

## **Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Salvation, Session 6, Election Systematic Formulations 1 - Author Resources from NotebookLM**

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

### **1. Abstract of Peterson, Salvation, Session 6, Election Systematic Formulations I - Author, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Robert Peterson's "Salvation, Session 6" is a lecture focusing on the doctrine of election within Christian theology.** The lecture opens with prayer and transitions into exploring the concept of God's choosing. **Peterson, identifying as a Calvinist, outlines and respectfully critiques three common Arminian views on election:** that it is solely corporate, that it is only for service, and that it is based on God's foreknowledge of faith. **He argues against these views, asserting that election is both corporate and individual, is for both salvation and service, and is rooted in God's sovereign purpose and grace before creation, not on foreseen human action.** Peterson supports his points by referencing scripture and other theological works, intending to build a systematic understanding of election's author and timing.

**2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Peterson, Salvation, Session 6 – 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 → Salvation).**



**Peterson\_Salvation\_  
Session06.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 6, Election Systematic Formulations I - Author

#### Briefing Document: Dr. Robert A. Peterson on Election - Author and Timing

**Overview:** This briefing document summarizes the initial points made by Dr. Robert A. Peterson in Session 6 of his lectures on Salvation, focusing specifically on the author and timing of God's election. Peterson, identifying himself as a Calvinist, aims to explain the doctrine of election from a systematic theological perspective, while also addressing and critiquing Arminian viewpoints on the subject.

#### Main Themes and Important Ideas:

##### 1. Introduction and Prayer:

- Peterson begins with a prayer acknowledging the Trinity and thanking God for the plan of salvation.
- He states that this session will focus on the doctrine of election, following some historical reconnaissance (not detailed in this excerpt).

##### 2. Biblical Preamble to Election:

- God chooses some for service in both the Old and New Testaments (prophets, priests, kings).
- However, election is not *just* for service; it is the means by which God's saving plan is realized.
- Examples: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were chosen for salvation (and service). Israel was chosen to be God's people. The Church of Jesus Christ is chosen to be the children of God.
- **Key Idea:** God's election is primarily for salvation and secondarily for service.
- **Quote:** "However, election is not just for service; it is also the means by which God's saving plan is realized."

##### 3. Addressing Arminian Views of Election (as a prelude to his own systematic formulation):

- Peterson emphasizes his respect for Arminian believers and their shared fundamental beliefs (Word of God, Trinity, salvation by grace through faith in Christ).

- He aims for fairness in summarizing three main Arminian approaches to election:
- **Corporate Election:** Election applies to groups (like Israel or the Church) and not primarily to individuals.
- Peterson agrees that election is corporate (as seen in the New Testament letters written to churches and the Old Testament election of Israel), but argues this is a "false choice" as election is also individual.
- He references William Klein's book, "The New Chosen People, A Corporate View of Election," acknowledging its contribution while disagreeing with its exclusivity.
- **Quote:** "Is election corporate? Yes. Does that mean it's not individual? No, it is both. It is both."
- **Election for Service, Not Salvation:** God chooses people for specific tasks or roles, not necessarily for eternal salvation.
- Peterson acknowledges biblical examples of election for service (John 15:16 - "I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bear fruit").
- However, he again argues this is a "false choice," asserting that election is primarily for salvation and secondarily for service. He points to verses in John 15 (verses 16 and 19) indicating Jesus' election of people for salvation.
- **Quote:** "Election is for service, not salvation... Once again, it's a false choice. It is not either or, it is both and."
- **Election Based on Divine Foreknowledge of Faith:** God chooses individuals based on his prior knowledge of who would believe in Him.
- Peterson respectfully disagrees with this view, stating that it will be refuted through the study of relevant scriptures. He mentions that while election and foreknowledge are related, exegesis does not support the idea that God's choice is contingent on foreseen faith.
- He notes that Arminian theologians like H. Orton Wiley, H. Ray Dunning, and J. Kenneth Grider hold this view, referencing their systematic theologies.
- Peterson also critiques the limited space given to the doctrine of election in some Arminian systematic theologies, considering it disproportionate to its biblical emphasis. He then self-reflects on whether Calvinist theologies adequately address the doctrine of apostasy.

- **Quote:** "Election is based on divine foreknowledge of faith. I respectfully disagree, and that will be borne out as we study the passages."

