

# Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Christology, Session 18, Systematics: Humanity of Christ – Proofs Resources from NotebookLM

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

## 1. Abstract of Peterson, Christology, Session 18, Systematics: Humanity of Christ – Proofs, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

**Dr. Robert Peterson's Christology session 18** focuses on proving the **humanity of Christ**, particularly through the book of Hebrews' assertion that Jesus was "made perfect." Peterson explains that this perfection relates to Christ's **learning obedience through suffering**, a necessary qualification for his role as savior and mediator. The lecture addresses potential theological difficulties with the idea of a perfect God becoming "perfect," clarifying that this applies to **Jesus' human experience** and not his divine nature. Peterson further illustrates Christ's genuine humanity through his **temptation**, **his limited knowledge of future events**, and **his anguish in Gethsemane**.

**2. 14 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Peterson, Christology, Session 18 – 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).**



**Peterson\_Christology\_Session18.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 18, Systematics: Humanity of Christ – Proofs

#### Briefing Document: The Humanity of Christ in Hebrews

**Overview:** This briefing document summarizes Dr. Robert A. Peterson's lecture (Session 18 of his Christology series) focusing on the proofs for the humanity of Christ, primarily drawing from the Book of Hebrews. Peterson emphasizes that while Jesus is fully God, his full and genuine humanity was essential for his role as Savior and Mediator. The lecture explores the concept of Christ being "made perfect" through suffering and obedience, and highlights instances in the Gospels that underscore the stark reality of his human experience.

#### Main Themes and Important Ideas:

##### 1. Christ's Humanity Demonstrated in Hebrews through Being "Made Perfect":

- Peterson highlights that the Book of Hebrews uniquely uses the language of the Son of God incarnate being "made perfect" or "became perfect" three times (Hebrews 2:10, Hebrews 5:9, Hebrews 7:28).
- **Hebrews 2:10:** This passage states, *"For it was fitting that He, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering."* Peterson explains that the Father making the Son perfect is linked to the Son's suffering and is fitting for bringing believers to glory.
- **Hebrews 5:8-9:** These verses provide further insight: *"Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered, and being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him."* Here, Peterson emphasizes that Jesus' perfection was achieved through learning obedience via suffering, exemplified by his prayers and supplications in Gethsemane. He wasn't spared death (the cross) but was saved *from* death through resurrection.
- **Hebrews 7:28:** This verse speaks of the high priest appointed by the word of the oath: *"For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever."* This indicates a permanent perfection achieved by the Son, in contrast to the temporary and imperfect priesthood under the law.

- Peterson clarifies that "being made perfect" pertains to Jesus' humanity, not his deity. His deity was already perfect, and his humanity was always sinless from conception. The perfection of his humanity was experiential, achieved through suffering and obediently living a human life.

## 2. The Necessity of Christ's Perfected Humanity for His Role as Mediator and Savior:

- Peterson uses an analogy of a job posting for the "savior of the world" with three qualifications: (1) must be God, (2) must become a man, and (3) must have "on-the-job training."
- This "on-the-job training," according to Peterson, refers to Jesus experiencing genuine human life with its sufferings and learning obedience, ultimately qualifying him to be the mediator between God and humanity and the redeemer of humankind.
- *"Being God wasn't enough, being the God-man wasn't enough. He had to successfully live a human life, whereas the first Adam failed."* This highlights the crucial role of Christ's lived human experience in fulfilling his saving work.

## 3. Affirmation of Christ's Sinlessness Despite His Genuine Humanity:

- Peterson strongly affirms Christ's sinlessness, citing several biblical passages:
- **John 8:46:** *"Which of you can convict me of sin?"*
- **2 Corinthians 5:21:** *"God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him."* Peterson notes this verse highlights the "great exchange" of our sin imputed to Christ and his righteousness imputed to us.
- **Hebrews 4:15:** *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."* This emphasizes that while fully tempted, Jesus never sinned.
- **1 Peter 2:22:** *"He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth."*
- **1 John 3:5:** *"You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin."*
- Peterson emphasizes that Jesus knew temptations we will never know but never succumbed to sin. His lifelong purity is a benefit to us.

