

STUDY GUIDE

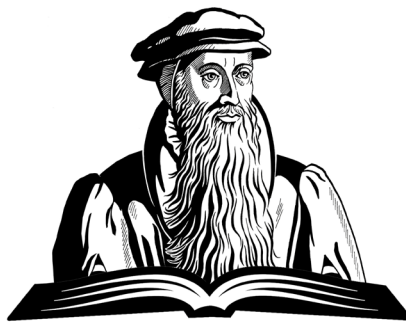
for

HERMENEUTICS

*Principles of
Scriptural Interpretation*

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

Lecture 4
COMPARING



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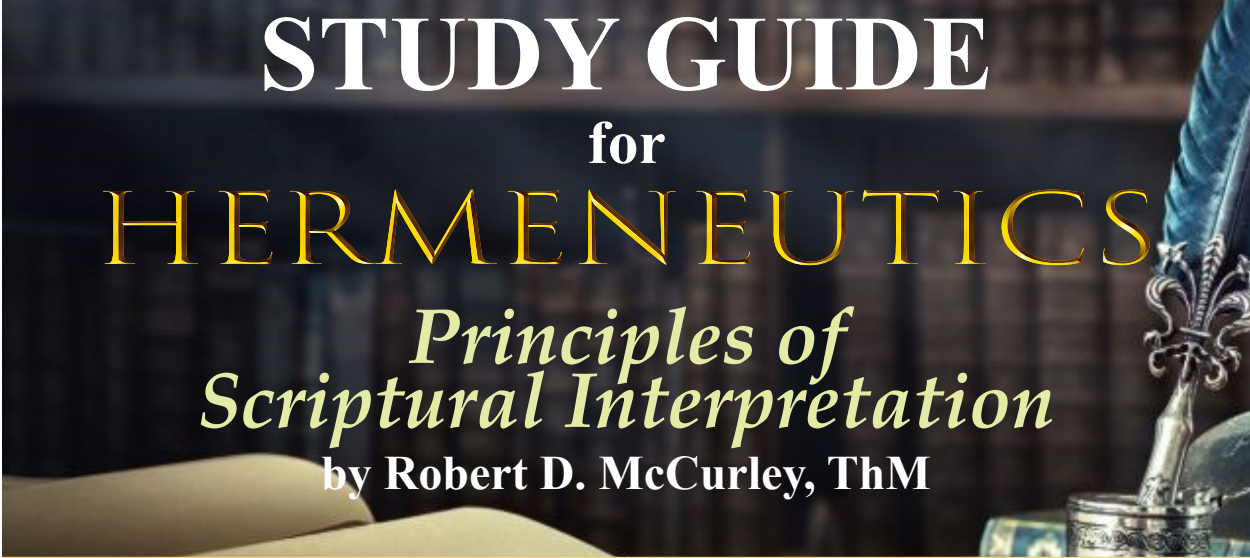
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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

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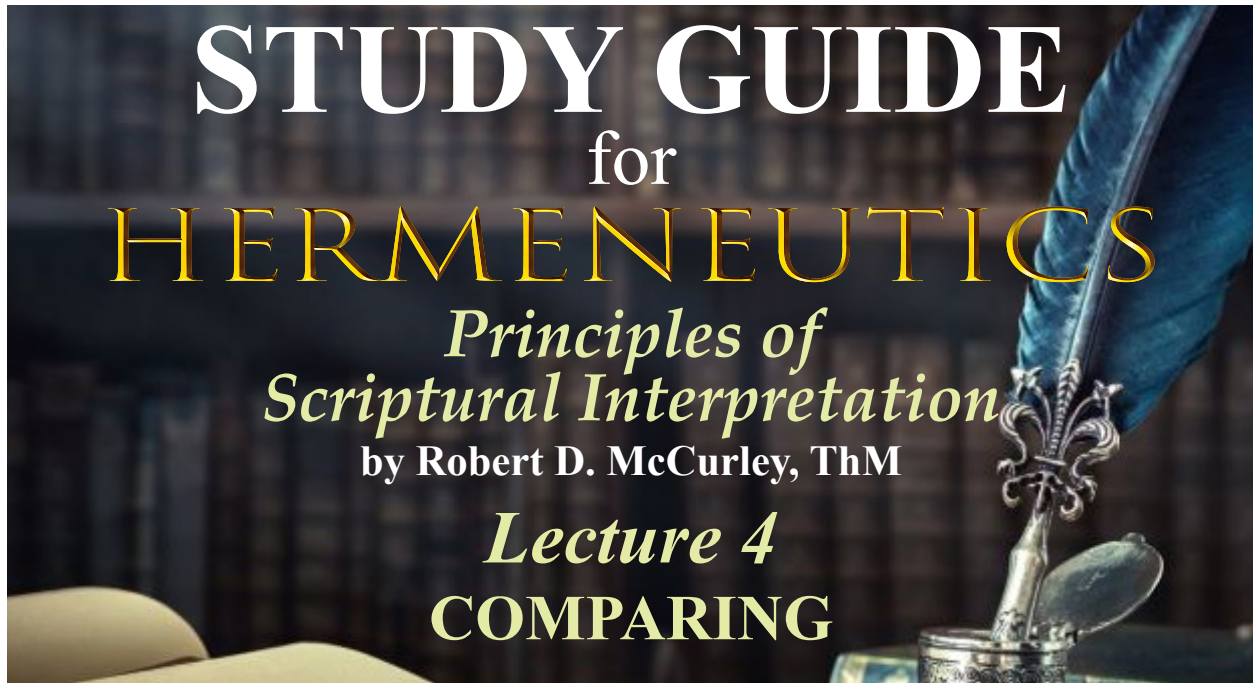


