

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 5, Restoration of Image in Christ Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 5, Restoration of Image in Christ, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert A. Peterson's lecture, "Humanity and Sin, Session 5," explores the Pauline concept of restoring the image of God in humanity, specifically through the lens of **Colossians 3:9-10**. The session begins with a review of historical views on the image of God, considering substantive, functional, and relational perspectives. **Peterson then transitions to a redemptive-historical understanding, emphasizing creation, fall, redemption, and consummation in relation to this image.** He highlights that the fall marred but did not erase the image, and Paul's writings in Colossians and Ephesians discuss its gradual renewal in believers through union with Christ. **The lecture provides a detailed exegesis of Colossians 3:9-10, arguing that the renewal in knowledge signifies a restoration of the cognitive aspect of God's image, enabling believers to align their thinking with God's will.** Ultimately, Peterson connects this renewal to the broader process of sanctification and growth in holiness.

2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 5 – 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 → Humanity and Sin).



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3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 5, Restoration of Image in Christ

Briefing Document: Pauline Restoration of the Image of Christ (Colossians 3:9-10)

Overview: This briefing document summarizes Dr. Robert A. Peterson's fifth session on the doctrines of humanity and sin, focusing on the Pauline understanding of the restoration of the image of God in Christ, specifically through an in-depth analysis of Colossians 3:9-10. Peterson begins with a review of historical views on the image of God and the redemptive-historical framework before delving into the chosen Pauline text to extract key theological insights.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. **Review of Historical Views on the Image of God:**
 - Peterson briefly reviews three main historical views of the *imago dei*:
 - **Substantive/Structural View:** Emphasizes the inherent makeup of humanity, particularly the soul and mind (cognition), as the primary location of the image. Calvin is cited as a proponent, noting his belief that the image is primarily in the soul as an endowment of reason, though sparks of it can be seen in the body. Peterson qualifies this by suggesting it's not merely abstract thinking but the ability to think in the service of God.
 - **Functional View:** Focuses on what humans *do*, particularly the dominion mandate in Genesis 1. Peterson acknowledges this as a genuine insight involved in the image.
 - **Relational View:** Highlights our interactions with God, others, and the environment, with love being a central aspect.
 - Peterson argues that all three views contain an element of truth and are not mutually exclusive.
1. **Redemptive-Historical View of the Image of God:**
 - This view utilizes the framework of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation to understand the image.
 - **Creation:** Adam and Eve were created in the original image of God, which Peterson suggests involved being created in the likeness of Christ, the true image.

- **Fall:** The image was not completely lost but was "damaged," "tarnished," and "blurred." Genesis 9 and James 3 are cited to show that post-fall humans still bear God's image.
- Quote: "In the fall, the image was not effaced completely, but it was damaged. It was tarnished. It was blurred, if you will."
- Quote (James 3): "And with that same tongue, we curse human beings who are made in the image of God."
- **Redemption:** In Christ, through union with him and the application of salvation, the image is gradually "restored" and "renewed." This is a lifelong process of sanctification.
- Quote: "Paul teaches in Colossians 3 and Ephesians 4 that in Christ, the image is gradually restored."
- **Consummation:** The perfect image of God will be realized in the eschaton.
- Peterson notes the usefulness of thinking of "image of God" (imago dei) as a verb: "We image God."

1. **Pauline Doctrine of the Restoration of the Image in Christ (Colossians 3:9-10):**

- The passage is central to understanding how the image is renewed in believers.
- **Context:** Peterson emphasizes the broader context of Colossians, particularly the believer's union with Christ in his death, resurrection, and ascension (Colossians 2:20, 3:1, 3:3, 3:4). This union means the benefits of Christ's saving work are ours, and believers are to consider their earthly desires as dead (Colossians 3:5).
- **Exegesis of Colossians 3:9-10:** "**Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices**" (Colossians 3:9 ESV): Peterson interprets the participle "seeing that" as causal. Believers are not to lie because they have "taken off" the "old man" (implied sinful nature) with its sinful practices, using the imagery of taking off clothing.
- "**and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator**" (Colossians 3:10 ESV): Similarly, "and have put on" is also a causal participle. Believers have "put on" the "new man" (implied new self), which is in a passive and progressive state of being "renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created him."

