

## **Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Salvation, Session 8, Election Systematic Formulations III Resources from NotebookLM**

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

### **1. Abstract of Peterson, Salvation, Session 8, Election Systematic Formulations III, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Robert Peterson's lecture on salvation explores the theological concept of election.** He examines biblical passages like Romans and Ephesians to highlight both **corporate and individual election**, emphasizing that God chooses both a people and specific persons for salvation. **Peterson addresses the timing of election**, noting scriptural references placing it before creation in Christ Jesus. He also discusses the **relationship between God's foreknowledge and election**, arguing that foreknowledge includes God's covenantal love and preordination, not just mere foresight. Finally, the lecture connects **election with God's calling and the ultimate goal of His glory** in the salvation of believers.

**2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Peterson, Salvation, Session 8 – 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\_  
Session08.mp3**

### **3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 8, Election Systematic Formulations II**

#### **Briefing Document: Dr. Robert A. Peterson on Election (Salvation, Session 8)**

##### **Overview:**

This briefing document summarizes the key themes and arguments presented by Dr. Robert A. Peterson in Session 8 of his teaching on Salvation, specifically focusing on "Election Systematic Formulations, Number 3." Peterson delves into the biblical doctrine of election, emphasizing both its corporate and individual aspects, its goals (salvation and God's glory), the distinction between historical and eternal election, its relationship with foreknowledge and union with Christ, and its connection to God's calling. He draws heavily on key New Testament passages, particularly Romans and Ephesians, and engages with different theological perspectives.

##### **Main Themes and Important Ideas:**

##### **1. Biblical Basis of Election:**

- Peterson begins by grounding the doctrine of election in Scripture, citing Ephesians 1:3-14, Romans 8:28-30, and Romans 9 as foundational passages.
- He highlights 2 Timothy 1:9 and Ephesians 1:4 as key texts locating God's electing grace "before eternal ages, before the creation of the world."
- He asserts that God's election for salvation is rooted in His "sovereignty and grace, his purpose and mercy, and his will and love."

##### **2. Corporate and Individual Election:**

- Peterson stresses that Scripture teaches both corporate (communal) and individual election.
- He argues that while corporate election is less contested, Calvinism has not adequately emphasized it, missing out on "some communal or fellowship applications."
- He provides numerous New Testament examples of corporate election, including 1 Peter 5:13 ("She who is in Babylon chosen together with you"), 2 John 1 ("the elect lady"), and 2 John 13 ("the children of your elect sister"), interpreting these as references to churches.

- He also presents evidence for individual election from the Gospels (Matthew 11:27, John 5:21, John 6:37), Acts 13:48 ("all who had been appointed to eternal life believed"), and Paul's letters (Romans 9:15, Romans 16:13 - "Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord").

### **3. Faith as a Result, Not the Basis of Election:**

- Peterson strongly emphasizes that faith is a consequence of God's election, not the condition upon which it is based.
- He uses 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 to illustrate this point: "For we know, brothers, loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction." He argues that their belief in the gospel is evidence of God's prior choice.
- He critiques the idea of trying to "probe God's eternal counsels" to discern election, stating, "We know whom God has chosen by who believes the gospel. Faith is not the basis of election. Faith is the result of election."

### **4. Goals of Election: Salvation and God's Glory:**

- Peterson identifies two primary goals of election: the salvation of the elect and the glory of God.
- For the church, election aims at "final salvation," encompassing holiness (Ephesians 1:4), adoption (Ephesians 1:5), conformity to Christ (Romans 8:29), inheritance (Ephesians 1:11), and glory (Romans 8:30, 2 Thessalonians 2:14).
- He quotes 2 Timothy 2:10: "I endure all things for the elect, so that they also may obtain salvation, which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory," noting that "election is God's eternal choice" while "obtaining salvation obtains in time and space."
- Regarding God's goal, Peterson states, "It is his own glory, which is the ultimate goal of God in all things." He cites Ephesians 1:12 ("that they might bring praise to his glory") and Ephesians 3:21 ("to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen") to support this.

