

Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 29, Household Code (Eph 5:22-6:9) Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 29, Household Code (Eph 5:22-6:9), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

In this session of his Prison Epistles lecture series, Dr. Daniel K. Darko examines the **Household Code** found in Ephesians 5:21-6:9, which provides principles for managing relationships within a household. Darko highlights **Paul's shift from communal unity to individual family relationships**, emphasizing the contrast between wise and foolish conduct as a foundation for these interactions. He explores the cultural context of the first century, including **household composition, honor and shame, age differences in marriage, the oikos-polis linkage, and Stoic debates on marriage**, to illuminate Paul's instructions. Ultimately, Darko explains how Paul calls for **mutual submission rooted in reverence for Christ**, with specific directives for husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, and slaves to foster harmony within the Christian home and by extension, the church.

2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 29 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → Pauline Epistles → Prison Epistles).



Darko_PrisonEp_Session29.mp3

3. Briefing Document: Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 29, Household Code (Eph 5:22-6:9)

Briefing Document: Dr. Daniel K. Darko on Ephesians 5:21-6:9 (Household Code)

Overview:

This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Daniel K. Darko in Session 29 of his lecture series on the Prison Epistles, focusing on the "Household Code" found in Ephesians 5:21-6:9. Darko emphasizes the context of this passage, moving from the unity of the wider church to the dynamics of individual households. He delves into the cultural background of the first century to illuminate Paul's instructions on husband-wife, parent-child, and slave-master relationships, highlighting the importance of wise living, spiritual filling, mutual submission, and societal influences.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. **Transition from Church Unity to Household Relationships:** Darko highlights Paul's shift in Ephesians from discussing the internal cohesion of the church as the "household of God" to addressing the "micro household of individual believers," the small family home setting. He notes that this transition begins in Ephesians 5:15.
2. **The Wise vs. the Unwise:** Darko emphasizes Paul's contrast between unwise and wise living. A wise person makes sound moral judgments, follows God's precepts, and exhibits self-discipline, while a foolish person makes bad choices that negatively impact themselves and others. For Paul in Ephesians, "the wise is the one who has come to know the Lord and is living to please the Lord." This contrast sets the stage for the Household Code.
 - *"Look carefully at how you work, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is."* (Ephesians 5:15-17, quoted by Darko)
1. **Making the Best Use of Time:** Darko explains that the Greek word for "making the best use of the time" implies "buying time," "seizing time," and managing it wisely, especially in the context of moral Christian behavior in "evil" times.
 - *"The wise person buys time. They seize time. They make good use of time. They do not procrastinate."* (Darko's explanation)

1. **Being Filled with the Spirit vs. Drunkenness:** Paul contrasts getting drunk with wine, which leads to "debauchery" (licentiousness and sexual immorality), with being "filled with the Spirit." Darko explores the potential cultural backgrounds of this contrast, including Greco-Roman mealtime customs and the rituals associated with the pagan god Bacchus (Dionysus), which involved drunkenness and promiscuity. He suggests Paul's contrast aims to highlight the supernatural infilling of the Holy Spirit versus the temporary and negative "spirit of the bottle."
 - *"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit..."* (Ephesians 5:18, quoted by Darko)
1. **Resultant Effects of Being Filled with the Spirit:** Darko emphasizes five participles in the Greek text that describe the outcomes of being filled with the Spirit:
 - **Addressing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs:** Darko notes the Greek word implies "speaking" or "addressing," suggesting that even everyday conversation should be nourishing and edifying, like music.
 - **Singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart:** This singing stems from gratitude and joy.
 - **Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father:** Thanksgiving is a crucial virtue for those filled with the Spirit, contrasting with a sense of entitlement.
 - **Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ:** This mutual submission is the foundation for the subsequent instructions on household relationships.
 - *"Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ."* (Ephesians 5:21, quoted by Darko)
1. **Mutual Submission as the Basis for Household Roles:** Darko clarifies that the verb "submit" in Ephesians 5:22 ("Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord") is borrowed from verse 21, emphasizing that mutual submission, stemming from being filled with the Spirit, precedes and informs the specific instructions for wives.
 - *"It should be verse 21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ, wives also ask to your own husbands."* (Darko's interpretation of the literal translation)
1. **Cultural Context of the Household Code:** Darko highlights five key cultural issues in the first century that are crucial for understanding Paul's instructions:

