

# Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 6, Unity in the Church (Col. 3) Resources from NotebookLM

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

## 1. Abstract of Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 6, Unity in the Church (Col. 3), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Daniel K. Darko's sixth lecture in his "Prison Epistles" series focuses on Colossians chapter three and the theme of unity within the church. The session examines how believers, grounded in Christ, are called to live out their faith through specific actions and attitudes. **Darko highlights contrasting patterns like heavenly versus earthly living and the putting off of the old self to embrace the new.** He emphasizes mutual responsibility within the Christian community, including teaching and encouraging one another. **The lecture then extends to the household, discussing the roles and responsibilities of wives, husbands, children, and slaves within the ancient societal context, always emphasizing conduct that reflects Christ.** Darko underscores that all actions, in word or deed, should be done in the name of the Lord, promoting harmony and serving as a testament against false teachings. **He concludes by encouraging a holistic reading of Colossians to understand Paul's message of unity and Christ-centered living for a threatened early church.**

**2. 13 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 6 – 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\_Session06.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 6, Unity in the Church (Col. 3)

Study Guide: Dr. Darko on Colossians 3 - Unity in the Church

#### Key Concepts:

- **Heavenly vs. Earthly Focus:** The contrast between a focus on earthly desires and a focus on heavenly realities as a foundation for Christian living.
- **Putting Off/Putting On:** The imperative for believers to actively discard old, sinful behaviors and adopt new, Christ-like characteristics.
- **New Self in Christ:** The identity of believers as unified in Christ, transcending earthly distinctions like ethnicity, race, and social status.
- **Mutual Responsibility:** The call for believers to actively support, teach, and admonish one another within the church community.
- **Living in the Name of the Lord:** The principle that all actions, both in word and deed, should reflect the reputation and character of Jesus Christ.
- **Christian Household Conduct:** The application of Christian principles to family relationships, including the roles of wives, husbands, children, fathers, and slaves/masters.
- **Voluntary Submission:** The concept of wives willingly placing themselves under the leadership of their husbands as an attitude of heart fitting to the Lord.
- **Husband's Love Without Harshness:** The expectation for husbands to love their wives sacrificially and avoid being severe or unkind.
- **Children's Obedience:** The directive for children to obey their parents in everything as pleasing to the Lord, within the context of a Christian household.
- **Fathers' Role in Nurture:** The admonition for fathers not to embitter or discourage their children.
- **Servant/Master Relationships in Christ:** The guidance for slaves to work wholeheartedly as serving the Lord and for masters to treat their slaves justly, recognizing their shared Master in heaven.
- **Unity as a Defense:** The idea that internal unity within the church and Christian households serves as a "firewall" against false teachings.

- **Gratitude:** The importance of thankfulness as a foundational virtue in the Christian community.

### Quiz:

1. What is the central theme of Colossians chapter 3 according to Dr. Darko's lecture?
2. Explain the contrasting patterns Dr. Darko highlights at the beginning of the discussion on Colossians 3. Provide one example.
3. According to Dr. Darko, what is the significance of the phrase "in the name of the Lord" in verse 17?
4. How does Dr. Darko interpret Paul's instruction for wives to "submit" to their husbands in Colossians 3:18?
5. What is the basis given for husbands to love their wives in Colossians 3:19, according to Dr. Darko?
6. How does Dr. Darko explain the instruction for children to "obey your parents in everything" in light of the cultural context?
7. What is the specific caution given to fathers in Colossians 3:21, and why is it important?
8. How does Dr. Darko contextualize the discussion on slavery in Colossians 3:22-4:1 within the first-century Roman world?
9. According to Dr. Darko, what is the responsibility of Christian masters towards their slaves as outlined in Colossians 4:1?
10. How does Dr. Darko suggest that unity within the church and Christian households can act as a defense against false teachings?

### Answer Key:

1. The central theme of Colossians chapter 3, according to Dr. Darko, is **unity in the church**. This unity is explored through the practical implications of believers' new life in Christ, both within the church community and in their individual households.
2. Dr. Darko highlights contrasting patterns such as **heavenly and earthly focus, putting to death and making alive, and the old self versus the new self**. An

example is the contrast between focusing on earthly desires (old self) versus pursuing heavenly realities (new self in Christ).

