the goals. Like Urquhart, I also see

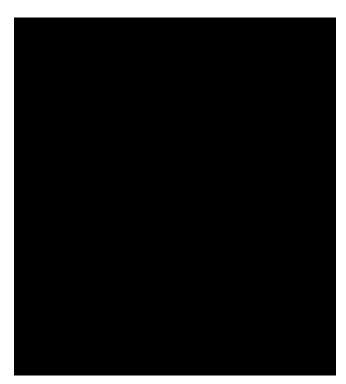


Fig. 1. God-the-Father-Apparel1. https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/ christian-clothing-god-the-father-vancouver.

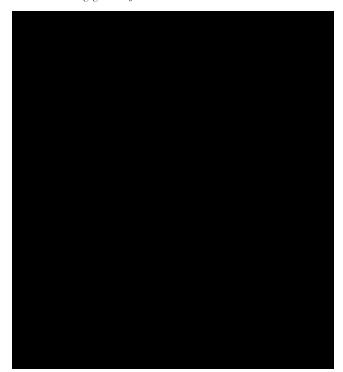


Fig. 2. 13. https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/christian-clothing-god-thefather-vancouver.

the importance of using our God-given skills to further the kingdom of God and do it in style. Urquhart and his clothing line, along with my own, see the importance of revitalizing the Christian apparel scene through good design and realize how important it is to create products that Christians are proud to wear. The truth is that the Christian apparel industry has been drowning in cliché and outdated designs for years, and through modern, trendy clothing brands like God the Father, they have been breathing life back into it. This ultimately helps expand the kingdom of God and creates a new means of evangelism. By researching this brand, I have learned many helpful things that will aid in the solution of my thesis.

### **VISUAL ANALYSIS**

This selection of photos depicts some of the products God the Father Apparel produced. I also showcase some of the marketing platforms they use, such as their company's Instagram page. As for the apparel, this company's products display biblical themes and ideas in a modern, trendy light. This company's target audience fits mainly in the Christian young adult age range. However, people that buy from this company can span from teenagers to older adults; such is a benefit of an apparel brand.

People consume these visuals through an online retail website and social media presence. They also consume it by buying and wearing the products to represent the brand and Jesus. The culture behind this project lies within modern Christian circles from various Christian denominations, which ultimately helps to cover a broader audience. This brand fits into these circles because it gives Christian individuals a means to express themselves through fashion while sharing and representing their love for Christ. In other words, they consume these pieces because it allows them to be trendy while sharing the gospel, which many of today's youth and young adults appreciate. Wearing their faith and representing Jesus is a huge part of Christian culture. Because of these facts, this project fits within Christian culture.

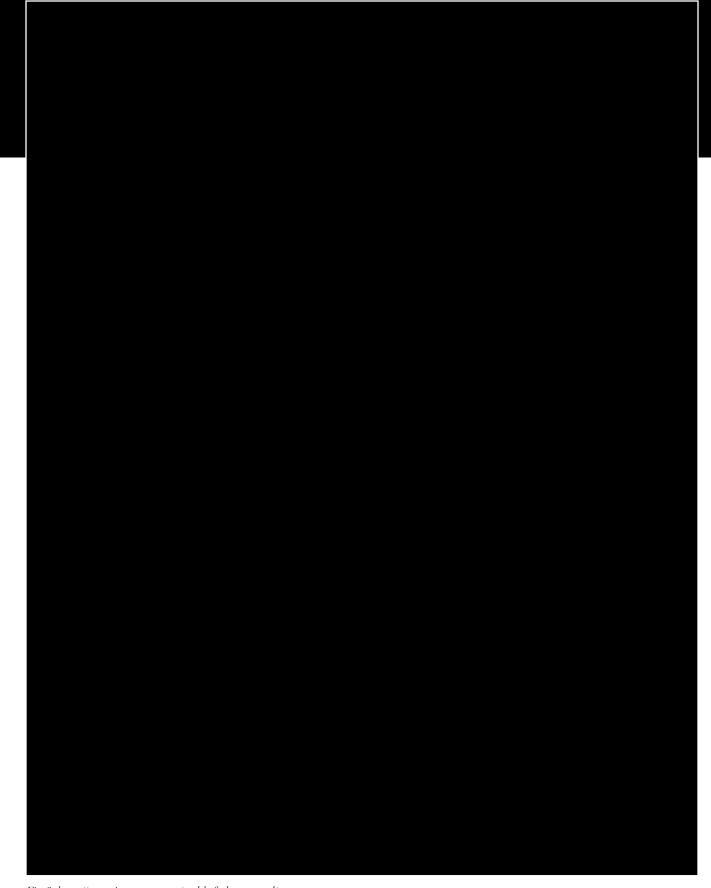
The images that I have displayed, along with the content shown within, align with what is being discussed by presenting the apparel designed with modern Christians in mind. This streetwear brand displays clothing with Biblical themes that are not only trendy but also comfy, with many T-shirts, hoodies, joggers, etc., that attract the eye of millennial and Gen Z age groups. They also encourage believers to share

their faith, and start a conversation, through the clothes they wear, ultimately furthering the kingdom of God. These images showcase a wide range of visual compositions. The models showcase and promote the products in the most effective manner and are positioned to do so within the shot while looking candid. They think through the best way to display the products and promote the brand. This effectively conveys the brand's mood and aesthetic and promotes the products for higher sales. The purpose of these compositional elements is to display the products, and this brand does it effectively.

As for the content within these photos, there are many things to evaluate. First and foremost, the apparel that is being showcased, as this is the most important visual element in this circumstance. The photography and model subjects are also important to consider, as they show off the displayed apparel. It is also essential to consider the brand while evaluating these visuals to see how they convey and maintain their brand style throughout multiple platforms through elements like color, styling, mood, poses, accessories, photo editing, and more. As for semiotics found within these pieces, there are many. There are many to choose from because of the various symbols commonly associated with Biblical themes. As seen in the Instagram grid photo, many of which God the Father has used within their apparel designs, such as the cross and dove. This also applies and transitions into the idea of iconography, such as with the cross. This, once again, highlights Biblical themes through images.

Some of the aesthetic choices made to make this brand successful were the simplistic, hiphop-inspired look commonly associated with streetwear fashion. As I mentioned above, Urquhart drew some visual influences from Kanye West's brand, Yeezy, which is a good representation of this look. Both of these brands offer clean visuals, as well as comfort, in their streetwear apparel. The designs and garments chosen by the brand have allowed them to reach success with their young adult Christian demographic. These aesthetic choices have enabled me to relate them to my own concept because of how similar my brand is to theirs and their look. With my streetwear brand, I would like to include simplistic and trendy designs showcasing Biblical themes. While I am not a fan of their apparel designs, I admire this brand and draw inspiration from their style choices. This visual information has affected my own design decisions for my thesis deliverables. In

other words, through evaluating this line and its products, this brand has proven valuable in providing inspiration for unique Hip-Hop-inspired apparel designs and brand imagery. I will apply this knowledge to my thesis problem for a successful solution.



 $Fig.\ 3.\ https://www.instagram.com/godthefatherapparel/,$ 

### FEAR OF GOD

### **CASE STUDY TWO**

Jerry Lorenzo is the mind behind the American luxury streetwear brand Fear of God. Lorenzo's first experience in the clothing retail scene was working nights for Diesel while in college (Tan). This influenced his career choices and gave him some knowledge needed to create Fear of God. Lorenzo started his own company after becoming tired of his limited possibilities regarding clothing pieces. He started this Los Angeles-based company in 2013 and prided himself on creating "timeless, wearable garments" that showcase contemporary culture in America while also "Paying homage to the unique heritage with a contemplated and sophisticated fusion through high-grade materials and fine craftsmanship" ("About"). The motivation behind this project was to create apparel that is missing from people's wardrobes, to fill the gap in the industry. Lorenzo believes that if something is lacking from his own closet, it must be lacking from others as well (Richardson). This idea is part of what sparked the idea for Lorenzo to create Fear of God. He also created this brand as a sort of conviction. He wanted to use it as a means to touch people

and convey his message (Kosh). In summary, this brand makes a subtle statement through its minimalist garments. Many diverse influences, such as hip-hop, rock and roll, and Christianity, went into this brand, and Lorenzo is proud to represent all of them. Although his line is not labeled a "Christian" clothing brand, Lorenzo still uses it to glorify God and share Jesus (Kosh). As a result of Lorenzo's vision, his brand has soared in modern fashion and only continues to grow.

