

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Christ's Saving Work, Session 12, 9 Saving Events, Part 4 [Resurrection, Ascension] Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Peterson, Christ's Saving Work, Session 12, 9 Saving Events, Part 4 [Resurrection, Ascension], Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This text from Robert Peterson's teaching series on Christ's saving work, specifically Session 12, Part 4, and Part 1, examines the theological significance of Jesus's resurrection and ascension. It argues that **Christ's resurrection is foundational for believers' regeneration and future resurrection to eternal life**, drawing parallels between Christ as the "firstfruits" and the "second Adam." Furthermore, **the ascension is presented as a crucial work of the triune God**, confirming Christ's identity and serving as a prerequisite for his ongoing heavenly ministry, including his session, the sending of the Spirit, intercession, and eventual second coming. Ultimately, **the ascension is essential for completing Christ's priestly work and restoring the intimate relationship between humanity and God lost after the fall.**

**2. 19 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Peterson, Christ's Saving Work, 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 (Theology → Theology, Peterson → Christology).**



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3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Christ's Saving Work, Session 12, 9 Saving Events, Part 4 [Resurrection, Ascension]

Briefing Document: The Saving Significance of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension

Overview: This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Robert Peterson in Session 12 of his teaching on Christ's saving work. This session focuses on the saving significance of Jesus Christ's resurrection, specifically its essential results, with an initial focus on Jesus's ascension. Peterson argues that the resurrection is foundational for believers' regeneration and future resurrection, and that it, along with Christ's death, has cosmic implications, including the inauguration of the new heavens and new earth. He then emphasizes the crucial saving significance of Christ's ascension, arguing it confirms his identity, is a prerequisite for his subsequent saving works (Session, Pentecost, Intercession, Second Coming), completes his priestly work, and elevates the reconciliation between humanity and God to a new level.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. The Foundational Importance of Jesus's Resurrection:

- **Believers' Regeneration:** Peterson states that because Christ is alive, believers are already regenerated and united to him in his resurrection, receiving new life by the Holy Spirit.
- **Quote:** "Already, because he is alive, believers are regenerated. They are united to Christ in his resurrection in this life and given new life by the Spirit." (Page 1)
- **Guarantee of Future Resurrection:** Christ's resurrection is the basis for believers' future resurrection to eternal life in glorified bodies on the new earth.
- **Quote:** "Our resurrection is our final salvation. We will be raised to eternal life on the new earth in glorious, imperishable, immortal, and powerful bodies that are filled with the Holy Spirit." (Page 1)
- **Firstfruits Analogy:** Paul's description of the risen Christ as the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20) signifies that just as the firstfruits guaranteed a larger harvest, Christ's resurrection guarantees the future resurrection of believers.
- **Quote:** "Therefore, the fact that Jesus is the firstfruits means that there are more to come." (Page 1)

- **Second Adam Theology:** Jesus's resurrection is central to the "second Adam new creation picture" (1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 47-49), contrasting Adam's legacy of death with Christ's provision of life and the promise that believers will bear the image of the man of heaven.
- **Quote:** "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (Page 2)
- **Quote:** "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven." (Page 2)

2. Cosmic Implications of Christ's Death and Resurrection:

- **Inauguration of the New Heavens and New Earth:** Peterson argues that Christ's atoning death and resurrection not only bring regeneration and eternal life now but will also culminate in the creation of the new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21:1).
- **Quote:** "Furthermore, Christ's atoning death inaugurates the new heavens and the new earth. Jesus' death and resurrection bring regeneration and eternal life now. It causes the resurrection of believers to eternal life on the last day. In addition, it has cosmic effects. Jesus' resurrection will inaugurate the new heavens and new earth." (Page 2)
- **Reconciliation of All Things:** Drawing from Colossians 1:19-20, Peterson explains that God was pleased to reconcile "all things" to himself through Christ. This encompasses all created reality, including angels, saved human beings, and the heavens and earth.
- **Quote:** "God was pleased through him to reconcile all things to himself, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." (Page 3)
- **Subjugation of Fallen Angels:** While unfallen angels do not need salvation, Christ's reconciliation of "invisible" things (Colossians 1:16) includes the defeat and subjugation of fallen angels, maintaining his peaceable kingdom (Colossians 2:15).
- **Quote:** "[He] disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him." (Page 4, quoting Colossians 2:15)
- **Cosmic Restoration, Not Universal Salvation:** Peterson clarifies that "reconciling all things" does not imply universalism. He cites scriptural evidence (Colossians 3:6, Romans 2:8-9, 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, Matthew 25:46, Revelation 21:8, 22:15) to argue that God's wrath will come upon the rebellious and that eternal

punishment exists. The reconciliation is a cosmic restoration of God's rule over his creation.