- The "taking off" of the old and "putting on" of the new are interdependent and crucial for understanding the transformation.
- The renewal is a "divine passive," meaning God is the one actively renewing the believer. This is an "ongoing" process.
- Quote: "There is a divine, and it's a so-called divine passive. Nobody in the world thinks it's anyone but God who's doing this renewal, right? It's a divine, divine passive."
- Quote: "We find here the Pauline theme of recreation. He follows Isaiah; almost every New Testament idea comes from the Old Testament, and Paul delights to use the language of Genesis 1 and 2 to speak of Christ as the recreator who initiates the new creation of God."

1. Theological Implications of Colossians 3:9-10:

- **Renewal in Knowledge:** The text specifically states that the new self is being renewed *in knowledge*. Peterson, following commentators like O'Brien and Lossa, argues that this "knowledge" is not mere abstract cognition but is tied to the ability to recognize and obey God's will (referencing Colossians 1:9).
- Quote (Lossa): "'The knowledge can neither be defined as morality nor be identified with conformity to the image. Rather, as a consequence of both, it is knowledge of his will, Colossians 1:9.'"
- **Knowledge as Part of the Original Image:** Since the renewal of the image is *according to knowledge*, it implies that knowledge was an integral aspect of the original *Imago Dei*. This includes the ability to think, understand God's revelation, and obey him, as seen in Adam naming the animals and understanding God's command regarding the forbidden fruit.
- **Impact of the Fall on Cognition:** The fall darkened human reason, leading to misuse of the mind in sin.
- Quote: "After the fall, human reason was darkened and human beings used their minds to engage in the sins of Colossians 3:5 and 8 and 9..."
- **Sanctification and Renewed Thinking:** Salvation and union with Christ initiate a lifelong process of sanctification, which includes the renewal of our thinking to conform to God's will. This is connected to putting away falsehood and other sins. Peterson draws a parallel with Romans 12:2, which speaks of the transformation of the mind.

- Quote: "When one is savingly united to Jesus Christ, he begins a lifelong process of sanctification and gradual growth in practical holiness. Part of this is having our thinking conformed to the will of God."

Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson's analysis of Colossians 3:9-10 highlights Paul's teaching that believers, through their union with Christ, undergo a progressive renewal in the image of God. This renewal is specifically characterized by a restoration of knowledge, understood as the ability to discern and obey God's will. This implies that cognitive capacity, oriented towards God, was a foundational element of the original *Imago Dei* and was significantly affected by the fall. The ongoing process of sanctification involves the transformation of our minds, aligning our thinking with God's will as we "put on the new self" in Christ. Peterson intends to further explore this theme with a detailed examination of Ephesians 4:22-24 in the subsequent session.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 5, Restoration of Image in Christ

Study Guide: Pauline Restoration of the Image of Christ

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, based on the provided text.

1. According to Dr. Peterson, what are the three historical views of the image of God discussed before moving to Pauline texts? Briefly describe each view.
2. What is the redemptive-historical view of the image of God, and how does the creation, fall, redemption, and consummation framework apply to this doctrine?
3. According to the text, was the image of God lost or merely damaged in the fall? What biblical evidence is provided to support this view?
4. What does Paul teach in Colossians 3:9-10 about the renewal of the image, and what is the significance of this renewal for believers?
5. What is the context of Colossians 3:9-10 within the broader chapter and surrounding verses, and how does this context illuminate the meaning of these verses?
6. Explain the significance of the two causal participles (*apectus saminoi* and *endusaminoi*) in understanding Colossians 3:9-10.
7. According to Dr. Peterson, what does the renewal "in knowledge" (Colossians 3:10) refer to? Is it merely intellectual cognition?
8. How does Dr. Peterson connect the concept of the renewed image in knowledge with the original image of God in Adam and Eve? What abilities did they possess that demonstrate this?
9. What is the relationship between the renewal of the image in knowledge and the process of sanctification in a believer's life?
10. What does Dr. Peterson indicate will be the focus of the next lecture regarding the restoration of the image?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The three historical views of the image of God are substantive/structural, functional, and relational. The substantive view emphasizes the inner human

makeup, especially the soul and mind. The functional view focuses on what humans do, particularly dominion. The relational view highlights our interactions with God, others, and the environment, with love being central.