When creating this clothing brand, Lorenzo faced many challenges, enabling him to grow professionally and individually. One of his first challenges was early in the company's beginning. While searching in Los Angeles to find someone to distribute his designs, he lost nearly \$30,000 through businesses that took advantage of him due to his lack of industry experience (Sanchez). They demanded that he pay upfront for their services, and when he did, they never delivered (Sanchez). Another challenge was the sudden and unexpected growth that Fear of God experienced once it gained traction. The brand was not "built for

immediate mass success," and Lorenzo himself was still learning how to run a business and set up production, as he had no prior experience and started from scratch (Richardson). Not only that, but he only had a small team at the time, and everyone struggled to keep up with the demand (Richardson). Despite these setbacks, Lorenzo continued to have faith and trust that God was in control. His company has grown into something much bigger than he had imagined, and it is all due to his vision, ambition, and God's grace.

This project found much success with their luxury products, especially with celebrity consumers that respected Lorenzo's vision and beliefs, such as Kanye West and Justin Bieber. As a result, Fear of God has gone on to participate in many successful collaborations with brands such as Vans, Nike, Adidas, and celebrities like Kanye West and Kendrick Lamar (Neiman). With the success of Fear of God, Lorenzo decided to create another version of the brand, Essentials, to make his garments more accessible to everyone. This brand features some of the same style choices and clean aesthetics as Fear of God's products but is more affordable to the average individual. This can be "attributed to Jerry Lorenzo's consistent vision of crafting something for everyone. He put a unique spin on an everyday primary apparel offering and made it premium and accessible to those who were interested" (Neiman). When asked about his success. Lorenzo said that he feels blessed to be able to do what he loves and that he gets to share his unique perspective and interpretation of clothing with the world (Kosh). As a result, Lorenzo's clothing lines and collaborations will continue to thrive.

Like Lorenzo, I also want to fill a gap in the Christian apparel industry regarding trendy streetwear for Christian Gen Z youth to wear. I want to create appealing garments that they will be proud to wear, with classic staples of clothing that bring out the right feel and mood for the brand, much like Lorenzo. His overall vision is similar to my own, though I will incorporate more hip-hop influences and more graphical elements into my garments. Not only that, but I admire how Lorenzo incorporated

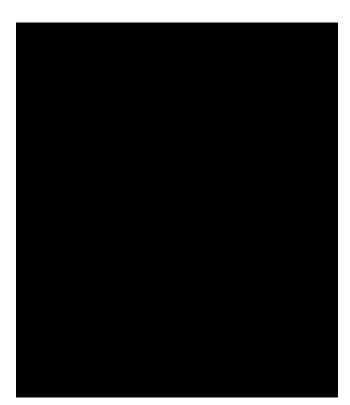
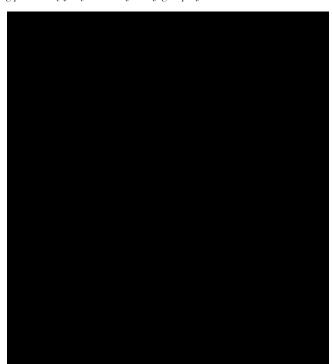


Fig. 4. jerry-lorenzo-fear-of-god-gq-november-2020-05. https://www. gq.com/story/jerry-lorenzo-fear-of-god-profile.



 $Fig.\ 5.\ jerry\text{-}lorenzo\text{-}fear\text{-}of\text{-}god\text{-}gq\text{-}november\text{-}2020\text{-}10.\ https://www.}$ gq.com/story/jerry-lorenzo-fear-of-god-profile.

inspiration from his different interests in life, such as hip-hop, grunge/rock and roll, and even baseball, into his clothing style. I have grown to learn that I tend to do this as well. I love how he combined all of these aspects that shaped him into his clothing brand to share clothing and an experience through it. Clothing is a true means of self-expression, and I love how Lorenzo views that.

### **VISUAL ANALYSIS**

This selection of images showcases the products that Lorenzo has created for his clothing line. Some are worn by models, while Lorenzo himself models other products. Regardless, they do well at representing the brand and its aesthetic throughout the Instagram grid and other photos. This brand draws celebrities and other wealthy individuals who have a taste for luxury garments as the primary target audience for this clothing line. However, Fear of God Essentials, Lorenzo's sister company, offers more affordable options, which draws in a wider audience.

The targeted demographic consumes the content through the visual experience he offers through his products, media, and other forms of imagery. In other words, through his clothes and visuals, Lorenzo provides a unique aesthetic that speaks to others that appreciate his vision and style. This pool of consumers also "take in" this brand through the actual physical products that one can buy and wear to express themselves. This project fits into the culture of higher fashion found in wealthier circles. In addition, Lorenzo's pieces draw the attention of others in fashion through the garments he chooses, how he cuts them, and how they drape and sit on the body. Many diverse influences go into Lorenzo's clothes from different genres and cultural scenes. All of the elements Lorenzo uses as inspiration convey a broader context of culture.

The visuals shown relate to the text in that they represent Lorenzo's hard work and dedication to wanting to create a brand that would fill a gap in the market and capture the attention of others, ultimately furthering the kingdom of God by Lorenzo giving Him credit for his success. These images showcase the products that Lorenzo creates through stunning visuals and shoots that accurately represent the mood of his brand. The text does well at explaining the ideas behind the products and graphics. In addition, these photos show the sophisticated composition that Lorenzo strategically used to display Fear of God's pieces. Because of this, the composition

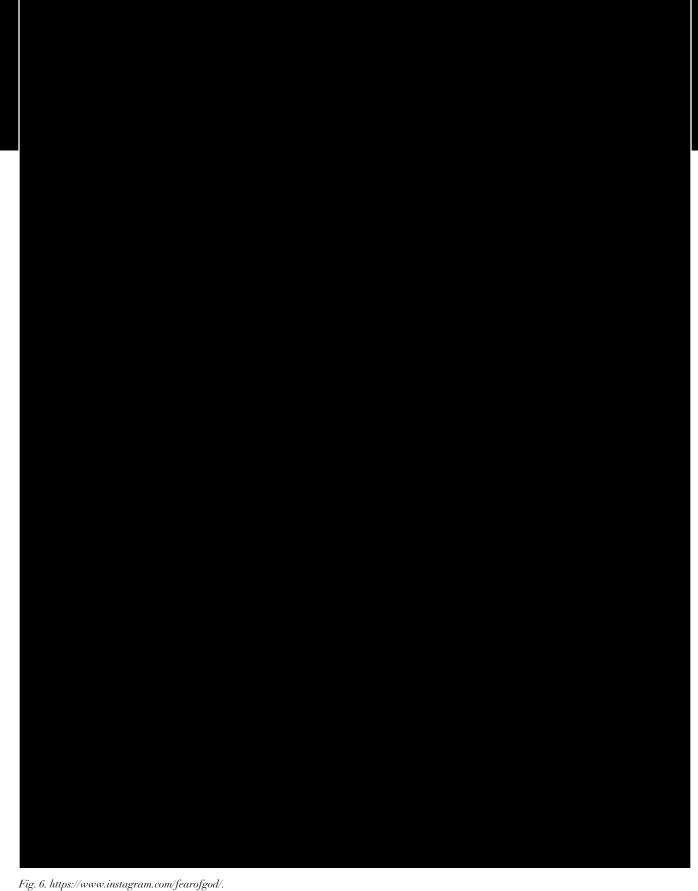
can be interpreted to fully highlight the apparel shown through areas such as the positioning of the models and how the clothes lay.

Fear of God's apparel pieces conveys a minimalist aesthetic with primarily muted tones that catch the eye of a distinct demographic. Not only that, he chooses garments that one typically does not see in other brands. For example, much more goes into a plain T-shirt than you think. The cut, the fit, and how it drapes are just a few of the many factors that must be considered. Analyzing Fear of God's apparel can teach many important things related to a clothing line. The company's social media platforms, website, and collections are also valuable areas to analyze. As for semiotics found within the brand, there are close to none, if at all. Lorenzo prides himself more on the actual garments themselves, both with Fear of God and Essentials. In fact, the company's logo itself is scarcely displayed on products. The same applies to iconography.

