

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Salvation, Session 16, Sanctification II, 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 16, Sanctification II, Historical Reconnaissance, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert Peterson's lecture provides a historical overview of five distinct viewpoints on the Christian life and sanctification: Lutheran, Wesleyan, Keswick, Pentecostal, and Reformed. The lecture explores the origins and key tenets of each perspective, highlighting both their common evangelical foundations and their specific differences concerning doctrines like the second blessing and progressive holiness. **It emphasizes the importance of understanding these historical developments as a prelude to a more systematic theological examination of sanctification.** While Peterson identifies with the Reformed view, he aims to present a fair comparison and acknowledges areas of agreement among the various traditions. **The discussion also touches upon the concept of the *ordo salutis* and critiques two-stage soteriologies.** Ultimately, the lecture sets the stage for a deeper exploration of sanctification within a Trinitarian framework in subsequent sessions.

2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, Salvation, Session 16 – 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_
Session16.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 16, Sanctification II, Historical Reconnaissance

Briefing Document: Historical Views on Sanctification

This briefing document summarizes Dr. Robert A. Peterson's lecture (Session 16 of his series on Salvation) focused on a historical reconnaissance of five distinct viewpoints on the Christian life and, specifically, their understanding of sanctification. Peterson emphasizes that these views share more common ground than differences, yet the real distinctions are worth exploring before delving into biblical and systematic formulations of sanctification.

Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:

1. Introduction and Common Ground:

- The session begins with prayer, seeking God's blessing on learning about the Christian life from godly individuals.
- Peterson states the purpose of this session is a "historical reconnaissance" of five different viewpoints on the Christian life (Lutheran, Wesleyan, Keswick, Pentecostal, and Reformed) before examining biblical and systematic theology of sanctification.
- He underscores that these views "have more in common than not," and the emphasis on their differences is somewhat "unfairly stressing" them, though these differences are real.
- All five views are considered "orthodox in their doctrines of God, sin, salvation, the Holy Spirit, church, and last things."
- Despite their differences, these are "fellow believers in Christ who ought to accept one another in the Lord."

2. The Keswick View:

- Originates from the annual Keswick Convention in northern England since 1875.
- Also known as "Keswick theology" or the "higher life movement."
- **Key Emphasis:** "victorious Christian living through the power of the Holy Spirit."
- Influenced by early Wesleyan teachers. Notable figures associated include Hudson Taylor, Amy Carmichael, Oswald Chambers, and Billy Graham.

- Stephen Barabbas' book, "So Great Salvation," is identified as the main source for its history and theology.
- **Shared Evangelical Emphases:** Christ's lordship, personal holiness, zeal for missions, Christ's finished work, justification by faith as the foundation of sanctification, and reliance on the Spirit's power for holiness and love.
- **Distinctive Theology:** Two key crises: justification (by grace through faith, occurring first) and sanctification (a later event, also through faith in Christ).
- A "second encounter with the Holy Spirit," or "second blessing," is deemed "necessary for a successful Christian life," enabling progress in holiness.
- The path to sanctification involves "surrender and faith," summarized by the slogan, "let go, and let God."
- Critics view this as "quietism," potentially discouraging active battle against sin.
- Sanctification is received by "asking God for it" at a "crisis point of decision," where believers "trust the Spirit to enter into the higher life of sanctification."
- Justification means receiving Christ as Savior; sanctification (the second work) means receiving Him as Lord.
- While not leading to sinless perfection in this life, it should lead to "consistent success in overcoming sin."
- J. Robertson McQuilken is cited as a promoter of this view, contrasting "average Christians" who struggle with unbelief and sin with the "normal Christian" who embodies Keswick understanding of sanctification.
- The "normal Christian" is characterized by loving responses, joy in adversity, peace, overcoming temptation, obedience, self-control, contentment, humility, courage, Spirit-controlled thoughts, Christ-like behavior, God's priority, and prioritizing others. They also possess power for godly living and effective service, and constant companionship with the Lord.

3. The Pentecostal View:

- Traces origins to the early 20th century with Charles Parham and William Seymour (Azusa Street).

