

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Salvation, Session 9, Election Systematic Formulations IV, Faith Gospel, Call Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Peterson, Salvation, Session 9, Election Systematic Formulations IV, Faith, Gospel, Call, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert Peterson's lecture on salvation, specifically session nine, explores the intricate relationship between God's election, human faith, the gospel message, and divine calling. The lecture asserts that **election precedes and causes faith**, evidenced in scripture through the work of John, Luke, and Paul. It emphasizes that **while faith is the means by which individuals receive salvation, it is not the origin**. Furthermore, the lecture highlights that **God's election is not separate from mission, as seen in the choosing of Abraham and Israel for the sake of reaching the nations with the gospel**. Finally, it distinguishes between the **universal gospel call and God's effective call**, emphasizing both human responsibility to believe and God's sovereign work in drawing individuals to salvation through this call.

2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, Salvation, Session 9 – 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_
Session09.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 9, Election Systematic Formulations IV, Faith, Gospel, Call

Briefing Document: Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Salvation, Session 9 - Election Formulations, Number 4: Faith, Gospel and Calling

Main Themes:

This session of Dr. Peterson's teaching on salvation focuses on the intricate relationship between God's election, human faith, the proclamation of the gospel, and God's calling. The lecture argues for the priority of God's election in salvation, emphasizing that faith is a result of God's prior choice. It also highlights the crucial role of the gospel as the means through which God draws his elect and the universal nature of the gospel call alongside God's effective call to salvation. Finally, it explores the purposes and implications of God's calling in the lives of believers.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. Election and Faith:

- **Faith as the Means of Salvation:** Scripture clearly teaches that salvation is attained through faith in Christ (Acts 16:31, Romans 3:22).
- **Quote:** "Scripture clearly teaches that the means of salvation is faith in Christ. This is evident in Acts where Paul and Silas tell the Philippian jailer, quote, believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Page 1)
- **Election as the Cause of Faith:** Several biblical passages indicate that God's election precedes and causes faith.
- John 6:37: Jesus states, "everyone the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me, I will not put out." Peterson interprets the Father giving people to Jesus as a picture of election, suggesting it precedes belief.
- Acts 13:48: Luke records that in Antioch of Pisidia, "all who had been appointed to eternal life believed" after the gospel was proclaimed.
- **Quote:** "When the Gentiles heard this, he writes, they rejoiced and honored the word of the Lord, and all who had been appointed to eternal life believed." (Page 1)
- David Peterson's commentary on Acts is cited, stating that Luke highlights how God uses the gospel to call out and save his elect by enabling them to believe.

- **Quote:** "God ordained persons to salvation and then drew them to Christ in the preaching of the gospel. Once again, the election is the cause of faith, not its result." (Page 2)
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13: Paul thanks God for the Thessalonians' salvation, stating they were "chosen you for salvation through sanctification by the spirit and through belief in the truth" from the beginning. This suggests election leads to belief.
- **Quote:** "We ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because from the beginning, God has chosen you for salvation through sanctification by the spirit and through belief in the truth." (Page 2)
- Romans 9:11 and 9:16: Paul's discussion of Jacob and Esau, and his conclusion that "salvation does not depend on human will or effort but on God, who shows mercy," are used to argue against human effort, including faith as the ultimate cause of salvation.

2. Election and the Gospel:

- **Multiple Reasons for Salvation:** While election is a foundational truth, the Bible offers various perspectives on why we are saved, all ultimately rooted in God. These include God's glory, love, plan, Christ's death, the Holy Spirit's work, the gospel message, and our faith in Christ (as the receptive act).
- **God Saves Through Christ, Faith Receives:** Faith is not the cause of salvation but the means by which we receive what God has done for us in Christ.
- **Quote:** "Our faith does not save us. God saves us through Christ. But our faith receives what God has done for us in Christ." (Page 2)
- **The Necessity of the Gospel:** Paul teaches that salvation comes through hearing the gospel (Ephesians 1:13). Therefore, speaking of election without missions is incomplete.
- **Election for the Sake of Mission:** God's choice of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) and Israel (Exodus 19:5-6) was not solely for their benefit but to make them a blessing to the nations, bringing the knowledge of God and the means of atonement.
- **Quote:** "Abraham is chosen for the sake of mission." (Page 3)
- **Quote:** "Out of all the nations, you are mine, and the whole earth is mine, so you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Page 3)

