

STUDY GUIDE

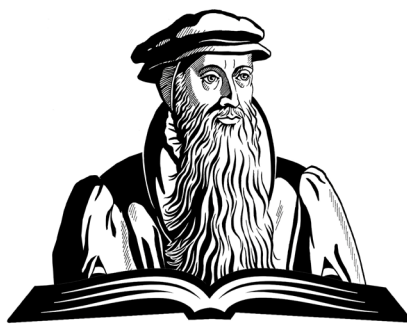
for

HERMENEUTICS

*Principles of
Scriptural Interpretation*

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

Lecture 5
CONTEXT



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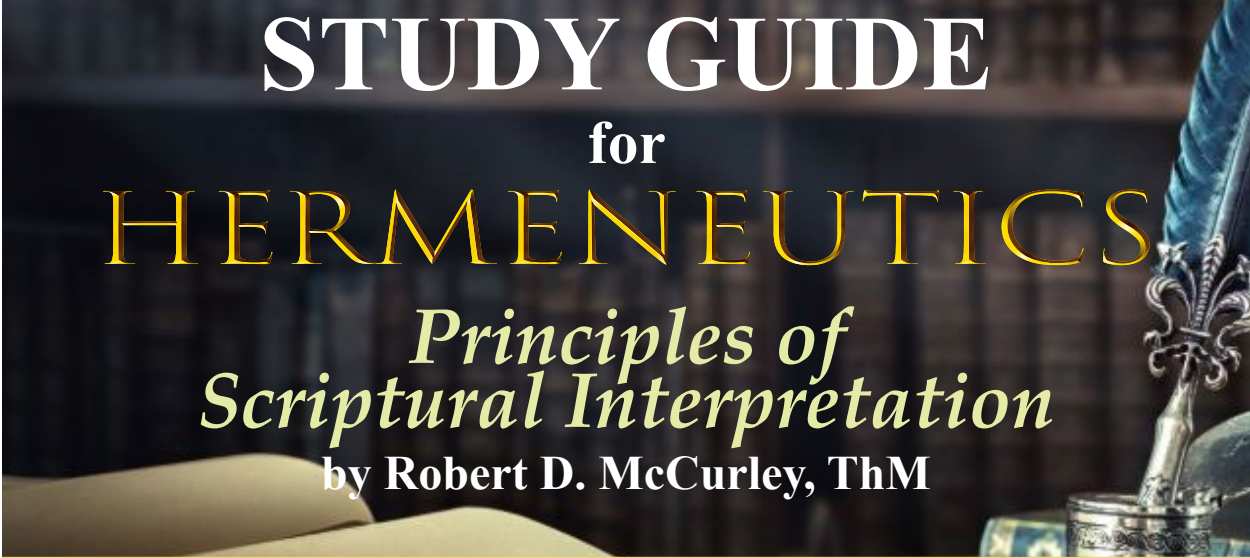
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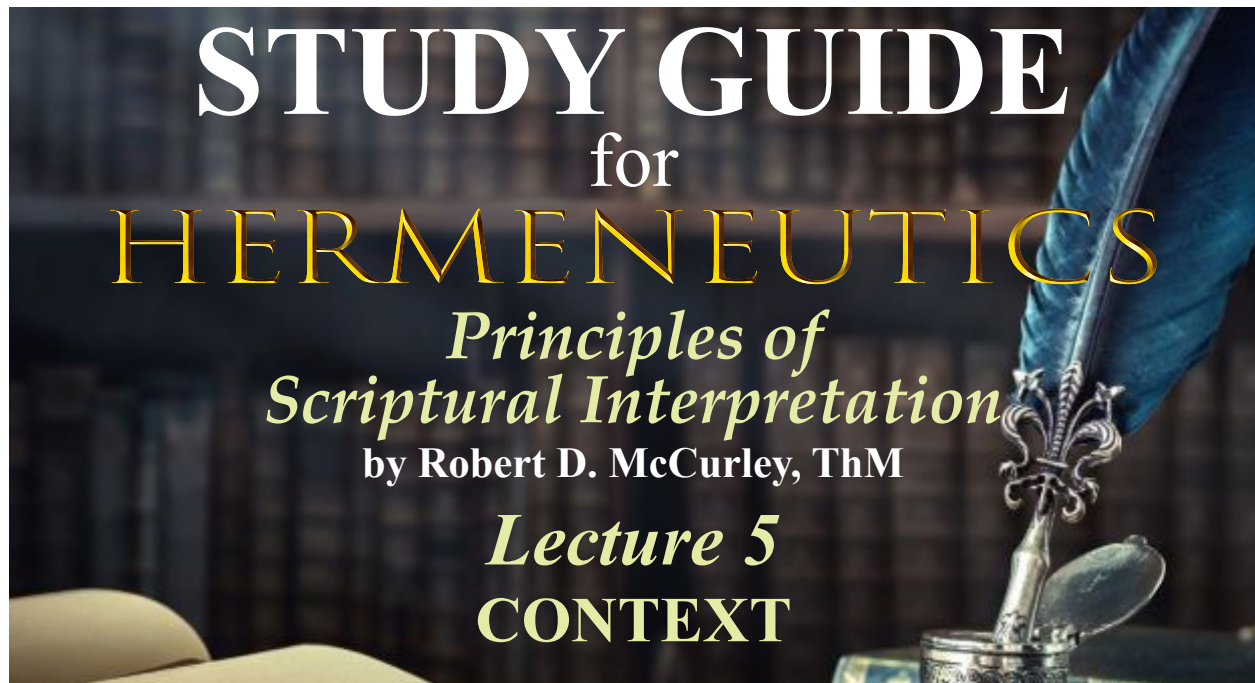