- Understanding requires acquaintance with the "three waves of the Holy Spirit": classic Pentecostalism, the charismatic movement (1960s-70s), and the third wave (1980s, signs and wonders, power evangelism).
- Byron D. Claus (Assemblies of God leader) outlines five historic themes of classic Pentecostalism: justification, sanctification (freedom from sin's power), divine healing, the second coming of Christ, and the "baptism of the Holy Spirit."
- The "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is considered the "defining distinctive" of Pentecostal theology, regarded as a "second blessing after salvation," drawing some similarity to Wesleyan theology but focused on God's powerful presence, not Christian perfection.
- Classical Pentecostalism distinguishes Holy Spirit baptism from initial salvation (justification/regeneration).
- Spirit baptism is seen as receiving "the Spirit's power for successful Christian living and service."
- While believers in Jesus without Spirit baptism are considered Christians, Spirit baptism is necessary for "vital Christian living and service."
- A key tenet is that this second blessing "must be accompanied by speaking in tongues, glossolalia, as evidence of spirit baptism."
- Pentecostalism adheres to "continuationism" of spiritual gifts, believing all New Testament gifts, including miraculous ones, continue.
- **Worldview:** Rejects the sacred-secular dichotomy, affirming the "immediate availability of God's power and presence." They see the world through a lens where "God is near at hand and provides clear evidence of his powerful presence through his Church."
- Emphasis on Spirit baptism and the second coming fuels a "powerful impetus for world missions."
- Pentecostal and charismatic Christians represent a significant portion of global Christianity.

4. The Reformed View:

- Emerged from the 16th-century Reformation, seeking to apply the Bible to all areas of life.

- Made significant changes in doctrine and church life.
- Shares the biblical view of justification with the other traditions.
- **Common Ground:** High view of Scripture, doctrine of the Trinity, sin, Christ and his atonement, salvation, the Holy Spirit, the church, and last things. Embraces Luther's "simul iustus et peccator" but doesn't see the law-gospel distinction as the primary hermeneutical key. Focuses on the creation-fall-redemption-consummation biblical storyline and the Abrahamic/New Covenant unity.
- **Points of Divergence:** Rejects Wesleyan "Christian perfection," holding to "lifelong, progressive sanctification."
- Rejects Pentecostal post-conversion baptism of the Spirit, believing all believers are baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ at conversion.
- Appreciates Keswick's emphasis on relying on God's power but rejects "letting go," emphasizing Scripture's call for believers to "expend great energy to fight sin and live for God" (Romans 8:13, Philippians 3:12, Colossians 1:29 cited).
- **Doctrine of Sanctification:** Distinguishes between "definitive or initial sanctification" (once-for-all setting apart), "progressive or lifelong sanctification" (growth in holiness), and "final sanctification" (perfect holiness at Christ's return). Progressive sanctification is the main concern for the Christian life.
- "Sola Scriptura" and "Sola Gratia" are foundational. Reformed soteriology is Trinitarian.
- "Union with Christ" is presented as the "genius of the reformed view of sanctification," encompassing suffering and glory. Believers are "genuinely new in Christ" but "not totally new" yet.
- Uses analogies of snapshots (sinful moments of biblical heroes like David and Peter) versus the motion picture of their lives (overall devotion to God) to illustrate the ongoing nature of sanctification. Contrasts David with Saul (lack of regeneration) and Peter with Judas (apostasy).
- Sanctification is understood as God "conforming believers to Christ's image" and the "progressive restoration of the imago Dei."
- Christians imitate Christ by the Spirit through God's means of grace: preaching, sacraments (baptism and Lord's Supper), and prayer.

