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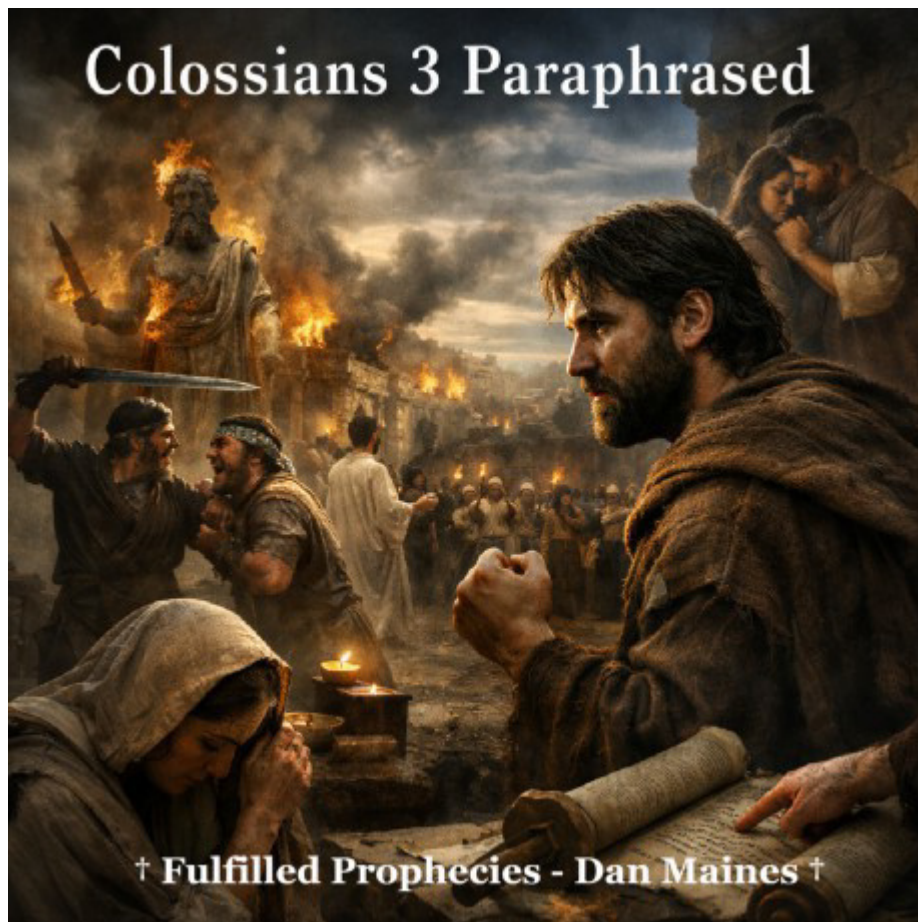
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## Colossians 3 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## Colossians 3 Paraphrased

### Introduction

† Paul is reminding the believers that their life has already been transformed through Christ, and because of that, their thinking and behavior must reflect the new life they now live.

† This chapter focuses on the change from the old life of the flesh to the new life that belongs to Christ. It isn't about becoming saved through works, it's about living consistently with the life that Christ already gave them.

† Early Christians understood this transformation as a real

change in identity. Clement of Alexandria wrote that believers were called to live in purity because they had been raised into a new life with Christ.

### **Colossians 3:1**

Since you have been raised together with Christ, keep your focus on the things that belong to heaven where Christ sits at the right hand of God.

† Paul isn't telling them to escape the world, he's telling them to set their minds on the authority and kingdom of Christ that had already been established (Ephesians 2:6).

† Being raised with Christ refers to the new life believers received through Him, not a future event.

† Irenaeus explained that those who belong to Christ live with their hearts directed toward Him rather than toward the old ways of the world.

### **Colossians 3:2**

Let your mind dwell on the things above, not on the things that belong to the earth.

† Paul contrasts two ways of thinking, the old covenant world centered on earthly systems and the new life centered in Christ.

† The instruction is about priorities, what shapes our thinking will shape our lives.