STUDY GUIDE for HERMENEUTICS

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

“As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”—2 Peter 3, verse 16

Key Points

1. Introduction: one way men twist the scripture is by taking it out of context (2 Peter 3:16).
2. The third principle: *Always interpret every Scripture passage in light of its context.*
 - a. Two types of context: Historical context and Biblical context.
3. Biblical Context: verse and chapter divisions are not inspired. The divisions can hinder us.
 - a. The immediate context; the meaning may include verses in the previous chapter.
 - b. The chapter context; the meaning may include following verses in the chapter.
 - c. The context of an entire topic under discussion.
 - d. The context of an entire book of the Bible. Each book of the Bible has a theme, and structure.
 - e. The context in light of the Testament in which it is found, whether Old Testament or New Testament; prior to Christ’s coming, and after Christ’s coming.
 - f. View every passage within the context of the whole Bible, which is one seamless revelation from God.

4. Points of counsel regarding practical use of this principle.
 - a. Be careful when seeking guidance from the Lord; don't make it mean something to you personally.
 - b. Be careful when formulating your theological convictions.
 - c. Be careful to read around the passage you are studying; the verses before it and after it will cast light on the passage you are studying.
5. In a future lecture, we will also learn to analyze the *Historical Context* of a passage. In the next lecture, we'll consider the principle related to *Words and Grammar* in Scripture.

Review Questions

1. Please describe the Third Principle of Interpretation, and the meaning of "context"?

2. What is the danger of reading a verse outside of its immediate context? What does the phrase mean, "A text without a context is a pretext"?

3. Rev. McCurley reminds us that the chapter divisions in the Bible are not inspired, except for the Psalms. How can chapter divisions hinder us in our Bible reading? What did he tell us about words like "Therefore" at the beginning of a chapter?

4. Explain what it means to interpret a Bible passage in *its immediate context*. Please give an example of how taking a passage out of its context can lead to misinterpretation of a text.

5. Why is *chapter context* essential for correctly interpreting a verse? How does this rule help us properly understand the passages in Romans 8:28 and Hebrews 6:4-6?

6. Please explain what it means to interpret a verse within *the context of an entire topic under discussion*. Please give an example using a particular verse.

7. Why is it important to understand the theme of each book of the Bible? How does that theme set a context for interpreting individual verses within the book?

8. Why should we take into consideration whether the verse we are reading is in the Old Testament or the New Testament? How does that affect the viewpoint of the Bible passage?

9. The last rule that Rev. McCurley gave is to view *every passage within the context of the whole Bible*. How does that rule relate to the principle of *Comparing Scripture with Scripture*?

10. What are the three points of counsel given by Rev. McCurley regarding practical use of this third principle?

Personal Applications

1. As you read and study your Bible, please try to apply these first three Principles of Scripture Interpretation. Rev. McCurley gave us multiple examples for them but see if you can find more examples of how you might misinterpret a verse by taking it out of context. Record your findings in a notebook for your own edification.

2. Can you think of Bible passages which you have perhaps been misunderstanding prior to knowing these first three principles? Can you see how cults have led many people astray by taking verses out of their *Biblical Context*? And do you also see how the whole Bible always agrees with itself?