- **Quote:** "Colossians 1:20 teaches, then, Moo writes, not cosmic salvation or even cosmic redemption, but cosmic restoration or renewal. Through the work of Christ on the cross, God has brought his entire rebellious creation back under the rule of his sovereign power." (Page 5, quoting Doug Moo)
- **Revelation 3:14 and the New Creation:** Peterson interprets Revelation 3:14 ("the beginning of God's creation") not as referring to the original creation but to the new creation inaugurated by Christ's resurrection, drawing connections to Isaiah 65:16-17 and Revelation 1:5 (Christ as "the firstborn of the dead").
- **Quote:** "In a word, his resurrection is viewed as the beginning of the new creation. This means that he alone, who died and arose, is the beginning of God's creation." (Page 7)

3. The Saving Significance of Jesus's Ascension:

- **Heaven as the Source of Salvation and Rule:** Peterson quotes Peter Toon, emphasizing that heaven is the sphere from which the universe is sustained and ruled, and from where salvation goes forth.
- **Quote:** "Heaven is the place and sphere from where the universe is sustained and ruled. Heaven is the place and sphere from where salvation goes forth into the world of space and time." (Page 7, quoting Peter Toon)
- **Foundation for Present Hope:** The ascension, as taught in Hebrews, establishes a sure foundation for believers' hope, granting access to God's presence.
- **Quote:** "The author to the Hebrews teaches us about Jesus' ascension in order to establish our present hope on a sure foundation." (Page 7)
- **Quote:** "We have this hope as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf..." (Page 8, quoting Hebrews 6:19-20)
- **Cooperative Work of the Trinity:** While Luke's accounts suggest God the Father as the primary actor in the ascension ("carried away" and "lifted up" using divine passives), John, Paul, and Hebrews depict Christ as actively ascending. Peterson concludes it is a cooperative work of the Trinity.

- **Quote:** "Given these two emphases, the best course is to understand the ascension as a cooperative work of the Trinity. The Father lifts Christ up and exalts him above the heavens. Christ himself ascends in accordance with his father's will and passes through the heavens." (Page 8)
- **Linchpin of Christ's Other Saving Works:** The ascension confirms the authenticity of Christ's earthly ministry and is a prerequisite for his subsequent heavenly ministry:
- **Session (Sitting at the Right Hand of the Father):** Necessary for Christ to take his place as king (Psalm 110:1, Acts 2:33-36).
- **Pentecost (Sending the Holy Spirit):** Christ explicitly states the necessity of his departure for the Spirit to come (John 16:7).
- **Intercession:** Christ's heavenly priestly ministry requires his ascension to be in the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews).
- **Second Coming:** Christ cannot return unless he first ascends (Acts 3:21).
- **Quote:** "The ascension confirms the authenticity of Christ's previous works and is a prelude and prerequisite for the subsequent works." (Page 9)
- **Completion of Christ's Priestly Work:** The ascension allows Christ, the perfect high priest, to present his finished sacrifice in the heavenly sanctuary, completing his priestly ministry.
- **Quote:** "By his ascension beyond the earthly realm, Jesus was able to take his sacrifice into the heavenly sanctuary, where the earthly temple, tabernacle, and temple were mere shadows." (Page 10)
- **Elevation of Divine Reconciliation:** The ascension takes the reconciliation of humanity and God to a new level, overcoming the separation caused by the fall. Christ, in his complete human nature, has entered God's presence as a forerunner, paving the way for intimate fellowship.
- **Quote:** "Through Christ's ascension and subsequent saving events, he did everything necessary to re-establish the intimate relationship between humanity and divinity." (Page 11)
- **Quote:** "But even now, quote, our fellowship is with the Father and with his son, Jesus Christ. First John 1, 3. This is possible only because Christ died and ascended to God's right hand." (Page 11)

- **Christ's Ongoing Heavenly Ministry:** Having ascended, Christ continues his ministry from heaven for the benefit of his people.
- **Quote:** "He has moved from his earthly to his heavenly ministry, which he currently executes for the benefit of his people." (Page 11)

Conclusion: Dr. Peterson convincingly argues that both the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ are essential components of his saving work, with profound implications for believers, the cosmos, and the restored relationship between humanity and God. The resurrection provides the foundation for new life and future hope, while the ascension confirms Christ's victory and enables his ongoing heavenly ministry and the ultimate fulfillment of God's redemptive plan.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Christ's Saving Work, Session 12, 9 Saving Events, Part 4 [Resurrection, Ascension]