† Eusebius noted that the early believers were known for living with their minds fixed on Christ rather than on worldly ambitions.

### **Colossians 3:3**

Your old life has died, and the life you now have is hidden with Christ in God.

† This describes a completed reality. Their former identity had already ended.

† Being hidden with Christ means their true life and identity are secured in Him.

† Tertullian wrote that the believer's true life is no longer defined by the flesh but by union with Christ.

### **Colossians 3:4**

When Christ, who is your life, is revealed, you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

† Christ Himself is described as the believer's life, showing that our identity is completely tied to Him.

† The revealing of Christ was tied to the manifestation of His kingdom and authority (Matthew 16:27-28).

† Early Christian writers understood this as the public vindication of Christ and His people.

### **Colossians 3:5**

Therefore put to death whatever still belongs to your earthly nature, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry.

† Paul calls believers to actively reject behaviors that belonged to their former life.

† Greed is called idolatry because it places desire for possessions above devotion to God.

† Clement of Alexandria warned that uncontrolled desire enslaves a person and pulls them away from the life Christ gives.

### **Colossians 3:6**

Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.

† The phrase points to God's judgment against persistent rebellion.

† In the first century this warning had real historical weight as judgment was approaching the old covenant system (Luke 21:22).

† Eusebius connected these warnings to the judgment that eventually came upon Jerusalem.

### **Colossians 3:7**

You once walked in these things when that was the life you lived.

† Paul reminds them of their past so they can recognize how

much has changed.

† The Christian life always involves leaving behind the patterns of the former life.

† Early church teachers often reminded believers of their former life to encourage perseverance.

### **Colossians 3:8**

But now you must also put aside anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your mouth.

† These sins deal with destructive attitudes and speech that damage relationships.

† The new life in Christ must be visible in the way believers speak to one another.

† Tertullian taught that the tongue reveals the heart and must reflect the character of Christ.

### **Colossians 3:9**

Do not lie to one another, since you have taken off the old self with its practices.

† Lying belongs to the old identity that has already been removed.

† Truthfulness reflects the character of the God who cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

† Early Christian communities were known for emphasizing honesty and integrity among believers.

### **Colossians 3:10**

You have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the One who created it.

† The new life restores humanity toward the image of God that was always intended.

† Renewal happens through knowledge of Christ and growth in His truth.

† Irenaeus often wrote that Christ restores the image of God within humanity.

### **Colossians 3:11**

In this new life there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and is in all.

† The barriers that once divided people have no place in Christ's kingdom.

† Identity in Christ overrides every cultural or social distinction.

† Early Christians shocked the Roman world by treating believers from every background as equal in Christ.

### **Colossians 3:12**

Since you are chosen by God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

† Paul describes the virtues that should define the believer's character.

† These traits mirror the character of Christ Himself.

† Clement of Alexandria described these qualities as the visible fruit of the Christian life.

### **Colossians 3:13**

Bear with one another and forgive each other if anyone has a complaint against another, just as the Lord forgave you, so you must also forgive.

† Forgiveness is grounded in the forgiveness Christ has already given.

† Christian unity requires patience and grace toward one another.

† Early Christian communities were known for radical forgiveness even in difficult conflicts.

### **Colossians 3:14**

Above all these things put on love, which binds everything together in perfect unity.

† Love is the central virtue that holds all other virtues together.

† Without love, moral behavior becomes empty religious performance.

† Irenaeus wrote that love is the mark that identifies the true followers of Christ.

### **Colossians 3:15**

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since you were called to one body, and be thankful.

† The peace Christ gives should guide decisions and relationships.

† Believers are reminded that they belong to one body, meaning unity matters deeply.

† Gratitude is a consistent theme in Paul's letters because it shapes a healthy spiritual life.

### **Colossians 3:16**

Let the message of Christ live richly within you as you teach and encourage one another with wisdom through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with gratitude in your hearts to God.

† Worship and teaching were central parts of early Christian gatherings.