- **Paul's Burden for Unbelieving Israel:** Even while discussing divine election in Romans 9-11, Paul expresses intense desire and prayer for the salvation of his people, highlighting the importance of the gospel call.
- **Quote:** "He begins his theological discourse by stating his intense and unceasing burden for the salvation of his people, the Jews." (Page 3)
- **Quote:** "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:13, quoted on Page 3)
- **Humility and Proclamation:** In response to the "marvelous yet inscrutable truths" of election and the gospel, we should humbly worship (Spurgeon quote emphasizing the incomprehensibility of God) and actively share the gospel (William Carey quote stressing the duty to spread the knowledge of God's name).
- **Quote (Spurgeon):** "A doctrine that I cannot fully grasp is a truth of God, which is intended to grasp me. When I cannot climb, I kneel." (Page 4)
- **Quote (Carey):** "[We should] use every lawful method to spread the knowledge of his name. Expect great things. Attempt great things." (Page 4)
- **Election Motivates Evangelism:** A correct understanding of election should not hinder but rather motivate the preaching of the gospel so that people might believe and be saved.

3. Calling:

- **Two Aspects of Calling:** Calling refers both to the general gospel invitation extended to all and the effective call by which God sovereignly brings people to salvation through the gospel.
- **Gospel Call (External Call):** This is a universal invitation to believe the gospel, intended by God to go to everyone without discrimination. Churches and individuals are disobedient if they fail to preach the gospel to all (hyper-Calvinism is rejected).
- **Quote:** "The gospel call is intended by God to go to everyone without discrimination." (Page 5)
- **Quote:** "We promiscuously, the canons of Dort say, call whosoever will to salvation." (Page 7)

- **Effective Call (Internal Call, Efficacious Call, Performative Summons):** This is God's sovereign work through the gospel call, enabling individuals to respond in saving faith. It is effective because God issues it and people respond.
- **Quote:** "The effectual call or the effective call is issued by God himself, sovereignly, as he chooses, through the gospel call." (Page 5)
- **Distinguishing the Calls:** The terminology of "external" and "internal" call can be confusing as the effective call works *through* the gospel call. "Gospel call" and "effective call" are preferred terms.
- **God's Desire for Salvation:** God does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:23, 33:11). He desires that people repent and live (Isaiah 45:22, 2 Peter 3:9).
- **Quote (Ezekiel 33:11):** "I take no pleasure in anyone's death. This is the declaration of the Lord God. So repent and live." (Page 7)
- **Sincerity of the Gospel Offer:** The gospel call is a sincere offer from both God and preachers, even within a Calvinistic framework that affirms total depravity, unconditional election, particular atonement, and irresistible grace. The Calvinists at Dort affirmed both God's sovereignty in salvation and the genuine offer of the gospel.
- **Human Responsibility for Unbelief:** Despite God's sovereignty in calling, human beings are held responsible and culpable for their unbelief (John 3:18, 3:36, 8:24, 2 Thessalonians 1:8, 1 John 5). The gospel is presented as a command to be obeyed.
- **Quote (John 3:18):** "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only son of God." (Page 5)
- **Quote (2 Thessalonians 1:8):** "[Christ will deal out] retribution to those who do not know God, and apparently it's the same group, even those who do not obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus." (Page 6)
- **The Gospel as Essential for Salvation:** Paul's teaching in Romans 10:8-17 emphasizes that faith comes through hearing the message about Christ, making the gospel call necessary for salvation.
- **Quote (Romans 10:17):** "So, faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the message about Christ." (Page 12)

- **Speech Act Theory:** The lecture briefly touches on locution (statement), illocution (purpose), and perlocution (results) to describe the effective call as a "performative summons" where God's inward call achieves its purpose.
- **Interrelation of Gospel and Effective Call:** The effective call works internally through the external proclamation of the gospel (Acts 13:48-49).
- **Election and Calling in Time:** Scripture connects eternal election with God's calling in time (Romans 8:30, 9:23-24, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).
- **Quote (Romans 8:30):** "Those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified." (Page 13)