As for aesthetic choices, Lorenzo draws inspiration from different areas of his life. While moving around the country growing up, Lorenzo was exposed to many different scenes like "rock, grunge, and metal" as well as "gospel and hiphop" (Kosh). Due to this diverse exposure, Lorenzo grew up with an eclectic style, all of which he claims to make up who he is and what he is about. Along with these influences, Lorenzo uses a "practical approach to navigating the Angeleno lifestyle of gym-work-play with effortless chic" pieces (Kosh). This mix of influences creates Lorenzo's unique style, which has led him to success. Lorenzo has said that his brand is all about the basics, the staples needed in a solid wardrobe; through that, they thrive (Perry). In addition, Lorenzo's faith tops it all off, being that "unknown element that turns something

laid back into something with conviction" (Kosh). Because of his unique vision and apparel taste, his brand has grown quite successful.

Through my evaluation of Jerry Lorenzo's brand, I have learned that he and I have a similar vision and fashion taste. We view ideal apparel in much the same way. Another important takeaway from this brand is the combination of influences and how Lorenzo combines them into pieces that attract. Lorenzo also encourages selfexpression, using apparel as a tool, much like my brand. Most importantly, he uses it to bring glory to God by reaching specific circles through his products and starting a faith conversation through a mutual love for fashion.



### **NATIVE SUPPLY**

### **CASE STUDY THREE**

When it came to the creation of this brand, two men were the minds behind it. These men are designer Jon Aragon and Christian rapper Kevin Burgess, or "KB." Jon Aragon is the creative director behind Native Supply ("Jon Aragon," TCG), while KB, an "award-winning hip-hop artist," is the visionary behind the brand ("Hip Hop Artist KB"). Together, they have created a line that has grown into one of the most popular Christian clothing brands in recent circles. Located in Tampa, Florida, this brand "seeks to use clothing as a means to stir one's affections for God" ("Native Supply"). The motivation behind this project is to "supply uniforms for Kingdom citizens," and the brand states that it is its goal to do everything for God's glory ("About"). In addition, this project was created in order to give Christ-followers a means to represent the kingdom of God through modern fashion trends. It allows them to sell merchandise to these natives and represent Jesus while wearing these products. Native Supply wishes to use apparel as a way to communicate its message, with a heart to share God in everything they do and create

("About"). Native Supply also believes in "faith in fabric" which, to them, has two meanings. First, one can trust the brand's quality and products through ethically sourced merchandise, and second, through Christ's involvement with every apparel graphic ("About"). This is an excellent way to represent Jesus and promote something within Christian circles. Finally, Native Supply believes that "this world is not our home" and that we, as Christians, are "natives of another world" ("About"). They do not shy away from fully representing their faith, even regarding clothes.

As for the challenges they faced, Native Supply went through what every business has when creating a company from the bottom up. Production is an essential and challenging part of a brand. Another one might have been having co-ownership of a brand and Jon Aragon's departure in December 2021 after five years at Native Supply ("Jon Aragon"). There are challenges to this business like any other. The outcome of this project is that through their unique vision and God's blessing, they have

grown to be a successful Christian streetwear brand. Through Aragon's involvement, revenue was raised by 40% and online traffic by 150% ("Jon Aragon"). Not only that, but Aragon's approach to marketing created millions of sales, paving the way for Native Supply's success ("Jon Aragon"). With the proper marketing campaigns, a company can soar, as seen through this brand.

This project is similar to my own in that it also shares the love of Jesus through clothing. Their designs speak to modern Christians, similar to my concept, and therefore, help start a conversation through streetwear fashion. It solves the problem of outdated and overused Christian apparel designs by bringing in attractive pieces. Through evaluating this streetwear company, I will gain valuable insights on perfecting my concept to succeed.

### **VISUAL ANALYSIS**

This selection of images displays the apparel pieces created by Native Supply. It showcases what they have to offer as a streetwear brand for merchandise. Ultimately, though, they display the gospel through the attractive and modern clothing pieces that they produce. The audience for this company mostly fits into the age range of young adults but can be stretched by anyone who buys from this company. The style of this brand, however, will appeal more to the young adult age range who take pride in representing Jesus and streetwear fashion.

The target audience consumes the content by purchasing the content shown on the retail site. Secondly, they can consume the visuals through the various forms of media associated with this brand, such as the online retail website, social media platforms, YouTube channel, and more. All these things allow the target audience to consume Native Supply content in a way that means something to them. As for the cultural influences involved in this project, there are



Fig. 7. https://native.supply/.

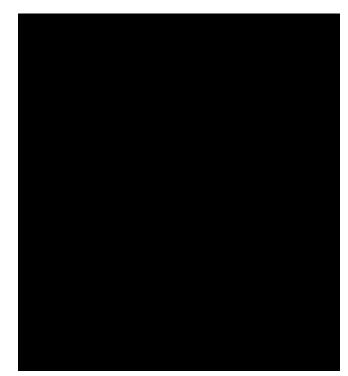


Fig. 8. https://native.supply/.

many. Native Supply is all about culture, ethnicity, and heritage, but at the forefront, they believe that we are natives of another world, our eternal life ("KB x Native Supply"). As such, Christian culture and evangelism are important aspects of this brand. Also, Aragon's heritage plays a role in Native Supply's content and visual choices, such as clothing collections. Being the son of Colombian immigrants, Aragon has a passion for diversity, and it allows him to share a unique perspective "when approaching design and problem-solving" ("A Proud Son"). Because of this, he creates products to better draw in several cultures, not only Christians.

Through an evaluation of Native Supply's displayed products and the accompanied text, they share the mission and drive behind their brand: to spread the name of Jesus by wearing "uniforms" for the kingdom of God. In other words, create Christian clothing that believers are proud to wear. This brand does so much to promote its products in an appealing way. Aragon, the head designer of the brand, "lead efforts for seasonal clothing collections" and headed all visual media as well ("Jon Aragon," LinkedIn). Due to Aragon's expert skill led to an increase in sales and exposure, which ultimately helped the brand and furthered the kingdom of God.

When it comes to composition, these images showcase a mastery of the topic by highlighting the apparel. Through the visual elements, the brand is effectively communicated. This composition is also shown throughout the Instagram grid that is included above. Even in these photographs, the apparel is showcased in a way that effectively displays the merchandise. As for the designs on the apparel themselves, they can range from highly illustrated designs to their minimalist logo. This company also incorporates His Glory Alone, or "HGA" for short, into its brand identity and apparel designs. Rapper KB added this to Natives Supply. HGA represents a group of individuals who are "obsessed" with God and His word and are passionate about doing everything for His glory ("HGA"). The visual mark for HGA is commonly incorporated into Native Supply's clothing, almost like a second logo. Aragon "created the vision for campaigns, and collaborate with copywriters, art directors, and more" ("Jon Aragon," LinkedIn). While Jon Aragon does most of the design portion of the business, KB "has naturally stepped into the role of creative visionary for" the company ("Hip Hop Artist KB"). Together they created a successful clothing line that speaks to today's generation. When it comes to semiotics, quite a few are found within the various apparel designs on their retail site and social media. Their pieces display

many Christian symbols and illustrations, such as lions, doves, and angels. They also showcase many Biblical ideas illustrated, like the idea of God breathing life into death. Their apparel graphics also showcase many iconographies many of the graphics found within showcase stories and themes from the Bible. Native Supply does an excellent job of showcasing these visuals while making them modern and trendy. As for other aesthetic choices, Native Supply incorporates many different illustration styles and graphics, becoming an eclectic source for modern Christian apparel. Due to this mix of apparel, they have grown to become one of the most popular Christian streetwear brands in the market today.

The visual aesthetics associated with this brand relate to my own topic because I also want to create a modern clothing brand that can be marketed to young Christians. I want to create a brand that captures the attention of others and creates a space for conversation to share Jesus with others. Because of the success of their unique designs, I would also like to draw inspiration from them for my brand. Through my study of Native Supply, I can use what I learned to create a successful clothing brand that will better appeal to Christian Gen Z youth.