† The word of Christ dwelling richly means Scripture and truth shape daily life.

† Eusebius wrote that early Christian assemblies were filled with songs and teaching centered on Christ.

### **Colossians 3:17**

Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

† This verse summarizes the Christian life, everything should be done in the authority and honor of Christ.

† Gratitude again appears as a defining attitude of believers.

† Early Christians understood daily life itself as an act of worship.

### **Colossians 3:18**

Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

† Paul speaks about order within the household while grounding

it in devotion to Christ.

† This instruction reflects mutual responsibility within the Christian home (Ephesians 5:22-33).

† Early church writings often addressed household order as part of Christian witness.

### **Colossians 3:19**

Husbands, love your wives and do not become harsh toward them.

† The husband is commanded to lead through love rather than domination.

† This instruction was revolutionary in the Roman world where husbands held unchecked authority.

† Early Christian teaching emphasized sacrificial love within marriage.

### **Colossians 3:20**

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

† Obedience within the family reflects respect for the order God established.

† Paul links family behavior directly to pleasing the Lord.

† Early Christian writers frequently addressed children and young believers in their instruction.

### **Colossians 3:21**

Fathers, do not provoke your children so they will not become discouraged.

† Parents are warned not to abuse their authority.

† Christian leadership within the family must encourage rather than crush the spirit of children.

† Clement of Alexandria urged parents to raise children with patience and wisdom.

### **Colossians 3:22**

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything, not with eye service as people pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing

the Lord.

† Paul addresses the reality of the social structure of the Roman world while calling believers to honor Christ within it.

† The focus is on sincerity and devotion to the Lord rather than human approval.

† Early Christian teaching often emphasized integrity in every role believers occupied.

### **Colossians 3:23**

Whatever you do, work at it wholeheartedly, as for the Lord and not for men.

† Every task can be an act of service to Christ.

† This transforms ordinary work into meaningful devotion.

† Early Christian writings often emphasized diligence and faithfulness in daily responsibilities.

### **Colossians 3:24**

You know that you will receive the reward of the inheritance from the Lord, for you serve the Lord Christ.

† The ultimate reward comes from Christ, not from earthly recognition.

† This reminder gave hope to believers living under difficult circumstances.

† Tertullian wrote that Christ Himself is the inheritance promised to believers.

### **Colossians 3:25**

The one who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

† God's justice is impartial and applies to everyone.

† This warning reinforces the seriousness of moral responsibility.

† Early Christian teachers frequently reminded believers that God judges with fairness.

### **Historical References**

† Clement of Alexandria emphasized that believers must live

according to the new life given through Christ.

† Irenaeus taught that Christ restores humanity to the image of God.

† Eusebius recorded that early Christians were known for lives shaped by devotion to Christ.

† Tertullian described the believer's life as completely transformed through union with Christ.

### **How It Applies To Us Today**

† Our identity isn't defined by the old life we left behind, it's defined by Christ.

† The way we think and act should reflect the new life we already have in Him.

† Love, forgiveness, humility, and gratitude remain the marks of a life centered on Christ.

† Everything we do, even ordinary daily work, can be done as service to the Lord.

### **Q & A Appendix**

**Q:** What does it mean to be raised with Christ?

**A:** It refers to the new life believers receive through Him, where our identity and life are now united with Christ (Romans 6:4).

**Q:** Why does Paul emphasize putting off the old self?

**A:** Because the old patterns of sin don't belong to the new life Christ has given us (Ephesians 4:22-24).

**Q:** Why is love described as the bond of unity?

**A:** Because love holds all other virtues together and reflects the character of Christ (1 Corinthians 13:13).

**Q:** Why does Paul speak about family roles in this chapter?

**A:** Because the transformation of the gospel affects everyday life, including the home (Ephesians 5:22-25).

**Q:** Why does Paul say everything should be done in the name of Jesus?

**A:** Because Christ is the center of the believer's life and every action should honor Him (1 Corinthians 10:31).

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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## **Source Index**

† Colossians 3

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Tertullian, Apology

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