3. The phrase "in the name of the Lord," according to Dr. Darko, carries the sense of **reputation or license**. Therefore, believers should conduct themselves in word and deed in a way that reflects well on the character of Jesus Christ and does not bring him a bad reputation or mockery.
4. Dr. Darko interprets the instruction for wives to "submit" as a **voluntary act of the wife**, not an imposition by the husband. It is presented as an attitude of heart, a willingness to work within a relational dynamic as is fitting to the Lord, not a power game.
5. The basis given for husbands to love their wives is that they should **not be harsh with them**. Dr. Darko suggests that a loving and respectful husband makes it easier for a wife to submit, emphasizing mutual responsibility within the marriage.
6. Dr. Darko explains that in the ancient Mediterranean culture, **family honor was paramount, and children were expected to behave in ways that upheld this honor**. While obedience was expected, within a Christian context, this obedience is to be pleasing to the Lord, and fathers are cautioned against embittering their children.
7. The specific caution given to fathers is **not to embitter their children, lest they become discouraged**. This is important because while fathers had the primary responsibility for discipline, they were to exercise it in a way that nurtured and encouraged their children rather than causing resentment.
8. Dr. Darko contextualizes the discussion on slavery by highlighting that it was a **pervasive institution in the Greco-Roman world**, with a significant portion of the population being slaves. He notes that the early church did not seek radical social reform of this institution but rather offered guidance on how slaves and masters should behave within that existing framework in a more humane way.
9. According to Dr. Darko, the responsibility of Christian masters towards their slaves is to **provide them with what is right and fair**. This is because they also have a Master in heaven who is observing how they treat their subordinates and will hold them accountable.
10. Dr. Darko suggests that unity within the church and Christian households acts as a defense against false teachings by creating a **strong sense of mutual support**,

**teaching, and admonishing among believers.** When individuals are grounded in Christ and living in harmony within their families, they are less susceptible to external negative influences.

### **Essay Format Questions:**

1. Analyze the significance of the "putting off" and "putting on" metaphor in Colossians 3, as discussed by Dr. Darko, and explain how this concept contributes to unity within the church.
2. Compare and contrast the cultural context of family relationships in the first-century Roman world, as described by Dr. Darko through sources like Josephus and Demosthenes, with the instructions provided in Colossians 3. How does Paul's teaching challenge or affirm these existing norms?
3. Discuss Dr. Darko's interpretation of the instructions for wives and husbands in Colossians 3. How does he navigate potentially controversial aspects of these passages, and what is the underlying principle he emphasizes in these relationships?
4. Examine Dr. Darko's explanation of the instructions regarding slaves and masters in Colossians 3-4. How does he address the ethical complexities of slavery in this passage, and what does he suggest are the key takeaways for Christian living within such a social structure?
5. Evaluate Dr. Darko's argument that unity within the church and Christian households serves as a "firewall" against false teachings. What specific elements of Colossians 3 does he point to in support of this claim, and how persuasive do you find his reasoning?

## Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Imperative:** A command or instruction, particularly in a biblical context referring to actions believers are called to do.
- **Mutual Responsibility:** The shared obligation and accountability among members of a community, in this case, the Christian church.
- **Admonish:** To gently warn, advise, or correct someone, often for their encouragement or spiritual growth.
- **Scythians:** A nomadic people in ancient times, used by Paul (as interpreted by Dr. Darko) as an example of a marginalized and disrespected group, highlighting the transcendence of social distinctions in Christ.
- **Voluntary Submission:** The act of willingly placing oneself under authority, emphasized in the context of wives submitting to their husbands as an attitude of the heart.
- **Harsh (in relation to husbands):** Being severe, unkind, or overly demanding in one's treatment of their spouse.
- **Embitter (in relation to fathers):** To provoke, discourage, or exasperate children, hindering their spiritual and emotional well-being.
- **Variegated Phenomenon (in relation to ancient slavery):** The idea that slavery in the ancient world existed in many different forms and conditions, ranging from harsh to relatively prosperous.
- **Unwritten Code of Honor and Shame:** A significant social dynamic in ancient Mediterranean culture where family reputation and social standing were highly valued and influenced behavior.
- **Steward:** Someone entrusted with managing the affairs or property of another. In this context, used to describe both earthly masters and slaves in relation to their heavenly Master.

## 4. Study Guide: Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 6, Unity in the Church (Col. 3)

### Study Guide: Dr. Darko on Colossians 3 - Unity in the Church

#### Key Concepts:

- **Heavenly vs. Earthly Focus:** The contrast between a focus on earthly desires and a focus on heavenly realities as a foundation for Christian living.
- **Putting Off/Putting On:** The imperative for believers to actively discard old, sinful behaviors and adopt new, Christ-like characteristics.
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### Answer Key:

1. The central theme of Colossians chapter 3, according to Dr. Darko, is **unity in the church**. This unity is explored through the practical implications of believers' new life in Christ, both within the church community and in their individual households.
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example is the contrast between focusing on earthly desires (old self) versus pursuing heavenly realities (new self in Christ).

