

Dr. Robert Peterson, Johannine Theology, Session 12, Pictures of Jesus's Work Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Peterson, Johannine Theology, Session 12, Pictures of Jesus's Work, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert A. Peterson's teaching on Johannine theology, specifically Session 12, examines various pictures and metaphors in the Gospel of John that illustrate Jesus' saving work. The session explores images such as **the Son of Man lifted up**, **the Good Shepherd**, **the Lamb of God**, and **Jesus as a priestly sacrifice**. It also highlights the theme of **Christus Victor** and Caiaphas' unwitting prophecy of Jesus dying for the nation and scattered people. Finally, it considers the metaphor of **Jesus as the grain of wheat** whose death leads to much fruit, a model also for his disciples.

**2. 11 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Peterson, Johannine Theology, Session 12 – 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 → Gospels → John).**



**Peterson_JnTheolo
gy_Session12.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Johannine Theology, Session 12, Pictures of Jesus's Work

Briefing Document: Pictures of Jesus' Work in Johannine Theology

Overview: This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented in Dr. Robert A. Peterson's Session 12 on Johannine Theology, focusing specifically on the "Pictures of Jesus' Work." The session transitions from examining the person of Jesus to exploring the metaphors and images John uses to depict his saving work. Dr. Peterson identifies and elaborates on several key pictures, emphasizing their significance within the Gospel of John and in relation to Old Testament concepts and other New Testament writings.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. The Son of Man Lifted Up:

- This image, particularly from John 3:14-15 and John 12:32-33, draws a parallel to Moses lifting up the bronze serpent in the wilderness (Numbers 21).
- Just as looking at the serpent provided physical healing from snake bites, believing in the "Son of Man lifted up" (referring to the crucifixion) provides eternal life and deliverance from spiritual death and condemnation.
- Dr. Peterson notes the double meaning of "lifted up," signifying both the painful execution on the cross and the subsequent exaltation of Jesus. He connects this to Isaiah 52:13 and 53, where the servant is described as "high and lifted up and shall be exalted."
- The lifting up in John 12:32 ("When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself") initially appears to suggest universal salvation but is clarified by John 5:28-29, which speaks of a resurrection of both life and judgment. Instead, Peterson argues, it signifies the inclusion of Gentiles alongside Jews, as seen in the context of the Greeks seeking Jesus in John 12. He quotes John 12:33, stating this was **"to show what kind of death he was going to die,"** emphasizing the connection to crucifixion.

1. The Good Shepherd:

- In John 10, Jesus explicitly declares, **"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep"** (John 10:11).

- This contrasts with a hired hand who does not care for the sheep. Jesus's love and care extend to knowing his sheep and laying down his life for them, a unique act for a shepherd.
- The imagery includes the idea of Jesus having "other sheep, not of this fold" (John 10:16), which Peterson interprets as the inclusion of the Gentiles into God's people, forming "one flock and one shepherd."
- Jesus's power to lay down his life and take it up again (John 10:17-18), mirroring John 2:19-22, highlights his divine authority. This overlaps with the theme of Jesus as the giver of eternal life (John 10:28).

1. **The Lamb of God:**

- John the Baptist's declaration, "**Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**" (John 1:29), is central to this theme.
- Dr. Peterson discusses various interpretations of this image (scapegoat, Passover lamb) but favors Leon Morris's view that it is a general reference to the entire Old Testament sacrificial system, which Jesus fulfills and replaces.
- This concept aligns with the teaching of Hebrews, highlighting the termination of Old Testament sacrifices through Jesus's death and his role as the ultimate high priest.
- The phrase "sin of the world" underscores the universal scope of Jesus's sacrifice, offering salvation to "all races, all languages, people living in any location, and people of any ethnicity."

1. **Priestly Sacrifice:**

- John 17:19 provides the basis for this picture: "**And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.**"
- Dr. Peterson explains that Jesus's consecration (hagiazo) of himself is a priestly metaphor, setting himself aside for his sacrificial death on the cross.
- This act is the foundation for the sanctification (also hagiazo in the original Greek) of believers through God's word (John 17:17: "**Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth**").
- Jesus acts as the ultimate high priest, offering a unique and final sacrifice that cleanses and purifies his people.

1. Victor (Christus Victor):

- This theme, popularized by Gustav Aulén, emphasizes Christ's victory over the powers of evil: Satan, death, the grave, sin, and the world system opposed to God.
- Dr. Peterson acknowledges its significance in John (e.g., John 12:31: "**Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out**" and John 16:33: "**Take heart; I have overcome the world**") and other New Testament books (like Hebrews 2:14: "**that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil**").
- He cautions against overstating its prominence, noting that Hebrews primarily focuses on Christ as sacrifice and high priest.
- The casting out of the "ruler of this world" (Satan) is linked to Jesus's being "lifted up" (crucified), signifying his victory through apparent defeat.