### **5. Historical vs. Eternal Election (Drawing on John Frame):**

- Peterson introduces John Frame's distinction between historical and eternal election.

- **Historical Election:** God's choosing of a group in history (e.g., Israel, the visible New Testament church). This does not guarantee the salvation of every individual within that group.
- **Eternal Election:** God's choice of individuals for salvation before creation, which "always results in salvation."
- He clarifies that both are types of election because they involve God's choice, but historical election doesn't automatically equate to eternal election.

## 6. Election and Foreknowledge (Engaging with Arminianism):

- Peterson addresses the relationship between election and foreknowledge, contrasting it with the Arminian view where election is subordinate to God's foreseeing who would believe (prescience).
- He argues that biblical foreknowledge is not merely "prescience" (foreknowledge of facts) but also includes "foreordination" (God's effective planning of the future) and God's "covenant affection" or "setting his love on people beforehand."
- He supports this interpretation by examining the Hebrew word "yadah" (to know) in the Old Testament (Genesis 18:19 - knowing Abraham as choosing him; Amos 3:2 - knowing Israel as choosing them) and the Greek word "ginōskō" (to know) in the New Testament (Galatians 4:9 - being known by God precedes knowing Him; 1 Corinthians 8:3 - loving God indicates being known by Him; 2 Timothy 2:19 - "The Lord knows those who are his" signifies covenant affection; Romans 11:2 - foreknowing Israel as selecting and preserving them).
- He concludes that in salvific contexts, "foreknowledge combines God's foreordination and commitment to love," suggesting translations like "fore loved" or "for loving" for "foreknowledge."

## 7. Election and Union with Christ:

- Peterson highlights the connection between election and union with Christ, noting that Paul twice ties pre-temporal election to being "in Christ" (Ephesians 1:4 and 2 Timothy 1:9 - "grace in Christ Jesus before time began").
- He clarifies that this pre-temporal "union with Christ" does not refer to actual union before creation but rather to God's eternal plan to unite the elect spiritually to His Son as the means of their salvation.

- He emphasizes that "Union with Christ was not a divine afterthought. It was a part of God's plan of salvation from the beginning."

### **8. Election and Calling:**

- Peterson examines the relationship between election and God's calling, noting that Paul connects them three times (Romans 8:28-30, Romans 9:22-24, and 2 Timothy 1:9).
- He explains that "calling" includes both the general gospel call and an "effective or effectual call that God gives through the gospel call to his own people."
- Romans 8:28-30 shows a chain: foreknew -> predestined -> called -> justified -> glorified, indicating that God's calling is directed towards those He has chosen.
- Romans 9:22-24 identifies believers as "objects of mercy that he prepared beforehand for glory" whom "he also called."
- 2 Timothy 1:9 states that 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 was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began," again highlighting the priority of God's eternal purpose.
- Peterson reiterates that this connection between eternal election and temporal calling further demonstrates that "faith is the result of election, not its cause."

### **Quotes:**

- "God's election of his people for salvation is based upon his sovereignty and grace, his purpose and mercy, and his will and love."
- "Scripture plainly teaches God's individual and corporate or communal election of his people."
- "We know whom God has chosen by who believes the gospel. Faith is not the basis of election. Faith is the result of election."
- "Election is God's eternal choice. Obtaining salvation obtains in time and space."
- "God's ultimate purpose in selecting and predestinating a people for himself is that it would lead to his own glory."
- "Eternal election always results in salvation."

- "In the New Testament, then, God's foreknowledge is not mere cognition but refers to his covenant affection and relationship with his people."
- "God chose people in Christ before the foundation of the world." (Ephesians 1:4)
- "God has saved us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before time began." (2 Timothy 1:9)
- "Union with Christ was not a divine afterthought. It was a part of God's plan of salvation from the beginning."
- "Those he predestined, he also called." (Romans 8:30)
- "Faith is the result of election, not its cause."