Christ's Saving Work: Resurrection and Ascension Study Guide

Quiz

1. According to the source, what is one of the immediate benefits believers receive because of Christ's resurrection, even before the final resurrection?
2. How does the concept of "firstfruits" relate to Christ's resurrection, as explained in the provided text?
3. In what way does the Apostle Paul contrast Adam and Christ in 1 Corinthians 15, and what is the significance of this comparison concerning resurrection?
4. Beyond the resurrection of believers, what broader cosmic effect does the text attribute to Christ's atoning death and resurrection?
5. According to Colossians 1:20 and its surrounding verses, what does Paul mean by God reconciling "all things" through Christ?
6. How does the text address the question of whether Christ's reconciliation of all things implies universal salvation for every human being? Provide one reason given in the source.
7. What is the author's interpretation of Revelation 3:14, where Jesus refers to himself as the "beginning of God's creation"?
8. Why does Peter Toon emphasize the significance of Christ's ascension for God's universal and everlasting salvation?
9. The text discusses the ascension as a "cooperative work of the Trinity." Briefly explain the roles of the Father and Christ in this event.
10. How does Christ's ascension relate to the completion of his priestly work and the presentation of his sacrifice before God?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The text states that because Christ is alive, believers are regenerated and united to Christ in his resurrection in this life, receiving new life by the Spirit.

2. Christ is called the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep," drawing on the Old Testament offering. This signifies devotion to God and, from God's perspective, is a promise that more will follow – that believers will also be raised.
3. Paul contrasts Adam as the first man, "from the earth, a man of dust," with Jesus as the second and last Adam, "from heaven." This highlights that just as we bear Adam's image of sin and death, believers will bear Christ's image of heavenly, resurrected bodies.
4. The text states that Christ's atoning death and resurrection inaugurate the new heavens and the new earth, bringing regeneration and eternal life now and causing the resurrection of believers to eternal life on the last day, thus having cosmic effects.
5. Paul uses "all things" to refer to all created reality, including everything in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, and specifically mentions angels, saved human beings, and the heavens and earth in the context of reconciliation.
6. The text argues against universalism by pointing to the teaching throughout Paul's epistles and the New Testament, such as Romans 2 and Matthew 25, which speak of wrath, eternal destruction, and eternal punishment for those who do not know God or reject Christ.
7. The author argues that "beginning of God's creation" in Revelation 3:14 refers not to the original creation but to the new creation inaugurated by Christ's resurrection, linking it to the "firstborn of the dead" in Revelation 1:5 and Colossians 1:18.
8. Toon argues that for God's salvation to be universal and everlasting, the incarnate Son needed to return to heaven to be the source of salvation everywhere to all who believe, working through the Holy Spirit.
9. The Father is presented as lifting Christ up and exalting him to heaven (divine passive voice in Luke's accounts), while Christ himself actively ascends in accordance with the Father's will, as depicted in John, Ephesians, and Hebrews.
10. Christ's ascension is essential for the completion of his priestly work because it enabled him to take his perfect sacrifice, accomplished on the cross, into the heavenly sanctuary and present it in the very presence of God the Father, fulfilling the pattern of Old Testament sacrifices.

Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the significance of Christ's resurrection as the foundation for believers' future resurrection and the nature of their resurrected bodies, drawing on the scriptural references provided in the text.
2. Analyze Robert Peterson's argument that Christ's death and resurrection have cosmic implications, leading to the reconciliation of "all things." What are the key components of this reconciliation, and how does the text address potential misunderstandings of this concept (e.g., universalism)?
3. Explain the relationship between Christ's ascension and his subsequent saving works, such as his heavenly session, sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and intercession for believers. How does the ascension serve as a "linchpin" for these activities?
4. Examine the saving significance of Christ's ascension in terms of both the completion of his priestly ministry and the reconciliation between humanity and God. How did the ascension provide access to God's presence and restore a level of fellowship lost after the Fall?
5. Critically evaluate the author's interpretation of Revelation 3:14 in light of other New Testament passages discussed, particularly concerning the concept of the "new creation." What are the strengths and potential weaknesses of this interpretation?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Regeneration:** The spiritual rebirth or renewal of a believer, giving them new life in Christ through the Holy Spirit.
- **Resurrection (of believers):** The future event when believers will be raised from the dead with glorified, imperishable, and immortal bodies, mirroring Christ's own resurrection.
- **Firstfruits:** An Old Testament offering signifying devotion to God and acknowledging His blessing. In the context of Christ's resurrection, it signifies that he is the first among those who will be raised.
- **Second Adam:** A title for Jesus Christ, contrasting him with Adam, the first man. As Adam brought sin and death, Christ brings righteousness and life.
- **New Creation:** The transformative work of God through Christ's death and resurrection, leading to the renewal of all things, including believers and ultimately the cosmos.
- **Reconciliation:** The act of restoring a broken relationship. Through Christ, God reconciles humanity and all creation to himself, overcoming the effects of sin.
- **Universalism:** The theological belief that all human beings will ultimately be saved. The text argues against this interpretation of Christ's reconciling work.
- **Sola Scriptura:** A foundational principle of the Reformation emphasizing that Scripture alone is the ultimate authority for faith and practice.
- **Ascension:** The bodily return of Jesus Christ to heaven forty days after his resurrection, where he is exalted at the right hand of God the Father.
- **Divine Passive:** A grammatical construction in which the actor performing the action is not explicitly stated but is implied to be God.
- **Forerunner:** One who goes before to prepare the way for others. Christ's ascension makes him the forerunner for believers, promising their eventual dwelling in God's presence.
- **Heavenly Session:** Christ's enthronement at the right hand of God the Father in heaven, signifying his reign and authority over all creation.
- **Intercession:** The act of Christ as our High Priest, continuously praying to the Father on behalf of believers.