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6. Dr. Darko explains that in the ancient Mediterranean culture, **family honor was paramount, and children were expected to behave in ways that upheld this honor**. While obedience was expected, within a Christian context, this obedience is to be pleasing to the Lord, and fathers are cautioned against embittering their children.
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8. Dr. Darko contextualizes the discussion on slavery by highlighting that it was a **pervasive institution in the Greco-Roman world**, with a significant portion of the population being slaves. He notes that the early church did not seek radical social reform of this institution but rather offered guidance on how slaves and masters should behave within that existing framework in a more humane way.
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## 5. FAQs on Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 6, Unity in the Church (Col. 3), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions on Unity in the Church and Household in Colossians 3

**1. According to Dr. Darko, what is the central theme of Colossians 3?** Colossians 3 focuses on the practical implications of the believers' union with Christ. Having established the foundational truths about Christ in earlier chapters, Paul now calls believers to live out their new identity in specific ways, fostering unity within the church and in their households. This involves putting off old behaviors and putting on new Christ-like virtues.

**2. What key contrasts does Dr. Darko highlight in Colossians 3 that should guide believers' lives?** Dr. Darko points to several important contrasting patterns in Colossians 3: the contrast between the heavenly and the earthly, the call to "put to death" old ways and to "make alive" in Christ, and the distinction between the "old self" and the "new self." These contrasts emphasize the radical transformation that should occur in a believer's life as a result of their new identity in Christ.

**3. How does Colossians 3 address issues of social division within the church?** Dr. Darko emphasizes that in the community of faith, once believers have "killed" and "stripped off" their old ways, there is no basis for distinctions based on ethnicity, race, or social status. He specifically mentions the example of the Scythians, a marginalized group, to illustrate that in Christ, such societal hierarchies and prejudices should cease to exist.

**4. What does Dr. Darko say about the mutual responsibility called for in Colossians 3?** Dr. Darko explains that believers, as those set apart, holy, and beloved by God, are called to mutual responsibility. This involves allowing love to prevail, letting the peace of Christ reign in their hearts, cultivating gratitude, and letting the word of Christ dwell richly among them. He highlights the admonition for church members to teach and encourage one another in wisdom, even through singing, to build a strong sense of community and resist false teachings.

**5. What is the significance of doing everything "in the name of the Lord Jesus" according to Dr. Darko's interpretation of Colossians 3:17?** Dr. Darko clarifies that doing everything "in the name of the Lord Jesus" goes beyond simply using his name as a label. It signifies acting with the reputation and license of the Lord. This means that believers' speech and conduct should reflect Christ's character and not bring him disrepute. It's a call to live in a way that honors Christ in all aspects of life.

**6. How does Dr. Darko explain Paul's instructions to wives and husbands in Colossians 3?**

Dr. Darko clarifies that Paul's instruction for wives to "submit" is a call for voluntary submission as fitting to the Lord, not a forceful imposition. He emphasizes the importance of husbands loving their wives and not being harsh with them. He suggests that a loving husband makes it easier for a wife to submit, and a submissive wife makes it easier for a husband to love, highlighting a mutual responsibility within the marriage relationship that contrasts with the societal norms of the time, which often emphasized the wife's inferiority.

**7. What is the context Dr. Darko provides for understanding Paul's instructions to children and fathers in Colossians 3?**

Dr. Darko explains that in the ancient Mediterranean culture, the husband was the head of the household, and family honor was paramount. Children were expected to obey their parents to maintain this honor. However, Paul's instruction for children to obey their parents "in everything" is qualified by the principle that it "pleases the Lord." Additionally, fathers, who were typically responsible for discipline, are instructed not to embitter their children, preventing them from becoming discouraged and limiting the traditional patriarchal powers.

**8. How does Dr. Darko interpret Paul's instructions to slaves and masters in Colossians 3, considering the historical context?**

Dr. Darko emphasizes that slavery was a prevalent institution in the ancient Greco-Roman world. Paul's instructions to slaves to work wholeheartedly as if serving the Lord, and to masters to provide what is right and fair, should be understood within this context. While Paul does not explicitly call for the abolition of slavery, he advocates for a more humane treatment of slaves by Christian masters and encourages slaves to see their work as service to Christ, introducing a sense of accountability to a higher authority for both parties. He notes that this passage has been misused to justify slavery but argues that Paul's primary aim was to promote peaceful and Christ-centered relationships within households, which served as meeting places for the early church.