### **Conclusion:**

Dr. Peterson's Session 8 on Election systematically explores this crucial theological doctrine, emphasizing its multifaceted nature, encompassing both corporate and individual dimensions. He firmly roots election in God's sovereign grace and purpose before creation, highlighting that faith is a consequence rather than a prerequisite. He clarifies the goals of election as the salvation of God's people and the ultimate glory of God. By engaging with different interpretations of foreknowledge and the concept of union with Christ, and by tracing the connection between election and calling, Peterson provides a detailed overview of the biblical teaching on election within his broader framework of salvation.

## 4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 8, Election Systematic Formulations III

### Study Guide: Peterson on Election

#### Key Concepts:

- **Election:** God's sovereign choice, before the creation of the world, to save certain individuals and constitute his church.
- **Corporate Election:** God's choosing of a group of people (the church) for salvation.
- **Individual Election:** God's choosing of specific persons for salvation.
- **Sovereignty:** God's ultimate authority and control over all things, including salvation.
- **Grace:** God's unmerited favor and love extended to humanity.
- **Foreknowledge:** In the biblical context, not merely God's foresight of events, but his pre-ordained covenant love and affection for his chosen people.
- **Foreordination:** God's pre-determined plan and purpose for all things, including the salvation of the elect.
- **Union with Christ:** The spiritual joining of believers to Christ, planned by God before creation.
- **Calling:** God's act of summoning individuals to salvation through the gospel, which includes a general call to all and an effective call to the elect.
- **Salvation:** God's saving work, bringing individuals out of sin and into a relationship with himself, ultimately leading to eternal glory.
- **Glory of God:** The ultimate purpose of election, reflecting God's inherent worth and majesty.
- **Historical Election:** God's choosing of a specific group in history (e.g., Israel, the visible church) for a particular purpose, which does not guarantee individual salvation.
- **Eternal Election:** God's choice of individuals for salvation before the foundation of the world, which always results in salvation.

**Quiz:**

1. According to Peterson, where in the New Testament does Paul explicitly locate God's electing grace as occurring before the creation of the world? What does Peterson say is the basis of God's election of his people?
2. What is the difference between corporate and individual election? Provide one New Testament example of each type of election mentioned by Peterson.
3. How does Peterson address the common concern about knowing who the elect are? What does he say is the relationship between faith and election?
4. What are the two primary goals of God's election, according to Peterson? Briefly explain each goal.
5. Explain John Frame's distinction between historical and eternal election. How do they differ in their results regarding salvation?
6. How do Arminians typically understand the relationship between foreknowledge and predestination? How does Peterson argue against this view, drawing on Old Testament usage?
7. Explain how Peterson defines "foreknowledge" in the context of salvation, going beyond simple foresight. What Old Testament words and passages does he use to support his definition?
8. What does it mean that God chose people "in Christ" before the foundation of the world? According to Peterson, does this refer to an actual historical union?
9. Describe the two types of "calling" that Peterson mentions in relation to election. How do these relate to God's eternal plan and the preaching of the gospel?
10. How does Peterson use Romans 8:28-30 to illustrate the connection between foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification in the context of election?

**Answer Key:**

1. Paul locates God's electing grace before the creation of the world in Ephesians 1:4 and 2 Timothy 1:9. Peterson states that God's election of his people for salvation is based upon his sovereignty and grace, his purpose and mercy, and his will and love.