#### 4. Stark Demonstrations of Jesus' Raw Humanity in the Gospels:

- Peterson identifies three instances where Jesus' humanity is particularly stark and might have "rankled the feathers of the church":
- **The Temptation in the Wilderness (Matthew 4):** Jesus, after fasting for 40 days, was hungry and vulnerable to temptation. Angels ministered to him afterward, highlighting his human weakness as the God-man.
- **Ignorance of the Time of His Second Coming (Matthew 24:36):** *"Concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only."* Peterson stresses the plain meaning of these words, rebuking attempts to set dates for Christ's return. He argues that during his state of humiliation on earth, it was not the Father's will for Jesus to know this time. This demonstrates a limitation in his human consciousness during that period.
- **The Agony in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46, Luke 22:44):** Jesus' profound sorrow and prayer, *"Father, if it is your will, let this cup pass from me,"* (referring to the cup of God's wrath he was to experience on the cross) vividly portrays his human aversion to suffering and the weight of bearing the sins of humanity. Luke's account of him sweating drops of blood further emphasizes the intensity of his anguish. Peterson underscores that this was not sinful recoiling but demonstrated the immense cost of our redemption.

#### 5. The Significance of Christ's Humanity for Our Relationship with God:

- Peterson quotes Calvin, stating that *"the humanity of Christ forms a bond, a fraternity... a communion between God and us."*
- He also cites Paul: *"the man Christ Jesus is the only mediator between God and man."*
- Jesus' deity links him to the Father, while his genuine human nature links him to us, creating the necessary bridge for reconciliation and salvation.

#### Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson's lecture powerfully argues for the essentiality of Christ's full humanity, not just as a theological concept, but as a lived reality that qualified him to be our perfect Savior and Mediator. His being "made perfect" through suffering and obedience, coupled with stark examples of his human limitations and struggles, deepens our understanding of the profound love of God in sending his Son to identify fully with humanity and redeem us from sin.

## 4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 18, Systematics: Humanity of Christ – Proofs

### Study Guide: The Humanity of Christ

#### Key Themes:

- The perfection of Christ's humanity through suffering and obedience (Hebrews).
- The sinlessness of Christ (various New Testament passages).
- The stark and raw expressions of Christ's humanity: temptation, limited knowledge, and anguish in Gethsemane.
- The necessity of Christ's fully experienced humanity for his role as Redeemer and Mediator.

#### Detailed Outline:

**I. Introduction to the Humanity of Christ (Peterson's Focus)** \* Session 18 of a Christology series. \* Focus on proofs of Jesus' humanness, primarily from Hebrews.

**II. Hebrews and the Perfection of Christ's Humanity** \* **Hebrews 2:10**: The Father making the "founder of their salvation perfect through suffering." \* Context of Psalm 8 and humanity's diminished dominion after the fall. \* Jesus being made "a little while lower than the angels" and tasting death for everyone. \* Perfection linked to suffering for the sake of bringing "many sons to glory." \* **Hebrews 7:26-28**: Jesus as the perfect High Priest. \* Contrast with the weakness of Old Testament high priests who had to offer sacrifices for their own sins. \* Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice of himself. \* The word of the oath (Psalm 110:4) appointing a Son "who has been made perfect forever" as high priest in the order of Melchizedek. \* **Hebrews 5:8-9**: Clarification of "being made perfect." \* Jesus "learned obedience through what he suffered." \* Context of his prayers and supplications in the days of his flesh (Gethsemane). \* Being made perfect resulted in him becoming "the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him." \* God's will for his Son to experience genuine human life and learn obedience. \* The perfection of Christ's humanity pertains to his experience and qualification as Savior, not a correction of sinfulness (as he was always sinless).

