

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Johannine Theology, Session 20, Salvation, Kept, Preservation, Salvation Already and Not Yet

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This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on Johannine theology. This is session 20, Salvation, Kept, Preservation. Salvation Already and Not Yet.

For our last lecture on Johannine theology, let us look to the Lord. Gracious Father, thank you for your grace that saves us, keeps us, gifts us, uses us in your service and will bring us safely home. We bow before you, we give you glory, we ask you to teach us again, in Jesus' name, amen.

Salvation this time, kept. The people of God are kept, they are preserved. We've seen it in John 6 so many times, I need at least to read it and I'll emphasize those parts.

John 6:37, all the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I will never cast out. Jesus will not push us aside; he will not throw us out of his family, and he will not reject us after we have come to him by grace through faith. This is the will of him who sent me, verse 39 of John 6, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me.

Jesus will keep the elect saved until the end but will raise it up on the last day. The language is corporate language of the people of God using the neuter it. In verse 40, this is the will of my Father that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life now and I will raise him up on the last day.

Then Jesus keeps the people of God. As I said in the last lecture, to give a fuller biblical presentation, we would say preservation is the work of the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In this place, it is the Son alone who keeps us and raises us up on the last day.

John 10:27 to 30, we have done this enough times as well, so by way of repetition, my sheep hear my voice, Jesus said, and I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life. Thomas Schreiner showed me in a book on salvation as part of Christopher Morgan's B&H Brauman and Holman series, Theology for the People of God.

Schreiner emphasized, and I hadn't emphasized this enough before, he taught me eternal life means in itself; it's a word of preservation. It is a life that will never end. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish.

A strong categorical statement of this eternal security, the preservation of the sheep, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. He uses strong language to cover lesser attempts to take us out of his hand. Oh yeah, but I can take myself out of his hand.

Jesus just said they will never perish. You cannot take yourself out of his hand. My father, who's given them to me, is greater than all.

No one is able to snatch them out of my father's hand. We're in the son's hand, we're in the father's hand, I and the father are one in our divine work of keeping the people of God safe. And then we haven't looked at these, so let's do so.

John 17. John 17, a number of times Jesus gives words of comfort whereby he assures his people for whom he prays that they will be finally saved. John 17:11 and 12.

I'm no longer in the world. There it is again. Jesus is in the world, heading to the cross, but he is so resolute and so focused on doing the Father's will and fulfilling his plan that he actually looks at this from the perspective of being back with the Father in heaven.

I'm no longer in the world, but they are in the world, the people the Father gave to the Son, the people of God. And I'm coming to you, Holy Father. Well, there it is.

He's not actually there yet, but he's coming. So, he vacillates between purposed action and fulfilled action. Holy Father, keep them in your name, where the name stands for the person.

Keep them in yourself. Keep them by your power. Your name which you have given me, that they may be one even as we are one.

Keep them, Father. Keep them safe. Jesus prays for the preservation of the people of God.

While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I've guarded them, and not one of them has been lost, except the son of destruction that the scripture might be fulfilled. The exception proves the rule.

And I was reminded by Andreas Kostenberger, *The Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, that he agrees with my own conclusion. Judas was never regenerated. Judas was never saved.

So, he didn't have salvation and lose it. He didn't have it. He appeared to have it, but his, in chapter 12, where Jesus is anointed, Judas objects.

This money, this ointment should have been sold to the poor, sold, and money given to the poor. Twelve, five. He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief and having charge of the money bag.

He used to help himself. It's a progressive imperfect. This was his habit, his custom, to what was put in it.

He is not a thief who steals and then repents, even repeatedly. It was his practice to steal. And surely, he did it surreptitiously because Matthew was a former tax collector.

Matthew either would have strangled Judas or ended up in a Jerusalem insane asylum if he knew the keeper of the money bag was a thief. Judas was never regenerated. He played the part, but he was not really one of the disciples in the fullest spiritual sense of the word.

John 17, 15. I do not ask you to take them out of the world, Father, Jesus prays, but that you keep them from the evil one. Satan is called Satan, the devil, the God of this world, the ruler of this world, and the evil one.

Jesus prays that the Father would keep the people of God from the evil one. That prayer will be answered. And we see that another such prayer in 24, although rather than the opposition to the negative, this is the accentuation of the positive.

Because now Jesus says, Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am. Jesus envisions himself back with the Father in glory in heaven to see the glory that you've given me because you love me before the foundation of the world. Jesus prays that his people would make it to heaven to be with Jesus and the Father.

The Father will not deny that prayer of his son. Salvation kept speaks of preservation. Jesus will raise up his people on the last day, John 6. Jesus and the Father keep the sheep safe, John 10.

The high priestly prayer three times includes a prayer for the final salvation, the keeping, and the preservation of the believers in the Lord Jesus. Finally, salvation is as already and not yet. This is perhaps the most important eschatological truth in the New Testament.