2. Corporate election refers to God's choice of a group, like the church, for salvation, while individual election refers to God's choice of specific people for salvation. An example of corporate election is found in 1 Peter 5:13 ("She who is in Babylon chosen together with you"), and an example of individual election is in Acts 13:48 ("all who had been appointed to eternal life believed").
3. Peterson states that we know whom God has chosen by who believes the gospel, citing 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5. He emphasizes that faith is not the basis of election but the result of it; God chooses, and then the Spirit works faith in those chosen.
4. The two primary goals of God's election are our salvation and God's glory. Our salvation includes holiness, adoption, conformity to Christ, inheritance, and glory. God's glory is the ultimate goal in all things, and election serves to bring praise to his glory through the saved.
5. Historical election is God's choosing of a group in history for a specific purpose (like Israel or the visible church), but it doesn't guarantee individual salvation for all within that group. Eternal election is God's choice of individuals for salvation before creation, which always results in their salvation.
6. Arminians believe that God's predestination is based on his foreknowledge of who would believe. Peterson argues against this by showing that in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word "yadah" (to know) often signifies covenantal love and choosing, not just mental cognition, as seen in Genesis 18:19 and Amos 3:2.
7. Peterson defines foreknowledge in the context of salvation as not merely God's foresight of events but as his pre-ordained covenant affection and relationship with his people. He uses the Old Testament word "yadah," which is translated as "know" but often implies choosing and setting love upon, as seen in God's relationship with Abraham and Israel.
8. That God chose people "in Christ" before the foundation of the world means that God's plan of salvation from the beginning included uniting the elect spiritually to his Son. According to Peterson, this does not refer to an actual union before creation since we did not exist then, but rather to God's pre-determined means of salvation.
9. Peterson describes a general gospel call that goes out to everyone and an effective or effectual call that God gives through the gospel to his chosen people. The effective call is connected to God's eternal election, drawing those he has chosen to saving faith in time.

10. Peterson explains that Romans 8:28-30 shows a chain: those God foreknew (in the sense of covenant love), he also predestined; those he predestined, he also called (effectively); those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified, illustrating the outworking of God's elective purpose.

### **Essay Format Questions:**

1. Discuss the significance of both corporate and individual election in the New Testament, according to Peterson. How does neglecting either aspect potentially impact our understanding of salvation and the church?
2. Analyze Peterson's argument that foreknowledge, in the context of salvation, encompasses more than just God's foresight. Evaluate the scriptural support he provides for understanding foreknowledge as foreordination and covenant love.
3. Explore the relationship between God's eternal election and the believer's experience of salvation in time, as presented by Peterson. How do concepts like calling and union with Christ bridge this connection?
4. Examine the two primary goals of election identified by Peterson: the salvation of the elect and the glory of God. How are these two goals interconnected, and why is God's glory considered the ultimate purpose?
5. Compare and contrast historical and eternal election as explained by John Frame and discussed by Peterson. What are the implications of this distinction for understanding God's relationship with different groups and individuals?

## Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Election:** God's sovereign, pre-temporal choice of individuals and a people for salvation and his own glory.
- **Corporate Election:** God's selection of a group (specifically the church) as his chosen people.
- **Individual Election:** God's specific choosing of particular persons for salvation.
- **Sovereignty:** God's absolute rule and authority over all creation and events, including the salvation of individuals.
- **Grace:** God's unmerited favor, love, and mercy extended to humanity, particularly in the context of salvation.
- **Foreknowledge:** In the biblical sense, God's pre-determined covenantal love and affectionate knowing of his chosen people, which includes more than just foresight.
- **Foreordination:** God's eternal plan and decree concerning all things that will come to pass, including the salvation of the elect.
- **Union with Christ:** The spiritual and vital connection that believers have with Christ, planned by God before creation and realized in time through faith.
- **Calling (General):** The outward proclamation of the gospel message to all people.
- **Calling (Effective/Effectual):** God's sovereign work through the gospel, drawing his elect to faith and salvation.
- **Salvation:** God's act of rescuing humanity from sin and its consequences, bringing them into a right relationship with himself.
- **Glory of God:** The infinite worth, honor, and splendor of God, which is the ultimate aim of all his actions, including election.
- **Historical Election:** God's choosing of a specific nation or group in history for a particular purpose, which does not guarantee the salvation of every individual within that group.
- **Eternal Election:** God's selection of individuals for salvation before the creation of the world, a choice that is certain to result in their salvation.