4. Purposes and Implications of God's Calling:

- **Praiseworthy Life (Short-Term):** God's effective call is intended to produce a life worthy of that calling, characterized by:
 - Freedom (Galatians 5:13): Freedom from sin to serve others in love.
 - Harmony (Colossians 3:15): Peace and unity among believers in the body of Christ.
 - Holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:7): Living in purity, set apart for God.
 - Willingness to Suffer (1 Peter 2:21): Following Christ's example of suffering.
- **Quote (Ephesians 4:1):** "I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received." (Page 13)
- **Glorious Long-Term Effects (Eschatological Hope):** God's calling is also connected to our future hope:
 - Hope of Eternal Life (Ephesians 1:18).
 - Obtaining the Glory of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:14).
 - Receiving the Promise of Eternal Inheritance (Hebrews 9:15).
 - Inheriting a Blessing (1 Peter 3:9).
 - Eternal Glory in Christ (1 Peter 5:10).
- **Quote (Ephesians 1:18):** "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of his calling." (Page 15)

Key Mystery:

Dr. Peterson highlights the mystery of how absolute divine sovereignty and genuine human responsibility can coexist, acknowledging that while not essential for salvation, it is a clear teaching of Scripture (illustrated by the decree of Christ's death and Judas's culpability in Luke 22:22). He also points to the Trinity and the person of Christ as other fundamental mysteries.

Conclusion:

This session provides a detailed exploration of the relationship between election, faith, the gospel, and calling within a Calvinistic framework. It emphasizes God's initiative and sovereignty in salvation while maintaining the necessity of faith as the means of receiving God's grace through the proclaimed gospel. The lecture underscores the universal call of the gospel, God's sincere desire for the salvation of sinners, and the responsibility of humanity to believe. Finally, it outlines the transformative purposes of God's calling in the lives of believers, both in the present and in the future hope of eternal glory.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 9, Election Systematic Formulations IV, Faith, Gospel, Call

Study Guide: Election, Faith, Gospel, and Calling

Quiz:

1. According to the text, what is the means of salvation clearly taught in Scripture, as illustrated in Acts 16:31 and Romans 3:22?
2. Explain the relationship between election and faith as presented in John 6:37 and Acts 13:48. Which precedes the other, and how does Luke describe this connection?
3. Summarize David Peterson's point regarding God's use of the gospel in relation to his elect, as mentioned in the commentary on Acts.
4. List three reasons, as stated in the text, why we are saved, emphasizing that our faith is not the source or cause of salvation.
5. How does the example of Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 illustrate the purpose of God's choosing, according to the provided material?
6. Describe the two aspects of calling discussed in the text, using the preferred terminology: gospel call and effective call.
7. Explain the difference between the gospel call and the effective call, noting who each is intended for and the outcome of the effective call.
8. Why did the Arminians at the Synod of Dort question the Calvinist understanding of the gospel call, and what was the Calvinist response?
9. What does the text say about God's desire regarding the salvation of the lost, referencing specific Old and New Testament passages?
10. According to Romans 10:17, what is essential for faith and salvation, and how does this relate to the role of preaching?

Answer Key:

1. The means of salvation is faith in Christ. Acts 16:31 states, "believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved," and Romans 3:22 says the righteousness of God is "through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."