STUDY GUIDE for HERMENEUTICS

Principles of Scriptural Interpretation

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

1. Introduction
2. Foundation
3. Sense
4. Comparing
5. Context
6. Words
7. History
8. Genre
9. Christ
10. Exposition



Scripture Text

“And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up.”—Acts 15, verses 15 and 16.

“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”—1 Corinthians 2:13

Key Points

1. Introduction: the Apostle James settled a controversy in the church, by citing and comparing Scriptures in the Old Testament (Acts 15:13–17).
2. The second principle: *Always compare Scripture with Scripture.*
 - a. The meaning of one passage must always agree with what the Bible says elsewhere.
 - b. Theologians refer to this principle as “the analogy of faith” (or divine truths).
 - c. The Bible is one united book, without any conflict between its various parts.
3. Implementing the principle—always interpret the obscure in light of the clear.
 - a. Interpret narratives in light of didactic passages.
 - b. Interpret the implicit in light of the explicit.
 - c. Interpret earlier texts in light of later texts.

d. Interpret figurative texts in light of literal texts.

4. Practical helps with examples.

a. You must be engaged in a systematic reading of the Bible; study the whole Bible.

b. Obtain a trustworthy book that provides a detailed survey of the Bible.

c. When reading a difficult passage, always consult related passages.

d. The study of Systematic Theology will greatly aid your ability to compare Scripture with Scripture.

5. Next lecture will be on the important place and use of *Context in Reading*.

Review Questions

1. What is the Second Principle of Interpretation, and how is it related to the first principle?

2. What was the context of the Apostle James's statement in Acts 15:13–17? How is this an example of the second principle?

3. What is "the analogy of faith"? What is the "faith" referred to in that phrase?

4. What method should be used for implementing this second principle?

5. What are the four rules to use when implementing this second principle?

6. What parts of the Bible would be considered narratives? Define “didactic” and give some examples of didactic parts of the Bible.

7. Another rule in this principle is to interpret implicit texts in light of explicit texts. Give an example of an implicit passage of Scripture, and an explicit passage that gives light to understanding it.

8. How does the progressive unfolding of God’s revelation in the Bible lead us to the rule to interpret earlier passages in light of later passages of Scripture?

9. Scripture that uses figurative language should be interpreted by literal texts, especially in passages describing God’s character. What kind of gross errors can be derived by not following this rule in interpreting figurative texts?

10. What are other practical helps that Rev. McCurley suggested in this lecture which might aid in studying these Principles for Interpreting Scripture?

Personal Applications

1. As was recommended by Rev. McCurley in this lecture, there are other lecture series on johnknoxinstitute.org, which will be a benefit to you in these studies. We encourage you to watch the lecture series on “Biblical Theology” and take notes. Then please share some of your insights relating to this series on Hermeneutics.

2. Rev. McCurley gave us a lot of examples from Scripture in this lecture. Try to find some more passages as you study the Bible. Keep a notebook handy so you can record the more obscure texts and how you were able to properly interpret them by using passages that are clearer.
