

# Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Salvation, Session 17, Sanctification III, Preservation and Perseverance Resources from NotebookLM

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

## 1. Abstract of Peterson, Salvation, Session 17, Sanctification III, Preservation and Perseverance, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

**Dr. Robert Peterson's lecture on salvation, specifically session 17, part three, focuses on the theological concepts of sanctification, preservation, and perseverance.** The session begins by examining systematic formulations of sanctification, emphasizing the roles of the Trinity and the believer's union with Christ, alongside the individual and communal aspects of holiness. **Peterson then discusses the three tenses of sanctification: initial, progressive, and final, highlighting both God's work and the believer's responsibility in pursuing holiness.** The lecture transitions to preservation, defining it as God's act of keeping believers saved until the end. **Peterson explores biblical arguments for preservation, outlining the active roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in ensuring the believer's final salvation.**

**2. 24 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, Salvation, Session 17 – 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\_  
Session17.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 17, Sanctification III, Preservation and Perseverance

#### Briefing Document: Sanctification (Part 3), Preservation, and Perseverance

##### Overview:

This session by Dr. Robert Peterson delves into systematic understandings of sanctification, moving beyond general views to explore its connection to the Trinity, union with Christ, and the believer's role. The session also introduces the interconnected doctrines of preservation, perseverance, assurance, and apostasy, with an initial focus on the theological arguments for preservation.

##### Main Themes and Important Ideas:

##### 1. Sanctification and the Trinity:

- **God the Father:** Disciplines true believers as sons for their benefit, enabling them to share in His holiness. Peterson quotes Hebrews 12:9-10: "The Father of Spirits disciplines us for our benefit so that we can share his holiness."
- **God the Son (Jesus Christ):** Loved the church and gave Himself to make her holy, cleansing her through the Word (Ephesians 5:25-26). Christ's ultimate goal is to present the church to Himself as "holy and blameless" (Ephesians 5:27).
- **God the Holy Spirit:** Is instrumental in bringing people to salvation through sanctification, setting them apart from sin to holiness, alongside faith in the Gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:13). Peterson quotes: "God has chosen you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth."
- **Key Idea:** The entire Trinity actively works to make God's people holy.

##### 2. Sanctification and Union with Christ:

- Sanctification, like all aspects of salvation, takes place in union with Christ.
- **Co-crucifixion:** Believers who belong to Christ have "crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Galatians 5:24). This union with Christ in His death is the remedy for sinful living.
- **New Life:** Baptism signifies union with Christ's death and resurrection, fueling a "newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

- **Freedom from Sin's Tyranny:** Union with Christ's death frees believers from the enslavement of sin (Romans 6:6).
- **Empowerment for Holiness:** Union with Christ's resurrection empowers believers to live for God (Romans 6:4).
- **Practical Application:** Believers are to "consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" and not let sin reign in their mortal bodies (Romans 6:11-12).
- **Key Idea:** Union with Christ is a foundational doctrine to which sanctification is subordinate, providing both the break from sin and the power for holy living.

### 3. Sanctification and Our Role:

- While the Holy Spirit is the "prime mover" in sanctification, believers have a responsible participation in progressive sanctification under His direction and power.
- Jesus' command to "remain or abide in him in order to produce fruit" (John 15:4) highlights believers as participants in their growth in holiness.
- New Testament writers repeatedly urge believers to grow in holiness (Romans 12:1, James 2:1, Hebrews 3:12, 2 Peter 3:10-11, 3 John 11, Revelation 22:10-11). Peterson highlights 3 John 11: "Do not imitate what is evil, but what is good."
- Paul's command to the Philippians to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12) is coupled with the truth that "it is God who is working in you both to will and to work according to his good purpose" (Philippians 2:13).
- **Key Idea:** Sanctification is a cooperative effort where God provides the power and the believer actively strives for holiness, motivated and enabled by God.

### 4. Sanctification and the Church:

- Sanctification is both an individual and communal matter. God is concerned for the holiness of each individual within the church and the holiness of the church corporately (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, 7).
- The writer to the Hebrews exhorts individual believers to "pursue peace with everyone and holiness, without it no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14-15) and also reminds them of the need for mutual care and encouragement (Hebrews 10:24-25).

- **Key Idea:** Holiness is not a solitary pursuit but is fostered and expressed within the context of the church community.