The great predictions of the Old Testament have been fulfilled in part in real measure. But the end of the age has not come. Those prophecies had not been fulfilled in their fullest and final sense.

We saw this already and not yet with two of the time sayings. A time is coming when people will worship neither in Samaria at Gerizim or in Jerusalem on Mount Zion. Now in the book of Acts, they worship right where they were.

They didn't have to go to Jerusalem any more, and Samaritan worship was apostate from the beginning. But on the other hand, a time was coming, and it is now here.

When true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth as a Samaritan woman does. So, the time sayings point to the already and the not yet. The presently realized fulfillments are still to be more fully realized fulfillments.

The other one is in chapter five. Time is coming, and it is now here when the dead will be regenerated to summarize the meaning of John's words. A time is coming, and it's not here when those who are in their graves will hear the voice of the Son of Man and come out.

Four truths concerning last things are already and not yet. Salvation and judgment, resurrection, second coming, glorification, salvation and judgment. We've done John 3:17 and 18 a number of times.

After John 3:16, for God did not send in his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. Everyone who believes in him is not condemned already. The one who does not believe in the name of the Son of God has already been condemned.

I think I botched it a little bit. Not good, not good at all. God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world , but rather to save the world through him.

John 3 18, whoever believes in him is not condemned. Now whoever does not believe is condemned already. It uses the word already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

Salvation and judgment are present depending upon one's relationship to Jesus Christ. One can know one is not condemned and will not be condemned, or one who is a rejecter is condemned and will be condemned. Once again, that latter verdict could be changed if the person believes in Christ.

Salvation and judgment are present and, of course, in their fullest sense. Hell and the new heavens and new earth for resurrected believers await. But John 3:17 and 18 don't show that yet.

John 12:25 shows the not yet of eternal life at least. Whoever loves his life loses it. John 12:25 whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

That eternal life is in the next world. There's a futuristic reference to salvation. Perhaps whoever loves his life loses it means we'll lose it.

Perhaps a futuristic present in the context. That is, we'll lose it on the last day and thereafter. We've already seen resurrection is already and not yet.

Resurrection is fulfilled. John 5:24, 25 whoever hears my word believes on him who sent me has eternal life already. He does not come into judgment but has passed from death to life.

An hour is coming, and now is that's already language that's fulfilled language when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. That is a spiritual resurrection now for those who believe in Jesus. And of course, as we said many times, John 5:28 29 speaks of a physical resurrection, not yet a futuristic one.

The hour is coming when all who are in their graves will come out. Some to a resurrection of life, others to a resurrection of judgment, which in this context means condemnation. This is something we did not treat the second coming.

My thesis is every major aspect of last things is fulfilled and yet to be fulfilled in a greater way is already and not yet. The already aspect of the second coming is really neglected it's in John 14 tucked in there in verse 23. The not yet is easy let not your hearts be troubled.

John 14:1 believe in God believe also in me in my father house or many rooms if it were not so what I have told you I go to a prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and take you to myself that where I am you may be also. Jesus pictures heaven Jesus pictures being with the Father as a mansion in heaven with many rooms, and one of those rooms has your believer's name written on it. That's not yet to be sure. Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us. The meaning of all of this imagery is we belong to God the Father. He loves us, and he will welcome us. When Jesus comes again, he will welcome us into his presence to be with him.

I don't think we're speaking of a literal heavenly house, but we're speaking of a literal God the Father who loves his people and wants them to be in his very joyous presence. But the other aspect, the already present aspect of the second coming, is in 14:23. As a matter of fact, it is both the Father and the Son who come in a sense. 22 of John 14 Judas, not Iscariot I told you before this guy is so glad that that's in the Bible lest he is confused with Judas who was the son of Iscariot said to him, Lord, how is it that you manifest yourself to us and not to the world? Jesus answered him if anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

14 one and two and three Jesus is preparing rooms in the Father's heavenly house for the people of God. 14:23 loving Jesus results in the Father and the Son being right at home now in our hearts and lives. If anyone loves me he'll keep my word he'll obey me and my father will love him and we Father and Son will come to him and make our home with him now.

In that sense, the Second Coming is already, certainly not to deny a literal, physical Second Coming at the end of the age, but to teach a real spiritual fellowship with the Father and the Son, such that believers who love the Lord Jesus, in D. A. Carson's book *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God*, he wants to make this only some believers. I'm not sure about that, but I would say, certainly open to all believers, is this invitation to deeply love Jesus and obey Him, and the result is sweet fellowship with the Father and the Son, and that fellowship is communicated in the language of them coming and taking up residence with us, making their home with us. I had a sweet student years ago, Stuart Cashman from London; I learned many things from Stuart: a good student, a lover of people, and a deep lover of the Lord.

This ends up with his wife's statement on Facebook, yesterday or the day before, Stuart wrestled with disease for years and years, always with a sweet attitude, and she said, I'm sad to tell you, my sweet, my dear husband died and went to be with the Savior he loved so well, amen. If you knew the man, it's the truth. One of my former colleagues at Covenant Seminary, David Calhoun, and I used to walk together, and we just had a great time of fellowship.