2. The redemptive-historical view sees the image of God through the lens of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Humans were originally created in God's image, this image was damaged in the fall, it is progressively renewed in Christ through redemption, and it will be perfected at the consummation.
3. The image of God was not lost in the fall but was damaged or tarnished. Genesis 9, which grounds capital punishment in the fact that humans are made in God's image, and James 3, which highlights the contradiction of cursing image-bearers with the same tongue used to praise God, support this view.
4. Paul teaches that believers have "taken off the old self" and "put on the new self," which is being progressively renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. This renewal signifies a restoration of the damaged image of God in believers through their union with Christ.
5. The context emphasizes the believer's union with Christ in his death and resurrection, urging them to put to death sinful earthly desires and negative speech patterns. This setting highlights that the renewal of the image is part of a broader transformation that stems from being joined to Christ and living a new life.
6. These two causal participles, meaning "having put off" and "having put on," are to be understood together and are the reasons why believers should not lie. The taking off of the old sinful self and the putting on of the new renewed self in Christ are intertwined aspects of their new identity.
7. The renewal "in knowledge" refers not merely to abstract cognition but to the ability to think in the service of God, specifically the knowledge of His will as mentioned in Colossians 1:9. It is a practical and applied understanding that guides a believer's life.
8. Dr. Peterson argues that since the renewal of the image involves knowledge, the original image must have also included a cognitive aspect. Adam and Eve's ability to understand and obey God's commands and Adam's ability to name the animals demonstrate this original cognitive capacity.
9. The renewal of the image in knowledge is a key part of the lifelong process of sanctification. As believers are progressively renewed in their thinking according

to God's image, their lives are increasingly conformed to His will, leading to practical holiness and the putting away of sin.

10. Dr. Peterson indicates that the next lecture will focus on Ephesians 4:22-24, another Pauline passage that speaks to the renewal of the image of God in believers.

Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the three historical views of the image of God (substantive/structural, functional, and relational), analyzing their strengths and potential limitations based on the provided text.
2. Explain the redemptive-historical understanding of the image of God, tracing its trajectory through creation, fall, redemption in Christ (as presented in Colossians 3:9-10), and ultimate consummation.
3. Analyze Paul's teaching on the renewal of the image in Colossians 3:9-10, paying close attention to the context, the meaning of key terms like "old self" and "new self," and the significance of being renewed "in knowledge."
4. Discuss the implications of the fall for the image of God in humanity, according to the text. While acknowledging the damage, explain why the text argues that the image was not completely lost.
5. Explore the connection between the restoration of the image of God in believers (as described in Colossians 3:9-10) and the ongoing process of sanctification in their lives. How does the renewal of the mind contribute to practical holiness?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Theological Anthropology:** The study of humanity from a theological perspective, concerning its nature, origin, purpose, and destiny in relation to God.
- **Hamartiology:** The branch of theology concerned with the study of sin, its origin, nature, consequences, and remedy.
- **Image of God (Imago Dei):** The doctrine that human beings are created in God's likeness, reflecting certain attributes and characteristics of God.
- **Substantive/Structural View:** A view of the image of God that emphasizes inherent qualities or endowments within human beings, particularly the soul and mind.
- **Functional View:** A view of the image of God that emphasizes the roles and responsibilities given to humanity, such as dominion over creation.
- **Relational View:** A view of the image of God that emphasizes humanity's capacity for relationship with God, with others, and with creation, particularly through love.
- **Redemptive-Historical View:** An approach to theology that understands God's actions and revelation as unfolding throughout history, culminating in the redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ.
- **Fall:** The biblical account of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God in the Garden of Eden, resulting in sin and its consequences entering the world.
- **Effaced:** Erased or completely removed. The text argues the image of God was not effaced by the fall.
- **Tarnished/Marred:** Damaged or diminished in quality or purity. The text describes the image of God as tarnished or marred by the fall.
- **Trichotomy:** The theological view that human beings are composed of three distinct parts: body, soul, and spirit. The text suggests this view is not ontologically sound.
- **Regeneration:** The act of God by which new spiritual life is imparted to a person, often associated with conversion.

- **Union with Christ:** The spiritual joining of believers to Jesus Christ, through which they share in his life, death, and resurrection, and receive the benefits of his saving work.
- **Sanctification:** The ongoing process by which believers are made holy and conformed to the image of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- **Eschaton:** The final period in God's plan, encompassing the end times, the second coming of Christ, judgment, and the eternal state.
- **Noetic Effects of Sin:** The consequences of sin on the human mind and understanding, leading to darkened thinking and an inability to fully comprehend spiritual truths.
- **Exegesis:** The careful and systematic interpretation of a text, especially scripture, to discover its original meaning.
- **Causal Circumstantial Participle:** A participle in Greek that indicates the reason or cause for the main verb's action. The text highlights two such participles in Colossians 3:9-10.
- **Divine Passive:** A passive verb construction in which God is the implied agent, even though He is not explicitly named.
- **Recreation:** The act of creating anew. Paul uses this language to describe God's work in Christ, initiating a new creation in believers.
- **Cognition:** The mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses. The text specifies that the renewed knowledge is not merely abstract cognition.
- **Propositional Revelation:** God's communication of truth through direct statements or propositions, such as the command not to eat the forbidden fruit.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 5, Restoration of Image in Christ, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: The Pauline Restoration of the Image of God