**III. The Sinlessness of Christ** \* Accentuation of Christ's humanity does not imply sinfulness. \* **John 8:46**: Jesus' challenge to his enemies: "Which of you can convict me of sin?" \* **2 Corinthians 5:21**: God made "him who knew no sin to be sin for us" (the great exchange). \* **Hebrews 4:15**: Jesus was "tempted in every way that we are, yet without

sin." \* **1 Peter 2:21-23**: Christ's suffering as an example; "He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth." \* **1 John 3:5**: "You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin." \* Christ's sinlessness was maintained throughout his earthly life, even in the face of intense temptation.

**IV. Stark Demonstrations of Jesus' Humanity \* The Temptation (Matthew 4:1-11)**: \* Led by the Spirit into the wilderness. \* Vulnerability and weakness after fasting. \* Genuine solicitation to evil by the devil. \* Refusal to use divine power outside the Father's will. \* **Ignorance of the Time of His Second Coming (Matthew 24:36)**: \* "Concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only." \* Illustrates a limitation of knowledge during his earthly state of humiliation. \* Distinction between possessing divine attributes and exercising them. \* Subordination to the Father's will in his earthly ministry. \* **Agony in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46, Luke 22:44)**: \* Sorrow and distress to the point of death. \* Prayer for the "cup" (God's wrath) to pass. \* Illustrates the cost of redemption and his genuine human aversion to suffering and bearing sin. \* Does not imply sinfulness, but the weight of becoming the sin-bearer.

**V. Significance of Christ's Humanity** \* Qualification to be the Redeemer and Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5). \* Links humanity to God (Calvin's idea of a "bond" and "fraternity"). \* Experienced human life with all its sufferings, succeeding where Adam failed. \* Allows God to truly touch and connect with humanity.

**VI. Upcoming Topics (Preview)** \* Subordination (within the Trinity). \* Peccability vs. Impeccability (discussion of whether Christ could have sinned).

### Quiz: The Humanity of Christ

1. According to Hebrews 2:10, what was fitting for the Father to do in bringing many sons to glory, and what was the means by which the "founder of their salvation" was made perfect?
2. In what sense does Hebrews 7:28 describe the Son as having been "made perfect forever," and how does this contrast with the high priests under the law?
3. According to Hebrews 5:8-9, what did Jesus learn through his suffering, and what did he become as a result of being made perfect?
4. Provide one scriptural reference (other than Hebrews) used by Peterson to demonstrate the sinlessness of Jesus, and briefly explain what that passage teaches about Christ's sinless nature.

5. Describe one of the temptations Jesus faced in the wilderness as recorded in Matthew 4, and explain the significance of this event in demonstrating his humanity.
6. According to Matthew 24:36, what specific piece of information did Jesus claim not to know during his earthly ministry, and how does Peterson address the theological implications of this statement regarding Christ's deity?
7. Describe the scene in Gethsemane as presented in the lecture, and explain what Jesus' prayer reveals about his human experience and the task before him.
8. According to Peterson, why was it necessary for Jesus to not only be God but also to fully experience human life with suffering and obedience?
9. Explain the concept of the "great exchange" as it relates to 2 Corinthians 5:21 and how it highlights both Christ's sinlessness and his work on our behalf.
10. Summarize in your own words one of the three "raw" demonstrations of Jesus' humanity discussed by Peterson, and briefly explain why it might have been a point of contention or difficulty for some.

#### **Answer Key: The Humanity of Christ Quiz**

1. According to Hebrews 2:10, it was fitting for the Father to make the founder of their salvation perfect. This perfection was achieved through suffering, highlighting the necessity of Christ's human experience in accomplishing salvation.
2. Hebrews 7:28 states that the Son has been "made perfect forever" in his role as high priest appointed by the word of the oath. This contrasts with the high priests under the law who were appointed in weakness and had to offer sacrifices for their own sins.
3. According to Hebrews 5:8-9, Jesus learned obedience through what he suffered. Having been made perfect through this experience, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, designated by God as a high priest.
4. One example is 1 Peter 2:22, which states, "He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth." This verse directly affirms Jesus' sinlessness as part of his example for believers to follow.
5. During his temptation in the wilderness, Jesus was hungry after fasting for 40 days and was tempted by Satan to turn stones into bread. This demonstrates his

genuine human need for sustenance and the reality of temptation faced by his human nature.