We would see those geese around that pond, and from a distance, we'd give ourselves about two seconds, all right, look away now, and we each would guess how many geese were there. It is so hard; they always had more geese than we would guess, so I would add five or so and still be too sure; anyway, we had a ball. Anyway, there was an elderly, look who's talking, elderly Hindu man, very cosmopolitan, liberal Hindu, I might add, very friendly, with his little dog, who looked like he was about to die any second, anyway, we became his friends, and we talked with him about the Lord a little bit, but Stuart Cashman became his friend and talked with him about the Lord a lot, without being offensive, just a remarkable gift, and he used his gift to love sinners.

That is an amazing thing, that ability to love others, to make them feel at home, and the Father and the Son promise special fellowship for believers who love Jesus and make it their burden to obey his commandments. Thus, I see the second coming as already in John 14:23, second coming, so to speak, the aspect of the presence and fellowship of the Father and Son in our lives now, and the second coming literally not yet spoken of in verses one through three, where Jesus expressly says in John 14:3, I will come again. Lastly, not only for salvation already and not yet, but lastly, for our course, we look at glorification.

You say, surely, glorification is only the future; well, glorification is mainly the future, but that has perplexed me for years; I believe in the Bible; my problem is I don't always understand the Bible. Second Corinthians, I know we're dealing with Paul here, I want to show an already aspect of glorification. Second Corinthians 3, 18, and we all with unveiled faces beholding the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image, literally from glory to glory, from one degree of glory to another.

For this comes from the Lord who is the spirit. Paul was teaching and all the commentaries who don't have a bias against this idea say he's teaching about believers enjoying an aspect of glorification now, as they look to Jesus, as they behold the glory of the Lord, as they worship Jesus, they are being transformed into the image of Christ now, from one degree of glory to another. And yes, the Holy Spirit plays a part, at the end of the verse, some say, and I think it's probably right, Sinclair Ferguson, for example, in his book on the Holy Spirit, it's actually talking about the Lord Jesus, who becomes functionally equivalent, not ontologically confused with, who becomes functionally equivalent to the Holy Spirit, anyway, it is God who's producing this progressive sanctification in believers.

I never would have said such a thing if the Bible didn't say it. John 17:22, starting at verse 20, I do not ask for those, for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one just as you, Father are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you've sent me. The glory that you have given me, I have given to them.

That is an already aspect of glorification. How could it be, these disciples, who are so, such strugglers, who don't believe, not in the fourth gospel, but in the, certainly in Matthew's gospel and Luke's gospel, repeatedly Jesus predicts, he's going to be traded into the hands of the, he's going to be turned over to the hands of the scribes and Pharisees, crucified, and rise again on the third day, over and over again, three or four times, and they can't take it in. These people, of them, it could be said, the glory you have given me, Father, I have given to them.

Well, praise the Lord. There is hope for us, fellow strugglers in the Christian life. That is incredible to me, absolutely incredible, that they may be one even as we are one. This present, progressive, 2 Corinthians 3:18, notion of glorification produces biblical unity among the people of God.

The glory that you have given me, I have given them, that they may be one even as we, Father and Son, are one. Every major aspect of last thanks is already and not yet fulfilled in part, more greatly to be fulfilled when Jesus comes again, when the end comes, including glorification. Verse 24, of course, speaks of final glorification.

Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation

of the world. Jesus here prays that believers will finally be glorified. He wants them to be in the very presence of the Father and the Son, to behold the glory of Christ.

Whether this is an intermediate glory or it merges with the final glory, I'm not sure, but it surely is not yet. Thus, again we see salvation is an important aspect to the Gospel of John. The Old Testament predicted it.

The time sayings say sometimes the time has come in conjunction with the saying the time has not yet come for worship to be independent of locale, John 4, for the resurrection of the dead, John 5. Salvation and judgment are already right now based on one's relationship to Christ. And maybe somebody listening to these lectures doesn't know the Lord. Surely you have heard the Gospel again and again and again.

We are rebels against the Lord our God who loved us and gave his Son to save anyone who believes in him. If that's your situation, we urge you to turn from your sins, trust Christ to have died in your place, to have risen again to give you eternal life and to forgive your sins. If you do so, it will be a happy day for you as well and for me as well.

I would love to hear such a thing happening from these lectures on the Gospel of John, which is so clear and repetitive in sharing the Gospel message. Resurrection is already in regeneration. It is not yet in the actual resurrection of the body.

Second coming is already in the sense that the Father and the Son come and make their home in the lives of believers who love and obey Jesus with all their hearts. But it is not yet in its fullness. And Jesus promises to come again and take us to the Father's heavenly house.

Glorification, as astonishing as it seems, is already in a sense. But its fullness awaits. Our going to be with the Lord or his coming to take us to be with himself.

Thus endeth the lectures on the fourth gospel and the great love of God in our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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