

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Salvation, Session 15, Adoption II & Sanctification I, Historical Reconnaissance Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Peterson, Salvation, Session 15, Adoption II & Sanctification I, Historical Reconnaissance, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert Peterson's lecture, "Salvation, Session 15," explores the theological concepts of adoption and the initial stages of sanctification from a historical perspective. The session begins by examining adoption as a key aspect of salvation, emphasizing its basis in grace through faith and its connection to redemption and union with Christ, highlighting the blessings it confers on believers, such as belonging to God's family and receiving the Spirit of sonship. **The lecture then transitions to sanctification, providing a biblical summary and outlining the plan for a "historical reconnaissance" of different evangelical views on the Christian life.** Peterson sets the stage for analyzing Lutheran, Wesleyan, Keswick, Pentecostal, and Reformed perspectives on sanctification, aiming to understand their distinctive emphases while acknowledging their shared evangelical foundations. **He underscores his intent to engage critically yet constructively with these viewpoints in subsequent parts of the lecture series.**

2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, Salvation, Session 15 – 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_
Session15.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 15, Adoption II & Sanctification I, Historical Reconnaissance

Briefing Document: Adoption (Part 2) and Sanctification (Part 1) - Historical Reconnaissance

Overview: This session, the fifteenth in a series on Salvation, delves into two key aspects of the application of salvation: Adoption (Part 2) and the initial stage of Sanctification, focusing on a historical reconnaissance of different evangelical viewpoints. Dr. Peterson explores the nature and blessings of adoption as believers are welcomed into God's family and then begins to examine various historical understandings of sanctification within different Christian traditions.

Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:

I. Adoption (Part 2):

- **Adoption is by Grace Through Faith, Linked to Redemption:** Like justification, adoption is entirely God's gracious act received through faith in Christ. The biblical picture of atonement corresponding to adoption is redemption, highlighting that as slaves to sin, we could never ransom ourselves (Psalm 49:7-9). Redemption in Christ, through His blood (Ephesians 1:7), is appropriated by faith, making us sons of God (Galatians 3:26). Even the final adoption is expressed as the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23).
- **Quote:** "Like Justification, Adoption is by grace through faith in Christ. Adoption is all of grace, for as slaves of sin and self, we could never redeem ourselves."
- **Quote:** "In him we have Redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, Ephesians 1:7."
- **Quote:** "Through faith you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus, Galatians 3:26."
- **The Holy Spirit and Adoption:** The Holy Spirit plays a crucial role in enabling belief unto adoption. He gives the gift of faith (1 Corinthians 12:3) and is the "Spirit of Adoption" (Romans 8:15) by whom we cry out "Abba, Father." This intimate Aramaic term signifies a child's loving and respectful address to their father.
- **Quote:** "You received the Spirit of Adoption by whom we cry out, Abba, Father, Romans 8:15."

- **Explanation of "Abba":** "Abba is an Aramaic word children use to address a dear father, much like Daddy or Papa... It's the word of a child toward a father who is respected and who is loved."
 - **Adoption in the Courtroom of Family Law:** While Justification is likened to a criminal court (God declaring us righteous), Adoption is pictured in the family court (God welcoming us as loved children). Both are by God's grace through faith in Christ alone.
 - **Quote:** "Justification and Adoption are both pictures of salvation taken from the courtroom. Justification is in the criminal division. Adoption is in the family court."
 - **The Trinity and Adoption:** God, in His Trinitarian nature (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), facilitates our adoption. While the names of the Father and Son naturally relate to adoption, God modifies the role of the Holy Spirit, calling Him the "Spirit of Adoption" and the "Spirit of His Son" (Galatians 4:6) to better communicate His love in this context.
 - **Quote:** "So, what does God do? He modifies the name of the third person of the Godhead in order to better communicate the doctrine of adoption to us. He is the Spirit of Adoption, Romans 8:15."
 - **Adoption Occurs in Union with Christ:** Like all aspects of salvation's application, adoption happens within the believer's union with Christ (Galatians 3:26). Faith is the means, and union with Christ is the encompassing reality for all spiritual blessings.
 - **Quote:** "Through faith you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus. In Christ Jesus here speaks of union with Christ."
1. **Blessings of Adoption (Five Summarized): Belonging to God's Family:** We become sons and daughters of God, fulfilling our deep need to belong (Galatians 4:4-5). We know God and are known by Him, and other believers are our brothers and sisters.
 - **Quote:** "God meets our deep need to belong by placing us as adult children in his family."
 1. **Receiving the Spirit of Sonship:** The Holy Spirit enables us to call God "Father" in truth (Romans 8:15-16), replacing fear with freedom and assuring us of our

sonship. Assurance is based on God's Word, the Spirit's ministry, and God's work in our lives, with God's promise being the most crucial.