5. Evaluation and Conclusion:

- Peterson, identifying as Reformed, aims to be broadly evangelical and does not condemn other views, seeing "strengths in all of them."
- The most important point is the significant common ground among the five views.
- Differences should not overshadow the shared "verities of the evangelical faith."
- **Critique of Lutheranism:** While acknowledging the debt to Luther for rediscovering the gospel and the value of the law-gospel distinction, Peterson disagrees with the hesitancy to affirm "progressive sanctification," citing scriptural evidence for growth in the Christian life. The "simul iustus et peccator" concept is seen as insufficient on its own.
- **Critique of Wesleyanism:** Great respect is expressed for Wesley's life and ministry and the understanding of sanctification as a process. However, disagreement lies with the teaching on "Christian perfection" or "entire sanctification" as attainable in this life. The Reformed view sees entire sanctification occurring at Christ's return (1 Thessalonians 5:22-24).
- **Critique of Keswick Theology:** While respecting godly teachers, the "second blessing doctrine" is rejected as "unbiblical." Scripture emphasizes relying on God's grace but calls for "activism" not "quietism" in Christian living, exemplified by the metaphors of soldiers, athletes, and farmers.
- **Critique of Pentecostalism:** Appreciation is noted for their global gospel outreach. However, the "second blessing doctrine" and the insistence on speaking in tongues as evidence are rejected based on scriptural interpretation (1 Corinthians 12:13, 30, emphasizing the diversity of spiritual gifts). The experience of individuals feeling spiritually impotent without speaking in tongues is highlighted as a concern.
- **Anthony Hoekema's Perspective:** His rejection of the traditional "ordo salutis" as a strict successive order is presented. He argues for viewing salvation as a unified "marvelous work of God's grace" with distinguishable aspects that are subsets of "union with Christ." Believing in Christ simultaneously brings regeneration, justification, adoption, conversion, the Holy Spirit, and the beginning of sanctification.
- Hoekema's view is used to critique the "two-stage soteriologies" (and sometimes three-stage of holiness Pentecostals) of Wesleyanism, Keswick, and

Pentecostalism, arguing that salvation is more simultaneous than successive. Such views can lead to depression for those feeling lower in their Christian walk and pride for those who believe they have reached a higher level.

- The session concludes by indicating that the next lecture will delve into the "systematic formulations" of sanctification, starting with "Sanctification and the Trinity."

This session provides a valuable overview of different historical understandings of sanctification within the broader evangelical tradition, highlighting both their shared foundations and significant points of theological divergence. Dr. Peterson clearly articulates his own Reformed perspective while engaging respectfully with the other viewpoints.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 16, Sanctification II, Historical Reconnaissance

Salvation: Sanctification, Part 2 - Historical Reconnaissance Study Guide

Quiz

1. According to Keswick theology, what are the two key crises in the Christian life, and how do they typically occur?
2. Explain the Keswick slogan "let go and let God." What does it emphasize regarding a believer's role in sanctification, and what is a common criticism of this view?
3. Describe the defining distinctive of classical Pentecostal theology regarding the Holy Spirit, and how does it relate to salvation according to this view?
4. What are the "three waves of the Holy Spirit" as understood in Pentecostalism, and what characterizes each wave?
5. Contrast the Reformed view of the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the Pentecostal view. When does the Reformed tradition believe this occurs for believers?
6. Explain the Reformed doctrine of *simul iustus et peccator*. How does the Reformed view see this in relation to progressive sanctification?
7. What is the Reformed perspective on the Keswick emphasis on relying on God's power for holiness? Where does the Reformed view differ in its understanding of the believer's role?
8. According to the Reformed understanding, what are the three aspects or stages of sanctification? Briefly describe each.
9. Why does the Reformed theologian Anthony Hoekema critique two-stage soteriologies like those found in Wesleyan, Keswick, and Pentecostal traditions?
10. What are the primary means of grace through which believers imitate Christ and grow in sanctification according to the Reformed view?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The two key crises in Keswick theology are justification and sanctification. Justification occurs by grace through faith in Christ, while sanctification is a later event, also through faith in Christ, often referred to as a "second blessing."

2. "Let go and let God" emphasizes that justified believers should cease their own efforts at sanctification and allow God, through the Holy Spirit, to work holiness in them. Critics often view this as quietism, potentially discouraging believers from actively fighting sin.
3. The defining distinctive of classical Pentecostal theology is the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a second blessing after salvation, evidenced by speaking in tongues (glossolalia). This baptism is believed to empower Christians for vital living and service, though not necessary for initial salvation.
4. The first wave is classical Pentecostalism, leading to new denominations. The second wave is the charismatic movement of the 1960s and 70s, influencing mainline churches with an emphasis on spiritual gifts. The third wave, beginning in the 1980s, focused on signs and wonders accompanying power evangelism.
5. The Reformed view holds that all believers are baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ at conversion, not as a separate, post-conversion experience. In contrast, Pentecostalism views Spirit baptism as a distinct second blessing for power and service, often evidenced by speaking in tongues.
6. *Simul iustus et peccator* describes the Lutheran-Reformed understanding that Christians are simultaneously righteous in God's sight through Christ's imputed righteousness and still sinners in their daily lives. The Reformed view acknowledges this but emphasizes that the Christian life also involves growth in progressive sanctification.
7. The Reformed tradition appreciates Keswick's emphasis on God's power but rejects the notion of simply "letting go." Instead, it emphasizes that while believers rely on God's grace, Scripture also urges them to actively strive against sin and live for God, using effort and diligence in their Christian walk.
8. The three aspects of Reformed sanctification are definitive (initial setting apart as saints), progressive (lifelong growth in holiness), and final (perfect holiness at Christ's return). Progressive sanctification is the primary focus when discussing the Christian life.
9. Hoekema critiques two-stage soteriologies because they suggest there are different categories or levels of Christians (e.g., ordinary, sanctified, Spirit-baptized) for which he finds no biblical basis. He also argues this can lead to depression for those who feel less spiritual and pride for those who believe they have attained a higher level.