6. According to Matthew 24:36, Jesus stated that no one knows the day or hour of his second coming, "not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only." Peterson explains this by suggesting that during his earthly state of humiliation, Jesus voluntarily limited the exercise of some of his divine attributes in obedience to the Father's will.
7. In Gethsemane, Jesus experienced deep sorrow and anguish, praying to the Father that the "cup" (representing God's wrath) might pass from him. This reveals his genuine human aversion to suffering and the immense weight of bearing the sin of humanity.
8. Peterson argues that being God wasn't enough; Jesus needed to fully experience human life with suffering and obedience to be fully qualified as the Redeemer and Mediator. This allowed him to succeed where Adam failed and to truly connect with and save humanity.
9. The "great exchange" in 2 Corinthians 5:21 describes how God made the sinless Christ to be sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. This highlights Christ's absolute sinlessness, which is imputed to believers, while our sin is imputed to him.
10. One example of a "raw" demonstration is Jesus' statement in Matthew 24:36 about not knowing the time of his second coming. This could be troubling for some because it seems to limit Jesus' knowledge, potentially raising questions about the scope of his divine consciousness during his incarnation.

## Essay Format Questions:

1. Analyze the significance of the phrase "made perfect" as it is used in the book of Hebrews in relation to the humanity of Jesus Christ. Discuss the contexts in which this phrase appears and what it reveals about his qualifications as Savior and High Priest.
2. Compare and contrast the biblical presentations of Christ's sinlessness with the scriptural accounts that highlight the genuine struggles and limitations of his human experience (e.g., temptation, limited knowledge, anguish). How can these seemingly different aspects of his humanity be reconciled theologically?
3. Evaluate Robert Peterson's argument that Jesus' temptation, his ignorance of the timing of his return, and his agony in Gethsemane serve as stark demonstrations of his humanity. In what ways do these instances uniquely reveal the depth and reality of his human nature?
4. Discuss the theological implications of Christ learning obedience through suffering. How does this concept, particularly as presented in Hebrews, impact our understanding of the relationship between his divine nature and his human experience, as well as his role in salvation?
5. Explore the necessity of Jesus Christ's full humanity for his role as the Mediator between God and humanity and as the Redeemer of humankind. Drawing from the lecture and relevant scripture, explain how his human nature enables him to effectively bridge the gap between a holy God and sinful humanity.

## Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Perfection (in the context of Christ's humanity):** In this context, it refers not to the absence of sin (as Christ was always sinless) but to the complete fulfillment of his human experience, including obedience and suffering, which qualified him for his saving work.
- **Incarnation:** The theological doctrine that the eternal Son of God took on human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.
- **Obedience (of Christ):** Jesus' willing submission to the will of the Father throughout his earthly life, culminating in his death on the cross. This obedience was learned and demonstrated through his human experience.
- **Sinlessness (of Christ):** The theological doctrine that Jesus Christ lived a life completely without sin in thought, word, and deed.
- **Temptation:** The solicitation to commit sin. Jesus experienced genuine temptation but never yielded to it.
- **State of Humiliation:** The period of Christ's earthly life, from his incarnation to his death and burial, during which he voluntarily limited the full exercise of his divine glory and attributes.
- **State of Glory:** The period after Christ's resurrection and ascension, where he fully exercises his divine glory and power.
- **Mediation:** The act of reconciling two parties. Jesus Christ is the sole mediator between God and humanity.
- **Redemption:** The act of buying back or delivering from bondage. Jesus Christ redeemed humanity from sin and its consequences through his death.
- **Propitiation:** The act of appeasing or satisfying divine wrath. Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross is understood as a propitiation for the sins of humanity.
- **Imputation:** The theological concept of crediting or reckoning something to someone. In salvation, Christ's righteousness is imputed to believers, and their sin was imputed to Christ.
- **Theanthropic:** Pertaining to the combination of divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ (God-man).