- **Quote:** "You did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you receive the spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba, Father, the Holy Spirit." (Romans 8:15)
- 1. **Resembling Our Heavenly Father:** Through God's grace and Spirit, we begin to exhibit a "family resemblance" to God, no longer desiring to fulfill the desires of our former "father the devil" (John 8:44) but wanting to please our heavenly Father (Romans 8:14). This involves following the Spirit's leadership in holiness and love.
- **Quote:** "For all those led by God's spirit are God's sons, Romans 8:14." (interpreted in the context of following the Spirit in holiness)
- 1. **God's Fatherly Discipline:** As beloved children, we are disciplined by our Father for our benefit, that we may share His holiness (Hebrews 12:7, 9-10).
- **Quote:** "The Lord disciplines the one he loves and punishes every child he receives; every son he receives endures suffering as discipline." (Hebrews 12:7)
- 1. **Inheritance as Heirs of God:** We are not only presently God's children (1 John 3:2, Galatians 4:7) but also heirs of a future inheritance, co-heirs with Christ, with a longing for our final adoption – the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:17, 23).
- **Quote:** "You are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then God has made you an heir." (Galatians 4:7)
- **Quote:** "Heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ." (Romans 8:17)

II. Sanctification (Part 1): Historical Reconnaissance:

- **Biblical Summary of Sanctification:** Sanctification involves being consecrated or devoted to God, separated from common use. Believers are initially sanctified (holy in God's eyes) through Christ's work. Simultaneously, they are called to grow in holiness, a process of being conformed to the image of Christ, culminating in perfection on the last day.
- **Focus on Evangelical Views:** The historical reconnaissance will examine various evangelical views of the Christian life, acknowledging that while these views share fundamental beliefs (inerrancy of Scripture, Trinity, sin, incarnation, resurrection, salvation by grace through faith), they differ in emphasis regarding sanctification.

- **Five Views to be Examined:** Dr. Peterson will summarize and interact with five viewpoints on sanctification: Lutheran, Wesleyan, Keswick, Pentecostal, and Reformed. He emphasizes that all these views held by true believers contain truths, even though he may respectfully disagree with certain emphases. His intention is to edify, not malign.
- **Common Ground Among Evangelical Views:** Despite their differences in emphasis on sanctification, these evangelical traditions share core beliefs: the inerrancy of Holy Scripture, the Trinity, the reality of sin, the incarnation, death, resurrection, and second coming of Christ, and salvation by grace through faith in Christ.
- **Lutheran View: Primacy of Justification:** The Lutheran view is built on the central importance of justification. "In Lutheran theology, the article of justification is the central chief article by which the Christian doctrine and the Christian church stand and fall" (Francis Pieper).
- **Inseparable Connection, Proper Order:** There's an inseparable connection between justification (faith) and sanctification; where one exists, the other does as well. However, sanctification is always the consequence and effect of justification, never preceding it.
- **Law-Gospel Dialectic:** The key to Lutheran exegesis is the distinction between law (God's demands, which sinners cannot fulfill and which condemn) and gospel (God's forgiveness through Christ's sacrifice, which gives faith and saves). The Christian life is about receiving God's forgiveness daily, not primarily about rule-keeping.
- **Simul Justus et Peccator:** A Christian is simultaneously righteous in Christ through free justification and a sinner in themselves. This is a foundational concept for understanding both justification and sanctification in Lutheran theology.
- **Quote (David Scare):** "There is no progress in the Christian life. We are always and only simul justus et peccator." This highlights a key distinction in Lutheran thought regarding the ongoing nature of sin in the believer.
- **Justification and Sanctification as Perspectives:** Justification describes the believer's relationship with God (passive reception of Christ), while sanctification describes the same reality from the perspective of the world and society (tireless performance of good works). They are not separate realities but different views of the same reality.