1. Dying Grain of Wheat:

- Unique to John's Gospel (John 12:20-25), this metaphor arises in response to the Greeks seeking Jesus.
- Jesus states, "**Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit**" (John 12:24).
- This initially refers to Jesus's own death and resurrection, where his apparent demise leads to abundant spiritual fruit (believers).
- Dr. Peterson highlights that Jesus then applies this principle to his disciples: "**Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life**" (John 12:25). They too must "die to themselves" to bear fruit and attain eternal life.

1. One Who Dies for the Nation and Scattered Gentiles:

- The unwitting prophecy of Caiaphas in John 11:49-52 is crucial here: "**It is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.**"
- While Caiaphas intended this as a politically expedient measure, John reveals its deeper significance: Jesus's substitutionary atonement not only for the Jewish nation but also "**to gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad**" (John 11:52), referring to the Gentiles.

- This underscores the inclusive nature of Jesus's saving work, extending beyond the Jewish people.

Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson concludes that John's Gospel presents a rich tapestry of "pictures" illustrating the multifaceted saving work of Jesus Christ. These images, drawing from the Old Testament and employing vivid metaphors, reveal the significance of Jesus's crucifixion and exaltation as the means of redemption, reconciliation, and victory over the forces of evil. While each picture offers a unique perspective, they collectively emphasize the depth and scope of Jesus's sacrifice and its transformative power for all who believe. The session highlights John's theological depth in portraying Jesus not only as the divine Son but also as the agent of God's saving work in the world.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Johannine Theology, Session 12, Pictures of Jesus's Work

Study Guide: Pictures of Jesus' Work in Johannine Theology

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, based on the provided excerpts from Dr. Peterson's lecture on Johannine Theology, Session 12.

1. What is the significance of the title "Son of Man lifted up" as discussed in John 3:14-15, and what Old Testament event does it parallel?
2. According to the lecture, how does John's Gospel connect the "lifting up" of Jesus in John 12:32-33 to the kind of death he would experience?
3. In what ways does Jesus fulfill the role of the "Good Shepherd" in John chapter 10, and how does his shepherding differ from that of a typical shepherd?
4. What are some of the interpretations discussed regarding John the Baptist's declaration, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world"?
5. Explain Dr. Peterson's understanding of Jesus' "priestly sacrifice" as presented in John 17:19, focusing on the meaning of "consecrate" and "sanctify."
6. What is the "Christus Victor" motif, and how does Dr. Peterson assess its importance in Johannine theology and the book of Hebrews?
7. According to the lecture, how is Satan portrayed as the "ruler of this world" in John's Gospel, and how is his power ultimately challenged and judged?
8. What is the ironic prophecy spoken by Caiaphas in John 11, and what is its deeper theological significance according to the lecture?
9. Explain the metaphor of Jesus as the "grain of wheat" in John 12:24, and how does it relate both to Jesus' death and the lives of his disciples?
10. Summarize the seven "pictures" of Jesus' saving work that Dr. Peterson identifies in Johannine theology based on this session.

Answer Key

1. The title "Son of Man lifted up" in John 3:14-15 refers to Jesus' crucifixion, which is presented as necessary for people to have eternal life by believing in him. This event is explicitly paralleled with Moses lifting up the bronze serpent in the

wilderness (Numbers 21), where looking at the serpent provided physical healing. Similarly, looking to and believing in the "lifted up" Son of Man offers spiritual healing and eternal life.