10. According to the Reformed view, the primary means of grace for progressive sanctification are the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper), and prayer. Believers use these means as they imitate Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Essay Format Questions

1. Compare and contrast the Keswick and Reformed views on the role of human effort and divine power in the process of sanctification.
2. Analyze the Pentecostal doctrine of Spirit baptism as a second blessing in light of the Reformed understanding of union with Christ and the reception of the Holy Spirit at conversion.
3. Discuss the strengths and potential weaknesses of the "let go and let God" approach to sanctification as presented in Keswick theology.
4. Evaluate the significance of the doctrine of progressive sanctification in the Reformed understanding of the Christian life, particularly in contrast to the Lutheran concept of *simul iustus et peccator*.
5. Critically assess Anthony Hoekema's arguments against two-stage soteriologies, considering the Wesleyan, Keswick, and Pentecostal perspectives on post-conversion experiences of the Holy Spirit.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **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 act of declaring a sinner righteous in His sight through faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Keswick Theology:** A view of sanctification emphasizing a post-conversion "second blessing" or encounter with the Holy Spirit that enables victorious Christian living through surrender and faith ("let go and let God").
- **Second Blessing:** In Wesleyan, Keswick, and Pentecostal theology, a post-conversion experience of the Holy Spirit that brings deeper sanctification or empowerment.
- **Quietism:** The belief that spiritual progress comes primarily through human inactivity and passive reliance on God.
- **Pentecostalism:** A Christian movement that originated in the early 20th century, emphasizing the experience of the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts (charismata) like speaking in tongues, and divine healing.
- **Glossolalia:** Speaking in tongues, often considered in Pentecostalism as initial physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- **Continuationism:** The belief that all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament continue to be active in the church today.
- **Cessationism:** The belief that certain "sign" gifts of the Holy Spirit (e.g., prophecy, miracles, speaking in tongues) ceased with the apostles and the completion of the New Testament.
- **Reformed Theology:** A branch of Protestantism rooted in the teachings of figures like John Calvin, emphasizing the sovereignty of God, the authority of Scripture, and salvation by grace through faith.
- **Simul iustus et Peccator:** A Latin phrase meaning "simultaneously righteous and a sinner," describing the Lutheran and Reformed understanding of the Christian's status before God.

- **Progressive Sanctification:** The ongoing, lifelong process of growth in holiness as believers are increasingly conformed to the image of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- **Definitive Sanctification:** The once-for-all setting apart of believers as holy at the moment of their union with Christ.
- **Final Sanctification:** The complete and perfect holiness that believers will experience in the presence of Christ after their death or His return.
- **Ordo Salutis:** Latin for "order of salvation," referring to the logical and theological sequence of the steps involved in God's saving work.
- **Union with Christ:** The central concept in Reformed theology describing the believer's spiritual and vital connection with Jesus Christ, through which they receive all the blessings of salvation.
- **Means of Grace:** The divinely appointed ways through which God conveys His grace to believers, such as the preaching of the Word, the sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper), and prayer.
- **Apostasy:** The act of abandoning or rejecting a religious faith once professed.
- **Imago Dei:** Latin for "image of God," referring to the likeness of God in humanity, which was marred by the fall but is being progressively restored in believers.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Session 16, Sanctification II, Historical Reconnaissance, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Views of the Christian Life

1. What are the five different viewpoints on the Christian life discussed, and what is a key similarity among them?

The five viewpoints on the Christian life discussed are the Lutheran, Wesleyan, Keswick, Pentecostal, and Reformed views. Despite their differences, a key similarity is that they all share many common evangelical emphases concerning Christian living. This includes accentuating Christ's lordship and personal holiness, promoting a zeal for missions, and exalting Christ's finished work and justification by faith as the foundation of sanctification. They all agree on the fundamental doctrines of God, sin, salvation, the Holy Spirit, the church, and last things.