#### **4. Peterson's Systematic Grid for Election (Outline):**

- Peterson outlines the topics he will cover in his systematic treatment of election:
- Election's author
- Election's timing
- Election's basis
- Election's scope (individuals and the church)
- Election's goals (our salvation and God's glory)
- Historical election
- Eternal election
- Election and foreknowledge (a significant treatment)
- Election and union with Christ
- Election and calling
- Election and faith (results from, not the basis of)
- Election and the gospel (importance of gospel zeal for those who believe in election)

#### **5. Election's Author:**

- Scripture consistently presents God as the author of election.
- Old Testament examples: God chose Abraham (Nehemiah 9:7) despite his family's idolatry (Joshua 24), and chose Israel (Deuteronomy 14:2) despite their stubbornness (Deuteronomy 5:6). God's choice was not based on them being the greatest or most faithful.
- New Testament examples: Matthew 22:14 ("Many are invited to the feast, but few are chosen"), Revelation 17:14 ("Those with the Lamb are called, chosen, and faithful").
- New Testament passages ascribe election to God or imply it through the "divine passive" (e.g., "you who are chosen by God").

- God the Father is generally the author of election. The Son is the author in one specific instance: John 15:16 and 19 (Jesus choosing his disciples).
- **Important Nuance:** While the Father is often specified, election is the work of the Trinity; the persons cannot be separated. The New Testament ascribes to the Son works that the Old Testament ascribes to God (creation, providence, judgment, salvation). John's Gospel extends this, presenting Jesus as the adopter (John 1:12) and the one who raises himself from the dead (John 2, 10).
- **John's Unique Perspective on Election:** Although John doesn't use the words "election" or "predestination," he communicates the same truth through three themes (as noted by D.A. Carson):
  - The Father gives people to the Son (John 17).
  - The antecedent or prior identity of God's people before they believe (John 10:26 - "You do not believe because you are not my sheep"). This implies God has his "sheep" before they believe, and their belief is a result of being his sheep.
  - Jesus choosing his disciples (John 15:16, 19). This election by Jesus is for both discipleship/fruitfulness (service) and for belonging to him, separating them from the world.
- **Key Conclusion:** The author of election is God, primarily the Father, and in one specific instance, the Son. Election is for both salvation and service.

## 6. Election's Timing:

- Election occurs before creation. This removes human faith or works as the basis for God's choice.
- Four New Testament texts place election before or from election:
  - **Ephesians 1:4:** "God chose us in him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in love before him." This indicates a choice *in Christ* before time began, with the goal of our sanctification. Peterson understands this sanctification to be initial, progressive, and final.
  - **2 Timothy 1:9:** "God has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began." This is seen as the most succinct Pauline statement on the basis of election, emphasizing God's purpose and grace in Christ before time.

- **Romans 9:11:** While not explicitly using the word "before" in the ESV, the context of God's choice of Jacob over Esau *before they were born or had done anything good or bad* demonstrates the principle of God's sovereign choice independent of human action. This illustrates that God's purpose according to election stands "not from works, but from the one who calls." Peterson highlights the similarity in the use of "purpose" in both Romans 9 and 2 Timothy 1.
- **Key Implication:** Election before creation means its basis lies entirely within God (his purpose and grace) and not in anything foreseen in humanity. It underscores that salvation depends on God's mercy, not human will or effort (Romans 9:16).

### **Conclusion:**

Dr. Peterson establishes that God, primarily the Father and also the Son in John 15, is the sole author of election. He critiques Arminian views that limit election to corporate entities or service, or base it on foreseen faith. Furthermore, he argues from Ephesians 1:4, 2 Timothy 1:9, and Romans 9:11 that God's election took place before the creation of the world, emphasizing that it is rooted in His sovereign purpose and grace, entirely independent of human works or foreseen faith. The subsequent lectures will likely delve deeper into the basis, scope, and other aspects of election outlined in his systematic grid.

## 4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 6, Election

### Systematic Formulations I - Author

#### Study Guide: Peterson on Election (Session 6)

##### Key Concepts

- **Election:** God's sovereign choice of individuals and the church for salvation and service.
- **Author of Election:** Primarily God the Father, and uniquely the Son (Jesus) in John's Gospel.
- **Timing of Election:** Before the foundation of the world (eternal).
- **Basis of Election:** God's free and loving choice, rooted in His purpose and grace, not based on human works or foreseen faith.
- **Scope of Election:** Both corporate (the church, Israel) and individual (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, believers).
- **Goals of Election:** Our salvation and God's glory.
- **Arminian Views of Election:** Corporate, not individual (false choice).
- For service, not salvation (false choice; primarily for salvation).
- Based on divine foreknowledge of faith (disagreed with; election results in faith).
- **Divine Passive:** A grammatical construction used to avoid directly naming God, implying divine action (e.g., "chosen by God").
- **Union with Christ:** Believers are joined to Jesus, the true vine, and bear fruit because of this connection.
- **Foreknowledge:** Related to election, but in the context of salvation, Scripture does not demonstrate God choosing based on foreseen faith.
- **Indicative and Imperative:** In relation to God's people (e.g., Israel), the indicative states their holy status chosen by God, while the imperative calls them to live out that holiness.
- **Sanctification:** God setting believers apart (initial), a lifelong process (progressive), and a future perfection (final/eschatological).