2. John's Gospel, particularly in John 12:32-33, states that Jesus' being "lifted up from the earth" indicates the kind of death he was going to die, which John clarifies is crucifixion. However, the "lifting up" also carries a double meaning of exaltation, as God uses this seemingly shameful death for ultimate good and victory, drawing all kinds of people to himself.
3. As the "Good Shepherd" in John 10, Jesus cares for his sheep, knows them intimately, and, most significantly, lays down his life for them. This differs from a typical shepherd who would not sacrifice their life for the sheep; Jesus' act demonstrates the depth of his love and concern for his flock, even to the point of death and resurrection.
4. Various interpretations exist for John the Baptist's declaration of Jesus as the "Lamb of God." These include connections to the scapegoat, the Passover lamb, or a general reference to the entire Old Testament sacrificial system. Dr. Peterson favors Leon Morris's view that it's a comprehensive reference to all Old Testament sacrifices, which Jesus fulfills and replaces with his own sacrifice.
5. In John 17:19, Jesus' "priestly sacrifice" is conveyed through the language of consecration and sanctification. When Jesus says, "I consecrate myself," it signifies him setting himself apart for his death on the cross, using a priestly metaphor. The result is that his followers "may also be sanctified in truth," meaning they are purified and cleansed through his sacrifice and the preached Word of God.
6. The "Christus Victor" motif, popularized by Gustav Aulén, highlights Christ's victory over the powers of evil, including Satan, death, and sin, through his death and resurrection. While Dr. Peterson acknowledges this as a significant biblical theme present in John and Paul's writings, he argues that Aulén overstates its case, particularly regarding the book of Hebrews, where the primary theme is Christ as sacrifice and high priest.
7. Satan is portrayed as the "ruler of this world" in John's Gospel in the sense of a usurper who opposes God, as seen in his lies to Adam and Eve and his instigation of Judas's betrayal. However, Jesus' death and resurrection signify the judgment of this wicked world system and the casting out of its ruler, demonstrating Christ's ultimate victory over Satan's power.

8. Caiaphas's statement in John 11:50, "It is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish," is an ironic prophecy. While Caiaphas intended it as a matter of political expediency to prevent Roman intervention, the lecture explains that God used his words to prophesy the substitutionary atonement of Jesus, who would die not only for the Jewish nation but also to gather the scattered children of God (Gentiles) into one.
9. The metaphor of Jesus as the "grain of wheat" in John 12:24 illustrates that his death, like a seed falling into the ground and dying, is necessary to produce much fruit. This refers first to Jesus himself, whose death leads to his glorification and the salvation of many. Secondly, Jesus applies this metaphor to his disciples, indicating that they too must "die" to their own desires and follow him to bear spiritual fruit and gain eternal life.
10. The seven pictures of Jesus' saving work identified in the lecture are: the Son of Man lifted up (in crucifixion and exaltation), the Good Shepherd (laying down his life), the Lamb of God (sacrificial death for sin), Priestly Sacrifice (Jesus consecrating himself), Christus Victor (victory over evil), the One who dies for the nation and gathers the Gentiles, and the Grain of Wheat (dying to bear fruit, applicable to both Jesus and his disciples).

Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the "lifting up" motif in John's Gospel, analyzing its connections to both suffering and exaltation, and providing specific examples from the text.
2. Compare and contrast the imagery of Jesus as the "Good Shepherd" and the "Lamb of God" in John's Gospel, exploring the unique aspects of each metaphor in depicting his saving work.
3. Evaluate the role of the "Christus Victor" motif in Johannine theology, considering its strengths as a descriptive framework for Jesus' work and its relationship to other models of atonement presented in the Gospel.
4. Analyze the use of prophecy, both intentional and unintentional, in John's Gospel as it relates to the portrayal of Jesus' saving work, focusing on examples like Caiaphas's statement and the connection to Isaiah 53.
5. Explore the implications of the "grain of wheat" metaphor in John 12:24-25 for understanding both the nature of Jesus' atoning sacrifice and the call to discipleship within Johannine theology.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Antitype:** Something in the New Testament that is foreshadowed by a type in the Old Testament; the fulfillment of a type. (e.g., Jesus' crucifixion as the antitype of the bronze serpent).
- **Christus Victor:** A theological motif emphasizing Christ's victory over the powers of evil (sin, death, the devil) through his death and resurrection.
- **Consecrate:** To set apart or dedicate something as holy for a specific purpose, often in a religious context. In John 17, Jesus consecrates himself for his sacrificial death.
- **Eternal Life:** In Johannine theology, this refers not only to unending life but also to a present, experiential knowledge of God and Jesus Christ (John 17:3).
- **Johannine Theology:** The distinctive theological themes and perspectives found in the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles.
- **Penal Substitution:** A theory of atonement emphasizing that Christ died to bear the penalty of sin, satisfying God's justice on behalf of sinners. While mentioned as emphasized by conservatives, Dr. Peterson suggests other themes are also vital in John.
- **Sanctify:** To make holy or set apart for God's use. In John 17, Jesus prays that his disciples would be sanctified by the truth of God's Word.
- **Type:** A person, event, or institution in the Old Testament that foreshadows or prefigures something greater in the New Testament. (e.g., the bronze serpent as a type of Jesus' crucifixion).
- **Vicarious:** Acting or done for or on behalf of another. Caiaphas's prophecy touches on the vicarious nature of Jesus' death.
- **World (in John's Gospel):** Can refer to God's creation, humanity in need of salvation, or the wicked system in opposition to God. The context usually clarifies the intended meaning.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Johannine Theology, Session 12, Pictures of Jesus's Work, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: Pictures of Jesus' Work in Johannine Theology

1. What is the central focus of John's Gospel regarding Jesus' work, according to this session?

John's Gospel primarily presents Jesus' saving work through various pictures, metaphors, and images. This approach aligns with biblical theology's custom of using figurative language to convey profound theological truths. The session focuses on understanding these "pictures" to grasp the multifaceted nature of Jesus' redemptive actions.