## 5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Session 18, Systematics: Humanity of Christ – Proofs, [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions: The Humanity of Christ

#### **1. What does it mean in Hebrews that Jesus was "made perfect" or "became perfect"?**

The language of Jesus being "made perfect" in Hebrews (2:10, 5:9, 7:28) refers specifically to his humanity, not his deity. It signifies that through his suffering and obedience, he was fully equipped and qualified to be the founder of our salvation and our perfect High Priest. This perfection was not about overcoming sin, as Jesus was always sinless, but rather about experiencing the fullness of human life, including its hardships, and demonstrating perfect obedience to the Father's will in those circumstances. This experiential perfection was essential for him to be our sympathetic and effective Savior and Mediator.

**2. How did Jesus learn obedience, being the divine Son of God?** Jesus, in his human nature, learned obedience "through what he suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). This doesn't imply a prior disobedience but rather a genuine human experience of willingly submitting to the Father's will, even in the face of immense suffering, culminating in his death on the cross. This obedience, perfected through his human experience, was a necessary qualification for his role as our Savior, demonstrating his complete identification with and victory within the human condition.

**3. If Jesus was always sinless, why was it necessary for his humanity to be "made perfect"?** While Jesus' deity was inherently perfect and his humanity was always sinless from conception, his being "made perfect" through suffering and obedience was crucial for his role as the mediator and redeemer. It was through this experiential perfection – living a fully human life marked by obedience amidst suffering – that he became fully qualified to save humanity. This process demonstrated his solidarity with us and his successful living where Adam failed, meeting the requirements to be our perfect Savior and High Priest.

**4. What are some examples from the Gospels that highlight the raw and vulnerable nature of Jesus' humanity?** Dr. Peterson points to three instances: (1) Jesus' temptation in the wilderness after fasting, where he experienced genuine hunger and was solicited by evil, requiring angelic ministry afterward. (2) Jesus' statement in Matthew 24:36 that "no one knows the day or the hour" of his second coming, not even himself in his earthly state, demonstrating a limitation of knowledge within his human experience. (3) Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he expressed profound sorrow and recoiled

from the prospect of drinking the cup of God's wrath, highlighting the immense cost of our redemption for him.

**5. How does Jesus' ignorance of the timing of his second coming in Matthew 24:36 relate to his deity?** The fact that Jesus stated he did not know the timing of his second coming in his earthly ministry has been a point of discussion. A proper understanding is that while Jesus, as God, possesses all divine attributes, during his incarnation, he sometimes chose not to exercise certain attributes in his human state, in obedience to the Father's will. This limitation of knowledge concerning the timing of his return was specific to his state of humiliation on earth and does not negate his deity. The church has historically distinguished between his state of humiliation and his state of glory, in which he now fully exercises all his divine knowledge.

**6. Why was Jesus' experience of suffering and temptation essential for his role as our Savior?** Jesus' suffering and temptation were not accidental but integral to his mission as Savior. By experiencing the full spectrum of human hardships and temptations (though without sin), he became a sympathetic High Priest who understands our struggles (Hebrews 4:15). His obedient endurance through these trials, culminating in his death on the cross, was the means by which he was made perfect and became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him (Hebrews 5:9). His victory over temptation and his willingness to suffer demonstrated his perfect obedience and qualified him to be our redeemer.

**7. What is the significance of Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, particularly his prayer about the cup?** Jesus' intense distress and prayer in Gethsemane ("Father, if it is your will, let this cup pass from me") reveal the immense weight of the task before him. The "cup" symbolizes the wrath of God against sin that he was about to bear on behalf of humanity. His initial recoiling from this prospect underscores the profound cost of our redemption for him, both physically and spiritually, as he would experience the Father's turning away on the cross. His ultimate submission ("yet not my will, but yours be done") demonstrates his perfect obedience and love for us.

**8. How does the humanity of Christ serve as a "bond" or "fraternity" between God and humanity?** As Calvin stated, and as the lecture affirms, Jesus' humanity creates a vital link between God and humanity. By becoming fully human, taking on our nature, Jesus, the God-man, bridges the gap created by sin. His deity connects him to the Father, while his humanity connects him to us. This union in one person, Jesus Christ, makes him the unique and perfect mediator, allowing us to have communion and fraternity with God through him.