- **New Heavens and New Earth:** The future, fully restored creation promised in Scripture, free from the effects of sin and death.
- **Incarnation:** The act by which the eternal Son of God took on human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.
- **Atoning Death:** Christ's death on the cross, which atones for or makes amends for the sins of humanity, satisfying God's justice.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Christ's Saving Work, Session 12, 9 Saving Events, Part 4 [Resurrection, Ascension], Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Christ's Resurrection and Ascension

1. How does Jesus' resurrection impact believers in the present? Because Jesus Christ is alive, believers are immediately regenerated and united with him in his resurrection in this life. This union, facilitated by the Holy Spirit, grants believers new life even before their future bodily resurrection.

2. What is the significance of calling Jesus the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep"? In the Old Testament, the offering of firstfruits demonstrated the worshiper's devotion and acknowledged God's blessing on their flock or crops. God's command to bring this offering also served as a promise of future provision. Similarly, Jesus' resurrection as the firstfruits signifies that he is the initial harvest of those raised from the dead, guaranteeing that more will follow. His resurrection is the cause and assurance of believers' future resurrection to eternal life.

3. How does the concept of the "two Adams" relate to Jesus' resurrection? The Apostle Paul contrasts Adam, the first man who brought sin and death, with Jesus, the second and last Adam, who brings resurrection and new life. Just as humanity bears the image of the first Adam (being of the dust and subject to sin and death), believers in Christ will bear the image of the man of heaven, being raised in resurrection bodies like Christ, grounded in the reality of God and the new creation.

4. Beyond individual salvation, what are the broader, cosmic effects of Jesus' death and resurrection? Christ's atoning death and resurrection not only bring regeneration and eternal life to believers now and cause their future resurrection, but they also have cosmic implications. Jesus' resurrection inaugurates the new heavens and the new earth, redeeming creation from the bondage and corruption it experienced after the fall. Through his death and resurrection, God reconciles all created reality back to himself.

5. What does it mean that Christ "reconciled all things" (Colossians 1:20), and does this imply universal salvation? While Colossians 1:20 states that God was pleased through Christ to reconcile all things, including created reality in heaven and on earth (angels, humans, the cosmos), this does not mean universal salvation. The reconciliation of angels refers to the subjugation of fallen angels, not their salvation. Regarding humanity, the context of Colossians and the broader New Testament teaching on

judgment and eternal punishment for those who reject God make it clear that not all will be saved. "All things" in this context signifies the comprehensive restoration and renewal of God's creation under his sovereign rule, with believing humans as the primary beneficiaries of this reconciliation.

6. Why is the ascension of Jesus considered a crucial part of his saving work? The ascension of Christ is a vital, often overlooked aspect of his saving work. It confirms the truth of his identity and earthly ministry, acting as proof that he is the Son of God who came to save and restore creation. Furthermore, the ascension is a prerequisite for his subsequent saving works, including his session at the right hand of the Father (his heavenly reign), the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, his ongoing intercession for believers, and his eventual second coming. Without the ascension, these crucial aspects of Christ's work for the church and the world would not be possible.

7. In what ways does the ascension relate to Christ's priestly ministry and the reconciliation between humanity and God? The ascension completes Christ's priestly work. Just as Old Testament sacrifices were only completed when presented before God, Christ's perfect sacrifice on the cross was presented in the heavenly sanctuary through his ascension. This qualifies him for a greater, eternal priesthood in the order of Melchizedek. Moreover, the ascension elevates the reconciliation between humanity and God to a new level. By taking his fully human nature into heaven, Christ acts as a forerunner for humanity, making a way for believers to have intimate fellowship with God, a relationship not fully restored since the fall in Eden.

8. How should believers view Christ's ascension in light of their present and future hope? Christ's ascension provides a sure foundation for the believer's hope. It signifies that Christ has entered into the very heavenly presence of God, and as our forerunner, he has paved the way for us to one day dwell with him in the Father's house. Believers are to live in the present with the confident hope that just as Christ died, rose, and ascended, they too will ultimately join him in glory. The ascension is a steadfast anchor for the soul, assuring believers of their future inheritance and the reality of their access to God through Christ.