- **Composition and Size of Households:** Households were often large, including slaves (who could constitute 30-35% of the city population), their children, unmarried relatives, and sometimes renters.
- **Unwritten Code of Honor and Shame:** Protecting the honor of the household was paramount, with women being potential sources of shame, requiring male heads to guard their sexual virtue.
- **Age Difference Between Spouses:** Husbands were typically 10 or more years older than their wives (average marriage age for women was around 14, for men 25-30), influencing the dynamics of respect and authority.
- **Oikos Polis Linkage:** The Greek concept that order and concord in individual households directly impacted order and concord in the wider society (polis). Early Christians applied this imagery to the church.
- **Stoic and Cynic Debates on Marriage:** Stoics viewed marriage as desirable for personal wisdom and societal good, while Cynics saw it as an obstacle. Paul's discussion likely resonates with the prevailing Stoic view of wise individuals marrying and raising families responsibly.

1. **Husband-Wife Relationship:**

- **Wives:** Paul calls for voluntary submission "in the Lord," Christologically validating this submission and framing it as being in the wife's best interest.
- **Husbands:** They are challenged to love their wives as Christ loved the church, offering himself up. This love is presented as the model and motivation for the husband's actions, aiming to sanctify and glorify his wife.
- *"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord."* (Ephesians 5:22, quoted by Darko)
- *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her..."* (Ephesians 5:25, paraphrased by Darko)

1. **Parent-Child Relationship:** Fathers are instructed not to provoke their children to anger but to bring them up in "discipline and instruction in the Lord." Children are called to obey their parents "in the Lord" and to honor them, with promises of well-being and longevity.

- *"Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."* (Ephesians 6:4, referenced by Darko)

- *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."* (Ephesians 6:1, referenced by Darko)
- 1. **Slave-Master Relationship:** Slaves are to obey their earthly masters with fear, trembling, and sincerity, as they would Christ. Masters are likewise challenged to treat their slaves well, without threats, recognizing that they both have the same Master in heaven who will hold them accountable.
- *"Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ."* (Ephesians 6:5, referenced by Darko)
- *"And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him."* (Ephesians 6:9, referenced by Darko)
- 1. **Impact of Christian Integrity in the Home:** Darko concludes by emphasizing that when Christian households function according to these principles, it leads to honorable families respected by society. The order and love within the "micro household" directly impact the health and growth of the wider church, preventing a disconnect between outward Christian behavior and inner domestic life.

Key Quote:

- *"Paul in the household is calling wives to submit and husbands to love, and if you look at the instruction of the husband, the husband is supposed to love beyond the realm of submission that is just stated for the wife. The elaboration of it actually calls for another sense of submission, but this time in the framework of love..."* (Darko's summary of the husband's role)

Conclusion:

Dr. Darko's lecture provides a rich contextual understanding of the Household Code in Ephesians. He argues that Paul's instructions are rooted in the principle of mutual submission resulting from being filled with the Spirit and are tailored to the specific cultural dynamics of the first century. By understanding this background, modern readers can better appreciate the nuances of Paul's guidance on family and household relationships, recognizing the significant responsibilities placed on husbands and the transformative potential of Christian love and integrity within the home for the well-being of the church and society.

4. Study Guide: Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 29, Household Code (Eph 5:22-6:9)

Study Guide: Ephesians 5:21-6:9 - The Household Code

Key Concepts:

- **Wisdom vs. Foolishness:** Paul contrasts wise living, characterized by moral judgment and following God's precepts, with foolish living, marked by poor choices and disregard for God's will.
- **Filling of the Spirit:** Being filled with the Holy Spirit is presented as the antithesis of drunkenness and results in specific behaviors within the Christian community and household.
- **Submission:** A key theme, particularly "submission to one another" within the Christian community and the specific submission of wives to husbands, is rooted in reverence for Christ.
- **Household Code (Hausdorfer):** This term refers to the set of rules or management principles governing relationships within the ancient household, including husbands and wives, parents and children, and masters and slaves.
- **Cultural Context:** Understanding the first-century Greco-Roman culture, including household composition, honor and shame, age differences in marriage, the oikos-polis linkage, and philosophical debates on marriage (Stoics vs. Cynics), is crucial for interpreting Paul's instructions.
- **Oikos-Polis Linkage:** The ancient concept that order and harmony within individual households directly contribute to order and harmony within the wider society (polis).
- **Stoic Influence on Marriage:** The Stoic view that marriage is desirable for wise individuals, contributing to both personal growth and societal well-being, provides a backdrop for Paul's discussion.
- **Christ as the Model:** Paul presents Christ's relationship with the church as the ultimate model for husbands in their love for their wives.
- **Mutual Responsibilities:** While addressing specific roles, Paul emphasizes mutual responsibilities and reciprocal actions within household relationships.

Quiz:

1. According to Dr. Darko, what is the origin of the term "Household Code," and what does it generally refer to?
2. What is the central contrast Paul establishes in Ephesians 5:15-20, and how does this contrast relate to the concept of living as "children of light"?
3. Describe two possible cultural contexts discussed by Dr. Darko that might have influenced Paul's instruction in Ephesians 5:18 about not getting drunk with wine but being filled with the Spirit.
4. List three of the five resultant effects of being filled with the Spirit that Dr. Darko highlights in his lecture.
5. Explain Dr. Darko's interpretation of the phrase "submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ" in Ephesians 5:21, particularly in relation to the subsequent instruction for wives.
6. Identify two significant cultural factors in the first-century Greco-Roman world that Dr. Darko suggests are important for understanding Paul's instructions on household relationships.
7. Briefly explain the "oikos-polis linkage" and its relevance to the early Christian understanding of household ethics.
8. Summarize the contrasting views of marriage held by the Stoics and the Cynics in the first century.
9. According to Dr. Darko, how does Paul use Christ as a model for husbands in their relationship with their wives in Ephesians?
10. What does Dr. Darko suggest about the voluntary nature of a wife's submission in Ephesians and the corresponding responsibility of the husband?

Answer Key:

1. The term "Household Code" is a translation from the German word "Hausdorfer," which refers to rules that should govern a house or household management principles. It outlines the expected behavior and roles within the family and household structure.
2. Paul contrasts foolish ways with wise ways, urging believers to live carefully and make the best use of their time by understanding God's will. This connects to living as children of light by abandoning unworthy patterns and embracing commendable thoughts and behaviors pleasing to God.

3. Two possible cultural contexts are the Greco-Roman mealtime, where singing and honoring deities occurred, and the rituals associated with the pagan god Bacchus (Dionysus), which involved excessive drinking and the belief of being filled by the god's spirit. Paul contrasts these with being filled with the Holy Spirit.
4. Three of the five resultant effects are: addressing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart; and giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
5. Dr. Darko explains that "submitting to one another" is a general principle for all believers filled with the Spirit. He suggests that the subsequent instruction for wives to submit to their own husbands borrows the verb "submit" from this general principle, indicating that a wife's submission should be an extension of this Spirit-filled mutual submission within the Christian community.
6. Two significant cultural factors are the composition of households, which often included extended family and slaves, and the unwritten code of honor and shame, where the behavior of household members greatly impacted the family's standing in society.
7. The "oikos-polis linkage" is the idea that order and harmony within the household (oikos) directly contribute to order and harmony within the wider city-state (polis). Early Christians applied this concept to the church, viewing well-ordered Christian households as essential for the well-being of the larger "household of God."
8. The Stoics believed marriage was desirable for wise individuals, aiding their pursuit of wisdom and contributing positively to society by fostering responsible citizens. The Cynics, on the other hand, viewed marriage as an obstacle to personal freedom and the pursuit of virtue.
9. Paul uses Christ's love for the church as the model for husbands, emphasizing self-sacrifice and giving oneself up for the wife, just as Christ gave himself up for the church to sanctify and glorify it.
10. Dr. Darko highlights that the wife's submission in Ephesians is presented as voluntary and "in the Lord," suggesting a willing submission grounded in her faith. He implies that this submission becomes easier when the husband fulfills his significant responsibility to love his wife as Christ loved the church, a love characterized by self-giving and service.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Analyze the significance of understanding the first-century Greco-Roman cultural context for interpreting Paul's Household Code in Ephesians 5:21-6:9. Discuss at least three specific cultural elements and their potential impact on our understanding of the text.
2. Compare and contrast the concept of "wisdom" as presented by Paul in Ephesians 5:15-20 with the characteristics of a "wise person" in the ancient Greco-Roman world. How does being "filled with the Spirit" relate to Paul's understanding of wisdom?
3. Discuss the theme of "submission" in Ephesians 5:21-6:9. How does Paul present this concept within the Christian community and specifically within the husband-wife relationship? Consider the cultural context and the analogy of Christ and the church in your analysis.
4. Evaluate the enduring relevance and potential challenges of applying Paul's Household Code (Ephesians 5:21-6:9) to contemporary family structures and relationships. Consider both the theological principles and the specific cultural instructions within the passage.
5. Explore the relationship between the "micro household" (individual family) and the "macro household of God" (the church) as suggested by Dr. Darko's interpretation of Ephesians. How does ethical behavior within the family contribute to the health and functioning of the Christian community?