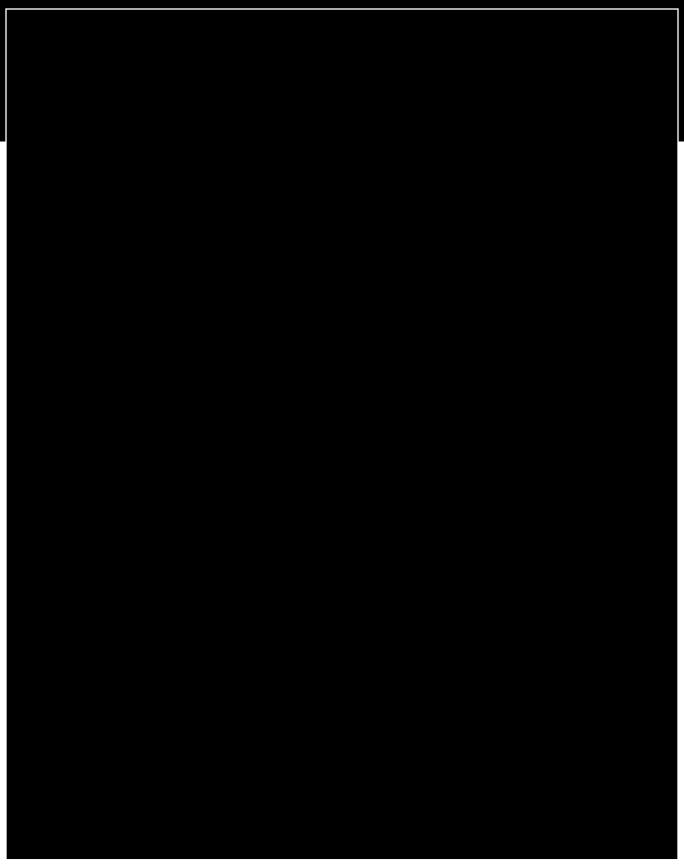
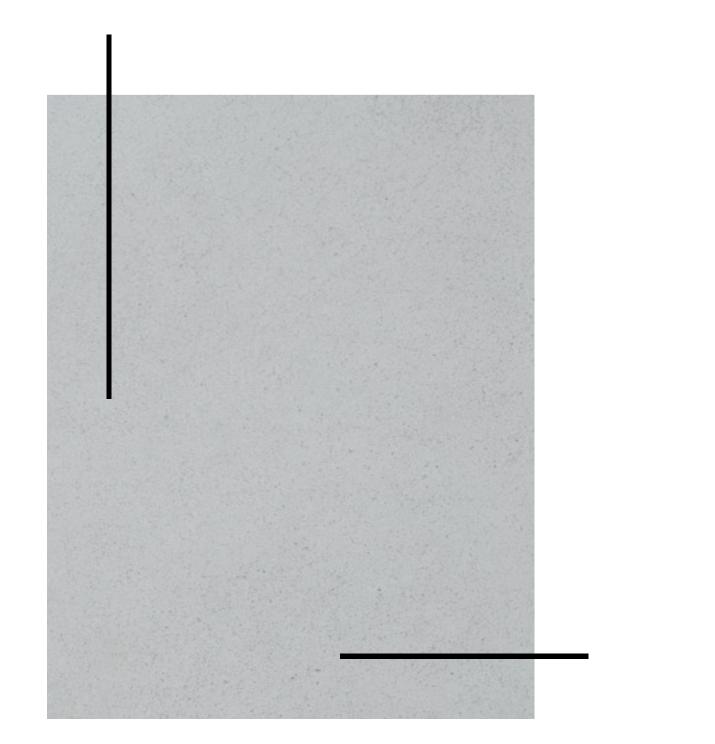


Fig. 9. https://www.instagram.com/nativesupply\_/



The literature review helped gain information on effectively reaching Gen Z youth as consumers. The literature review also allowed the student to collect vital details on evangelizing to today's youth. Through research on Gen Z and retail consumerism, the student will apply the knowledge learned to the clothing brand that will be created. Information such as online consumer habits and successful apparel brand research was also collected to inform the student about this project. Information on marketing to Gen Z on social media was helpful in contributing to the brand. Ultimately, this research will help create something that enables Christian Gen Z youth to represent Christ and express themselves more authentically through developing a successful Christian streetwear brand.

Another part of the research that was particularly useful was the case studies that were performed. They helped provide more context on apparel companies, and the student learned from their success and failures. One brand success story the student learned and will incorporate is using micro-influencers to advertise products. God the Father found particular success with this marketing strategy, and the student will also use it with future products. Overall, the student gained a more realistic understanding of what goes into a thriving clothing line by performing these case studies on similar Christian clothing brands. By evaluating these brands, the student gained visual inspiration by exploring their apparel products and graphics on their social media presence and retail website.

The additional chosen research methods also proved successful in collecting information. The content analysis allowed the student to view and take in all of the visual elements at once, allowing the student to further the development of their thesis deliverables. The prototype allowed the student to physically test the products, helping them catch mistakes and color variations before the official deliverables were produced. Researching the thesis concept solidified The project's solution, allowing the deliverables to reach Gen Z effectively.

### **EVANGELISM & SELF-EXPRESSION THROUGH** CLOTHING

Through this modern clothing line, the apparel produced will enable Christian Gen Z youth to represent Christ and express themselves more authentically. This will ultimately allow them to share the gospel of Jesus Christ through the clothing that they wear, unexpectedly reaching their peers.

Conclusion

# VISUAL PROCESS Chapter Three

OVERVIEW
SKETCHES
DRAFTS
PHOTOGRAPHY





### VISUAL PROCESS



### **OVERVIEW**

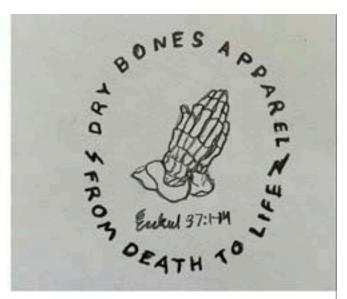
The visual solutions created provide Gen Z with a means to express themselves through a streetwear brand while sharing their faith and building community in the Christian apparel industry. By revitalizing Christian apparel, we can use it to bring glory to God in more ways than one. It has the potential to not only pique the interest of non-believers and start a conversation, but it can also be used as a way of worship through fashion. By putting effort into our appearance, we can glorify God. Through the deliverables presented, the student was able to accomplish these goals. The following sections show the process of creating these deliverables and explain how I, the student, reached my final design solutions.

The main idea of this project was to create a Christian clothing brand named Dry Bones Apparel. A logo was made, and a brand identity was established. Various social media platforms were created, and apparel graphics were designed for numerous garments. A photoshoot was organized, and six different models showcased the products before a social media marketing campaign was launched to show off the brand. The name of this clothing

brand was inspired by the valley of dry bones in the Bible, found in Ezekiel 37:1–14. I have always loved this story and what it represents. I have such a clear visual in my mind when reading this passage, and have always enjoyed concepts associated with death and life. I believe that God has blessed me with these interests for a reason, and through this, I can bring glory to His name. The valley of dry bones perfectly signifies what I hope to accomplish with this brand: Breathing life back into Christian apparel to be used to share the love of Jesus.