- **Wesleyan View:Reformation Doctrine of Justification:** Wesley affirmed the Reformation understanding of justification by grace through faith.
- **Progressive Sanctification:** Sanctification begins at conversion and is a gradual process resulting from God's sanctifying grace.
- **Christian Perfection (Entire Sanctification/Holiness/Second Blessing):** Wesley added the doctrine of believer's maturity, a state of "pure love reigning alone in the heart and life," involving wholehearted dedication to God and not willfully sinning due to overwhelming love. This is not sinlessness (involuntary transgressions still occur).
- **Quote (Wesley):** Christian perfection consists of "pure love reigning alone in the heart and life."
- **Use of Spiritual Methods:** Wesley emphasized methodical self-discipline (hence "Methodists") as necessary but insufficient for overcoming sin.
- **Instantaneous Aspect:** Wesley believed in both progressive and instantaneous aspects of sanctification (Christian perfection as a distinct experience).
- **Divergence Among Wesleyan Heirs:** While Wesley combined progressive and instantaneous sanctification, some of his successors, like Adam Clark, emphasized instantaneous and complete purification from all sin, viewing gradual sanctification as unscriptural.

Next Steps: The lecture will continue by exploring the Keswick, Pentecostal, and Reformed views of sanctification, followed by an evaluation and systematic formulation of the doctrine, including its relation to the Trinity and union with Christ, and the believer's role.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 15, Adoption II & Sanctification I, Historical Reconnaissance

Study Guide: Adoption and Sanctification (Historical Reconnaissance)

Key Concepts: Adoption

- **Definition:** God's act of welcoming believers into his family as sons and daughters, granting them all the rights and privileges of sonship.
- **Basis:** God's love, secured through the person and work of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.
- **Means:** By grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Biblical Correspondence:** Redemption (Galatians 4:1-7).
- **Role of the Holy Spirit:** Enables belief unto adoption and provides the "Spirit of Adoption" by whom we cry "Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15). Assures believers of their sonship (Romans 8:16).
- **Relationship to Justification:** Both are aspects of salvation received by grace through faith. Justification is a legal declaration of righteousness in the courtroom, while adoption is a welcoming into the family in family court.
- **Union with Christ:** Adoption occurs within the context of union with Christ, which encompasses all spiritual blessings. Faith is the means by which believers are adopted and united with Christ.
- **Blessings of Adoption:** Belonging to God's family (Galatians 4:4-5).
- Receiving the Spirit of Sonship (Romans 8:15-16).
- Resembling our heavenly Father (principle of family resemblance) (Romans 8:14).
- Experiencing God's fatherly discipline (Hebrews 12:7-10).
- Having an inheritance as co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17, Galatians 4:7, 1 John 3:2).
- **Already and Not Yet:** Adoption is a present reality (we are God's children now) with a future aspect (the redemption of our bodies).

Key Concepts: Sanctification (Introduction and Lutheran View)

- **Definition (Biblical):** The process of being consecrated or devoted to God, separated from common use. Initial sanctification occurs at conversion through Christ's work.
- **Process:** A lifelong growth in holiness, being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, culminating in perfection at Christ's return.
- **Historical Reconnaissance (Purpose):** Examining various evangelical views of the Christian life (polemics among believers, not apologetics to unbelievers). Acknowledges that all views contain truths, but with differing emphases.
- **Common Ground Among Evangelical Views:** Belief in the inerrancy of Scripture, the Trinity, the reality of sin, the incarnation, death, resurrection, and second coming of Christ, and salvation by grace through faith.
- **Lutheran View of Sanctification: Primacy of Justification:** Justification is the central and foundational article of Christian doctrine. If justification stands, the church stands; if it falls, the church falls.
- **Inseparable Connection:** Justification (faith) and sanctification are inseparably connected. Where there is justification, there is always sanctification.
- **Order:** Sanctification is a consequence and effect of justification, not a prerequisite.
- **Law-Gospel Dialectic:** The key to understanding Scripture. The Law reveals sin, demands obedience that sinners cannot fulfill, and condemns. The Gospel forgives sins through Christ's sacrifice and gives faith for salvation.
- **Simul Justus et Peccator:** A Christian is simultaneously righteous (justus) in God's sight through Christ's imputed righteousness and a sinner (peccator) in their own being. This is a constant reality, not a sequential one.
- **Sanctification as Relationship to the World:** While justification describes the believer's relationship with God (passive reception of Christ), sanctification describes the justified Christian's active relationship to the world and society, performing good works.
- **No Progress in the Christian Life (David Scare's perspective):** Some Lutheran theologians emphasize that believers remain always and only simultaneously righteous and sinners, implying no real progress in personal holiness in this life.