##### Quiz

1. According to Peterson, who is primarily the author of election in the New Testament, and is there any exception to this?
2. Summarize two of the main Arminian views of election that Peterson discusses, and briefly explain why he considers them "false choices."
3. What does Peterson state is the basis of God's election? Is it dependent on anything within humanity?
4. Explain the difference between a corporate and an individual view of election, as presented by Peterson. Does he see these as mutually exclusive?
5. According to Peterson, what are the primary goals or purposes of God's election?
6. How does Peterson interpret New Testament passages that use the divine passive in relation to the concept of election?
7. Explain Peterson's understanding of the timing of God's election, referencing at least one New Testament book.
8. How does Peterson use the example of God's choice of Israel in the Old Testament to support his understanding of election?
9. What is Peterson's view on the relationship between election and faith? Does one precede the other, according to him?
10. In the Gospel of John, how does Jesus uniquely portray the concept of election, even though he doesn't use the explicit terms?

### **Quiz Answer Key**

1. Primarily, God the Father is the author of election in the New Testament. The exception is in John 15:16 and 19, where Jesus himself speaks of choosing his disciples.
2. One Arminian view is that election is corporate and not individual, focusing on God's choice of groups like Israel or the church. Peterson considers this a false choice because Scripture demonstrates both corporate and individual election. Another view is that election is for service, not salvation. Peterson argues this is also a false choice, as election is primarily for salvation, with service being a consequence.



3. Peterson states that the basis of God's election is His free and loving choice, rooted in His own purpose and grace. It is not dependent on anything within humanity, such as good works or foreseen faith.
4. A corporate view of election emphasizes God's choice of groups or communities, like the nation of Israel or the church. An individual view highlights God's specific selection of particular people for salvation. Peterson believes that election is both corporate and individual; these aspects are not mutually exclusive.
5. According to Peterson, the primary goals of God's election are our salvation and the ultimate glorification of God.
6. Peterson interprets the use of the divine passive in New Testament passages related to election as implicitly ascribing the act of choosing to God. Even when God's name is not directly used, the passive voice indicates that God is the one performing the action of election.
7. Peterson understands the timing of God's election to be before the foundation of the world, meaning it is an eternal decision made by God before creation. He references Ephesians 1:4 and 2 Timothy 1:9 as passages that support this timing.
8. Peterson uses the example of God's choice of Abraham and the nation of Israel to illustrate that God's election is not based on foreseen faith or merit. God chose Abraham despite his background and Israel despite their waywardness, demonstrating God's sovereign initiative.
9. Peterson argues that election precedes and results in faith, rather than being based on it. He cites Acts 13:48 ("as many as were appointed to eternal life believed") to support this order.
10. In the Gospel of John, Jesus portrays election through three themes: the Father giving people to the Son, the prior identity of God's people before they believe (they believe because they are His sheep), and Jesus himself choosing his disciples out of the world (John 15).

## Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the timing of election ("before the foundation of the world") in relation to the basis of God's choice, as presented by Peterson.
2. Compare and contrast Peterson's Calvinistic understanding of election with the Arminian views he outlines. What are the key points of disagreement, and why does Peterson hold his position?
3. Analyze Peterson's argument that election is both corporate and individual. Provide biblical examples he uses to support this view.
4. Explain the relationship between God's sovereignty in election and human responsibility, based on the implications of Peterson's lecture.
5. Critically evaluate Peterson's claim that election is primarily for salvation and secondarily for service, using scriptural examples and considering potential counterarguments.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Election:** God's sovereign and gracious choice, before the foundation of the world, of individuals and the church for salvation and service according to His own purpose.
- **Sovereignty:** God's ultimate authority and control over all things, including the salvation of individuals.
- **Foreknowledge:** In the context of election, understood by Calvinists like Peterson as God's predetermination or loving knowledge of His elect, not merely His foresight of their actions.
- **Predestination:** A theological doctrine, often used interchangeably with election (though some distinctions exist), referring to God's foreordained plan for all things, including who will be saved.
- **Grace:** God's unmerited favor and love freely given to humanity, particularly in the context of salvation.
- **Free Will (in Arminianism):** The belief that humans have a genuine ability to choose whether or not to accept God's offer of salvation, and that God's election is conditional upon this choice.