### **SKETCHES**

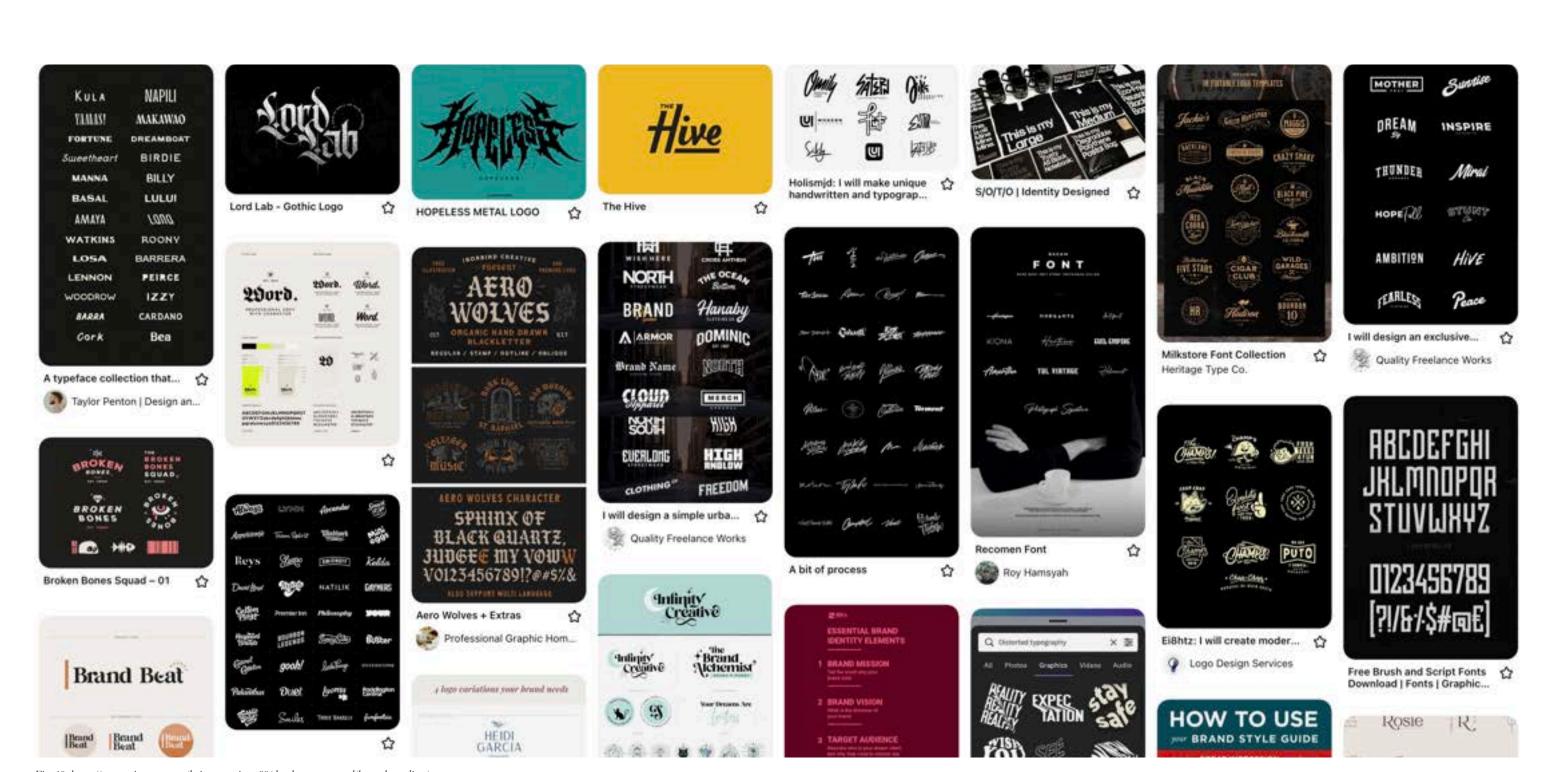
### **LOGO**

A brand's logo is the most important identifier of a company's branding. It is the face of the brand. The "right logo says everything without saying a word" (Westgarth). It creates a connection between the consumer and the brand. Sketching is the first step in creating a logo. It enables designers to explore and refine ideas quickly, allowing the logo to "develop character and take shape" ("The Importance of Sketching In A Logo Design Process"). Because of this, I was careful to consider how I wanted my company's logo to look. I also thought about how the logo might look on various materials, such as a T-shirt, sign, or website. I wanted a logo that would look good on all brand materials.

These are a few sketches created to begin fleshing out possible faces for the brand. Several logo variations were made to play with different looks. Each brought a different look and feel to the brand. Right off the bat, I knew what look I wanted for the brand's identity. All of these fall within this aesthetic. I drew logo inspiration from brewery design, retro design, and alternative rock and metal culture, as seen in Figure 10. I did this in the form of a Pinterest

mood board named after my company. The inspiration there enabled me to come up with inspiration for logos to sketch out for my project. I adopted the vintage script and sans serif fonts from this inspiration and the idea to add an icon to my logo. These inspirations combined to provide a similar look for the logo options shown within these sketches.

Sketching out logo options allowed me to view the brand in different ways. Through this process, I learned how to physically visualize logo ideas that had been floating in my mind. It was beneficial to draw these out on paper so that I had something to see and analyze. I also learned how to effectively narrow down the logo sketches to the best options to digitalize, enabling me to take the next step in completing my thesis deliverables.



 $Fig.\ 10.\ https://www.pinterest.com/brittany\_winter99/dry-bones-apparel/logos-branding/.$ 

### **SKETCHES**

### **BRAND STYLE GUIDE**

A brand style guide is vital to the success of a brand. It displays the essential visual elements that make up a brand's look. These sketches comprise the chosen brand style guide used for my thesis project. I went for a blocky, simple look for the design portion of these sketches yet "high fashion" enough to be visually attractive. In other words, I wanted to ensure the layout was simple enough not to steal away from the displayed brand elements but still showcase a stylish look, much like this thesis document.

When sketching ideas, I carefully considered what aspects must be included in the brand style guide. My research informed me to include the logo, color scheme, fonts, and other elements to help create a solid aesthetic for the clothing brand. This brand may be built upon as the clothing line grows and expands in the future. The sketches shown here helped to develop this brand style guide and make a solid collection of elements.

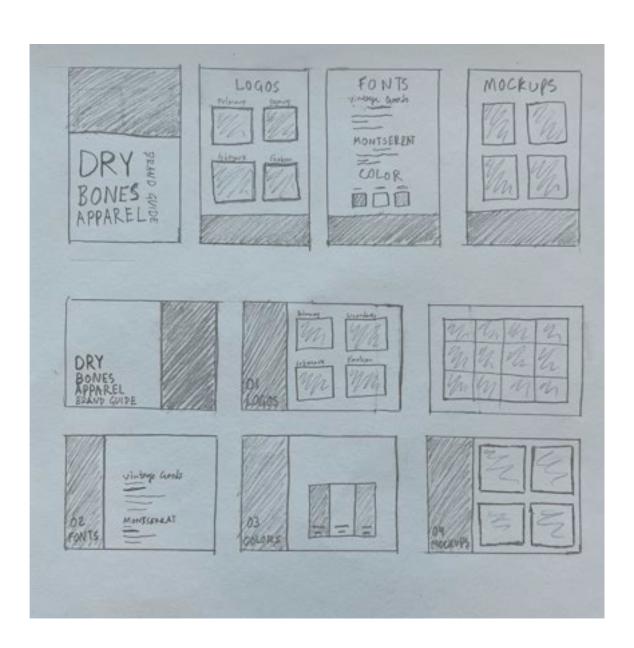
By sketching different style guide options, I learned how to develop a layout that accurately and professionally displays the elements and information needed to make up the Dry Bones Apparel brand aesthetic.

### **UNIQUE BRAND STYLE**

Purpose Statement: We evangelize through Christian streetwear that appeals to those in alternative culture.

This brand is unique to competing Christian clothing brands through its concept, content matter, and target audience. Dry Bones Apparel creates streetwear for Gen Z Christians who participate in alternative culture. In other words, this clothing brand is the bridge between those two worlds. Through this brand, I create edgy products that reflect the fashion style of those who participate in an alternative culture. This audience is often overlooked, and I wish to target these Christian individuals to give them the means to express themselves and share the gospel through the style that they love. It is rare to see content matter such as skeletons, lightning bolts, and dark colors in Christian apparel. It is unexpected and speaks to this specific audience.

This brand also differs from other Christian clothing brands as it aims to utilize its unique apparel graphics in an evangelistic way. In other words, this method of evangelism is different from other Christian clothing brands because its underlying concept and target audience are different. The people and how this brand reaches those people may vary then from what is conventionally seen.





### **SKETCHES**

### **APPAREL GRAPHICS**

These rough sketches comprise the options that would eventually become the designs I created for this clothing brand. When researching and brainstorming apparel design ideas, I carefully considered how each would look with the rest of my brand and my vision for the company. I knew I wanted the designs to be cohesive enough to fit the summer collection, but each was different enough from the last to set them apart and display their own unique look. These designs will appeal to my target audience because they love graphic T-shirts. When it comes to Gen Z, they are "all about bridging style with practicality" ("Why Gen Z is Falling in Love with Graphic Shirts"). So, it makes sense that they would be drawn to streetwear pieces such as graphic T-shirts or hoodies. Not only that, but Gen Z are bold individuals who want to express themselves through their fashion, and bold graphics help to do that. They like the attitude of graphic T-shirts and use them to make a statement. I hope to enable Christian youth to do that through this clothing brand. I created these graphics to reflect that. The sketches shown do well in creating a cohesive collection of designs without being so different from each other that

they fail to fit. Ultimately, I was satisfied with my designs and was ready to move to the next step of digitalizing these sketches.