2. Election precedes faith. John 6:37 indicates that everyone the Father gives to Jesus will come and believe. Acts 13:48 states that "all who had been appointed to eternal life believed," showing a divine appointment prior to their faith.
3. David Peterson writes that God uses the gospel to call out his elect and save them. Those who seek the Lord from among the nations are those God has already claimed, and this happens as God enables them to believe through gospel proclamation.
4. We are saved because God deserves to be praised, because God loves us, and because God planned to save us. Our faith receives what God has done in Christ; God is the source, ground, and cause of our salvation.
5. God chose Abraham for the sake of mission. He was promised blessings and commissioned to be a blessing through whom all peoples on earth would be blessed.
6. The two aspects of calling are the gospel call, which is a universal invitation to believe the gospel, and the effective call, which is God's sovereign work through the gospel call to bring chosen individuals to salvation.
7. The gospel call is intended for everyone without discrimination, inviting all to believe. The effective call is issued by God to specific individuals through the gospel, and it results in their belief and salvation.
8. The Arminians questioned how Calvinists could claim the gospel offer was a sincere desire on God's part given their beliefs in total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, and irresistible grace. The Calvinists responded that the Bible teaches both God's absolute sovereignty in salvation and the sincere offer of the gospel to all.
9. The text emphasizes God's desire to save sinners, referencing Ezekiel 18:23 and 33:11, Isaiah 45:22 in the Old Testament, and 2 Peter 3:9 in the New Testament, all showing God's lack of pleasure in the death of the wicked and his desire for all to repent and be saved.
10. According to Romans 10:17, faith comes from hearing the message about Christ. This highlights the necessity of preaching the gospel so that people can hear and believe, leading to salvation.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Analyze the relationship between divine election and human responsibility as presented in the text. Discuss the apparent tension between these two doctrines and how the author suggests we should approach this mystery. Support your answer with specific examples and scriptural references from the source material.
2. Discuss the significance of the gospel call as both a universal invitation and the means through which God issues the effective call. Explain why the author emphasizes the necessity of preaching the gospel to all, even within the framework of the doctrine of election.
3. Explain the concept of the effective call (performative summons) and how it differs from the gospel call (gospel invitation). How do these two aspects of calling work together in God's plan of salvation, according to the provided text?
4. Explore the purposes and results of God's effective calling in the lives of believers, both in the short-term (present life) and the long-term (eschatological hope). Use specific examples of the characteristics and blessings associated with this calling as outlined in the text.
5. Evaluate the author's perspective on theological consistency versus biblical faithfulness, particularly in the context of potentially paradoxical doctrines like election and the sincerity of the gospel offer. Do you find this approach persuasive? Why or why not, based on the material presented?

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Election:** God's sovereign choice before the foundation of the world of certain individuals to be saved.
- **Faith:** Trust in Jesus Christ as the means of salvation, often described as a gift from God and a result of election.
- **Calling (Gospel Call):** The universal invitation to all people to repent and believe the gospel. It is sincere on the part of God and those who proclaim it.
- **Calling (Effective Call/Efficacious Call):** God's sovereign and inward work through the gospel call, by the Holy Spirit, to draw his elect to saving faith in Christ. It is described as a performative summons that inevitably leads to belief.
- **Soteriology:** The branch of Christian theology concerned with the doctrine of salvation.
- **Total Depravity:** The theological doctrine that, as a consequence of the Fall, every aspect of human nature is corrupted by sin, rendering individuals incapable of saving themselves.
- **Unconditional Election:** The belief that God's election of individuals for salvation is not based on any foreseen merit or action in them, but solely on his sovereign will and grace.
- **Limited/Particular Atonement:** The doctrine that Christ's atoning death was intended to save only the elect, not all of humanity.
- **Irresistible Grace:** The theological concept that when God effectually calls someone to salvation, that person will unfailingly respond in faith.
- **Hyper-Calvinism:** A theological position that overemphasizes God's sovereignty in election to the exclusion of the responsibility to freely offer the gospel to all.
- **Justification:** God's act of declaring a sinner righteous in his sight through faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Sanctification:** The process by which believers are made holy and conformed to the image of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- **Eschaton:** The final events in the history of the world or of humankind; the end times.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Session 9, Election Systematic Formulations IV, Faith, Gospel, Call, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Election, Faith, Gospel, and Calling

1. How does the Bible describe the relationship between God's election and human faith in salvation? The Bible teaches that God's election is the foundational cause of salvation, and faith in Jesus Christ is the means by which individuals receive this salvation. Several scriptures indicate that God's choice precedes and results in a person's belief. For example, John 6:37 states that everyone the Father gives to Jesus will come to him, and Acts 13:48 notes that those appointed to eternal life believed. Therefore, faith is understood as a consequence of God's prior election, not a condition that prompts it.