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Household Code (Hausdorfer):** A set of rules or principles, derived from German scholarship, that govern the relationships and conduct within a household, particularly between husbands and wives, parents and children, and masters and slaves in the ancient world.
- **Wisdom (in Ephesians):** According to Paul, a way of living characterized by sound moral judgment, adherence to God's precepts, and making choices that please the Lord. It is contrasted with foolishness and is linked to understanding and living according to God's will.
- **Foolishness (in Ephesians):** A way of living marked by poor moral judgment, making bad choices that negatively impact oneself and others, and disregarding the will of God. It is the antithesis of wisdom.
- **Filling of the Spirit:** The state of being continuously influenced and empowered by the Holy Spirit, resulting in specific behaviors such as speaking in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with gratitude, giving thanks, and submitting to one another.
- **Submission (in Ephesians):** A voluntary act of yielding or placing oneself under another out of reverence for Christ. It is presented as a mutual practice within the Christian community and a specific instruction for wives in relation to their husbands.
- **Oikos-Polis Linkage:** The ancient Greek philosophical concept that the order and harmony within individual households (oikos) are directly linked to and influence the order and harmony within the wider city-state or society (polis).
- **Honor and Shame:** Fundamental social values in the ancient Greco-Roman world. Honor was the positive social standing and recognition of worth, while shame was the negative consequence of dishonorable behavior, impacting both the individual and the family.
- **Stoicism:** A prominent Hellenistic philosophy that emphasized virtue, reason, and living in accordance with nature. Stoics generally viewed marriage and family life as desirable and conducive to wisdom and societal well-being.
- **Cynicism:** Another Hellenistic philosophy that advocated for a simple life, rejecting conventional social norms and material possessions. Cynics often viewed marriage and family as obstacles to personal freedom and virtue.

5. FAQs on Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 29, Household Code (Eph 5:22-6:9), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on the Household Code in Ephesians

1. What is the "Household Code" discussed in Ephesians 5:21-6:9, and what is its significance? The "Household Code," derived from the German term "Hausdorfer," refers to principles or rules for household management. In Ephesians 5:21-6:9, Paul applies this concept to the "micro household" of individual believers, encompassing husband-wife, parent-child, and slave-master relationships. Its significance lies in extending the principles of unity and wise living, previously discussed in the context of the wider church (the "household of God"), to the intimate sphere of the family home. Paul emphasizes that how believers conduct themselves within their households directly reflects their spiritual maturity and impacts the broader Christian community.