## 5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Session 8, Election Systematic Formulations III, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions on Election

**1. What are the primary biblical passages that discuss the doctrine of election?** The primary biblical passages that discuss the doctrine of election include Ephesians 1:3-14, Romans 8:28-30, and Romans 9. Additionally, 2 Timothy 1:9 is significant as it, along with Ephesians 1:4, indicates that God's electing grace occurred before the creation of the world. Other passages throughout the New Testament, including the Gospels, Acts, and the General Epistles, also touch upon both corporate and individual election.

**2. What is the distinction between corporate and individual election?** Corporate election refers to God's choosing of a group of people, the church, for salvation. This is evident in numerous New Testament passages that speak of the "elect" in a plural sense, referring to the Christian community. Individual election, on the other hand, refers to God's choosing of specific individuals for salvation. Scripture teaches both, with individuals being chosen by God ultimately forming the corporate body of the church. While corporate election is often less contested, it's crucial to recognize both aspects in biblical teaching.

**3. Is faith the basis or the result of God's election?** Faith is presented as the result of God's election, not the basis for it. The Bible indicates that God's appointment of individuals to eternal life precedes and results in their saving faith. We know who the elect are because they believe the gospel; their belief is a consequence of God's prior choice, driven by His sovereignty and grace.

**4. What are the goals of God's election?** The goals of God's election are twofold: our salvation and God's glory. God chose people in eternity past with a view to their final salvation, which includes holiness, adoption, conformity to Christ, inheritance, and glory. Concerning God himself, the ultimate goal of election is His own glory. By choosing both Jews and Gentiles for salvation, God intends that they might bring praise to His glory, which is the ultimate purpose in all that He does.

**5. What is the difference between historical and eternal election?** John Frame helpfully distinguishes between historical and eternal election. Historical election refers to God's choosing of a community in history, such as the nation of Israel or the visible New Testament church. However, being part of this historically elected group does not guarantee individual salvation. Eternal election, in contrast, refers to God's choosing of individuals for salvation before the creation of the world, and this choice always results in salvation for those individuals.

**6. How does the concept of "foreknowledge" relate to God's election?** In the Arminian tradition, election is seen as being based on God's foreknowledge of who would believe. However, the biblical understanding of God's foreknowledge is more than just Him seeing beforehand who would have faith. It includes the idea of foreordination, God setting His covenantal love and affection on His people beforehand. Passages in the Old Testament and New Testament use the word "know" (Yadah in Hebrew) to signify not just cognitive awareness but a personal, covenantal relationship of choosing and love. Therefore, God's foreknowledge in the context of salvation implies His prior choice and loving commitment to those He has elected.

**7. How is election connected to union with Christ?** Paul's writings highlight a connection between election and union with Christ, particularly in two instances where he speaks of pre-temporal or eternal election. In Ephesians 1:4 and 2 Timothy 1:9, Paul states that God chose people "in Christ" before the foundation of the world and gave grace in Christ Jesus before time began. While our actual union with Christ occurs in history when we believe, God's plan of salvation included uniting the elect to His Son from the very beginning. This union was not a divine afterthought but a foundational aspect of God's eternal purpose.

**8. How does election relate to God's calling?** Paul's writings also connect election and calling. God effectively brings people to salvation by calling them through the gospel. This calling includes the general gospel call that goes out to all, and an effective or effectual call that God extends to His chosen people through the gospel. Romans 8:28-30, Romans 9:22-24, and 2 Timothy 1:9 illustrate this connection, showing that those God predestined, He also called. This temporal calling to salvation is rooted in God's eternal election, further emphasizing that faith and salvation are consequences of God's prior choice and grace.