## 5. Sanctification and Time (Initial, Progressive, and Final):

- Sanctification is not just a present process but has past, present, and future dimensions.
- **Initial/Definitive Sanctification (Past):** The Holy Spirit moves believers once and for all from the realm of sin to holiness, making them saints of God (1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11). Peterson emphasizes: "In initial or definitive sanctification, the Holy Spirit moves us once and for all from the sphere of sin to the sphere of holiness. And we become saints of God."
- **Progressive Sanctification (Present):** The Spirit builds practical holiness into believers day by day (Ephesians 4:20-32, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7).
- **Final/Entire Sanctification (Future):** At Christ's second coming, God will confirm His saints in perfect holiness (Romans 8:29, 1 John 3:2, Ephesians 5:27, 1 Thessalonians 5:23). Peterson quotes 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "the God of peace himself will sanctify you completely. Your whole spirit, soul, and body will be kept blameless... at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- **Key Idea:** Understanding the three tenses of sanctification provides hope and a comprehensive view of God's work in making believers holy from initiation to consummation.

## 6. Tensions in Sanctification (Victory and Struggles):

- The Christian life involves both victories and struggles against sin (Romans 7:24, 8:35, 37). Peterson quotes Paul's cry: "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24) and his triumphant declaration: "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).
- God uses failures in progressive sanctification to humble believers and drive them to His grace.
- The Christian life is lived "by grace through faith," just as salvation is received.
- Peterson highlights Luther's dictum: "a Christian is a person who is at the same time righteous and a sinner."

- **Key Idea:** The ongoing struggle with sin is a reality for believers, requiring constant reliance on God's grace, the church, and personal spiritual disciplines.

## 7. Introduction to Preservation:

- Preservation is defined as "God's work of keeping His people saved to the end." It is related to the common term "eternal security." Peterson prefers "preservation" as it conveys a more dynamic idea of God constantly working in believers.
- Four interconnected doctrines will be explored: preservation, perseverance, assurance, and apostasy.
- **Brief Definitions: Preservation:** God keeps believers saved to the end.
- **Perseverance:** God's people keep believing, living for the Lord, and loving others to the end.
- **Assurance:** Confidence now of final salvation someday.
- **Apostasy:** Abandoning a faith that was previously professed.

## 8. Theological Arguments for Preservation (Initial Focus on the Trinity):

- Scripture teaches that each person of the Trinity is active in preserving God's people for final salvation.
- **God the Father's Role:** Jesus teaches that everyone the Father has chosen will believe and be raised up on the last day (John 6:38-40). The Father's will is not to lose any of those given to Jesus. Believers are safe in the Father's hand (John 10:28-29). Peterson quotes John 6:39: "This is the will of Him who sent me that I should lose none of those He has given me, but raise them up on the last day."
- **God the Son's Role:** Jesus pledges never to cast out the Father's children and will raise them up (John 6). He gives eternal life to His sheep, who will never perish and cannot be snatched from His or the Father's hand (John 10:28-30). Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17 highlights His role in protecting and desiring the eternal presence of believers with Him.
- **God the Holy Spirit's Role:** Paul speaks of God's sealing of believers with the Holy Spirit as a down payment of their inheritance, preserving them for the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30, 2 Corinthians 1:21-22). Peterson quotes Ephesians 1:13-14: "In Christ, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth... The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance until the redemption of the possession..."

- **Key Idea:** The active involvement of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit provides a strong theological foundation for the doctrine of preservation, assuring believers of God's commitment to keep them saved.

**Next Steps:**

The next lecture will continue the teaching on preservation, focusing on God's attributes as further evidence for this doctrine.

## 4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 17, Sanctification III, Preservation and Perseverance

### Study Guide: Sanctification, Preservation, and Perseverance

#### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. Describe the roles of the three persons of the Trinity in the process of sanctification according to the provided text.
2. Explain the connection between union with Christ and sanctification as presented in the material.
3. What does the source material mean by "initial or definitive sanctification," and how does it differ from "progressive sanctification"?
4. According to the text, what is the role of the believer in their own progressive sanctification? Provide an example from the scripture references given.
5. How is sanctification described as both an individual and a communal matter within the church?
6. What are the past, present, and future aspects of sanctification as outlined by Dr. Peterson?
7. Define "preservation" as it relates to salvation according to the text.
8. Explain how the actions and words of Jesus Christ, as mentioned in the Gospel of John, support the doctrine of preservation.
9. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the preservation of believers, according to the excerpts from Ephesians and 2 Corinthians?
10. What is the relationship between God's sovereignty in salvation and the believer's responsibility to live for God, as discussed in the context of sanctification and preservation?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. God the Father disciplines believers as his sons so they can share in his holiness. The Son loved the church and gave himself to make her holy. The Holy Spirit is the means through which God brings people to salvation, setting them apart for holiness.