2. How does Paul connect the idea of wisdom with the instructions on household relationships in Ephesians? Paul begins his discussion on household relationships by contrasting foolish and wise ways of living, urging believers to "look carefully at how you walk, not as unwise but as wise" (Ephesians 5:15). He defines wisdom not merely as intellectual prowess but as the ability to make sound moral judgments rooted in understanding and living according to God's will. He links this to the household by implying that wise individuals, filled with the Spirit, will naturally manifest godly behavior within their families, fostering harmony and order. The instructions on submission, love, obedience, and responsible leadership within the household are presented as practical expressions of living wisely as children of light.

3. What does Paul mean by "submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21), and how does this relate to the specific instructions for wives and husbands? Paul's call to mutual submission among believers, motivated by reverence for Christ, is a foundational principle. Regarding marriage, the instruction for wives to "submit to your husbands as to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22) is rooted in this broader concept. Dr. Darko clarifies that the verb "submit" in verse 22 is likely borrowed from the preceding verse on mutual submission. This suggests that wives' submission to their husbands is a specific application of the general principle of submission within the Christian community. Conversely, husbands are commanded to "love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25), emphasizing a self-sacrificial and serving love that mirrors Christ's relationship with the church. This

mutual responsibility, framed by submission and love, redefines the traditional patriarchal structures of the time.

4. How does the cultural context of the first century, particularly regarding household composition, honor and shame, and age differences, inform Paul's instructions in the Household Code? Understanding the first-century cultural context is crucial for interpreting Paul's instructions. Households were often large and complex, including not only immediate family but also slaves, extended relatives, and even renters. The concepts of honor and shame were deeply ingrained, with the behavior of household members reflecting on the family's standing in society. Significant age differences between husbands and wives were common, influencing societal expectations around authority and respect. Paul's instructions, while seemingly reinforcing some societal norms (like the husband as head), also challenge and transform them within a Christian framework. For instance, while wives are called to submit (a common expectation), husbands are called to a radical, Christ-like love, demanding self-sacrifice and care, potentially shifting the power dynamics within the household.

5. What is the "oikos polis linkage," and how does it relate to Paul's discussion of household ethics? The "oikos polis linkage" refers to the ancient Greek idea that order and harmony within individual households (oikos) directly contribute to order and harmony within the wider society or city-state (polis). Philosophers like Aristotle argued that a well-managed household was the foundation of a well-functioning state. Early Christians adopted this concept, applying it to the church. Paul, by detailing ethical conduct within the "micro household" of believers, suggests that these principles of love, submission, obedience, and responsible leadership contribute to the well-being and unity of the "macro household" of God, the church. The idea is that integrity and godly behavior in the home will be reflected in the community of faith.

6. How does Paul address the relationship between parents and children in the Household Code? Paul provides concise instructions for both parents and children. He exhorts fathers not to "provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). This emphasizes the responsibility of parents to raise their children in a nurturing and spiritually formative environment, avoiding harshness that could lead to resentment. Children, in turn, are instructed to "obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" and to "honor your father and mother" (Ephesians 6:1-2), highlighting the importance of respect and obedience as foundational to a healthy family and aligned with God's will.

7. What guidance does Paul offer regarding the relationship between slaves and masters in the Household Code? Paul addresses the prevalent issue of slavery in the first century by instructing slaves to "obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would obey Christ" (Ephesians 6:5). He also calls on masters to "do the same to them" (treat their slaves with respect and fairness), knowing that both masters and slaves have the same Master in heaven and that God shows no partiality (Ephesians 6:9). Paul urges masters not to threaten their slaves. While not explicitly condemning slavery, these instructions introduce principles of mutual respect, fairness, and accountability under God, which would have significantly impacted the treatment of slaves within Christian households.

8. What are the key virtues or outcomes that Paul emphasizes should characterize Christian households as a result of being filled with the Spirit? Paul highlights several key virtues and outcomes that should characterize households where believers are filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-21). These include: speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (indicating edifying and uplifting communication); singing and making melody to the Lord with their hearts (expressing heartfelt praise and joy); giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ (cultivating a spirit of gratitude); and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ (demonstrating humility and a willingness to prioritize others). These spiritual practices are presented as the foundation for healthy and harmonious relationships within the Christian household.