Key Concepts: Sanctification (Wesleyan View)

- **Reformation Doctrine of Justification:** Agreement with the Reformation understanding that God declares righteous those who trust in Jesus.
- **Prevenient Grace:** Universal grace that enables individuals to respond positively to the Gospel.
- **Progressive Sanctification:** Sanctification begins at conversion and is a gradual process of growth in holiness through God's sanctifying grace.
- **Christian Perfection (Entire Sanctification, Holiness, Second Blessing):** A distinct aspect of sanctification involving instantaneous wholehearted dedication to God, characterized by pure love reigning in the heart and life, and not willfully sinning against God due to overwhelming love.
- **Not Sinlessness:** Christian perfection in Wesley's understanding does not mean being free from involuntary transgressions, which require lifelong confession and for which Christ's atonement is necessary. It focuses on freedom from voluntary, willful sin.
- **Spiritual Methods:** Wesley emphasized the use of methodical self-discipline as a means of spiritual growth, influenced by figures like Thomas à Kempis.
- **Love as the Goal:** The essence of Christian perfection is fulfilling the two greatest commandments: loving God with all one's being and loving one's neighbor as oneself.
- **Potential for Attainment:** Wesley believed that believers could attain entire sanctification after conversion through God's sufficient grace in this life.
- **Clark's Divergent View:** Adam Clarke, a contemporary, argued against gradual sanctification, advocating for instantaneous and complete purification from all sin, which influenced the holiness movement.

Quiz: Adoption and Sanctification (Historical Reconnaissance)

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. Explain the core meaning of adoption in the context of salvation, as presented by Dr. Peterson. What is the primary analogy used to describe this aspect of salvation?
2. According to the lecture, how is adoption related to redemption, and what biblical passage illustrates this connection?

3. What role does the Holy Spirit play in the process of adoption for believers? Provide at least two specific ways the Spirit ministers in relation to our adoption.
4. Contrast the concepts of justification and adoption, highlighting the different "arenas" in which each takes place and what each declares about the believer.
5. Describe at least two of the key blessings that believers receive as a result of being adopted into God's family.
6. What is the central tenet of the Lutheran view of the Christian life, and how does this principle influence their understanding of sanctification?
7. Explain the Lutheran concept of "simul justus et peccator." What does this phrase signify about the Christian's standing before God and their own self-perception?
8. According to the Lutheran perspective discussed, what is the primary function of the Law in the life of a believer? How does the Gospel relate to this function?
9. Describe John Wesley's understanding of sanctification, including both its progressive aspect and the concept of "Christian perfection."
10. How did Wesley define "Christian perfection," and what did he specifically clarify that it does *not* entail?

Answer Key: Quiz

1. Adoption in salvation means God welcomes believers into His family as sons and daughters, granting them the full rights and privileges of sonship. The primary analogy used is that of family court, contrasting with the criminal court analogy for justification.
2. Adoption biblically corresponds with redemption, as seen in Galatians 4:1-7, where Christ redeems those under the law so that they might receive adoption as sons. Redemption provides the basis for God to adopt us into His family.
3. The Holy Spirit enables belief unto adoption by giving the gift of faith. Additionally, the Spirit provides the "Spirit of Adoption" (Romans 8:15) through whom believers can genuinely call God "Abba, Father," signifying an intimate and loving relationship.
4. Justification is God's declaration of believers as righteous in His sight, imputing Christ's righteousness to them in the courtroom of divine justice. Adoption, on the other hand, is the Father's welcoming believers into His family as loved children in the context of family court.