2. What is the significance of the "Son of Man lifted up" imagery in John's Gospel, particularly in relation to the bronze serpent in the wilderness?

The "Son of Man lifted up" (John 3:14-15, 12:32-33) is a key Johannine image that draws a parallel to Moses lifting up the bronze serpent in the wilderness (Numbers 21). Just as the Israelites who looked at the serpent were spared from death by the fiery serpents, so too those who believe in the "lifted up" Son of Man, referring to Jesus' crucifixion and subsequent exaltation, will have eternal life. This imagery highlights that Jesus' death on the cross, though seemingly an act of judgment against sin, becomes the means of salvation for those who look to him in faith.

3. How does John's Gospel portray Jesus as the "Good Shepherd," and what are the key characteristics of this role?

Jesus as the "Good Shepherd" (John 10) emphasizes his deep care, love, and knowledge of his sheep (believers). Unlike a hired hand, the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, demonstrating the ultimate sacrifice. This imagery also includes the idea of Jesus knowing his own as the Father knows him, and the inclusion of other sheep (Gentiles) into one flock with one shepherd, signifying the universal scope of Jesus' saving work. Furthermore, Jesus' unique authority to lay down his life and take it up again underscores his divine nature and power over death.

4. What does John the Baptist's declaration, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world," signify about Jesus' work?

John the Baptist's statement (John 1:29, 36) presents Jesus as the ultimate sacrificial Lamb of God. While the specific Old Testament sacrifice alluded to is debated (scapegoat, Passover lamb, or a general reference to the sacrificial system), the core meaning is that Jesus' death serves as a sacrifice that effectively deals with the sin of the entire world. This declaration foreshadows Jesus' atoning death, which renders the Old Testament sacrificial system obsolete, as Jesus fulfills and replaces it as the definitive sacrifice for sin. The offer of salvation through this sacrifice is open to "whosoever will," encompassing all people regardless of race, language, or ethnicity.

5. How does the concept of Jesus as a "Priestly Sacrifice" manifest in John's Gospel, particularly in John 17?

In John 17:19, Jesus' prayer highlights his role as a priestly sacrifice. His statement, "For their sake I consecrate myself," signifies him setting himself apart for his sacrificial death on the cross. This self-consecration as a high priest provides the basis for the sanctification (purification and cleansing) of his followers. Just as Old Testament priests made sacrifices to consecrate themselves and others, Jesus' ultimate sacrifice serves to make believers holy through the truth of God's Word, especially the preached gospel.

6. What is "Christus Victor," and how is this theme present in John's Gospel?

"Christus Victor" is a theological concept emphasizing Christ's victory over the powers of evil, such as Satan, death, sin, and the world system opposed to God. While the session acknowledges that this isn't the sole or necessarily the primary theme in all New Testament books (like Hebrews), it is present in John's Gospel. For instance, John 12:31 speaks of the "judgment of this world" and the casting out of the "ruler of this world" (Satan) through Jesus' being "lifted up." Jesus' confidence in his impending victory despite the cross (John 13:1, 16:33) further illustrates this theme.

7. How does Caiaphas' unwitting prophecy in John 11 illustrate a key aspect of Jesus' work?

Caiaphas, the high priest, in advocating for Jesus' death to prevent national unrest, unknowingly prophesied the substitutionary atonement of Jesus (John 11:49-52). His statement that it is "better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish" had a political motivation but was divinely inspired to reveal that Jesus would die not only for the Jewish nation but also to gather into one the scattered children of God, a reference largely understood as the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's people.

8. What is the significance of Jesus being portrayed as the "grain of wheat" in John 12, and how does this relate to his followers?

The image of Jesus as the grain of wheat (John 12:24-25) illustrates that his death, like a seed falling into the ground and dying, is necessary to produce much fruit. This "fruit" initially refers to the glory of his resurrection and the subsequent growth of his followers. However, Jesus extends this metaphor to his disciples, stating that those who "hate their life in this world" (prioritize God and follow Jesus) will "keep it for eternal life." This implies that believers, like the grain of wheat, must also die to themselves and their selfish desires to bear spiritual fruit and attain eternal life. Their deaths, unlike Jesus', are not redemptive but are a consequence of following him and participating in the propagation of the gospel.