- **Free Will (in Calvinism):** While humans make genuine choices, even in response to God, these choices are ultimately within the scope of God's sovereign plan and are enabled by His grace in the case of salvation.
- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of one's religious faith.
- **Exegesis:** The critical interpretation and explanation of a text, especially of sacred Scripture.
- **Systematic Theology:** A discipline of Christian theology that formulates an orderly, rational, and coherent account of Christian beliefs.
- **Corporate Election:** The view that God's election primarily refers to His choice of groups or communities, such as Israel or the church.
- **Individual Election:** The view that God's election also encompasses His specific choice of particular individuals for salvation.
- **Divine Passive:** A grammatical construction where the subject of the verb receives the action, often used in Scripture to imply God as the actor without explicitly naming Him.
- **Indicative:** A grammatical mood that states a fact or reality. In theology, it refers to what God has done or declared to be true about believers (e.g., "you are holy").
- **Imperative:** A grammatical mood that expresses a command or exhortation. In theology, it refers to what God calls believers to do based on their indicative status (e.g., "be holy").
- **Sanctification:** The process by which believers are progressively made holy and conformed to the image of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. It has initial, progressive, and final aspects.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end times or the final destiny of humanity and the universe.

## 5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Session 6, Election Systematic Formulations I - Author, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions on the Doctrine of Election

**1. What is the doctrine of election according to this source?** The doctrine of election, as presented here, is God's act of choosing some individuals and the Church for salvation and service. This choice is not based on anything within humanity, such as foreseen faith or good works, but is rooted entirely in God's free, loving, and gracious will. Election is understood as the means by which God's saving plan is realized, extending beyond mere service to encompass eternal salvation.

**2. Does the Bible present election as only corporate or only individual?** The source argues against the idea that election is exclusively corporate (pertaining only to groups like Israel or the Church) or exclusively individual. While acknowledging the New Testament's emphasis on the corporate election of the Church, particularly in Paul's letters, the speaker asserts that election is both corporate and individual. God chose the nation of Israel, and he also chose individuals like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for salvation. Similarly, the election of the Church includes the individual election of its members.

**3. Is election solely for service, or does it also involve salvation?** The source refutes the Arminian view that election is only for service and not for salvation. While acknowledging that God chooses people for specific roles and service (as seen in John 15:16), it emphasizes that this election for service occurs within the broader context of God's election for salvation. The primary purpose of God's election is the salvation of individuals, and within that context, they are also called to service. Therefore, it is a "both and" rather than an "either or" proposition.

**4. What is the Calvinistic perspective on the basis of God's election, and how does it differ from the Arminian view of foreseen faith?** The Calvinistic perspective, as articulated here, is that God's election is based solely on His own purpose and grace, not on anything foreseen in humanity. This contrasts with the Arminian view, which posits that God elects individuals based on His foreknowledge of who would freely believe in Him. The source argues that Scripture, particularly passages like Nehemiah 9:7 and the selection of Israel despite their waywardness, demonstrates that God's choice precedes and is not contingent upon human faith. Furthermore, Acts 13:48, stating that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," suggests that election results in faith, not the other way around.

**5. When did God's election take place according to the New Testament?** Several New Testament texts, specifically Ephesians 1:4 and 2 Timothy 1:9, indicate that God's election of believers occurred "before the foundation of the world" or "before eternal ages." This timing underscores that God's choice was made prior to any human action or even existence, reinforcing the idea that election is based on God's sovereign will and grace, not on anything within humanity.

**6. How does the speaker interpret John 15:16 and 15:19 in relation to the doctrine of election?** While acknowledging that the immediate context of John 15 emphasizes discipleship and fruit-bearing, the speaker highlights Jesus' words, "You did not choose me, but I chose you," as a clear statement of Jesus as the elector. In verse 19, Jesus states, "I chose you out of the world," indicating that this choice precedes and determines their separation from the world and their belonging to Him, which ultimately leads to their salvation. This passage demonstrates that election by the Son, like election by the Father, is for both salvation and service.

**7. How does the source address the relationship between election and the gospel?** The speaker acknowledges that sometimes those who believe in election have not been zealous for the gospel. This is identified as a sin, as Scripture consistently portrays God as a God of salvation. The doctrine of election should not hinder but rather motivate believers to share the gospel, as God's chosen people are called to salvation, and faith comes through hearing the message of Christ.

**8. What is the significance of God the Father and, in one instance, God the Son being identified as the author of election in the New Testament?** The source points out that consistently in the New Testament, God the Father is presented as the author of election. The Holy Spirit is never explicitly named as the elector. Uniquely, in John 15:16 and 19, Jesus, the Son, is also shown to be the elector. This aligns with the New Testament's tendency to ascribe to the Son works that the Old Testament ascribes to God. While election is ultimately the work of the Trinity, the New Testament distinguishes the roles, with the Father primarily initiating and the Son also actively choosing individuals for salvation and belonging to Himself.