5. Two key blessings of adoption include belonging to God as our heavenly Father and becoming part of His family with other believers as brothers and sisters in Christ. Another blessing is receiving the Spirit of Sonship, which enables us to call God "Father" in truth and assures us of our status.
6. The central tenet of the Lutheran view of the Christian life is the primacy of justification by grace through faith. This principle means that justification is always the foundational truth, and sanctification is understood as a consequence and effect of being declared righteous.
7. "Simul justus et peccator" means that a Christian is at the same time righteous (justus) in God's eyes due to Christ's imputed righteousness, and yet simultaneously a sinner (peccator) in their own being and nature. This is not a sequential state but a constant, concurrent reality.
8. In the Lutheran perspective, the primary function of the Law is to reveal humanity's sinfulness, demonstrate their inability to meet God's demands, and thus condemn them. The Gospel, in contrast, offers forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and gives faith, saving believers from the Law's condemnation.
9. Wesley understood sanctification as a progressive work of God's grace that begins at conversion, leading to increasing holiness. He also taught the doctrine of "Christian perfection" or "entire sanctification," which he believed could be an instantaneous experience of wholehearted dedication to God and pure love.
10. Wesley defined "Christian perfection" as "pure love reigning alone in the heart and life," which involves a wholehearted dedication to God and not willfully sinning against Him due to overwhelming love. He clarified that it does not mean sinlessness in the sense of being free from involuntary transgressions.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Compare and contrast the roles of "grace through faith" in both adoption and justification as presented in the lecture. How do these two aspects of salvation work together in the life of a believer?
2. Discuss the five blessings of adoption outlined in the lecture. In your opinion, which of these blessings addresses the most fundamental human needs and why?
3. Analyze the Lutheran understanding of the relationship between justification and sanctification, paying particular attention to the concept of "simul justus et peccator." What are the strengths and potential weaknesses of this view of the Christian life?
4. Explain John Wesley's doctrine of "Christian perfection" within the broader context of his theology of sanctification. How did he understand this state, and why did it become a distinctive element of Wesleyan thought?
5. Considering the introductory remarks on the historical reconnaissance of sanctification, why does Dr. Peterson emphasize both the common ground and the distinctive emphases of the various evangelical views? What potential pitfalls does he hope to avoid in this approach?

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Adoption:** God's gracious act of taking believers into His family as sons and daughters, granting them all the rights and privileges thereof.
- **Sanctification:** The process by which believers are made holy, conformed to the image of Christ, and set apart for God's purposes.
- **Justification:** God's legal declaration that a sinner is righteous in His sight, based on the imputed righteousness of Christ received through faith.
- **Redemption:** The act of buying back or freeing someone from captivity or bondage, often through the payment of a ransom. In salvation, it refers to Christ's work in freeing us from sin and its consequences.
- **Holy Spirit (Spirit of Adoption):** The third person of the Trinity who indwells believers, enabling them to call God "Father" and assuring them of their adoption.
- **Union with Christ:** The believer's spiritual incorporation into Christ, through which they share in His life, death, and resurrection, and receive all spiritual blessings.
- **Law (in Lutheran Theology):** God's commands and demands in Scripture that reveal sin, convict, and condemn humanity's inability to meet His perfect standard.
- **Gospel (in Lutheran Theology):** The good news of God's forgiveness and salvation offered freely through faith in Jesus Christ's atoning death and resurrection.
- **Simul Justus et Peccator:** Latin phrase meaning "simultaneously righteous and a sinner," a key concept in Lutheran theology describing the Christian's ongoing status before God.
- **Prevenient Grace (in Wesleyan Theology):** The grace of God that precedes conversion, enabling all people to have the capacity to respond to the Gospel.
- **Christian Perfection (Entire Sanctification):** In Wesleyan theology, a state of wholehearted love for God and neighbor, achieved through God's grace, where one is freed from willful sin.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Session 15, Adoption II & Sanctification I, Historical Reconnaissance, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Adoption and Sanctification (Based on Dr. Peterson's Session 15)

1. What is meant by "Adoption" in the context of salvation, and how does it relate to redemption?

Adoption, as a facet of the application of salvation, refers to God welcoming believers into His family as His beloved children. It signifies a transition from slavery to sin and self to the status of sons and daughters of God. Biblically, the picture of the Atonement that corresponds with Adoption is Redemption. While Redemption, through Christ's blood, provides forgiveness of trespasses, Adoption is the resulting familial relationship with God, secured by faith in Christ's redemptive work. Paul even expresses our final Adoption as the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23).