- 1. What is the traditional understanding of the "image of God" within the Christian Church, and what are its key aspects according to figures like Calvin?** The traditional view, prevalent from the early church fathers through the Middle Ages and the Reformation, understands the image of God primarily as an endowment within the soul. Calvin specifically identified this endowment as substantive or structural, with the human mind and the ability to think being the major aspects. He later qualified this by suggesting it's not merely abstract thought but the ability to think in the service of God. While primarily located in the soul, Calvin also recognized "sparks" of this image in the human body, highlighting the integrity of all human faculties.
- 2. Besides the substantive/structural view, what other perspectives exist regarding the "image of God," and what do they emphasize?** Beyond the substantive or structural view, two other significant perspectives exist: functional and relational. The functional view, gaining prominence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, emphasizes what humans *do*, particularly the dominion over creation described in Genesis. While not defining the image solely by function, this perspective recognizes it as an important aspect. The relational view focuses on our interactions with God, our environment, and fellow human beings, with love being the central component. This perspective highlights the importance of our relationships as reflecting God's image.
- 3. How does the "redemptive-historical" view frame our understanding of the image of God?** The redemptive-historical view understands the image of God through the lens of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Adam and Eve were created in the original image of God, potentially in the likeness of Christ as the true image. The fall did not completely erase the image but damaged, tarnished, and blurred it, as evidenced by post-fall humanity still being described as bearing God's image (Genesis 9, James 3). Through salvation and union with Christ, the image is gradually restored in believers, a process that begins in this life and will be perfected at the final consummation.
- 4. According to Colossians 3:9-10, how is the image of God being renewed in believers?** Colossians 3:9-10 instructs believers to "not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator." This passage indicates a progressive and divine (passive voice) renewal of the believer, specifically in the area of knowledge, according

to the image of God. This renewal is linked to the believer's union with Christ and the putting off of old, sinful ways of life and the putting on of a new, holy life.

5. What is the significance of "knowledge" in the Pauline understanding of the restoration of the image of God in Colossians 3:10? The "knowledge" mentioned in Colossians 3:10 is not merely abstract cognition but rather the ability to think rightly in the service of God, specifically the knowledge of His will (referencing Colossians 1:9). Since the renewal of the image is described as being "in knowledge," it implies that knowledge was an integral aspect of the original image of God in humanity. Adam and Eve were created with the capacity to understand and obey God, demonstrating a cognitive element of the *imago Dei*.

6. How did the fall of humanity affect the image of God, particularly concerning the mind and knowledge? The fall of humanity resulted in the darkening of human reason. Instead of using their minds to serve God, fallen human beings employed their cognitive abilities to engage in sin and ungodliness. This is highlighted by Paul's emphasis on the "noetic effects of sin," which include darkened understanding and foolish thinking. The ability to rightly know and obey God was impaired, necessitating a renewal of the mind in believers through their union with Christ.

7. What does it mean to "put off the old self" and "put on the new self" in the context of Colossians 3:9-10 and the restoration of the image? "Putting off the old self" with its sinful practices refers to the believer's decisive break with their former ungodly way of life, characterized by sins such as lying, anger, and malice. "Putting on the new self" signifies the adoption of a new way of living that is being progressively transformed and renewed according to God's image. This new self is characterized by a life of holiness and truthfulness, reflecting the nature of God. The two actions are interconnected; the putting off is necessary for the putting on, and vice versa, in the ongoing process of spiritual growth.

8. How does the concept of "union with Christ" relate to the restoration of the image of God in believers according to the Pauline texts discussed? The restoration of the image of God in believers is fundamentally linked to their spiritual union with Jesus Christ. Through this union, believers participate in Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, and they receive the benefits of his saving work. This union provides the foundation for the ongoing process of renewal, where believers are progressively conformed to the image of Christ. As they put off their old, sinful ways and put on the new self in Christ, their thinking and living are increasingly aligned with God's will, thus restoring the image that was marred by the fall.