This step has allowed me to understand how vital sketching is in the creative process of developing apparel graphics. It is essential to flesh out designs while rapidly exploring ideas ("The Importance of Sketching In A Logo Design Process"). Through this step, I have expanded my knowledge by sketching out all of the ideas I brainstormed and creating a physical visual that I can use to expand upon when digitalizing these apparel designs.

### **DRAFTS**

### LOGO

Here I feature various logo options for my street fashion line. From the beginning, I had an idea and vision of what I would want my brand to look like, so it was easy for me to come up with the options I did. I liked many of these options and carefully considered how they may look on several formats, such as a T-shirt. Not all logos can be pulled off while worn on a garment, and it was essential to have something that worked for all kinds of future print and digital materials for the brand.

As for inspiration, I drew it from various areas while still maintaining an aesthetic that worked together. Vintage graphics and logos helped to inform my solutions, as well as a variety of rock and metal culture and aesthetics. I also drew some inspiration from hip-hop influences. All of these things helped to create the visual for these logo options.

These rough logo drafts were created from the sketches I created in the prior week. The digital renditions of these sketches helped provide an accurate and more realistic idea for the logo. From there, I narrowed down my options before deciding on the official choice.

By creating these digital drafts, I learned how to make different visuals with the same visual aesthetic in mind. I applied different colors and other elements to certain logos, which helped me to understand variety better. I also learned how to play with different weights and sizes to create visuals that attract the eye.



### DRY BONES APPAREL BRAND GUIDE

















### **DRAFTS**

### **BRAND STYLE GUIDE**

A brand style guide is vital to have when it comes to establishing a solid look and feel for a company. After conducting research on how to best represent a brand through a style guide, I got to work. The elements should be set so that one can pull from them later to maintain a cohesive look throughout the materials. The details here display what has been chosen to represent Dry Bones Apparel.

When designing this style guide, I knew what sort of look I wanted from the beginning, much like the logo and apparel designs. I have always liked this aesthetic in other companies and wanted to implement a similar look to my apparel brand. I added numbered and titled sections to display each of the different elements of the brand and used a clear hierarchy to divide sections as well.

Through this draft of the brand style guide, I determined what I wanted for my finalized deliverables aesthetic. The elements found within this brand will successfully appeal to a Gen Z audience because of its edgy and bold appearance. Generation Z is "bold and

unapologetic," and they expect their brands to be no different ("Why Gen Z is Falling in Love with Graphic Shirts"). They want to "express themselves and make a statement" through everything they do, as it is their way of life ("Why Gen Z is Falling in Love with Graphic Shirts"). Gen Z identifies with the products that they purchase and uses them to reflect their personality, as discussed in the research collected in the literature review (Goldring). This knowledge is applied to the deliverables by supplying an unapologetic love for streetwear and Jesus through the deliverables created.

I chose this solution because this style guide most successfully displayed the information needed to highlight the elements out of all the sketched guides. This style guide taught me how to create a document representing my brand the best out of all the other sketched options. Choosing this style guide was helpful in accurately displaying the information for this company, allowing me to feel confident in taking the next step in my other thesis deliverables.

### **DRAFTS**

### **APPAREL MOCKUPS**

Through previous research conducted on apparel designs for Gen Z, I was able to create designs for this thesis project. In addition to these, I had some designs on other garments, such as long sleeve shirts, hoodies, and an embroidered trucker cap. From the sketches and digital drafts, I perfected the designs and showcased them on the featured garments to obtain a more realistic visual of my products and what they may look like for my future Gen Z customers. I took trends from my research and applied them to these pieces, incorporating bold designs and text commonly seen in today's graphic T-shirts.

Some of these mockups showcase a front and back to the shirt. However, most of the designs that I created showcase just the front. I wanted to display both within this clothing collection. The garments themselves also help to showcase the brand aesthetic. The pieces are either shown on a black or white shirt, which displays contrast within the apparel while still displaying a pop of color in some designs, a common theme within the brand itself.

These mockups helped me gain a more realistic image of what my apparel will look like. By finalizing this step, I felt comfortable testing my apparel pieces in the next phase of my thesis project: physical prototypes.























### **DRAFTS**

### **APPAREL PROTOTYPES**

By creating apparel prototypes, I could see the physical product with my own eyes, feel it, and try it out to see how it looks. I suggest this to anyone starting a company similar to mine. Unfortunately, I found that several of my pieces were defective when they were delivered to me. The trucker cap had an embroidered letter squished down and out of line with the rest of the word. Another piece on one of my long sleeve shirts had the letter "L" missing from "apparel," and a couple of the other graphics on the shirts were tilted slightly or not centered. Through this experience, I learned how to do a quality check for my products so that they can be improved for future orders. By reaching out to the company, I was able to work with them to fix these pieces, and they sent me new versions of the defective pieces. I now know how to fix these problems so that future orders will be correct and approved for customers. Without testing my apparel with prototypes before my photoshoots, I would have been worse off.

I will address future problems with my apparel by contacting the company and building a relationship with them. By sitting down and

explaining the defects to the printing company and providing photos, the issue was resolved. The digital files uploaded are now adjusted to print correctly for future orders. In other words, the kinks are smoothed out and items are currently approved for customers. Through the prototype portion of this assignment, I made the changes needed for my apparel to print in a way that exceeds the expected quality for my brand apparel pieces. I was able to grow from this experience because of the issues I had, and because of that, I am thankful for it.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

The content captured during these photoshoots will be used in various present and future materials for Dry Bones Apparel, such as the social media campaign for this thesis project and the prospective website. I shot many different kinds of content, easily adaptable to meet both present and future needs. The research conducted for this portion of the thesis deliverables helped to inform me on things like how to pose the models, how to highlight the apparel, and more. This content will benefit me as I proceed with my streetwear brand. Through conducting these photoshoots, I learned the importance of showcasing apparel and what goes into a photoshoot. I learned how to set up the shots to highlight the clothing, how to pick backgrounds that suited them, and how to direct models.

### **PHOTOSHOOT ONE**

The first photoshoot I completed was held in the evening during the golden hour. These photos were taken on a street with different boutique shops, which displayed a variety of backgrounds, from large glass windows to brick walls and murals. Several other locations like these were shot on this street, such as in alleyways, side

yards, building exteriors, and more. I paired these two models together because of their differentiation in looks. Through this difference, I think they complement each other and help provide a fun, friend-focused feel for this shoot, which is precisely what I was aiming to capture. With their help, I displayed my products and captured shots that will help me in my marketing campaign. Several locations were shot on the same street, such as alleyways, side yards, building exteriors, and more. These Gen Z individuals represented their community well and showcased the apparel created for this brand. The shots provided will help me in my marketing campaign.

### PHOTOSHOOT TWO

The second photoshoot was on the morning of the next day. Due to it being earlier, there was a slight golden hour look, although I had to edit these shots a little more in post-production to add warmth to the photos. A couple helped to model these shots. I wanted one of the shoots to feature two models who looked like a couple because I wanted my products to be shown in different situations, such as with the friendship theme of the first photoshoot. The locations shot within this shoot all consisted of areas downtown in Springfield, Missouri which turned out to be the perfect location due to the variety of buildings. I picked specific backgrounds on structures that would complement each shirt that they modeled. These models fit the look of my brand well, as they had tattoos and a sense of style consistent with Gen Z audiences. This helped to add to the "edgy" look of the brand.

### PHOTOSHOOT THREE

The final photoshoot took place that evening at golden hour, muchlike the photoshoot from the day before. I shot these two individuals separately for the most part, but I did get a couple shots of them together. I wanted two of my six models to be separate to use their solo shots for specific content in my thesis project and future materials. They modeled downtown as well among the various brick buildings found there. With these two models, I picked specific backgrounds that would highlight their apparel. All of these were different spots from the second photo shoot. Like the models from the previous shoot, this female model also had tattoos, which helped to ensure the desired look for the brand.



























# FINA Chapter Four

LOGO VARIATIONS
BRAND STYLE GUIDE
SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS
APPAREL DESIGNS
PHOTOSHOOT
MARKETING CAMPAIGN



### VISUAL SOLUTIONS

### LOGO VARIATIONS

When it comes to the face of the brand, several logo versions are typically used for different kinds of brand materials. They all maintain the same visual of the primary logo but vary enough to be flexible. The displayed logos display this concept. They also vary in color for different materials to best suit each look.

### **PRIMARY LOGO**

The first version is the primary logo associated with the brand. It is the standard iteration of your logo and the design used most often in your brand materials. I was inspired by brewery and vintage design looks for this logo. Alternative rock was also a main inspiration in this design to add personality to the logo. This gave the brand a bold and edgy look, which will appeal to Gen Z consumers.