2. What is the distinctive feature of Keswick theology regarding sanctification, and what are some criticisms of this view?

The distinctive feature of Keswick theology is its emphasis on a second encounter with the Holy Spirit, often referred to as the "second blessing," occurring after justification. This second blessing is believed to be necessary for a successful Christian life, enabling believers to progress in holiness through surrender and faith, summarized by the slogan "let go and let God." Critics charge that Keswick teaching can lead to quietism, discouraging believers from actively battling sin and instead passively trusting the Spirit to deal with it. They also question the biblical basis for a required second spiritual experience for deeper Christian living.

3. How does classical Pentecostalism view the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and what is its significance according to this tradition?

Classical Pentecostalism views the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a distinct experience from initial salvation (justification or regeneration), considered a second blessing after conversion. This baptism is understood as receiving the Spirit's power for successful Christian living and service. A key distinctive is the insistence that this second blessing must be accompanied by speaking in tongues (glossolalia) as evidence of the Spirit's baptism. While not considered necessary for salvation itself, it is seen as essential for vital Christian life and ministry.

4. What is the Reformed understanding of sanctification, and how does it differ from the Wesleyan and Pentecostal "second blessing" views?

The Reformed understanding of sanctification emphasizes lifelong, progressive growth in holiness that begins at conversion, alongside an initial definitive sanctification where believers are set apart to be saints. It rejects the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection (entire sanctification in this life) and the Pentecostal view of a post-conversion baptism of the Spirit as a necessary second blessing for empowerment. Instead, the Reformed view teaches that all believers are baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ at conversion and emphasizes the believer's active striving against sin through the Spirit's power, contrasting with the Keswick idea of "letting go."

5. How does the Reformed view reconcile the idea of believers being both righteous and sinners ("simul iustus et peccator") with the call to progressive sanctification?

The Reformed view acknowledges the Lutheran concept of believers being simultaneously justified (righteous in God's sight through Christ) and still sinners in their daily lives. However, it does not see this as the complete picture of the Christian life. Instead, it emphasizes that this reality should not lead to complacency but rather fuel a lifelong process of progressive sanctification, where believers grow in grace and knowledge of Christ, becoming more conformed to His image through the power of the Holy Spirit and the means of grace.

6. What is the Reformed perspective on the "ordo salutis" (order of salvation), and why is there a critique of viewing the aspects of salvation as strictly successive steps?

The Reformed perspective, as articulated by Anthony Hoekema, critiques the traditional understanding of the *ordo salutis* as a strict logical sequence of successive steps (e.g., regeneration, calling, faith, justification, sanctification). The critique stems from the recognition that the relationships between these aspects are more complex and interwoven. For example, regeneration is causal, while faith is instrumental. Furthermore, sanctification itself is understood as initial, progressive, and final, making its placement in a linear order problematic. Hoekema proposes viewing salvation not as a step-by-step process but as a unified work of God's grace in union with Christ, where believers simultaneously receive all the blessings of salvation upon believing.

7. What are some of the potential negative consequences identified by Tony Hoekema regarding "two-stage" or "three-stage" soteriologies?

Tony Hoekema identifies several potential negative consequences of two-stage (like Wesleyan and Keswick) or three-stage (like some Holiness Pentecostal) soteriologies. He argues that these models can create a false dichotomy among Christians, suggesting there are "ordinary" believers and those who have attained a "higher" level through a second (or third) blessing. This can lead to depression among those who feel they haven't reached this higher level and pride among those who believe they have. Hoekema emphasizes that there is no biblical basis for such a distinction among believers.

8. Despite the differences among these five views of the Christian life, why does the presenter emphasize their common ground and the importance of Christian unity?

Despite the substantial differences between the Lutheran, Wesleyan, Keswick, Pentecostal, and Reformed views of the Christian life, the presenter emphasizes that they share the most important foundational beliefs of the evangelical faith. This common ground includes their orthodox doctrines of God, sin, salvation through Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, and last things. The presenter stresses that these are fellow believers in Christ who ought to accept one another in the Lord and communicate about their differences, recognizing their shared commitment to the core tenets of Christianity. The unity of the church is presented as important, even amidst doctrinal variations regarding the specifics of the Christian life.