2. Sanctification takes place in union with Christ, including co-crucifixion with him, which remedies sinful living by freeing believers from sin's tyranny. Union with Christ's resurrection empowers believers to live a new life of holiness.
3. Initial or definitive sanctification is the once-for-all setting apart of believers from the realm of sin to the realm of holiness by the Holy Spirit, making them saints. Progressive sanctification is the ongoing process by which the Spirit builds practical holiness in believers.
4. Believers have a responsible participation in progressive sanctification under the Spirit's direction and power, actively striving for holiness and presenting their bodies as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1). They are urged to grow in holiness and not imitate what is evil (3 John 11).
5. Sanctification is individual because God makes each of his people holy and is concerned for every member. It is communal because God wants his people to be holy as a corporate body, the church, with believers showing mutual care and encouraging one another in holiness.
6. Sanctification is past in the initial setting apart as saints, present in the ongoing growth in practical holiness, and future in the final, entire holiness believers will experience at Christ's second coming.
7. Preservation is God's work of keeping his people saved to the end, a dynamic and constant action of God working within believers to ensure their final salvation.
8. In John's Gospel, Jesus teaches that the Father chooses believers and gives them to him, and he will lose none of them but raise them up on the last day. He gives them eternal life, and they will never perish, safe in his and the Father's hand, which no one can snatch them from.
9. The Holy Spirit is the seal of God on believers, marking them as God's own and preserving them for the day of redemption. He is also described as the down payment of their inheritance, guaranteeing the future fullness of salvation.
10. God's sovereignty in salvation, including sanctification and preservation, does not minimize the believer's responsibility to live for God but rather undergirds it. Believers are called to strive for holiness, knowing that God works within them to provide both the desire and the power to do so.



## Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the interconnectedness of the Trinity's roles in the sanctification of believers, providing specific examples from the text to support your analysis.
2. Analyze the concept of "union with Christ" as the foundation for sanctification, explaining its implications for the believer's freedom from sin and empowerment for holy living based on the provided source material.
3. Compare and contrast the three tenses of sanctification (past, present, and future), explaining their significance for the Christian life and how understanding these distinctions can bring hope to struggling believers.
4. Critically evaluate the doctrine of preservation as presented in the text, considering the scriptural support provided and its implications for the believer's security in their salvation.
5. Explore the tension between God's work in sanctification and preservation and the believer's responsibility to pursue holiness and persevere in faith, drawing on the various scriptural references and explanations within the provided excerpts.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Sanctification:** The process by which believers are made holy or set apart for God. This includes an initial setting apart, an ongoing growth in holiness, and a final state of perfect holiness.
- **Trinity:** The Christian doctrine that there is one God who exists in three co-equal and co-eternal persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit.
- **Union with Christ:** The spiritual and vital connection that believers have with Jesus Christ through faith, participating in his death, burial, and resurrection.
- **Initial/Definitive Sanctification:** The once-for-all act of God, through the Holy Spirit, setting believers apart from the realm of sin to the realm of holiness at the moment of conversion.
- **Progressive Sanctification:** The ongoing process of spiritual growth and increasing holiness in the life of a believer, as the Holy Spirit works to conform them to the image of Christ.
- **Final/Entire Sanctification:** The ultimate and complete transformation of believers into perfect holiness at the return of Christ.
- **Preservation:** God's work of continually keeping his people saved to the end, ensuring that those who are genuinely saved will persevere in faith and reach final salvation.
- **Perseverance:** The act of believers continuing in their faith and obedience to God until the end of their lives, enabled by God's preserving grace.
- **Assurance:** The confident belief and certainty that a believer has eternal salvation through Jesus Christ.
- **Apostasy:** The act of abandoning or renouncing a faith that was once professed.
- **Justification:** God's act of declaring a sinner righteous in his sight through faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Regeneration:** The spiritual rebirth or renewal of a person by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a new nature and the ability to love and obey God.
- **Down Payment (Arrabōn):** A term used by Paul to describe the Holy Spirit as the initial installment or guarantee of the believer's full inheritance in Christ.