2. How is Adoption received, and what role does faith play in this process? Like justification, Adoption is received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. As slaves to sin, we are incapable of redeeming ourselves, and therefore, Adoption is entirely God's gracious act. Faith is the means by which we appropriate this adoption, becoming sons and daughters of God through belief in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26). Furthermore, the Holy Spirit enables us to believe, resulting in Adoption, and gives us the gift of faith (1 Corinthians 12:3).

3. What does it mean to have the "Spirit of Adoption," and how does this relate to our relationship with God as Father? The "Spirit of Adoption," as mentioned in Romans 8:15, is the Holy Spirit, who enables believers to cry out "Abba, Father" in truth. "Abba" is an Aramaic term expressing a child's loving and respectful address to their father, akin to "Daddy" or "Papa." While anyone can vocalize the words "Our Father," the Spirit of Adoption empowers us to truly know and relate to God as our Father. God even modifies the name of the Holy Spirit, calling Him the "Spirit of His Son" (Galatians 4:6), to better communicate His love for us in Adoption.

4. How is Adoption connected to "union with Christ," and what are some of the blessings that come with being adopted into God's family? Adoption, like all aspects of the application of salvation, occurs in union with Christ. Faith in Christ Jesus is the means by which believers are adopted, and this adoption takes place within the larger context of our union with Him. Some of the manifold blessings of being adopted into God's family include: belonging to our heavenly Father and being part of His family, receiving the Spirit of sonship enabling us to call God Father, resembling our Father in heaven through the Spirit's leading in holiness and love, experiencing God's loving discipline as His children, and possessing a present and future inheritance as heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.

5. What is "sanctification" as described in the sources, and how does it relate to the initial holiness believers receive in Christ? Sanctification, as taught in the Bible, refers to something being consecrated or devoted to God, separated from common use. Believers in Jesus Christ are initially sanctified or holy in God's eyes by virtue of Christ's work on the cross; they are considered saints. However, sanctification also involves a process of growth and progression in holiness, where believers are conformed more and more to the image of Jesus Christ. This process will ultimately be completed when believers are perfected in holiness at Christ's return.

6. What is the central tenet of the Lutheran view of sanctification, and how does it relate to justification? The Lutheran view of the Christian life and sanctification is built around the primacy of justification. For Lutherans, justification, God declaring believers righteous by grace through faith, is the central and chief article upon which the Christian doctrine and the church stand or fall. They emphasize an inseparable connection between justification (or faith) and sanctification, asserting that where justification exists, sanctification is always present. However, they maintain that sanctification is a consequence and effect of justification and should never precede it.

7. What is the "law-gospel dialectic" in the Lutheran understanding, and how does it shape their view of the Christian life? The "law-gospel dialectic" is a key component of Lutheran theology. The law encompasses all of Scripture's demands, obligations, threats, warnings, and judgments, revealing humanity's inability to meet God's holy standards and convicting us of our sin. In contrast, the gospel proclaims the forgiveness of sins through Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, giving faith to sinners for salvation. This distinction teaches that the Christian life is not primarily about keeping rules (the domain of the law, which continually condemns us) but about receiving God's forgiveness through Christ (the essence of the gospel).

8. What is John Wesley's doctrine of "Christian perfection" or "entire sanctification," and how does it relate to progressive sanctification?

John Wesley taught that sanctification begins at conversion and is a progressive work of God's grace. However, he also introduced the doctrine of "Christian perfection" or "entire sanctification," which he conceived as a state of wholehearted dedication to God, characterized by pure love reigning in the heart and life, and a cessation of willful sinning. Wesley believed this could be an instantaneous experience after conversion, alongside the ongoing process of progressive sanctification. While he didn't see it as absolute sinlessness, it represented a significant step in Christian maturity, though not all believers were thought to attain it.