### **SECONDARY LOGO**

The second logo is a simplified version of the primary logo. It is altered to accommodate small formats on certain brand materials. This version displays the Vintage Goods script font seen in the first logo, accompanied by Montserrat Semibold. This makes for a simplified wordmark look of the primary logo.

### **SUBMARK**

A submark symbol acts as a simplified version of the primary logo. In this case, it shares the first letter of the brand's name on materials where space is limited, such as a social media profile picture. Once again, it features the Vintage Good script font to represent the brand and a signature lightning bolt to add personality to the logo.

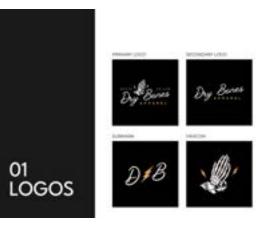
### **FAVICON**

The last version is a browser icon that represents the brand. It is commonly seen in an online format, next to the web page title in the browser tab. You can also see it on other web elements like the address bar or search engine pages. When creating the favicon, I immediately knew what I wanted to be the visual icon of my brand. The skeleton hands praying effectively set the brand apart and create a specific aesthetic that will catch my audience's attention.

These logo deliverables will help display the brand's face, allowing for a solid aesthetic to be shared across various materials. These logos will attract the attention of today's Gen Z youth due to their unexpected, edgy look compared to other Christian apparel brands.



### DRY BONES APPAREL BRAND GUIDE















### BRAND STYLE GUIDE

The finalized style guide comprises all elements that make up the Dry Bones Apparel brand. Each section was carefully chosen and created with the vision of the clothing brand in mind. This document displays all brand elements, including a section with mockups of the apparel designed to offer a visual for products. The simple and stylish layout aids in creating a clear hierarchy of highlighted elements for the brand. It displays much contrast and whitespace, much like the other visuals found within the branding. This consistent layout displays details that effectively communicate visual elements within the brand. Through this personality, the brand language will also be developed and emerge as the brand grows, therefore reaching the target faith-based target audience.

The religious effect on consumerism is great. Christian consumers seek businesses that resonate with them. In other words, these consumers search for companies representing Biblical views and values (Davis). Gen Z also seeks companies that reflect their values. As a result, Christian Gen Z consumers will be attracted to this streetwear brand because of its

Biblical values. These views are reflected in the apparel designs and the brand itself through uplifting campaign messages, brand language, consumer interactions, and more.

With the completion of this brand style guide, I can draw from this document when creating present and future brand materials, much like I did with the social media marketing campaign in this thesis project. By doing this, the brand materials will maintain a consistent look throughout in both content and imagery.



### **SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS**

From the beginning, I knew having social media incorporated into my thesis deliverables was essential. In today's world, it wouldn't make sense not to include social media in a company's marketing plan, as 85% of products are advertised to Gen Z youth on these platforms (Pinto and Paramita). This shows how important social media is in today's culture among Gen Z.

### **INSTAGRAM**

I chose this platform because I have the most experience with this app and how to market and advertise on it. The format is easy to use for businesses and provides pro tools to help with engagement, reach, insights, and more. This is the app that I will primarily promote my business with, but I will utilize other platforms as well. Most importantly, however, this is one of the most used platforms that Gen Z consumers spend their time up, making up 76% of users (Roberts). By using this app, my business will benefit greatly.

### TIKTOK

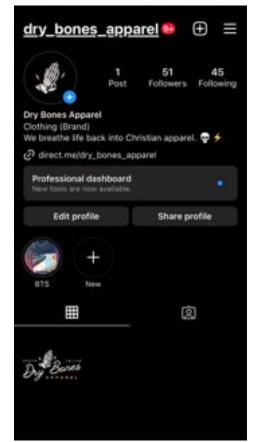
TikTok is also a powerful tool for businesses to promote their brand and products to the Gen Z community. 68% of Gen Z users are found on TikTok, so it is easy to see why I have chosen this platform

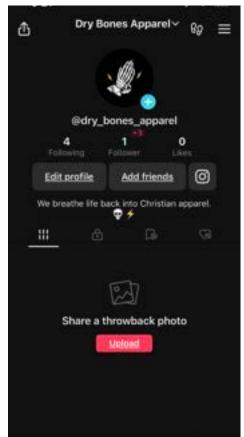
to market my products and brand (Roberts). Specific video content will be shot and used for this platform, increasing the clothing line's audience and reach.

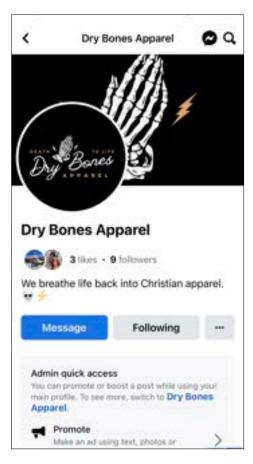
### **FACEBOOK**

Facebook is the final platform that will be used for my company. While I am not fond of the weak display of easy business tools for this app, it does do well at reaching potential customers through the app. While there is a noticeable dip, 49% of Gen Z still use Facebook, making it a relevant social media platform to market on. This is the main reason why I have chosen to expand my business to this platform. It is a powerful advertisement tool for businesses, especially for reaching a specific audience, which will benefit my goal of getting customers in the future.

Together, these social media platforms will assist in promoting my streetwear brand to my target audience, the digital natives, allowing for effective marketing and advertising. I will be able to showcase my brand and its products, gaining a following of potential niche customers. I learned many things from researching and exploring these social media platforms, as well as how to effectively utilize them to reach Gen Z consumers in today's digital world.









### TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH



### **APPAREL DESIGNS**

These are all the designs I created for my apparel brand products. These designs are displayed on various garments for deliverables, such as T-shirts, long-sleeved shirts, hoodies, and hats. These designs are cohesive enough to fit into a collection but unique enough to appeal to different kinds of individuals within my target Gen Z audience.

While this collection mainly displays dark garments, two of the designs display a lighter background. I wanted contrast to be one of the main themes of this collection, and I achieved that through the interchangeability of blackand-white elements. I was inspired by hip-hop fashion, vintage, and metal music aesthetics for this collection. I also researched various stories, themes, and verses from the Bible to display within this clothing collection.

This brand also builds relationships with Gen Z youth by encouraging confidence in their Christian apparel, resulting in an authentic representation of themselves. This brand can be trusted to produce Christian products that today's youth proudly wear to represent their beliefs and personal style. This is reflected in the deliverables in this thesis project through the apparel collection created.

These designs comprise the first clothing launch for Dry Bones Apparel, the Summer 2023 Collection. In other words, they are the designs created for the models to wear, showcasing the products made for this clothing line and thesis project. These products will go on to be sold on an online retail website with the completion of this thesis project.















### **PHOTOSHOOT**

### **BEST EDITED SHOTS**

Here I display some of the best shots captured from the three photoshoots I organized for this thesis project. I scheduled six models and had them wear two pieces each from my summer clothing collection. These models were posed in specific ways as to accentuate the products being worn.

In post-production, minor changes were made. I erased visual disturbances like trash from the background of some alleyways, scratches, and other blemishes from some of my models' skin. As for enhancing the photos, I went for a high contrast, vibrant, and warm aesthetic. I wanted to bring out the natural colors of the shots while maintaining that high-contrast look, which is commonly seen within other brand elements for my company. A dark vignette was also added to subtly encourage the focus of the apparel shown.

The photos produced from these photoshoots will be used in the social media marketing campaign for this thesis project as well as future brand materials, such as pictures for an online retail website.













94 | EVANGELIZING IN STYLE | BRITTANY WINTER

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### DRY BONES APPAREL











### MARKETING CAMPAIGN

These deliverables make up the various graphics for the social media marketing campaign that will be launched with the completion of this thesis project. All of these graphics will be implemented in different social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, to reach a wider audience of potential Gen Z consumers.

### **FEED POSTS**

Several feed posts were created to display the designs for this clothing brand's first collection. These feed posts vary in content. While most of them feature the models and clothing created for the brand, there are a couple of text-based posts. One of the posts displays a Bible verse, Ezekiel 37:1-10, in addition to the Dry Bones name. This verse inspired the name of this clothing brand, and I thought it necessary to display the verse and share the gospel. Many of these graphics display a burnt-film effect on the edges of the post, creating a unique and visually interesting look for the brand as it displays the products that are featured.