2. What role does the gospel play in God's plan of election and salvation? The gospel is the message of truth through which God draws his elect to Christ. It is the means by which individuals hear about Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins, and the promise of eternal life through faith in him. As highlighted in Acts 13:48 and David Peterson's commentary, God uses the proclamation of the gospel to call out and save those whom he has already chosen. Paul also emphasizes in Romans 10:17 that faith comes through hearing the message about Christ, underscoring the necessity of the gospel in God's saving work.

3. The source mentions that our faith does not save us, but God saves us through Christ. What is the role of our faith then? While our faith is not the source, ground, or cause of our salvation, it is the means by which we receive what God has accomplished for us in Christ. Faith is our active response to God's grace, our trust and belief in Jesus Christ and his work on the cross. Ephesians 2:8-9 states that we are saved by grace through faith, emphasizing that faith is the instrument through which we embrace God's gift of salvation. We are active in believing, trusting, and repenting, thereby receiving the salvation that God offers.

4. Why does the doctrine of election not hinder the need for evangelism and missions?

The Bible reveals that God's election is not meant to be understood in isolation but in connection with the proclamation of the gospel to all nations. God chose Abraham to be a blessing to all peoples on earth (Genesis 12:1-3), and Israel was chosen as a kingdom of priests to bring the knowledge of God to the nations. Similarly, the gospel call is intended to go to everyone without discrimination. As William Carey emphasized, the belief in God's sovereignty in salvation should motivate Christians to use every lawful method to spread the knowledge of Christ, as people must hear and believe the gospel to be saved (Romans 10:14-17).

5. What are the two aspects of "calling" discussed in the source, and how do they differ? The source distinguishes between the "gospel call" and the "effective call." The gospel call is a universal invitation to believe in Jesus Christ, which is to be proclaimed to all people without discrimination. It is a sincere offer from God and preachers for sinners to repent and be saved. The effective call, on the other hand, is God's sovereign work through the gospel call, by which he internally draws his chosen people to saving faith. While the gospel call goes out to many, the effective call is issued by God himself and is always responded to in faith. The internal call works through the external call.

6. Does God genuinely desire the salvation of all people, even though not all are elect?

Yes, the source emphasizes that God does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked but desires that they turn from their ways and live (Ezekiel 18:23, 33:11). Isaiah 45:22 declares God's call to all the ends of the earth to be saved. The New Testament echoes this sentiment, with 2 Peter 3:9 stating that the Lord is patient, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance. Even though God has chosen some for salvation, the gospel call is a sincere offer to all, reflecting God's desire for sinners to repent, believe, and be saved.

7. How does the source address the apparent tension between God's absolute sovereignty in salvation and genuine human responsibility for belief or unbelief? The source acknowledges the mystery of how absolute divine sovereignty and genuine human responsibility coexist in the doctrine of salvation. Scripture consistently presents both truths side by side. For example, while God decreed the death of Jesus (Luke 22:22), Judas remains culpable for his betrayal. Similarly, Jesus laments over Jerusalem's unbelief (Matthew 23:37) while also acknowledging the Father's sovereign will in revealing truth (Matthew 11:25-26). The author considers this interplay a biblical mystery, akin to the Trinity and the person of Christ, where finite human understanding cannot fully reconcile these truths, yet both are affirmed in Scripture. Humans are held responsible for their response to the gospel, and unbelief is considered culpable (John 3:18, 3:36, 2 Thessalonians 1:8).

8. What are some of the intended short-term and long-term effects of God's effective calling in the lives of believers? In the short term, God's effective call is intended to produce a life that is praiseworthy and worthy of the calling received (Ephesians 4:1). This includes freedom from sin, harmony with other believers, holiness before God and others, and a willingness to suffer for the gospel (Galatians 5:13, Colossians 3:15, 1 Thessalonians 4:7, 1 Peter 2:21). In the long term, God's calling is connected with the believer's final hope and eternal glory. It leads to the inheritance of eternal life and resurrected bodies (Ephesians 1:18, 2 Thessalonians 2:14, Hebrews 9:15, 1 Peter 3:9, 1 Peter 5:10), motivating believers to love, worship, and live for the Lord with their whole hearts.