## 5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Session 17, Sanctification III, Preservation and Perseverance, [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions on Sanctification and Preservation

**1. How do the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each contribute to the sanctification of believers?** The Trinity actively participates in our sanctification. God the Father disciplines believers as his children for their benefit, so they can share in his holiness (Hebrews 12:9-10). The Son, Jesus Christ, loved the church and gave himself to make her holy, cleansing her through the Word (Ephesians 5:25-26), with the ultimate goal of presenting her to himself as holy and blameless (Ephesians 5:27). The Holy Spirit is the primary agent of sanctification, setting believers apart from sin to holiness (2 Thessalonians 2:13) and playing a vital role in progressive sanctification, empowering us for practical holiness.

**2. What is the relationship between sanctification and a believer's union with Christ?** Sanctification is intrinsically linked to our union with Christ. Just as we are united with Christ in his death, which signifies the crucifixion of our old, sinful nature (Galatians 5:24, Romans 6:6), we are also united with him in his resurrection, which empowers us to live a new life of holiness (Romans 6:4). This union with Christ is the foundation for all spiritual blessings, including sanctification (Ephesians 1:3), and it is through this union that we find the strength to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God (Romans 6:11-12).

**3. What role do believers play in their own progressive sanctification?** While the Holy Spirit is the prime mover in sanctification, believers are not passive recipients. We have a responsible role to play in progressive sanctification under the Spirit's guidance and power (John 15:4). This involves actively presenting our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1), striving for holiness in our conduct (2 Peter 3:10-11), and choosing to imitate what is good (3 John 11). We are called to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," knowing that God is simultaneously "working in you both to will and to work according to his good purpose" (Philippians 2:12-13).

**4. Is sanctification an individual or a communal process?** Sanctification is both an individual and a communal matter. God makes each of his people holy, and he is concerned with the holiness of every individual believer (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5). Simultaneously, God desires his church as a whole to be holy (1 Thessalonians 4:7). We are exhorted to pursue peace and holiness with everyone (Hebrews 12:14-15) and to

show mutual care for fellow believers, encouraging one another towards love and good works (Hebrews 10:24-25).

**5. How does the Bible speak of sanctification in relation to time – past, present, and future?** Sanctification has past, present (progressive), and future (final) dimensions.

**Initial or definitive sanctification** occurred in the past when the Holy Spirit set us apart from sin to holiness, making us saints of God (1 Corinthians 6:11). **Progressive sanctification** is the ongoing present process by which the Spirit builds practical holiness in believers as they put off ungodly practices and put on godly ones (Ephesians 4:20-32). **Final sanctification** is a future event that will occur at Christ's second coming when God will conform his saints to the image of his Son in perfect holiness (Romans 8:29, 1 John 3:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:23).

**6. What are some of the tensions involved in the process of sanctification?** The Christian life is marked by a tension between victory and struggle. Even as we experience freedom in Christ, we still battle against sin (Romans 7:24, 8:37). This tension serves to humble us, deflating our pride and driving us to rely on God's grace. We are simultaneously righteous in Christ and still struggle with sin in our flesh. Navigating this requires constant reliance on God's enabling grace, the church community, and personal engagement with God's Word and prayer.

**7. What is meant by the "preservation" of the saints?** Preservation refers to God's work of keeping his people saved to the end. It is the truth that God, through the active work of the Trinity, ensures that those he has saved will remain saved. This is supported by the roles of the Father, who chooses and keeps his people (John 6:38-40, John 10:29), the Son, who gives eternal life and promises that his sheep will never perish and cannot be snatched away (John 10:28-30, John 17), and the Holy Spirit, who seals believers as a down payment of their inheritance, guaranteeing their future redemption (Ephesians 1:13-14, Ephesians 4:30).

**8. How does the doctrine of preservation relate to perseverance and assurance?**

Preservation (God keeping us saved) is closely related to perseverance (believers continuing to believe and live for the Lord until the end). Because God preserves his people, they will persevere in faith and obedience. Assurance is the confidence that believers have in their final salvation, a confidence grounded in God's promise to preserve them. Apostasy, in this context, refers to the act of abandoning a faith that was previously professed, and the doctrine of preservation assures true believers that they will not ultimately apostatize.