### **STORIES**

Five story posts were created to show off more products made as deliverables for this clothing brand. Like the graphics, these stories displayed a similar look, adjusted to fit the dimensions of a story post. These stories reveal different photos than the ones in the feed posts, but the layout is still similar so that it goes with the campaign.

### **REELS/TIKTOKS**

The video content shot will be used as reels on Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. The footage was taken of the "lay flat" outfits I created for this campaign, as seen in some of the feed posts. They display close-ups of the outfits and the designs of the T-shirts. More footage content will be created with the completion of this thesis project and before the launch of social media.

### FINAL DELIVERABLES

These final deliverables will be used in a social media marketing campaign that will be launched for this thesis project. These social media graphics will allow for brand exposure to the target audience, enabling self-expression through clothing in the Christian Gen Z community and allowing for the gospel to be shared through this new means to evangelize.



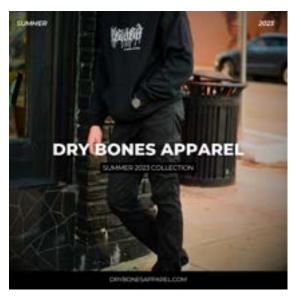
















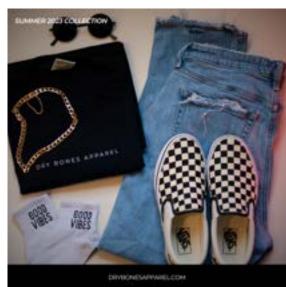








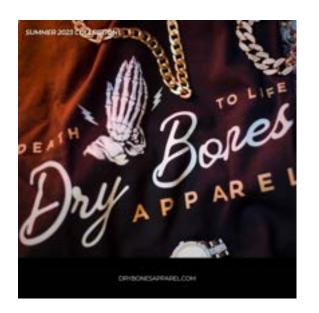






















## CONDICE CONDICE Chapter Five



### THE PROBLEM

Christian apparel fails to produce pieces that today's Gen Z youth are proud to wear, resulting in a lack of potential evangelism and Christian self-expression within the community.

### THE SOLUTION

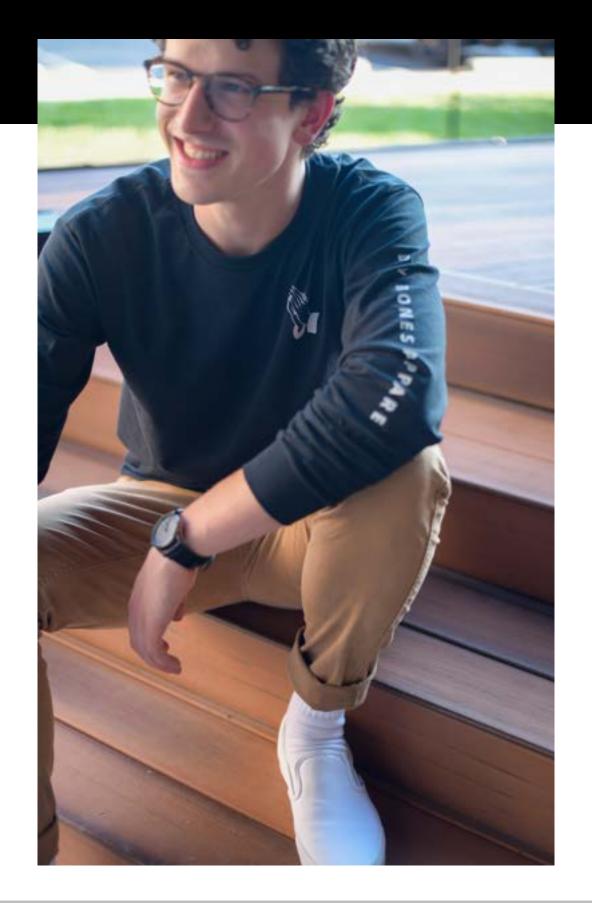
Through the deliverables presented within this thesis project, the problem is beginning to be solved. The change starts here as the brand begins to grow and gain recognition. Dry Bones Apparel will aid in introducing revitalized Christian apparel to today's Gen Z youth to encourage self-expression and evangelism. Through this brand, they can proudly represent their beliefs and love for Jesus in style. The apparel deliverables provide a new and edgy look to Christian apparel, making it stand out and ultimately capture Gen Z's attention. Already, consumers have begun to take an interest in the company. Several individuals have wanted to buy from the brand, and the Instagram account has gained over fifty followers in the last couple of weeks. This is just the beginning.

Dry Bones Apparel fills the gap in the Christian clothing industry by making clothes that pique

the interest of today's Gen Z youth, which make up 40% worldwide consumers ("Why Gen-Z Teens"). There is apparel for the older generations, but this brand explicitly makes apparel that appeals to the youth. It is a fact that "graphic shirts have become a way for Gen-Z to show off their personality and connect with like-minded individuals" ("Why Gen Z is Falling in Love with Graphic Shirts"). Through current consumer interest in the brand, this is true.

As Christians, we should embrace fashion. God created us to express ourselves as individuals. We can use apparel to celebrate Christianity and represent Jesus while simultaneously displaying our unique fashion style (Smit). The Lord encourages this in Ecclesiastes. Because of this, we can embrace Christian streetwear.

Dry Bones Apparel's mission is to reach this generation of believers and empower them to express their style and faith through clothing, sharing the love of Jesus with their peers as they do so. A mutual interest in streetwear fashion can then be a form of evangelism. That is what I aim to encourage with the launch of this brand.



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### **TAKEAWAYS**

I have learned and grown so much from creating this thesis project, not only personally but professionally as well. I am genuinely thankful for this experience and look forward to learning more as my company grows. I am particularly excited to launch my social media campaign and to create my retail website. What I learned most from this experience was that it takes a lot to create and start an apparel company. Many steps go into it, from creating the brand aesthetic to the product photoshoots to the retail website. There will be even more steps as I continue this project after graduation. It is essential to do each step well to create a brand that will last and make a good following with Gen Z customers. There is room to grow in every situation, and I embrace this growth in this project and my life.

As for my vision, I wouldn't say that I would do anything differently. I think it mainly stayed the same once I decided on the name. My vision was clear for the brand from there. I had another name in mind for the company with a different aesthetic. However, I ultimately went with Dry Bones Apparel because of my vision for it. It displays an edgy and bold aesthetic from other Christian apparel companies, which I fully embrace as my vision.

### **CHALLENGES**

The most significant challenge I faced with this project was when I created the prototypes for the apparel. As previously stated, some apparel pieces were defective when printed and shipped to me. I caught these mistakes through my personal quality check and quickly contacted the company that had published the apparel for me. Despite the bonus of getting my money back for those particular items, I also learned a valuable lesson from this experience. Through this negative experience, I learned how to make my designs more print-friendly and how to contact the company when orders go wrong. Ultimately, this positively affected me as both an apparel designer and apparel company.

### **FUTURE GOALS**

With the conclusion of this thesis, Dry Bones Apparel will expand further by creating an online retail website that will allow customers to purchase the pieces created for this thesis project and future seasonal clothing collections. In addition, the social media campaign will also be launched to market to the target audience upon the creation of the retail website.

I want to continue encouraging evangelism through my clothing and provide additional opportunities for brand followers to grow their



faith. This could look like a weekly devotional posted to a dedication page on the website or encouraging word through social media reels or TikTok. The brand's social media may also recommend or discuss cool Christian bands or artists that they think would appeal to their audience, as the culture surrounding specific genres greatly influences the brand. Not only that, but I would like to market this brand to bands or artists in the future in addition to Gen Z individuals. This will benefit both audiences as they interact with each other and the brand. I want this brand to get to a place that makes a difference by inspiring others to share Jesus in new ways. I want this brand to grow to be an example of authenticity in self-expression and representation of faith and doing it in style.

This project is also a personal goal of mine. I created a company where I could design pieces that I love and would wear. I want to create products that are my style and Christian pieces that I wish had been around when I was growing up. I want to provide that now for myself and for others. Not only do I want others to express themselves through my products, but I also want to express myself through this brand and all of the pieces I design, as it combines many things I am passionate about. As a result, I will continue to develop this brand and be authentic to myself as it continues to grow.



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### **MODEL RELEASE FORMS**

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